

# Guide to the Samuel Thorne, Jr., Papers

MS 1193



compiled by Staff of Manuscripts and Archives

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Manuscripts and Archives  
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**CALL NUMBER:** MS 1193

**CREATOR:** Thorne, Samuel, 1904-

**TITLE:** Samuel Thorne papers

**DATES:** 1938-1953

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 2 linear feet

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** Working files documenting Samuel Thorne's activities as statistical geographer for the United Nations and United States Army Map Service (1938-1949), with material on the classification of maps, on place names, and on Guatemala. The remainder is made up of research materials reflecting his course work and research for the M.A. in geography at Columbia University (1949-1953). Much of this material deals with gold mining in South Africa.

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## Requesting Instructions

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Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Samuel Thorne, 1960.

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## Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

Copyright status for collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

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## Preferred Citation

Samuel Thorne Papers. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

Samuel Thorne, Jr. was born on May 28, 1904, in New York City. He received his preparatory education at the Groton School before attending Trinity College, Cambridge, between 1923 and 1924. Thorne then enrolled at Yale College, from which he graduated in 1928.

During the first few years after graduation Sam had business and publishing experience in New York City—as a student-employee in the Banking School at the Bank of America, October, 1928-November, 1931 (when he also took courses in law and finance elsewhere); apprentice editor at the Avenue Book Store, as sales clerk, chief window dresser, and secretary of the corporation; with Doubleday Bookshops for a few months in 1937-38. He was appointed curator of maps at the Yale Library in May, 1938, and served in this capacity until 1942, also teaching a course in the history of cartography in the Yale Graduate School one semester. He gave a series of lectures at Yale on the history of cartography in 1941-42 and one on maps and map makers of the American Revolution in Washington in 1944.

In the war years Sam served first as chief of map information at the Army Map Service in Washington (March, 1942-April, 1944) and then of the Cartographic Division of the Engineer Research Office in New York City until January, 1945. He was chief geographer and editor at C.S. Hammond & Company in New York from February, 1945, to May, 1947; consultant, with the title of statistical geographer, in the Statistical Office of the U.N. Department of Economic Affairs at Lake Success (also chairman, Secretariat Committee for Standardization of Geographic Names) from August, 1949, to December, 1949; and geographical consultant at the American Geographical Society in the summer of 1952, selecting names of cities and towns to be used in a forthcoming map of Africa on the scale of 1:5,000,000.

In addition to studying bibliography under Henrietta Bartlett, Sam took courses at the Columbia School of Library Science some years ago and in 1952 received the degree of M.A. in geography at Columbia. He prepared many exhibitions at the Yale Library showing the relationships between oldtime maps and modern ones. Among other exhibitions he prepared were: first one-man show of Richard E. Harrison's maps, at Yale Library, 1939; one of *Time* covers, by Boris Artzybasheff, at Old Lyme, 1956; *Lymeana*, a creative exhibition—and we must note, as having special interest, the two maps Sam made for our Twenty-fifth Reunion: *Where Men of 1928 Live Today* and *Where Men of 1928 Lived in Freshman Year*.

His writings include the following: many book reviews and articles (among the latter, "South Africa, Land of Dilemma," in October, 1953, issue of *Focus*); contributions in *Statistical Yearbook* and *Statistical Papers* of the United Nations; "The Gold Mining Industry and the Economy of the Union of South Africa" (M.A. thesis); *The New Deal with Mephistopheles* (edited and designed layout; 1935); *Samuel Thorne: The Journal of a Boy's Trip on Horseback, 1848* (edited and designed layouts; 1936); text for *Hammond's Illustrated Atlas* (1946). Sam is a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society of London (elected 1946) and formerly was a fellow of the American Geographical Society and a member of the Association of American Geographers. In addition to the Veteran Corps of Artillery, State of New York (in which he is an alternate

for the Color Guard), he belongs to the Military Society of the War of 1812 (appointed assistant historian, 1956, and assistant treasurer and Color Guard alternate, 1957), the Sons of the Revolution of the State of New York (in Color Guard since 1956, and assistant treasurer and Color Guard alternate, 1957), the Sons of the Revolution of the State of New York, the Coffee House, the Down Town Association, and the St. Nicholas Society. He was president of the Florence Griswold Association of Old Lyme (now the Lyme Historical Society of the Florence Griswold Association) from 1954 to 1956 and at present is a trustee. He is a reader for Recording for the Blind of New York City and a trustee of the Church Army in the U.S.A. He is a director of the Pemata Oil Company of Graham, Texas.

He was married October 6, 1928, in Rye, New York, to Vera Alexandrovna Sokolova Dabrowsky, daughter of Sir Alexander Nikolaievich Sokoloff and the former Sophia Nazhivina. Mrs. Thorne studied at the Moscow Conservatory.

He died on January 5, 1992.

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## Scope and Contents

Working files documenting Samuel Thorne's activities as statistical geographer for the United Nations and United States Army Map Service (1938-1949), with material on the classification of maps, on place names, and on Guatemala. The remainder is made up of research materials reflecting his course work and research for the M.A. in geography at Columbia University (1949-1953). Much of this material deals with gold mining in South Africa.

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## Collection Contents

Working files as statistical geographer, United Nations, and in the U.S. Army Map Service

b.1	Cataloging and classification of maps	[1938-1949?]
b.1	Research notes and bibliography relating to Guatemala	[1938-1949?]
b.1	Nomenclature of geographic areas	[1938-1949?]
b.1	Area changes	[1938-1949?]

Research materials, notes, maps, course work, papers for an M.A. in geography at Columbia

b.2	"How to read a map" English	[1949-1953?]
b.2	"Regional Economy of Latin America" English	[1949-1953?]
b.2	"The Homestake Mine" English	[1949-1953?]
b.2	South Africa	[1949-1953?]
b.2	"Socio-Economic Aspects of the Gold Mines of the Transvaal" English	[1949-1953?]
b.2	"The Significance of the Gold Mining Industry in the Union of South Africa" English	[1949-1953?]
b.2	"The Leardo Map" English	[1949-1953?]

## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

Geography  
Gold mines and mining -- South Africa

### **Geographic Names**

Guatemala -- Description and travel  
South Africa

### **Occupations**

Geographers

### **Names**

Thorne, Samuel, 1904-