

# A Guide to the Griffith Thomas Family of Virginia Collection , 1934-1990

Griffith Thomas Family of Virginia Collection 1934-1990  
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A Collection in the Thomas Balch Library M 047  
Thomas Balch Library  
2006  
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## History

**Processed by:** Emily Hershman

## Title Statement

A Guide to the Griffith Thomas Family of Virginia Collection , 1934-1990

**Subtitle:** Griffith Thomas Family of Virginia Collection

**Collection:** M 047

**Author:** Emily Hershman

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## Profile Description

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## Revision Description

**2013-11-21** Converted to schema conforming EAD by dtd2schema.vh.xsl.

## Descriptive Summary

### Collection number

M 047

### Language

English

### Abstract

The Griffith Thomas Family of Virginia Collection includes photocopied, handwritten, and typed transcripts of consecutive family reunion meetings between 1934 and 1990.

### Collector

Elizabeth Thomas, Silver Spring, MD

### Repository

Thomas Balch Library

## Administrative Information

**Access Restrictions**

Collection open for research.

**Use Restrictions**

Physical characteristics and conditions affect use of this material.

**Acquisition Information**

Elizabeth Thomas, Silver Spring, MD

**Processing Information**

Processed by Emily Hershman, 4 January 2010; Updated by Ashley Swartwout, 24 June 2014

**Preferred Citation**

Griffith Thomas Family of Virginia Collection, 1934-1990 (M 047), Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA.

**Accruals**

2007.0169; 2013.0148

**Alternative Form Available**

None

**Adjunct Descriptive Data****Related Material**

None

**Bibliography**

Ancestry Library: Ancestrylibrary.com, U.S., Find a Grave Index, 1700s-Current

Griffith Thomas Family of Virginia Collection, 1934-1990 (M 047), Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA

Emily Rebecca Hershman, interview with Wynne C. Saffer, 6 January 2010.

Journey Through Hallowed Ground, Mount Zion Old School Baptist Church

[http://www.hallowedground.org/component/option,com\\_jthg/theme,region/task,view/county,Loudoun/Itemid,1/id,98/](http://www.hallowedground.org/component/option,com_jthg/theme,region/task,view/county,Loudoun/Itemid,1/id,98/).

The Mirror

Saffer, Wynne C. Mount Zion Cemetery: Aldie, Virginia. Lovettsville, Virginia: Willow Bend Books, 1997.

Thomas Balch Library, Loudoun Cemetery Database, <http://www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=940>

University of Virginia Library, VirgoBeta catalog, <http://virgobeta.lib.virginia.edu/catalog/u3900975>

**Other Finding Aid**

None

**Technical Requirements**

None

**Biographical Information**

Griffith E. Thomas (1814-1899) was "one of Loudoun's oldest and most highly respected citizens" when he died. Buried in the Mount Zion Cemetery, he left behind a wife, Rebecca Wright Thomas (1821-1911), and seven children. Beginning in 1934, his descendants established an annual family reunion held at the Mount Zion Baptist Church. Except for the year 1935 when the meeting was canceled due to an outbreak of infantile paralysis, the family members have reunited once every year. At each meeting, family records births, deaths, and marriages that occurred in the last year, gives each graduating high school and college student a gift of money, and gives a gift of honor to the matriarch. Meetings are presided over by the elected president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer. Over the years, attendance has averaged 91 family members. The family still meets annually.

The Mount Zion Baptist Church was founded in 1851, and in 1864, it was the site of a Civil War skirmish between Mosby's Rangers and the Second Massachusetts Cavalry. For many years, the Thomas family gave money to Mount

Zion as thanks for allowing a picnic to be hosted on its grounds, as well as contributing money to the upkeep of the graveyard, where many Thomases were buried. In 1985, after expressing concern about the maintenance of the grounds and cemetery, the family formed the Mount Zion Cemetery Company to assist in its preservation. Along with trustees of the Mount Zion Church, the Griffith Thomas family funded the placement of a historical marker in 1986.

## Scope and Content

This collection consists of a scrapbook and loose materials. The family used the scrapbook to store family and reunion records from 1934, the year of the first reunion, until 1969. Since then documents have been kept in folders.

The scrapbook contains reunion minutes, treasurer's reports, and attendance records from 1934 through 1969. For preservation purposes, attendance rolls for the years 1945, 1951-1958, 1965, and 1972, as well as many letters to the Thomas family, have been removed from the scrapbook and placed in folders. Remaining family reunion records are in folders.

Most of the collection consists of minutes, treasurer's reports, and reunion attendance lists. Additionally, there are thank you notes from graduates, some poems composed in the Thomas family's honor, and documents regarding the Mount Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery's upkeep and historical marker. There are some documents regarding family records compiled by a family researcher. Minutes from 1981 describe the dedication of Carruthers Hall at the University of Virginia in honor of Elmer Irving Carruthers (1874-1951), who served as university bursar and was present at the earliest Griffith Thomas reunions. The 1982 minutes include a biographical obituary of Elizabeth Burns Thomas (1888-1982), which describes her childhood in Loudoun, experiences on a Montana homestead, and subsequent return to Virginia.

## Arrangement

Chronological

## Contents List

### **M 047**

#### **Box 1**

**Scrapbook, Griffith Thomas Family of America, 1934-1969**

#### **Box 2**

**Folder 1: Attendance rolls removed from the scrapbook, 1945-1972**

**Folder 2: Letters removed from the scrapbook, 1939-1959**

**Folder 3: Reunion Minutes and Records, 1934-1939**

**Folder 4: Reunion Records, 1947**

**Folder 5: Reunion Records, 1950-1959**

**Folder 6: Reunion Records, 1960-1969**

**Folder 7: Reunion Minutes and Records, 1970-1979**

**Folder 8: Reunion Minutes and Records, 1980-1990**

**Folder 9: Correspondence, 1961-1982**

**Folder 10: Family History, 1934-1984**

**Folder 11: Family History Committee, 1990-1991**

**Folder 12: Mount Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, 1977-1983**

**Folder 13: Mount Zion Baptist Church Historical Marker, 1985-1986**

**Folder 14: News Clippings, 1957-1981**

**Folder 15: Tributes to the Griffith Thomas Family Reunions, 1960**

**Folder 16: Typed transcripts of Reunion Minutes, 1991**

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