

# Owens and Thomas family papers

## Descriptive Summary

<b>Repository:</b>	Georgia Historical Society
<b>Creator:</b>	Owens family.
<b>Creator:</b>	Owens, George Welshman, 1786-1856.
<b>Creator:</b>	Thomas family.
<b>Title:</b>	Owens and Thomas family papers
<b>Dates:</b>	1837-1954
<b>Extent:</b>	1.5 cubic feet (3 boxes)
<b>Identification:</b>	MS 0602

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## Biographical/Historical Note

George Welshman Owens (1786-1856) was the son of Owen Owens (1751-1814), a native of Wales. He married Sarah Wallace (1789-1865). Their children were Mary Wallace Owens (1819-1903), Sarah J. Owens (1820-1900), John Wallace Owens (1821-1862), George Savage Owens (1825-1897), Margaret Wallace Owens (1829-1925), and Richard W. Owens.

George Savage Owens married Elizabeth Gordon Wayne (1825-1903). Their children were Sallie G. Owens (1851-1920), George Welshman Owens (1853-1924), Annie W. Owens (1854-1925), Elizabeth W. Owens (1856-1940), Maggie W. Owens, (1857-1941), Julia C. Owens (1859-1930), Virginia S. Owens (1861-1936), William Wayne Owens (1863-1917), Clifford W. Owens (1865-1891), and J. Floyd Owens (1870-1925).

Margaret Wallace Owens married Dr. James Gray Thomas. Their children were Sallie J. Thomas (1866-1925), Maud Bedford Owens (1868-1917), and Margaret Gray Thomas (1871-1951), known as Meta. As the last surviving member of the family, she bequeathed the Owens-Thomas house to the Telfair Academy of Arts and Sciences to be operated as a house museum.

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## Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of papers pertaining to George Welshman Owens and some of his descendants. Many of the papers relate to the settlement of estates of various members of the family. Some papers relate to the Civil War, including general field orders for Mercer's Division, 1864, assigning Dr. J.G. Thomas as Chief Surgeon of the Division. Some of the papers pertain to the Owens-Thomas house museum of Savannah, Georgia, including a garden book, 1892-1902; a plan for a proposed formal garden by Clermont Lee, ASLA, 1954; blueprints and contracts for alterations to the carriage houses, 1910; and blueprint specifications and agreement for alterations for apartments in the house, 1939. The collection also includes minutes and the Constitution and By-Laws of the Telfair Literary and Art Union, 1889-1892.

The papers are in the same arrangement as when they were given to the Georgia Historical Society by the Owens-Thomas House Museum, with only slight changes for consistency. George Welshman Owens (1786-1856) is referred to as G.W. Owens I in the collection inventory; George Welshman Owens (1853-1924) is referred to as G.W. Owens II.

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## Index Terms

- Blueprints (reprographic copies)
- Decedents' estates.
- Deeds.
- Ellis, Henry, 1721-1806.
- England--Description and travel.
- Financial records.

Legal documents.  
Letters (correspondence)  
Owens family.  
Owens, George Welshman, 1786-1856.  
Owens-Thomas House (Savannah, Ga.)  
Thomas family.  
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Medical care.  
Wright, James, Sir, 1716-1785.  
societies--Georgia--Savannah.

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## Administrative Information

### Custodial History

Material was acquired from the Owens-Thomas House Museum, which was bequeathed to the Telfair Academy of Arts and Sciences by Margaret Gray Thomas, the last surviving member of the Owens Thomas family.

### Preferred Citation

[item identification], Owens and Thomas family papers, MS 602, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

### Acquisition Information

Gift of Owens-Thomas House Museum, 1954, 1958.

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## Restrictions

### Access Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

### Publication Rights

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## Sponsorship

Encoding funded by a 2012 Documenting Democracy grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

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## Container List

### Box Fldr

- 1 1 George Savage Owens, 1841 ( 2.0 items. )  
Studies at Oglethorpe College, Midway, Ga.; translation from Homer, 5th and 9th books, 1841;  
schedule and miscellaneous notes.

- 2 G.W. Owens I, 1852-1875

Book of receipts; last portion contains receipts made to Mary W. Owens.

- 3 G.W. Owens II estate, 1865-1904 ( 13.0 items. )

Letter of George S. Owens to G.W. Owens II et. al.; letters of G.W. Owens II to Mrs. Margaret W. Owens Thomas; deed, George S. Owens to Alonzo B. Luce for lease of West half of Lot 2, 1st Tything, Anson Ward, Savannah, 1865-1869; accounts of the estate, 1892-1904. One letter with enclosure pertains to the estate of Sarah J. Owens (1900-1903); another paper, 1892, pertains to the estate of George S. Owens.
- 4 Mary Wallace Owens account book and estate papers, 1896-1908 ( 65.0 items. )

account book, 1896-1908, account book, 1896-1905, will, inventory, vouchers for payments in settling the estate, etc.
- 5 Richard W. Owens, 1832-1840 ( 4.0 items. )

Receipt for tuition for sophomore class, 3rd term, 1832-1833 to R.W. Owens; Sallie Owens to R.W. Owens, her brother, 1833, in French; A.D. Bache to R.W. Owens, 1833, regarding disciplinary matter at University of Pennsylvania; receipted bill, W. Thorne Williams to R.W. Owens for legal papers, 1840. All torn.
- 6 Mrs. Owens and the Misses Owens, 1849-1856 ( 5.0 items. )

Receipts for payments to the Episcopal Orphans Home and receipted bills for insurance payment and bonnets.
- 7 Dr. James Gray Thomas personal papers, 1855-1903  

Ticket of admission to chemistry and physiology, Dept. of Medicine, New York University, 1855-1856; medical bill, Dr. J.G. Thomas to John Wilkerson, 1860; General Field Orders No. 1 Headquarters Mercer's Division, December 10, 1864, assigning Dr. J.G. Thomas Chief Surgeon of the Division; receipted bill for furnishings, F.W. Richardson & Co. to J.G. Thomas, 1882; Power of Attorney, J.G. Thomas to Marcus S. Baker, and correspondence and account with Baker for the estate of Dr. Thomas, 1883-1903; U.S. land office to J.G. Thomas regarding land in Florida, 1884; call book, January-November, 1884; "In Memoriam," of Dr. James Gray Thomas, written by Dr. Cornelius R. Agnew, 1884.
- 8 Dr. James Gray Thomas writings, 1875-1881 ( 3.0 items. )

*Report of the state Board of Health, November 15, 1875*, of which Dr. Thomas was president; *Dengue*, by J.G. Thomas, M.D. (Boston: 1881), 20 p.; undated clipping from an unidentified newspaper regarding proposed closing of Sapelo Island Quarantine Station.
- 9 Margaret Gray Thomas Awards, 1929, 1946 ( 2.0 items. )

Note regarding prize for best china painting, Ninth Annual Exhibition of the Southern States Art League, 1929; certificate from American Red Cross for her meritorious service in World War II, 1946.
- 10 Margaret Gray Thomas letters, 1936-1937, undated ( 3.0 items. )

"H" Harriet R. Colquitt to "Meta." London, December 21, 1936, regarding travel in England, abdication of King Edward VIII; Clara B. Ford (Mrs. Henry Ford) to Miss Thomas with regrets on being unable to see her when she called, undated; envelope with coronation stamp, King George

and Queen Elizabeth, 1937.

## Box Fldr

- 2 11 Margaret Gray Thomas legal papers, 1915-1927 ( 6.0 items. )  
William L. Clay to Miss Thomas, November 18, 1915, conveying some legal documents (no enclosures); 5 deeds pertaining to certain properties.
- 12 Margaret Gray Thomas and Maud Bedford Thomas notebooks, 1894-1913 ( 3.0 items. )  
cash book of Maud B. Thomas, October 1894-September 1913 with quotations in back; note books of Margaret G. Thomas: poetry, some dated 1896, with clippings laid in; and scattered weather notes, 1899.
- 13 Margaret Wallace Owens Thomas correspondence, 1900-1906 ( 32.0 items. )  
Letter from Lillie Noble Jones to Mrs. Thomas, 1900; the remainder of the correspondence is letters to and from G.W. Owens II, from Samuel B. Adams, attorney, and William L. Clay, attorney, re the estates of Mary W. Owens, Sarah J. Owens, and George W. Owens I and the case of Margaret W. Thomas, Exrx., vs. G.W. Owens II, Exr.
- 14 Margaret Wallace Owens Thomas legal papers, 1905-1915 ( 5.0 items. )  
Accounts of William L. Clay for legal fees, 1905, 1908; bill of costs in Chatham County Superior Court, suit in equity, 1907; deed of conveyance for Savannah lot, 1907; deed to secure debt, 1915.
- 15 Owens-Thomas House Museum, letters regarding, 1939-1940 ( 2.0 items. )  
Two letters from Nancy V. McClelland, Decorator, to Margaret W. Thomas regarding the house, April 1939, April 8, 1940.
- 16 Owens-Thomas House Museum: Garden, 1892-1902, 1954 ( 2.0 items. )  
Garden book, December 31, 1892-October 1902; plan for a proposed formal garden for the Owens-Thomas House Museum, by Clermont Lee, ASLA, 1954.
- 17 Owens-Thomas House Museum: Alterations, 1910 ( 3.0 items. )  
Blueprints and contracts for alterations to carriage houses, 1910.
- 18 Owens-Thomas House Museum: Alterations, 1939 ( 3.0 items. )  
Blueprint specifications and agreement for alterations for apartments in the house, 1939.
- 19 Notes on Savannah historical houses and buildings by Miss Thomas and Walter C. Hartridge ( 46.0 items. )
- 20 Court papers, 1837, 1842-1847 ( 2.0 items. )  
The State vs. Cornelius MacArdell, libel against Levi S. DeLyon, McIntosh County, September

Court, 1837; Court docket book, 1842-1847.

21 Newspapers: New York, 1865

*Metropolitan Record & New York Vindicator*, October 7, 1865. In two sections.

22 Newspapers: Savannah, 1795-1879 ( 7.0 items. )

*Georgia Gazette*, July 9, 1795 (part of p. 3-4); *Savannah Republican*, May 1, 1861; November 11, 1862; February 5, 1865; *The Savannah Daily Herald*, November 16, 1865; *Savannah Morning News*, May 25, 1875; June 4, 1879.

**Box Fldr**

3 23 Recipes: *Miss Parloa's New Cook Book* (t.p. missing) with some handwritten recipes in back; 31 handwritten miscellaneous recipes ( 32.0 items. )

24 William J. Scott, 1832 ( 2.0 items. )

Letter of Mr. Malcolm, Solicitor of Edinburgh to George W. Anderson in Savannah, February 13, 1832, and queries for John Hood of Stravithie, one of the Trustees and Executors of William J. Scott, regarding his estate.

25 Telfair Literary and Art Union, 1889-1892

Minute book of the board, March 11, 1889-March 4, 1891; Constitution and Bylaws; Correspondence, 1891-1892. The organization was first called the Ladies Literary and Art Union. Mrs. Margaret W. Thomas was acting secretary in 1892.

ADDENDUM

**Box Fldr**

3 26 Account books. Account book of Sarah I. Owens, 1870-1881, 2.0 volumes

Many of the entries are charitable and civic donations. Household accounts, November 1898-June 1906. Includes incidentals, a few addresses, and recipes.

27 Miscellaneous papers, 5.0 items.

Fragments of two deeds, one for 1756, signed by Henry Ellis; the other for 1771, signed by James Wright; "In Memoriam," by ASM, 1884 (printed); "Prom the Arabic," a poem on a 4 p. leaflet; obituary of Lilah Owens Carmichael from an unidentified, undated newspaper; sample of heavy embossed notepaper.