

C Southwood, Virginia, Family Papers, 1861-1904  
974 .4 linear feet

This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri](http://The State Historical Society of Missouri). If you would like more information, please contact us at [shsresearch@umsystem.edu](mailto:shsresearch@umsystem.edu).

#### INTRODUCTION

This collection contains the genealogical record of Virginia Southwood's family, the diaries of George Ward Litts, and the Civil War correspondence between teacher Susan Griggs and some of the Union soldiers who had attended her school in Wolcottville, Indiana.

#### DONOR INFORMATION

The records were donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri by Virginia Southwood on October 19, 1991 (Accession No. 2805).

#### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Virginia Southwood was born Lucy Virginia Whitechurch in Maryville, Missouri, August 10, 1908. Her parents were Felix and Lucy Whitechurch. Her father was a train conductor in Maryville before moving the family to Savannah, Missouri, where he opened a hardware store. Virginia had two brothers, Robert and Frank. She graduated valedictorian from the Savannah High School in 1926 and attended St. Joseph Junior College for one year. After that she went to Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, and graduated in 1930. Eric Southwood would visit Virginia in Iowa and the two married August 2, 1931. The couple moved to California during the Depression years. Eric and Virginia had two children together before he died. In 1957, Virginia moved to Columbia, Missouri, to work on a degree in social work at the University of Missouri. She eventually became an associate professor at the school of social work, retiring in 1979. Virginia died in Columbia on March 10, 1999.

#### SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The family papers include the diaries of George Ward Litts, Virginia Southwood's great-grandfather. The diaries, spanning the years 1890-1904, consist of daily weather conditions and major events in people's lives such as weddings and deaths.

The Civil War letters of Susan Griggs consist of 21 letters addressed to Miss Griggs and authored by seven Union soldiers between the dates July 9, 1861 and March 25, 1865. The letters discuss current events, religion, politics, and the soldier's personal opinions about the war and why they are fighting it. Of particular interest are the letters of A.W. Cummings who was stationed at the headquarters of the Army of the Potomac within view of General George B. McClellan's tent during the Peninsula campaign. His letters describe the camp in detail and express the loyalty and devotion average soldiers felt for their criticized commander. In addition to the original letters are typed transcripts for all but one of the letters. The transcriptions were commissioned by Virginia Southwood and completed in 1990 by LaRie Jensen. All but one of the hand-written letters survives. The missing letter was among those transcribed in 1990.

The genealogy of Virginia Southwood's maternal line is found in the collection with documents pertaining specifically to the life of Virginia Southwood's great-grandfather George Ward Litts. It also contains the family tree of her husband Eric John Millington Southwood, as well as an autobiographical sketch written by Virginia Southwood.

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