

7-8-2015

# Davidson, Benjamin Gideon, III, 1914-1998 (MSS 559)

Manuscripts & Folklife Archives  
Western Kentucky University, [mssfa@wku.edu](mailto:mssfa@wku.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc\\_mss\\_fin\\_aid](http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc_mss_fin_aid)



Part of the [Social History Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Folklife Archives, Manuscripts &, "Davidson, Benjamin Gideon, III, 1914-1998 (MSS 559)" (2015). *MSS Finding Aids*. Paper 4035. [http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc\\_mss\\_fin\\_aid/4035](http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc_mss_fin_aid/4035)

This Finding Aid is brought to you for free and open access by TopSCHOLAR®. It has been accepted for inclusion in MSS Finding Aids by an authorized administrator of TopSCHOLAR®. For more information, please contact [topscholar@wku.edu](mailto:topscholar@wku.edu).

Manuscripts & Folklife Archives  
 Department of Library Special Collections  
 Western Kentucky University  
 Bowling Green, KY 42101-1092

*Descriptive Inventory*

**MSS 559 DAVIDSON, Benjamin Gideon, III, 1914-1998**

½ box. 8 folders. 132 items. 1915-1947. Originals, photographs.

SC2015.2.215

***BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE***

Benjamin Gideon "B. G." Davidson, III, the son of Benjamin Gideon Davidson, II and James Katherine (Depp) Davidson, was born in Bowling Green, Kentucky on 7 December 1914. He graduated from Bowling Green High School in 1933 and from Centre College in Danville, Kentucky in 1937 with a bachelor's degree in economics. While at Centre, he played football and was a member of the Phi Delta Theta fraternity.

Davidson attended the Jefferson School of Law, Louisville, Kentucky and served in the U.S. Navy. He also served as prosecuting attorney for the City of Bowling Green and as Warren County Attorney, and represented the 22<sup>nd</sup> District in the Kentucky General Assembly. He and his wife Dixie Russell (1919-2004), who he married on 21 February 1950, were the parents of four sons.

***COLLECTION NOTE***

This collection consists primarily of letters to B. G. Davidson from friends, mostly female, written to him while was a student at Bowling Green High School and Centre College. After Davidson graduated from high school and enrolled at Centre, he maintained contact with his hometown friends, some of whom attended Western Kentucky State College (WKU) and the Bowling Green Business University. Also included are a few letters from his mother, miscellaneous papers, and photographs. An inventory is in Folder 1, along with data on Davidson's summer employment during his law studies.

Folder 2 contains letters from friends keeping Davidson up to date on their activities, gossiping, and making arrangements to meet in Danville or Bowling Green. A few identify themselves only by first names or nicknames: "Scottie," "Baggy," "Carol," "Helen." The letters focus heavily on youthful hijinks and leisure activities, principally dances and football games, but also discuss studies and grades. Among Davidson's several female admirers is Ann Beasley, two years behind him in high school. She becomes especially enamored of him and writes anguished letters when a rival for his affections enters the picture. A male friend, Leonard Rabold, writes of his work operating the Goal Post, a popular WKU student hangout.

Folder 3 contains letters to Davidson from Ann's romantic rival Hildegarde "Hildy" Massey, who is equally effusive in her expressions of both affection and jealousy. Together, the letters of Ann and Hildy present a vivid picture of a youthful 1930s love triangle. A few letters from Davidson to Hildy are also included.

Folder 4 contains letters to Davidson from his mother, written while he was a student at Centre College and at law school in Louisville. Davidson and his mother, who had been a widow since 1918, retained stock in Davidson and Brothers, Inc., a family grocery firm in Glasgow, and the letters make reference to a legal action involving the firm, Davidson's father's estate, and the elder Davidson's brother Glenn Price Davidson. Mrs. Davidson also writes to her son in 1941 regarding his draft status.

Folder 5 contains lively and affectionate letters to Davidson from a female friend (and possibly cousin), Mary Pauline Scherer of Denver, Colorado.

Folder 6 contains a 1915 letter to Davidson's mother from his father, who writes from North Carolina and alludes to his poor health. A second 1933 letter from a faculty member at Centre College informs her of the football coach's wish to interview her son about playing for the school.

Folder 7 contains miscellaneous papers of B. G. Davidson. Included are notes and receipts relating to his financial indebtedness to Centre College; a report card from fall 1934; a notice of a meeting of stockholders of Davidson Brothers, Inc.; his 1943 letter to the Jefferson School of Law advising that Navy service will interrupt his nearly completed law studies and asking for consideration in obtaining his degree early; and a 1947 campaign card advertising his candidacy in the Democratic primary as state representative for Warren County.

Folder 8 contains unidentified photographs of a child, young women (one on horseback), and a young man (possibly Davidson) on horseback.

### ***SHELF LIST***

<b>BOX 1</b>	<b>Benjamin Gideon Davidson, III</b>	<b>1915-1947</b>	<b>132 items</b>
Folder 1	Inventory and biographical data		3 items
Folder 2	Miscellaneous letters to B. G. Davidson	1929-1946, n.d.	39 items
Folder 3	B. G. Davidson – Correspondence with Hildegarde Massey	1931-1935, n.d.	56 items
Folder 4	James Katherine Davidson – Letters to B. G. Davidson	1934, 1941, n.d.	7 items
Folder 5	Mary Pauline Scherer – Letters to B. G. Davidson	1940-1941, n.d.	6 items
Folder 6	Letters to James Katherine Davidson	1915, 1933	2 items
Folder 7	B. G. Davidson – Miscellaneous papers	1933-1947	9 items

Folder 8      Miscellaneous unidentified photographs      n.d.      10 items

### ***BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD***

MSS    DAVIDSON, Benjamin Gideon, III,      1915-1947  
559      1914-1998

Letters to B. G. Davidson, Bowling Green, Kentucky, written primarily by female friends when he was a student at Bowling Green High School and Centre College, Danville, Kentucky. Includes some letters from his mother and miscellaneous papers.

½ box. 8 folders. 132 items. Originals, photographs.

SC2015.2.215

### ***SUBJECT ANALYTICS***

Almstedt, William C., 1892-1963      B1,F2  
Aviation – Accidents – Bowling Green, 1935      B1,F2  
Baker, Hildegard (Massey), 1916-2011 – Correspondence      B1,F3  
Baker, Hildegard (Massey), 1916-2011 – Relating to      B1,F2  
Barnes, Martha, b. 1917?      B1,F2  
Bowling Green Country Club, Inc.      B1,F7  
Bowling Green High School – Student life, 1931-1933      B1,F2,3  
Centre College – Danville – Fraternities and sororities – Phi Delta Theta      B1,F7  
Centre College – Danville – Relating to      B1,F6,7  
Courtship, 1933-1935      B1,F2,3  
Davidson, Benjamin Gideon, II, 1883-1918      B1,F6  
Davidson, Glenn Price, 1875-1935 – Relating to      B1,F4  
Davidson, James Katherine (Depp), 1888-1962 – Correspondence      B1,F4,6  
Deavours, Ann Ellen (Beasley), 1917-2010      B1,F2  
Deavours, Ann Ellen (Beasley), 1917-2010 – Relating to      B1,F3  
Dodd, Mary Bush (Nichols), 1917-2006      B1,F2  
Elections and election campaigns, 1947 – Relating to      B1,F7  
Firearms – Repair – Relating to      B1,F2  
Gerard, Theresa Elizabeth (Whitmer), 1915-2009      B1,F2  
Hines, Mary Katherine (Davidson), 1910-1988      B1,F4  
Hines, Mary Katherine (Davidson), 1910-1988 – Relating to      B1,F1-4  
Kemper, Virginia, b. 1918?      B1,F2  
Lawyers – Education – Relating to      B1,F2,7  
Lowe, Preston      B1,F2

Noel, Philip Jordan "Tumps," Jr., 1914-1993 – Relating to B1,F2,3  
Osteen, Mary Elizabeth "Lib," b. 1915 B1,F2  
Porter, Roger Campbell, Jr., 1915-1957 B1,F2  
Rabold, Leonard James, 1915-2013 B1,F2  
Rabold, Leonard James, 1915-2013 – Relating to B1,F2  
Scherer, Mary Pauline, b. 1914? B1,F5  
Sympathy cards, 1935 B1,F3  
Western Kentucky State Teachers College – Student life, 1933-1935 B1,F2  
World War II, 1939-1945 – Compulsory military service, 1941 B1,F4

Niedermeier/Jeffrey 07/08/2015