



State of Tennessee
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403 Seventh Avenue North
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DAVIS, HAROLD LENOIR
(1896-1960)
PAPERS
1936-1955

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INTRODUCTION

The photocopies of the papers of Harold Lenoir Davis (1896-1960), poet and novelist, were deposited in the Manuscript Division of the Tennessee State Library and Archives by Mildred Prewett Ingram (Bowen Ingram), Lebanon, Tennessee.

The materials in this finding aid measure approximately 100 items. There are no restrictions on the materials. Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the Harold Lenoir Davis Papers may be made for purposes of individual or scholarly research.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The papers of Harold Lenoir Davis (1896-1960) are composed of drawings, clippings, a photograph, and letters written by this poet and novelist to Bowen Ingram during the period 1936-1955. Mr. Davis's parents were Tennesseans who emigrated to Oregon when he was born. Some of his novels have Tennessee settings. There are ninety-four letters written to Mrs. Ingram from California, Oregon, New York, and Mexico on various subjects including advice about her writings; comments on the various publishing houses, especially Dodd Mead, Doubleday Doran, Harpers, Knopf, Macmillan, and William Morrow; magazines, especially the *American Mercury*, *Forum*, *Harpers*, *Holiday*, *New Yorker*, and *Yale Review*; descriptions of the country, especially California, Oregon, and Mexico; Fugitives and Agrarians, especially John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, Robert Penn Warren, and Andrew Lytle; other authors, including Sherwood Anderson, Willa Cather, Brainerd Cheney, John Dos Passos, T.S. Eliot, William Faulkner, Christopher Fry, Caroline Gordon, Ernest Hemingway, Sinclair Lewis, Thomas Mann, H.L. Mencken, Merrill Moore, Margaret Mitchell, Katherine Anne Porter, Ezra Pound, Carl Sanburg, Mickey Spillane, John Steinbeck, Edith Wharton, Thomas Wolfe, and Stark Young; politics and government, with comments about Presidents Roosevelt, Truman, and Eisenhower; political parties; political figures, including Harold Ickes, Kenneth D. McKellar, Estes Kefauver, and Albert Gore; communism in Hollywood; religion, especially the Methodists and Roman Catholics; Negroes in the South and in California; racial strife; discriminatory freight rates; Huntingdon-Hartford Foundation; Confederates in Mexico with information about E. Kirby Smith; material for stories, especially Tennessee history and early manuscripts. All of these subjects and many more are discussed by Mr. Davis in his letters to Mrs. Ingram.

Three letters for the dates July 4, and July 24, 1945, and October 25, 1954, have been added to the collection. The letters for July 4, and 24, 1945, contain advice about Bowen Ingram's book and how to advertise it. There are some remarks about Frances Robinson and Katherine Anne Porter in these letters. In one written October 25, 1954, was from Oaxaca, Mexico. Also an article entitled "Everybody's Protest Novel" by James Baldwin published in the *Partisan Review* with a typed note by Davis has been added to the collection.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Harold Lenoir Davis

- 1896 Born in Yoncalla, Douglas County, Oregon, October 18; son of James Alexander and Ruth Bridges Davis, emigrants from Tennessee
Educated in the public schools of Oregon
- 1919 Recipient of Levinson poetry prize by *Poetry Magazine*, Chicago
- 1928 Married Marion Lay, May 25 (divorced)
Typesetter on country newspaper for nine years
Sheep and cattle herder
Surveyor
Deputy county assessor and deputy county sheriff
Editor, *Antelope Herald*
- 1932 Guggenheim Fellow to work in Mexico
- 1936 Pulitzer prize for best novel, *Honey in the Horn*, published in 1935 which was Harpers Prize Novel
- 1942 Published *Proud Riders* (Poems)
- 1947 Published *Harp of a Thousand Strings*
- 1949 Published *Beulah Land*
- 1952 Published *Winds of Morning*
- 1953 Published *Team Bells Wake Me*
Married Elizabeth M. Tonkin (second wife)
- 1957 Published *The Distant Music*
Contributed fiction and articles to *American Mercury*, *Holiday*, *Poetry Magazine*, and *Saturday Evening Post*
- 1960 Died in California

CONTAINER LIST

Box 1

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