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Moody, Thomas Newton, b. 1938 (MSS 287)

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Thomas Newton Moody, a native of Franklin, Kentucky, attended Southwestern at Memphis (now Rhodes College) as a music major, where he studied organ for two years under Adolph Steuterman. In 1958, he transferred to the University of Kentucky and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree. He subsequently received a Master of Arts degree from George Peabody College for Teachers and did further graduate work at Western Kentucky University. Moody became an English teacher at Franklin-Simpson High School and organist of the Bowling Green Presbyterian Church. His community activities have included service as an officer with the Nashville Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and membership on the boards of Riverview at Hobson Grove (Bowling Green) and the Shaker Museum at South Union.

Thomas Newton Moody’s parents were Thomas Raymond Moody (1901-1994) and Josephine Harris Short (1912-2000). Josephine was the daughter of Newton Turner Short (1874-1915), a Giles County, Tennessee merchant, and Drucilla Jane Harris (1878-1952). Drucilla Jane Harris’s parents were George Calvin Harris (1840-1928) and Amanda Jane Downey (1843-1925). They lived in Franklin, Kentucky, where George practiced law and served as a circuit court judge.

In addition to Drucilla Jane Harris, George Calvin Harris and Amanda Jane Downey had the following children: Cortlandt Cooper Harris (1872-1948), Downey Lamar Harris (1875-1956), George DeWitt Harris (1876-1918), Stella Dorinda Harris (1881-1958), and Lucy Josephine Harris (1884-1977). Cortlandt became a successful merchant in St. Louis, Missouri. Downey was a St. Louis pathologist and is said to have developed a vaccine for rabies. George DeWitt practiced law in St. Louis, but entered the U.S. Army in 1917. He died in France of battlefield wounds on 13 October 1918. Stella Dorinda Harris was an active leader in the Franklin Presbyterian Church. Lucy Josephine Harris was an amateur historian and an avid antique collector in Franklin.
COLLECTION NOTE

Most of the collection (Box 1, Folders 1-8 and Box 2, Folders 1-3) consists of letters written by Thomas Newton Moody to his parents, Josephine and Raymond Moody, and his aunts, Stella and Lucy Harris, from 1956-1963. During this time, Moody was a student at Southwestern at Memphis and the University of Kentucky, and an English teacher in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. Moody’s letters from Southwestern were written from 1956-1958 and are in Box 1, Folders 2-4 and Box 2, Folder 2. His letters from the University of Kentucky were written from 1958-1961 and are in Box 1, Folders 4-7 and Box 2, Folders 1-3. His letters from Elizabethtown cover 1962-1963 and are in Box 1, Folder 8 and Box 2, Folder 1. Some of the letters are written to his parents and aunts separately, others collectively.

Moody’s letters describe many activities typical of a college student. He writes of his dates and attendance at concerts, movies and dances; his courses, professors and grades; the activities of his fraternity, Alpha Tau Omega, and of other fraternities and sororities; athletic events; his roommates and friends; his illnesses; and his attempts to manage his finances. As a student of music, however, Moody also writes regularly of his work playing the organ at various churches in Memphis, Tennessee and Lexington, Kentucky. To his parents and aunts, who were active in the Franklin Presbyterian Church, he comments on various church services that he has attended and sometimes encloses the programs with his letters. Moody keeps abreast of news from home by reading the Franklin Favorite, and his letters refer to local people and events as well as to people he sees at school who are known to his family. He also comments briefly on events of national significance such as elections, the Soviet space program, and racial integration at the University of Mississippi. After he begins teaching, he continues his church musical activities and discusses the purchase of a car with his father.

Box 2, Folders 4-5 of the collection date from 1905-1953 and consist primarily of letters between members of the family of Drucilla Jane (Harris) Short, Moody’s maternal grandmother. Her husband, Newton Turner Short, writes her both before and after their marriage, and he also writes to their daughter Josephine (Moody’s mother) shortly after her birth (Box 2, Folder 5). Letters exchanged among Drucilla Jane (Harris) Short, her siblings, and her parents discuss family news and express good wishes on birthdays and anniversaries. A 1913 letter from her father, George Calvin Harris, to his son George (Box 2, Folder 4) discusses several local legal cases and describes Fourth of July festivities in Franklin. (For a related collection, see MSS 100 HARRIS Family Papers and other smaller collections: SC 1032 HARRIS, Amanda Jane (Downey), SC 1033 HARRIS, Downey L., SC 1567 SHORT, and Drucilla Jane (Harris), SC 1177 HARRIS, George Calvin.

Enclosures with the letters in this collection, whether programs, clippings or other letters, remain clipped to the original letter. News clippings have been photocopied on acid-free paper and the originals discarded. All materials were placed in acid-free folders and boxes.

SHELF LIST

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<th>273 items</th>
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<td>Inventory</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 item</td>
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<td>30 items</td>
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<td>Folder 3</td>
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<td>Folder 8</td>
<td>Moody, Thomas Newton – Letters</td>
<td>1962-1963</td>
<td>29 items</td>
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**BOX 2**  
**Thomas Newton Moody; Harris and Short Families**  
1901-1963 | 143 items |

| Folder 1 | Moody, Thomas Newton – Letters | 1961-1963 | 24 items |
| Folder 2 | Moody, Thomas Newton – Letters | 1956-1958 | 58 items |
| Folder 3 | Moody, Thomas Newton – Letters | 1959-1960 | 34 items |
| Folder 4 | Harris and Short family correspondence | 1905-1913 | 12 items |
| Folder 5 | Harris and Short family correspondence | 1901-1953 | 15 items |

**BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD**

MSS MOODY, Thomas Newton, 1901-1963  
287 b. 1938

Chiefly letters from Moody, a Franklin, Kentucky native, written to his parents while attending college at Southwestern at Memphis and the University of Kentucky, and while teaching afterward in Elizabethtown. Also includes letters of the family of Moody’s grandmother, Drucilla Jane (Harris) Short.  
2 boxes. 13 folders. 416 items. Originals.  
2000.92.1
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SEE and SEE ALSO

Everybody's Church – Lexington
See also:
Lexington's Community Church

Rhodes College – Memphis, Tennessee
See also:
Southwestern at Memphis

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