BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Craig Robert Thomas was born in 1946 and diagnosed with cerebral palsy. At the age of seven, his parents, the Reverend and Mrs. Robert John Thomas, both graduates of Dickinson College, aided in the formation of a collection of autographed photos and letters of famous personalities of the day. This diversion resulted in national attention for young Craig, and as a result of this pursuit, he was named an honorary citizen of several states as well as a Junior Member of the United States Secret Service. Among other highlights in his brief life, Craig was appointed the first honorary cadet in the Civil Air Patrol in 1951, and in 1954, at the age of eight, Craig was one of the three United Cerebral Palsy poster children to be greeted by Mrs. Dwight D. Eisenhower. Craig died in 1957.

Craig’s father, Rev. Robert John Thomas, grew up in northeastern Pennsylvania. He was a ranger in the Carlsbad National Park for two and a half years when he decided that the ministry offered greater opportunity for service. He graduated from Dickinson College in 1940. In 1941, he enrolled in Yale University’s Divinity School and then went on to receive his S.T.B. degree from Boston University School of Theology in 1944. He served many churches in places from San Francisco to Gloucester, Massachusetts before settling in Syracuse, New York at the Rockefeller Memorial Methodist Church with his wife, Beatrice and son, Craig. Robert and his wife were extremely active with the United Cerebral Palsy Foundation. Rev. Thomas served as the chairman for its National Convention the same year that young Craig was the poster boy, and Mrs. Thomas also was active with the Cerebral Palsy Auxiliary of Syracuse.

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

The Craig Robert Thomas Collection was a bequest of Robert John Thomas. The collection consists of letters, autographs, and photographs from prominent celebrities and political and military figures who sent their warm wishes and personal regards to Craig Robert Thomas. Another collection of related material (MC 2000.7) was donated by Robert and Beatrice Thomas in 1959, and contains many more documents and photographs of a similar nature. This
The collection is housed in one document box, one artifact box, and 14 photograph folders, and is arranged into the following three categories: Correspondence; Artifacts; and Photographs.

The Correspondence are arranged alphabetically by the author of each letter or autograph. To the right of each personality’s name within the inventory listing of correspondence, it is indicated if there is also a photo of that person within the Photograph section of the collection. (Note that some letters in this collection have corresponding photos in PC 2000.7.)

The Photograph section of the collection is arranged alphabetically by name. Some of the photos were press release images. In such cases, corresponding press releases or short biographies are included in the folder with the photo. For those photos which are autographed, the notation “PS” appears beside the personality’s name in the inventory listing.

The Artifact section of the collection consists of a gavel autographed by Sam Rayburn and a deck piece from the USS Missouri. These are separately housed as AC 2001.18.

**COLLECTION INVENTORY**

**BOX 1 - MC 2001.18**

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Folder 01)

- Acheson, Dean - undated
- Beau, Lucas V. - Feb. 26, 1952
- Bonnet, Henri - undated
- Byrd, Harry F. - Mar. 4, 1952
- Byrnes, James F. - Mar. 7, 1952
- Cates, C. B. - undated
- Christenberry, R. K. - Feb. 20, 1952
- Clark, Mark W. - Feb. 7, 1952
- Collins, J. Lawton - undated
- Dean, Gordon - Feb. 19, 1952

Folder 02)

- Donaldson - undated
- Douglas, Paul H. - Feb. 7, 1952
- Eden, Anthony - Feb. 29, 1952
- Eisenhower, Milton S. - Mar. 6, 1952
- Farley, James A. - Mar. 7, 1952
- Gabrielson, Guy George - Mar. 11, 1952
- Hickenlooper, Bourke B. - Mar. 11, 1952
- Hill, H. W. - Feb. 2, 1952
- Hoffman, Paul G. - Feb. 8, 1952
- Hughes, Charles E. - undated

Folder 03)

- Kagawa, Tonohiko - undated
- Kaiser, Henry J. - undated
- Kefauver, Estes - Jan. 14, 1952
- Kerr, Robert S. - Mar. 7, 1952
- Killian, James R. Jr. - undated
- Lodge, Henry Cabot Jr. - Jan. 31, 1952
- Loluie, Maurice J. - Feb. 14, 1952
- Marshall, George C. - undated
- Martin, Joseph W. Jr. - Mar. 6, 1952 (2)
This collection register was prepared by LeAnn J. Fawver, December 2001.