

5-5-2007

## Thomas, Robert Young, Jr., 1855-1925 (MSS 167)

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*Descriptive Inventory*

**MSS 167 THOMAS, Robert Young, Jr., 1855-1925**

1 box. 9 folders. 90 items. 1853-1931. Originals.

2007.88.1

***BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE***

Robert Young Thomas, Jr. was born near Russellville, Kentucky, on July 13, 1855. He received his Bachelor's degree in 1878 from Bethel College in Russellville. He studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1881 and commenced practice in Central City, Kentucky; he also worked as a journalist. He served as a member of the Kentucky General Assembly as a representative in 1886 and 1887; was elected Commonwealth attorney for the seventh judicial district of Kentucky in 1903 for a term of six years; was elected as a Democrat to the Sixty-first and to the eight succeeding Congresses and served from March 4, 1909, until his death at Red Boiling Springs, Tennessee on September 3, 1925. He is interred in the Evergreen Cemetery in Greenville, Kentucky.

Mr. Thomas had a rather colorful life. He was said to be rather "notorious for his non-political fights in which he became engaged. In one of these he was accused of drawing a knife on a House doorkeeper whom he met in a Washington hotel."

***COLLECTION NOTE***

The bulk of this collection consists of letters sent from Congressman Thomas to his wife, Annie Lee Thomas (she later married W. J. Barber), and their children: Barber Nell Thomas and Annie Lee Thomas. Most of the letters were written after the couple divorced (1914) and are chiefly written to his children. Another significant set of letters was sent from Mrs. Barber to John W. Moore, who was assisting her in obtaining a small appropriation from Congress for the two children.

The collection also includes a small number of letters from the Helm and Kuykendall families of Butler County. The majority of these letters are addressed to W. A. Helm of Morgantown, Kentucky. Several of these letters discuss the real estate market and business environment of Kansas City, Missouri, and Independence, Missouri. One last item of interest is a letter written in 1931 from a young girl, Martha

Belle Moore, to General Richard E. Byrd congratulating him after one of his South Pole exploratory trips.

Bibliography: *Speeches of Hon. R. Y. Young, Jr. of Kentucky in the House of Representatives...* (Found in Kentucky Library)

### ***SHELF LIST***

<b>BOX 1</b>		<b>1853-1931</b>	<b>90 items</b>
Folder 1	Inventory	n.d.	1 item
Folder 2	Biographical information and calendar of papers	n.d.	5 items
Folder 3	Letter from W.A. Chapman to Miss L.A. Boadley of Morgantown, Kentucky	1853	1 item
Folder 4	Kuykendall and Helm family - Correspondence	1872-1926	12 items
Folder 5	Thomas, Robert Young, Jr. - Letters to his wife and children	1913-1914	5 items
Folder 6	Thomas, Robert Young, Jr. - Letters to his ex-wife and children	1914-1920	29 items
Folder 7	Thomas, Robert Young, Jr. - Correspondence with his children	1921-1925	24 items
Folder 8	Letters from various Barber family to John W. Moore	1917-1926	12 items
Folder 9	Letter from Martha Belle Moore to Admiral Richard E. Byrd	1931	1 item

**BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD**

MSS THOMAS, Robert Young, Jr., 1855-1925 1853-1931  
167

Chiefly letters written by Robert Young Thomas, Jr. to his wife, Annie Lee Thomas, and his two children, Barber Nell Thomas and Annie Lee Thomas. The majority of these letters are to the children and were written after Mr. and Mrs. Thomas divorced in 1914. Also included is correspondence of the Helm and Kuykendall families of Butler County, Kentucky.

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**SUBJECT ANALYTICS**

Barber, Mary Lee – Letters from, 1919, 1926 B1,F6,8  
Byrd, Richard E., 1888-1957 – Letter to, 1931 B1,F9  
Helm, W. A., 1857-1921 – Letters to, 1883-1891 B1,F4  
Independence, Missouri – Travel and description, 1887-1891 B1,F4  
Kansas City, Missouri – Travel and description, 1887-1891 B1,F4  
Kuykendall, M. W. B1,F4  
Moore, John William, 1877-1941 – Letters to, 1917-1926 B1,F8  
Thomas, Barber Nell – Letters to, 1913-1925 B1,F5-7  
Thomas, Mary Lee – Letters to, 1913-1924 B1,F5-7

Jeffrey 5/2007