THE LIFE OF DANIEL R. THOMAS

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Daniel R. Thomas was born in 1843 died April 7, 1916. Married Jeane M. E. Had four children two died before adulthood. The two that lived were John M. and Jennie T. Daniel R. Thomas was a coal manufacturer and an insurance agent. He was a member of the Independent Presbyterian Church. He became an Alderman in Savannah in 1883 to 1889 and again from 1893 to 1901. Daniel R. Thomas was affiliated with the following organizations: Director of Savannah and Ogeechee Canal Company, Commissioner of Sinking Fund, member of the Savannah Christian Society, and a member of the Masonic Temple.
Savannah Georgia is a small southeastern city that is proud of her past and present. We are grateful to our historic leaders that helped mold Savannah into a beautiful city by the sea. Since 1733 Georgia has been blessed with men and women who have come from all parts of this country and the world who decided to make Savannah their home. One such man born and raised in Savannah and has made many contributions to the city's growth is Daniel R. Thomas.

Daniel R. Thomas born in 1843 in Savannah, Georgia.\(^1\) He was the son of John T. Thomas born May 7, 1818 in Charleston, South Carolina,\(^2\) and Jane Thomas, born July 5, 1818.\(^3\) John and Jane Thomas moved to Savannah during the 1840s. John T. Thomas became a coal and wood manufacturer in the early 1850s.\(^4\) He opened his first business at the foot of Reynolds Street.\(^5\) John T. and Jane had five other children: Alice H. Thomas West; John M. Thomas; Kate N. Thomas; Laura J. Thomas and Joachim R. S. Thomas.\(^6\)

Daniel R. Thomas at age 17 worked as a clerk in the Commission House in 1860.\(^7\) His father ventured into the insurance business in 1874 leaving the wood and coal dealership to Daniel R. and a close friend of the family Daniel G. Purse.\(^8\) The coal and wood company was moved from Reynolds Street to 109 Bay Street.\(^9\)

Daniel R. Thomas and Daniel G. Purse became partners in many business ventures. In 1868 they brought lot number thirteen (13) Monterey Ward from Robert and William Habersham at
the sum of three thousand dollars. On October 13, 1869 a separate title was given to D. R. Thomas and D. G. Purse. He purchased one half of Lot number thirteen Monterey Ward. These men built a beautiful house at number 12 and 14 Taylor Street, Monterey Ward. Daniel R. Thomas sold his half of the Lot on June 23, 1885 to Benjamin Levy. In 1870 the two men brought lot number fourteen West of Bull Street from Augustus P. Wetter for a sum of One thousand seven hundred sixty two dollars. They also purchased the Southern thrid of lot number 13 West of Savannah and the Ogeechee Canal from Mary Williams for five hundred dollars. Other property included lot number 21 Monterey Ward, then lot number 22 Monterey Ward. Lot number 19 Duffy Street just to name a few of the seventy one deeds recorded at the Chatham County Court House.

Daniel Thomas' family was not stationary very long. They lived at 111 East Jones Street, then at 116 Taylor Street, 425 Bull Street then finally 210 Gaston Street.

Daniel's father John T. Thomas became ill and was unable to continue the insurance business. His illness made it possible for him to give his wife Jane consent to write a separate will. The following is a statement made by John T. Thomas in 1870.

"My wife Mrs. Jane Thomas being popcyeses (cannot make out this word as written in the statement) of a separate estate absolutely and having exprepsed (another word unable to read) a desire to dispose of the same will I do hereby consent that she may do do and make such disposition of said separate
estate by will in such manner and to such person or persons either absolutely in fee or unfrom [another word cannot read] such trusts and conditions and to such uses as she may think proper. Witnesses my hand and seal this 17th day of May in the year eighteen hundred and seventy.”

Signed John T. Thomas

Jane Thomas wrote her will in eighteen hundred seventy. She made the following provisions in the will:

1. Daniel R. Thomas her son and Daniel G. Purse a close family friend were to be executors of the will.

2. Jane Thomas' estate was to continue as it was for five years after her death. During this time the children would receive the income from her estate. It was to be divided as follows: Daniel R. Thomas one sixth of the income; Alice H. West one sixth of the income; Kate M. one third of the income; Laura J. one third of the income.

3. After the five year period was up the executors were to sell the estate and dispose of as follows: Daniel R. four eighteenth of the estate, Daniel G. Purse four eighteenth; Alice H. West five eighteenth and Laura five eighteenth of the estate.

Mrs. Jane Thomas died November 10, 1884. John T. her husband died October 20, 1889 of softening of the brain. Their daughter Kate died in 1896 at age forty six. There are no records giving the death dates of Laura Thomas or Alice H. West.

By 1877 Daniel Purse and Daniel R. Thomas were commission merchants, sold fertilizers, coal and insurance. In 1879 Daniel R. Thomas and Daniel Purse dissolved their partnership. Daniel Thomas became Coal Dealer and general insurance agent for the Franklin Fire Insurance Company of Philadelphia; located at 111 Bay Street.
Daniel R. Thomas was married to Jane M. E. Thomas. They had four children: Jennie T. married Alex Robeson, they lived in Elizabethtown, North Carolina. They had one child Jeanne Manet who died in 1925 at age twenty one in North Hampton, Massachusetts. Daniel R. Thomas Junior born in 1875 died June 22, 1877 at age two. Elise D. Thomas born in 1880 died on October 25, 1892 at twelve years of age. John M. Thomas the eldest son married, lived in Savannah for a few years then moved to Atlanta, Georgia. There are no records of John M. Thomas' life or death.

Daniel R. Thomas lived a full and worthy life. He was member of the Independent Presbyterian Church. He was affiliated with the following organizations: Director of the Savannah and Ogeechee Canal Company in 1873, Elected Commissioner of the Sinking Fund on December 31, 1878; The Savannah Chriatian Association, held stock in the Arkwright Manufacturing Company; a member of the Masonic Temple, and the Union Society. Daniel R. Thomas was elected Alderman of Savannah from 1883 to 1889 and again in 1893 to 1901.

Daniel R. Thomas died on April 7, 1916 at the age of 72 of Apopple Cerebral. He died at his home 210 Gaston Street. Daniel R. wrote his will in March 1885. John M. Thomas became the executor of his father's will.

The Thomas' family cemetery lot is located in Laura Grove Cemetery, lots 1230 and 1231. The following family members are buried in these lots: Lot 1230 Sophia Loud, Miss. Jenne
Birthdate was obtained from the tombstone of Daniel R. Thomas. Laura Grove Cemetary, lot 1230.

The 1860 Census of Chatham County, Georgia Historic Society, (Savannah, Georgia, 1980), page 368.

Tombstone, Laura Grove Cemetary lot 1230

Savannah City Directory, (Savannah, Georgia 1858) page 216

Ibid.

1860 Census of Chatham County, page 368

Ibid.

Savannah City Directory, 1874, page 218.

Ibid.

Deed Book of Chatham County, (Chatham County Court House, 1868) Book 4-B, page 15

Ibid., 1869 Book 4-G, page 208.

Ibid., 1885, Book 5-G, page 345

Ibid. April 23, 1870, Book 4-G, page 202

Ibid. page 203

Ibid. page 216

Savannah City Directory, 1877, 1879 and 1880, pages 201, 423 and 379.

Statement written by John T. Thomas. A part of the will of Jane Thomas. Chatham County Court House, Probate Court

Ibid.

Ibid.

Tombstone, Laura Grove Cemetary, Savannah, Georgia. Lot 1230

General Index to Keeper's Record Book, Laura Grove Cemetary, Savannah Georgia, WPA Official Project, 1939, pages 375-378.

Ibid.

Savannah City Directory, 1877, page 223

Ibid. 1879, page 323
Will of Daniel R. Thomas, Chatham County Court House, Savannah, Georgia, Probate Court.

Tombstone, Laura Grove Cemetery, Savannah, Georgia, Lot 1231

General Index to Keeper's Record Book, Laura Grove Cemetery, page 316

Ibid.

"Savannah Morning News Digest 1873, page 242

Ibid. 1878, page 314

Ibid. 1879, page 754

Ibid. 1879, page 73

Ibid. page 74

Ibid. page 78

Thomas Gamble History of City Government 1790-1901, page 21

Death Certificate of Daniel R. Thomas, Chatham County Health Department, Savannah, Georgia

Will of Daniel R. Thomas, Chatham County Court House, Savannah, Georgia

General Index to Keeper's Record Book, Laura Grove Cemetery, pages 316-318.
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Census of Chatham County 1860, Georgia Historical Society, (Savannah, Georgia, 1980).

Death Certificate of Daniel R. Thomas, Chatham County Health Department, Savannah, Georgia.

Death Certificate of John T. Thomas, Chatham County Health Department, Savannah, Georgia.

Deed Books of Chatham County, Chatham County Court House, Books 4-B, 4-G, 5-G and 8-P.

Gamble Thomas, History of City Government 1790-1901.

General Index to Keeper's Record Book, Laura Grove Cemetery, Savannah, Georgia, WPA Official Project 1939.

Lot Book of Laura Grove Cemetery, Laura Grove Cemetery.

Savannah City Directories.

Tombstones, Laura Grove Cemetery, Lots 1230 and 1231.

Will of Daniel R. Thomas, Chatham County Court House, Probate Court. Savannah, Georgia.

Will of Jane Thomas, Chatham County Court House, Probate Court. Savannah, Georgia.