

A Guide to the Thomas H. Williamson Papers, 1788-1888 MS.0105

Thomas H. Williamson papers
1788-1888

Title Statement

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

MS.0105

Unit ID

/repositories/3/resources/626

Unit Date

1788-1888

Language

English

Creator

Williamson, Thomas H. (Thomas Hoomes), 1813-1888

Extent

0.50 cubic feet

Physical Location

Manuscripts stacks and Oversized Case 2

Repository

Virginia Military Institute Archives

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

There are no restrictions.

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Preferred Citation

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Biographical / Historical

Thomas Hoomes Williamson was born on August 30, 1813 in Richmond, Virginia to Thomas and Anne Walke Williamson. He spent most of his childhood in Norfolk, Virginia, where he received his early schooling. He entered the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York in 1829, but resigned in 1833 before receiving his degree.

In 1834 Williamson entered the profession of civil engineering and was the assistant to the United States Engineer in charge of building the dry dock at the Norfolk Navy Yard.

Williamson married Louisa Henrietta Fenton Garnett on May 11, 1837 and the couple had five children: Mercer, William, Anne, Thomas, and Olympia.

In 1841 Williamson accepted a faculty appointment at VMI where spent the remainder of his career except for a brief absences during the Civil War. He taught tactics, drawing, and engineering, and at various times was assigned additional duties (e.g., Commandant of Cadets, Treasurer, and Librarian). While at VMI he wrote a textbook titled "An Elementary Course of Architecture and Civil Engineering."

Williamson took on various special assignments during the Civil War. In April 1861 he served with the Confederate Engineers Corps and worked on the defenses of the Rappahannock River and Manassas, Virginia. In October of that year he was ordered to return to VMI to teach civil and military engineering, but he was recalled to the Confederate Army in April 1862 for temporary special duty on the staff of General Stonewall Jackson.

In 1864 Williamson married for the second time to Julia Wharton (Lewis) and the couple had two children: Sydney Bacon and Cornelia.

Williamson continued his teaching career at VMI until shortly before his death on March 31, 1888.

Scope and Contents

The Thomas H. Williamson papers include: Civil War memoirs, in which Williamson discusses the events that took place during his temporary assignment to the command of Major General Stonewall Jackson beginning in April 1862 Lecture notes (1850s) used in teaching engineering and architecture courses at VMI Two copies of the textbook written by Williamson for use at VMI titled "An Elementary Course of Architecture and Civil Engineering" Williamson family genealogical material Correspondence

Keywords

Virginia Military Institute—Curricula

Virginia Military Institute—Faculty—Publications

Architecture

United States—History—Civil War, 1861-1865—Personal narratives—Confederate

Virginia Military Institute—Faculty—Biography

Virginia Military Institute—Academics—History—19th century

Textbooks

Correspondence

Memoirs

Jackson, Stonewall, 1824-1863

Virginia Military Institute. Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering

Description of Subordinate Components

Civil War memoirs

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/2055

Unit Date circa 1883

Language English

Scope and Contents

The memoirs, titled "My Service with Genl Thos. J. Jackson" regard Thomas H. Williamson's assignment to General Stonewall Jackson's command in the Spring of 1862.

Note on the text by William Couper, VMI's "official historiographer" from 1934-1954: "This memorandum is written in the handwriting of General Thomas H. Williamson and is reproduced with the spelling, etc., unchanged. There is no date on the memorandum, but it was probably written after 1883 when Colonel Shipp began to spell his name Shipp (originally spelled Ship). It also must have been written after Jones wrote his Reminiscences, published in 1876."

Keywords

Memoirs

United States—History—Civil War, 1861-1865—Personal narratives—Confederate Jackson, Stonewall, 1824-1863

Lecture notes and textbook

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/2056

Unit Date 1850-1875

Language English

Scope and Contents

Materials used by Thomas H. Williamson while teaching his architecture, drawing, and other classes at VMI.

Notebook, glossary of architectural terms

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/2059

Language English

Extent One notebook (approximately 100 page) that contains definitions of various architectural terms and small sketches.

Keywords

Architecture

Notebooks

"Lecture No. 1"

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/2060

Language English

Scope and Contents

"Babylon - Edfou, Parthenon-Colosseum"

Keywords

Virginia Military Institute—Faculty—19th century

"Lecture No. 2"

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/2061

Language English

Scope and Contents

"Church of Our Savior, Saxon Church, Smithsonian Institute, Pisa Cathedral, Mosque at Cordova, Mosque at Constantinople"

Keywords

Virginia Military Institute—Faculty—19th century

"Lecture No. 3"

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/2062

Language English

Scope and Contents

"Illustrations, 1st-3rd Period of the Gothic"

Keywords

Virginia Military Institute—Faculty—19th century

"Lecture No. 4"

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/2063

Language English

Scope and Contents

"Illustrations, English Parish Churches"

Keywords

Virginia Military Institute—Faculty—19th century

Textbook, "An Elementary Course of Architecture and Civil Engineering"

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/2064

Language English

Creator Williamson, Thomas H. (Thomas Hoomes), 1813-1888

Keywords

Textbooks

Virginia Military Institute—Faculty—Publications

Virginia Military Institute—Faculty—19th century

Family genealogy notes and chart

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/2057

Language English

Scope and Contents

Contains notes and an oversized chart.

Correspondence and documents

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/2058

Unit Date 1788-1888

Language English

Scope and Contents

Includes one letter (dated February 1788) from William Watts to his brother, Captain John Watts. The exact relationship to Thomas H. Williamson is not known, but the letter is presumed to be related to an ancestor.