

A Guide to the Sherwood Farm Collection, 1839-1977

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Abstract

The Sherwood Farm Collection spans the years 1839-1977 and consists of account and record books, identification cards, a fire insurance policy, photocopied newspaper clippings, newspapers, a marriage certificate, program, photographs, and glass plate negatives that were assembled by the Ballinger, Gibbs, and Wilkinson families who lived at Sherwood Farm in the Woodlawn area of Fairfax County, Virginia.

Creator

Ballinger, Gibbs, and Wilkinson Families

Extent

4.5 linear feet

Repository

Fairfax County Public Library

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

None

Use Restrictions

Consult repository for information

Acquisition Information

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Adjunct Descriptive Data

Separated Material

None

Historical and Biographical Information

Sherwood, built approximately in 1859, sheltered five generations of the same family until August 31, 1999. In 1852, Edward Curtis Gibbs and Maria Louisa Gibbs purchased Hollin Hall Farm from George and Sally Mason. On October 27, 1859, Charles Ballinger married the Gibbs' daughter, Elizabeth Troth Gibbs. The following year, Ballinger purchased 100 acres of land from his in-laws' Hollin Hall Farm, and 100 additional acres in 1877 all of which became Sherwood Farm.

Ballinger's daughter, Mary Alice Ballinger inherited Sherwood Farm after her father's death in 1878. She and her step-mother, Rebecca Nicholson Gibbs, continued to live in Sherwood and operate the farm. In 1891, Ballinger married Francis H. Wilkinson, a Quaker, whose family owned the nearby Gray's Hill Farm. Sherwood Farm stayed in the Wilkinson family until 1999, when Joyce Wilkinson Brown sold the property. Sherwood still stands at 7702 Middy Lane, although most of the surrounding farmland is now housing developments which include Kirkside, Hollinbrook and Hollin Hall Village.

Several clubs and organizations provided recreation for the Quaker farmers and families living in the surrounding Sherwood Farm area in the late 19th and early 20th century. Some of those groups included the Woodlawn Horse Company (an anti-horse theft organization), Woodlawn Housekeeping Association, Woodlawn Literary Association, and the Woodlawn Debating Society.

Around 1901, the Wilkinson family donated a portion of their farmland for the construction of Sherwood Hall, a one-room community center to be used by the Mount Vernon Circle of the King's Daughters. The building served as a meeting hall and hosted concerts, lectures, and suppers. The Gibbs family operated the Sherwood Hall Sunday School from 1901 until 1923. The Mount Vernon Grange later used Sherwood Hall and it was briefly used as an air raid shelter in 1943. In 1944, Douglas Holland bought and dismantled Sherwood Hall and the land reverted back to the Wilkinson family. Today the road that once ran by the structure is named Sherwood Hall Lane.

Scope and Content

The Sherwood Farm Collection spans the years 1839-1977 and consists of account and record books, identification cards, a fire insurance policy, photocopied newspaper clippings, newspapers, a marriage certificate, program, photographs, and glass plate negatives that were assembled by the Ballinger, Gibbs, and Wilkinson families who lived at Sherwood Farm in the Woodlawn area of Fairfax County, Virginia. Included are records for Sherwood Farm; Sherwood Hall Sunday School; Woodlawn Agricultural Society; Woodlawn Debating Society; Woodlawn Farmers Club; Woodlawn Horse Company; Woodlawn Housekeeping Association; and the Woodlawn Literary Society.

Series 1: Records, 1863-1977, Boxes 1-3 and 5

This series contains account and record books, newspapers, a marriage certificate, program, identification cards, and a fire insurance policy. Account and record books are included for Sherwood Farm; Sherwood Hall Sunday School; Woodlawn Agricultural Society; Woodlawn Debating Society; Woodlawn Farmers Club; Woodlawn Horse Company; Woodlawn Housekeeping Association; and the Woodlawn Literary Society. The newspapers and clippings in this series document the history of the Sherwood Farm area. Also included is an oversize marriage certificate for Samuel Martin Brosius (1851-1936) and Anna Mary Wilkinson (1853-1954) which includes the signatures of the wedding attendees, many of whom were area locals.

Series 2: Books, 1839-1922, Boxes 3 and 5

This series contains published books including four editions of *Some Old Historic Landmarks of Virginia and Maryland* by W.H. Snowden, one of which is autographed by Snowden to Rebecca Ballinger, Mary Alice Ballinger's stepmother and aunt; *A Treatise on Surveying*, by John Gummere, which was owned by W.

Gillingham, the author of "the Gillingham map" of 1859, delineating George Washington's lands with their current owners; Queen Hortense: A Life Picture of the Napoleonic Era, by L. Muhlback, which includes a book plate listing the Rules of the Woodlawn Housekeepers' Book Club and an inscription by Mary A. Gibbs, the sister to Rebecca Ballinger and sister to Maria Gibbs Ballinger, Mary Alice Ballinger's mother.

Series 3: Photographs, 1887-1906, Box 4

This series contains photographs of Fairfax Courthouse, Grays Hill, Gum Springs, Gunston Hall, Occoquan, Mount Vernon, the Pierson Bridge near Huntley, Sherwood Farm, Sherwood Hall, and the Woodlawn Friends Meeting House as well as members of the Wilkinson family. Also included is an unidentified photograph of a house that resembles Engleside. A few glass plate negatives accompany some of these prints. Some photographs were taken by Samuel Martin Brosius (1851-1936), an amateur photographer. Brosius was Kirk Wilkinson's uncle. Brosius married Kirk's father Francis Hilary Wilkinson's (1864-1935) sister, Anna Mary Wilkinson Brosius (1853-1954), at Sherwood.

Index Terms

Alexandria (Va.)

Ballinger family

Dairy farms - Virginia - Fairfax County

Gibbs family

Quakers - Virginia - Fairfax County

Sherwood Hall Sunday School

Wilkinson family

Woodlawn (Fairfax County, Va.)

Woodlawn Agricultural Society

Woodlawn Debating Society

Woodlawn Farmers Club

Woodlawn Horse Company

Woodlawn Housekeeping Association

Woodlawn Literary Association

Container List

Series 1: Papers, 1863-1977

Box 1 Folder 1: Independent Mutual Fire Insurance Company of Fairfax County, VA policy for the Sherwood Sunday School building, C. Kirk Wilkinson, policyholder , 1942

Box 1 Folder 2: Sherwood Hall Sunday School record book, 1902-1904

Box 1 Folder 3: Sherwood Hall Sunday School record book, 1905-1911

Box 1 Folder 4: Sherwood Hall Sunday School record book, 1912-1918

Box 1 Folder 5: Sherwood Hall Sunday School record book, 1919-1923

Box 1 Folder 6: Sherwood Hall, Alexandria Gazette newspaper article [photocopy with added notes by Susan Hellman], 1944 September 28

Box 1 Folder 7: Woodlawn Agricultural Society record book, 1866-1902

Box 1 Folder 8: Woodlawn Agricultural Society ledger book, 1866-1873

Box 2 Folder 1: Woodlawn Debating Society ledger book, 1886 - 1887. These notes end on page 41. Pages 44-188 appear to be farm records of Sherwood Farm from 1898-1902, Page 189-191 appear to be part of the Debating Society's by-laws. , 1886-1887,1898-1902

Box 2 Folder 2: Woodlawn Farmers Club, a list of members ; minutes from a meeting held on April 19, 1902; minutes from at meeting held Sept 5, 1903 at J.P.H. Mason's. , 1902-1903

Box 2 Folder 3: Woodlawn Farmers Club, A brief historical sketch, written by E.E. Mason (4 pages), Undated

Box 2 Folder 4: Woodlawn Horse Company identification card, Owner: Frank Wilkinson, Sherwood Farm, 12 horses, 1910 February 21

Box 2 Folder 5: Woodlawn Horse Company blank identification cards [12], Undated

Box 2 Folder 6: Woodlawn Horse Company Treasurer's Account Book, 1863-1934

Box 2 Folder 7: "Constitution and By-Laws of the Woodlawn Horse Company of Fairfax County, VA. Organized 10th Month 7th, 1865", Alexandria, VA: Ramey & Son, Prs. 113 S. Royal Street, 1908. [2 copies] , 1908

Box 2 Folder 8: Woodlawn Horse Company, Alexandria Gazette newspaper article, December 30, 1937 [photocopy], Undated

Box 2 Folder 9: Woodlawn Housekeepers Society record book, minutes, 1876-1891

Box 2 Folder 10: Woodlawn Housekeeper Association notebook - by-laws and minutes , 1891-1895

Box 2 Folder 11: Woodlawn Housekeeping Association ledger book, 1896-1906

Box 2 Folder 12: Woodlawn Housekeeping Society receipt book, Jan 8, 1876. [contains recipes and newspaper clippings], 1876-1907

Box 3 Folder 1: Woodlawn Literary Society notebook - constitution, list of members, meeting minutes, 1901-1902

Box 3 Folder 2: Program, George Washington's Birthnight Ball at Woodlawn, 1951 February 21

Box 5 Folder 1: Newspaper, "Farms History Styles Urban Life Today," Alexandria Gazette, 1977 July 27

Box 5 Folder 2: Newspaper, "The Army Swallows a Hamlet, Expanding Fort Belvoir Absorbs Acreage, Crowding Out Families and a Church," Washington Daily News, 1941 October 11

Box 5 Folder 3: Marriage certificate, Samuel Martin Brosius and Anna Mary Wilkinson, includes signatures of the attendees, 1911 June 1

Series 2: Books, 1839-1922

Box 3 Folder 3: "A Treatise on Surveying" by John Gummere, 14th ed.; Philadelphia: Kimber & Sharpless, 1839. Written on the front inside cover of this book "W. Gillingham, 1887. , 1839, 1887

Box 3 Folder 4: "Mount Vernon Arlington and Woodlawn" by Minnie Kendall-Lowther, Washington, D.C.: The Ben Franklin Press, 1922, 1922

Box 3 Folder 5: "Queen Hortense: A Life Picture of the Napoleonic Era" by L. Muhlbach, NY: D. Appleton and Company, 1870. Includes book plate listing the Rules of the Woodlawn Housekeepers' Book Club and signed by Mary A. Gibbs, 1870, 1892

Box 3 Folder 6: "Some Old Historic Landmarks of Virginia and Maryland", 1st ed., by W.H. Snowden, Published by J.B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia, 1894, 1894

Box 3 Folder 7: "Some Old Historic Landmarks of Virginia and Maryland", 2nd ed., by W.H. Snowden, Published by G.H. Ramey & Son, Alexandria, 1901., 1901

Box 3 Folder 8: "Some Old Historic Landmarks of Virginia and Maryland Parts One and Two Together With The Story of The Young Surveyors" by W.H. Snowden, autographed by Snowden to R.N. Ballinger (Rebecca Ballinger, Mary Alice Ballinger's stepmother and aunt) Published by G.H. Ramey & Son, Alexandria, VA 1904., 1904, 1908

Box 3 Folder 9: "Some Old Historic Landmarks of Virginia and Maryland", 7th ed., by W.H. Snowden, Undated

Box 5 Folder 4: "Atlas 15 Miles Around Washington Including Fairfax and Alexandria Counties, VA", G.M. Hopkins, 1879

Series 3: Photographs, 1887-1906

Box 4 Folder 1: Fairfax Courthouse, two views [2 photos], Undated

Box 4 Folder 2: Grays Hill, couple taking in the view of the Potomac River [3 photos], 1887

Box 4 Folder 3: Grays Hill, front of the house, Undated

Box 4 Folder 4: Grays Hill, group photo: Caleb Kirk Wilkinson, Samuel Martin Brosius, Sarah Wilkinson; (front row): unidentified little girl, Anna Mary W. Brosius, Sarah H.K. Wilkinson, unidentified man., 1906 May 20

Box 4 Folder 5: Grays Hill, group photo: Sallie Wilkinson, Craig (?), Sarah H. Wilkinson, an unidentified boy, Carrie Pennock, Kirk Wilkinson (leaning on Carrie), Caleb Wilkinson, Anna Mary W. Brosius, and Rex the dog., c. 1906

Box 4 Folder 6: Grays Hill, group photos: Sarah H. Wilkinson, Morris Wilkinson, Anna Mary Wilkinson, Sarah/Sallie Wilkinson, Frank Wilkinson, and three unidentified individuals, 1887 June 1

Box 4 Folder 7: Grays Hill, side view of house with Sallie, Caleb, and Anna Mary Wilkinson (Brosius) and Carrie Pennock, Undated

Box 4 Folder 8: Grays Hill, view of the Potomac River/Dogue Creek, Undated

Box 4 Folder 9: Gum Springs, Va., Shuster house, 1897

Box 4 Folder 10: Gum Springs, Va., West Ford house, 1897

Box 4 Folder 11: Gunston Hall, four views [4 photos and glass plate negative], 1904-1906

Box 4 Folder 12: Mary Harrison on Pierson Bridge near Huntley, c. 1880

**Box 4 Folder 13: Merchants Mill at Occoquan, Va. [2 photos], 1906
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**Box 4 Folder 14: Mount Vernon, view from the south looking north,
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**Box 4 Folder 15: Sherwood Farm, aerial view taken from Goodyear blimp
by Charles Cecil Wall, Resident Director of Mount Vernon, 1950**

Box 4 Folder 16: Sherwood Farm, barn built in 1937, Undated

**Box 4 Folder 17: Sherwood Farm, cow herd with Charles Kirk Wilkinson [3
photos], 1901**

**Box 4 Folder 18: Sherwood Farm, exterior of Sherwood with chickens in
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**Box 4 Folder 19: Sherwood Farm, Mary Alice Ballinger Wilkinson (1866-
1943) and her son, Charles Kirk Wilkinson (1894-1965) on the front porch
of Sherwood, c. 1904-1906**

**Box 4 Folder 20: Sherwood Farm, Sherwood photographed by William
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**Box 4 Folder 21: Sherwood Farm, Sherwood with Kate Snowden's horse Kit
in the foreground [2 photos], Undated**

**Box 4 Folder 22: Sherwood Farm, three women and a baby stroller in front
of Sherwood [3 photos], Undated**

Box 4 Folder 23: Sherwood Hall, 1901

**Box 4 Folder 24: Sherwood Hall, taken from Alexandria to Accotink
Turnpike (now Sherwood Hall Lane), Undated**

**Box 4 Folder 25: Woodlawn Friends Meeting House [includes glass plate
negative], c. 1900**

Box 4 Folder 26: Woodlawn Friends Meeting House cemetery, Undated

**Box 4 Folder 27: Unidentified photo, family on the porch of an unknown
house that resembles Engleside, Undated**