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Allen F. Davis Papers¹

US-HHS-2012-0001
Hardwick Historical Society;
47 Depot Street, PO Box 177
Hardwick, Vt. 05843

Collection Title: Allen Davis Papers
Collection Dates: 1850-1970s; bulk 1898-1960s
Extent: 1 box; .75 cubic feet

Name of Creator: Allen Freeman Davis, 1931-

Abstract: The Davis Collection contains a variety of ephemera from the Hardwick community. The material dates from the late 19th century through the middle of the 20th century. The collection also includes a substantial number of inventories from his father's store.

Preferred citation: Allen F. Davis Papers at the Hardwick Historical Society, Hardwick, Vt. 05843

Biography: Allen Freeman Davis was an American history professor and writer. He was born in Hardwick, Vt., January 9, 1931, the son of Harold Freeman (1894-1977) and Bernice Susan (Allen) Davis (1896-1951). His parents owned and ran the general store started by C.F. Davis, Harold's father.

Davis received an AB from Dartmouth College in 1953, an MA from the University of Rochester in 1954, and a Ph.D. from the University Wisconsin, 1959. He served in the U.S. Army, 1954-1956.

He started his academic career as an Instructor of History at Wayne State University, Detroit, 1959-1960. He became an Assistant Professor of History at the University Missouri, Columbia, 1960-1963 and Associate Professor, 1963-1968. He was Professor of History at Temple University, Philadelphia, 1968-1999, and Professor Emeritus, since 1999. He was Visiting Professor of History at University Texas, Austin, 1983, University Amsterdam, 1986-1987. He served as the John Adams Chair and Director of the Center for Public History, 1987-1999.

He was the recipient the following rewards: a Danforth Graduate fellowship, 1953-1959, an American Philosophical Society grant, 1962, '65, a Friends of Literature award, 1970, an

¹ For more technical details about this collection, see the last page.

American Council Learned Societies senior fellow, 1971-1972, the Christopher award, 1974; a National Endowment of the Humanities fellow, 1975-1976, and a Fulbright fellow, 1986-1987.

In his own words: "I grew up during Depression and War and that had a great impact on my generation. I lived in a large Victorian house at South Main and Summer Streets across from the cemetery and in the shadow of Buffalo Mountain. It was my only house until I went to college. My father owned a general store on South Main Street at the top of Plank Hill. My grandfather, Charles F. Davis (1864-1951), purchased the store in 1902. My father graduated from Hardwick Academy in 1914. My mother graduated from Craftsbury Academy in 1913 and the University of Vermont in 1917. She taught Latin and English at Hardwick Academy from 1918 to 1924. She also served on the Hardwick School Board for nearly thirty years. I had two sisters, Florence (1926-) and Marjorie (1934-1965). Like many of my friends in Hardwick my family had a grandmother living with us. In my case she was my mother's mother, Lola Wylie Allen (1858-1940), and she died when I was nine. My grandfather and his second wife, Sarah Holton Davis (1867-1957), lived only a few houses away.

"I entered first grade in 1937 (there was no kindergarten in Hardwick) and for twelve years I went to school in the same building. We all walked home for dinner at noon (there was no concept of lunch in Hardwick). I was in the fourth grade when the attack on Pearl Harbor catapulted the United States into the World War II. I was in the eighth grade when the war ended in Europe. In High School we had some good and some inadequate instructors as well as two great teachers. Leone Cobb and Chandler Mosher taught us how to write and inspired us to go to college. There were twenty-three in my graduating class in 1949, and twelve went to college. Because it was a small school there were opportunities to participate in a variety of activities. I played basketball, football, and baseball (but I never could hit a curve ball.) I sang in the glee club (though I could not sing.) I acted in plays (though I had no talent). I wrote for the year book and for the school newspaper.

"I spent a great deal of time in the Judevine Memorial Library and the Idle Hour Theater, and both places stimulated my imagination and influenced my dreams. In the library I hid out on the balcony and read whatever was on the shelves – biography, fiction and history. I went to the theater at least once a week and usually more than once. Often there was a double feature as well as a cartoon, a serial, and a news reel. I also spent many hours in the "New Gym" which had been completed in 1940. I went there not only for basketball, but also for dances, lectures, graduation exercises, plays, and even movies. I also spent time at the United Church on South Main Street, not only for religious services, but also for church suppers and young peoples' meetings that included lectures and folk dancing. The United Church was a liberal protestant church. The Catholic Church was across the street. There was tolerance, but little cooperation. My family was Congregational and Republican by conviction and habit. I outgrew both within a decade after I left town. Hardwick was a declining granite town while I was growing up. There was some conflict and prejudice but there was also a real sense of community.

"I graduated from Dartmouth College in 1953, earned a Masters Degree in History from the University of Rochester in 1954 and a Ph.D. in History at the University of Wisconsin in 1959. I served two years in the Army, as most men of my generation did, but because of student deferments, the Korean War was over before I was drafted. I taught American Cultural History

and American Studies in several American Universities and lectured widely in the United States, Europe, and Asia. I have written or edited more than a dozen books and many articles.

“I contribute regularly to *The Hazen Road Dispatch*, a publication of the Greensboro Historical Society, and the *Hardwick Historical Society Journal*. I live in Philadelphia, but I return each summer to the family camp on Caspian Lake built by my grandfather in 1923 on land purchased by my grandmother, Florence Haines Davis (1864-1923), in 1913. And I return each year to Hardwick.”

Scope and Content: The Davis Collection contains a variety of ephemera from the Hardwick community dating from the late 19th century through the middle of the 20th century. It also includes a substantial number of inventories from his father's store and correspondence of John Bell which Davis received from Rosemary Traynor.

System of arrangement: Arranged in six series: I. Hardwick Community, II. Hardwick & Woodbury Railroad, III. Hardwick's Granite Industry, IV. H.R. Davis Store, V. Bell Correspondence, VI. Miscellaneous.

Removed from Collection: The following issues of the *Hardwick Gazettes* were moved to the *Gazette* collection: April 2-April 23, 1892, May 7 - May 14, 1892

CONTROLLED HEADINGS²

People and families: Davis, Allen Freeman, 1931- ; Traynor, William*; Davis, Harold Freeman, 1894-1977*; Bell, John*.

Geographical names: Hardwick, Vt.– History; Vermont – Social history

Corporate names: Congregational Church and Society (Hardwick, Vt.); Methodist Church (Hardwick, Vt.)*; Hardwick and Woodbury Railroad*; Granite Cutters' International Association of America; Woodbury Granite Company (Hardwick, Vt.); Davis Store; Hardwick (Vt.)* ; United Church of Hardwick (Vt.) – History

Occupations: Grocers; Stonecutters

Genre: Information form (census); advertisements; booklets; visitors' books; clippings; ration cards; tickets (railroad); letters (correspondence); appointment books; merchandise inventories; financial records

2 * Indicates that this term does not appear in a formal authority source, e.g., the Library of Congress lists or a Getty thesaurus.

Topics: Floods; Methodism – Hardwick (Vt.);

SERIES/BOX/FOLDER LISTS

Series I: Hardwick Community

- Folder 1. *Hardwick Gazette*
Duplicates of April 2, April 16, April 23, May 7, and May 14, 1892.
- Folder 2. Town of Hardwick Census form, 1880
- Folder 3. Dedication of Congregational Church, 1896
- Folder 4. Events & announcements, 1901, n.d.
Program for “Paying the Fiddler,” by the East Hardwick Players, undated [c. 1890- 1920]
- Folder 5. Wanted poster for Mark Foster, c. 1908
Foster had been the treasurer for Hardwick Village, Hardwick Town, and the Hardwick schools. In 1908, he absconded about \$6,000 [About \$167,000 in 2020]. In 1912, he was caught, tried, convicted, and sentenced to Windsor Prison, Windsor, Vt.
- Folder 6. Hardwick Village tax notice. 1909
- Folder 7. Booklet: Methodism in Hardwick, 1803-1921
- Folder 8. Hotel guest book, 1925-1932
Hotel unknown
- Folder 9. Flood news clippings, 1927
- Folder 10. Sugar rationing card, c. 1942
- Folder 11. Davis Store flyer, ca. 1950
- Folder 12. Business advertisements, mid 20th century
Maple Hill Farm, Daniels Rocking Milk Chest, Real estate on Greenwood Lake, Hardwick Inn, H.R. Mack (Runaway Pond Memorial), E.R. Fletcher
- Folder 13. News clippings featuring Allen Davis, 1970s
- Folder 14. Railroad tickets, nd
Rutland Railroad Co., St. Johnsbury & Lake Champlain, Montpelier & Wells River
- Folder 15. Copy of Evan Jones’ article “Reveillon in Vermont” from *Gourmet Magazine*, December, 1984
Jones had a second home in Walden, one town east of Hardwick.
- Folder 16. History of United Church of Hardwick, 1981-1991, 1991.
- Folder 17. Letter to the Editor about the Traynor Family reunion, Spring, 1992
- Folder 18. Flyers for Davis’ book *Postcards from Vermont: A Social History 1905-1945*, 2002.
The HHS holds a copy of this book.

Series II: Hardwick & Woodbury Railroad

- Folder 19. Hardwick & Woodbury Railroad annual statement, 1906
- Folder 20. Hardwick & Woodbury Railroad annual statement, 1906 (duplicate)
- Folder 21. Map of the Hardwick & Woodbury Railroad and quarries, 1969
By George F. Bickford. Not drawn to scale.

Series III: Woodbury Granite

- Folder 22. Woodbury Granites booklet, c 1917
Booklet of pictures of the work of the Woodbury Granite Company
- Folder 23. Woodbury Granite Co. appointment book calendar, 1917
- Folder 24. Wm. Traynor notebook—Hardwick Chapter of the Granite Cutters Union, 1907-1913
Traynor was the Secretary of the Hardwick branch of the union.

Series IV: HR Davis Store

- Folder 25. HR Davis inventory, 1918
- Folder 26. HR Davis inventory of January, 1933
- Folder 27. Misc. documents related to HR Davis inventory, 1940s-1960s
- Folder 28. January inventory HR Davis Store, 1950
- Folder 29. January inventory HR Davis Store, 1952
- Folder 30. January inventory HR Davis Store, 1953
- Folder 31. January inventory HR Davis Store, 1954
- Folder 32. January inventory HR Davis Store, 1955
- Folder 33. January inventory HR Davis Store, 1956
- Folder 34. January inventory HR Davis Store, 1957
- Folder 35. January inventory HR Davis Store, 1958
- Folder 36. January inventory HR Davis Store, 1959
- Folder 37. January inventory HR Davis Store, 1961
- Folder 38. January inventory HR Davis Store, 1962
- Folder 39. January inventory HR Davis Store, 1963
- Folder 40. January inventory HR Davis Store, 1964
- Folder 41-45. January inventory HR Davis Store, undated
- Folder 46. Charge account form, 1950s

Series V: Bell Correspondence

- Folder 47. J. Bell invoices, Wolcott, 1849-1851
- Folder 48. J. Bell correspondence from Ann Bill, 1851-1854
- Folder 49. J. Bell correspondence from Frederik F. Hall, 1852-1854
- Folder 50. J. Bell correspondence from Alice Mason, 1854
- Folder 51. J. Bell correspondence from Sarah Wilder(?), 1854
- Folder 52. J. Bell correspondence from his sister, Ann, 1850
- Folder 53. J. Bell correspondence from Marietta ?, 1950s
- Folder 54. J. Bell correspondence from Lorena Chenay, 1850s-1860s (?)
- Folder 55. J. Bell correspondence from Adeline Bernils (?), 1861
- Folder 56. J. Bell correspondence from misc. businesses, 1862
- Folder 57. J. Bell correspondence from F.C. Hathaway (?), 1865
- Folder 58. J. Bell correspondence from his brother Charlie, 1875
- Folder 59. Rosemary Traynor notes on J. Bell correspondence, undated
- Folder 60. J. Bell correspondence duplicates

Series VI: Miscellaneous

- Folder 61. Newspaper clipping on Blaine & Co., Philadelphia, 1880s(?)

Folder 62. Invoices and business correspondence, 1898-1938
Folder 63. Ledger of checks, 1924-1928 Unknown account.
Folder 64. Grocery prices, 1932

Technical Details

Conditions governing access: Open and available to the public.

Details of physical access: Nothing unusual

Details of technical access: Nothing unusual

Conditions governing reproduction access and use: Subject of copyright laws.

Languages/scripts in the collection: English

Other finding aids: None

Custodial history: Collected and maintained by Allen F. Davis

Immediate source of acquisition: Allen F. Davis

Appraisal/destruction/scheduling information: N/A

Accruals: If Dr. Davis adds more to this collection, we will add references to the new material.

Existence/location of originals: Hardwick Historical Society

Existence/location of copies: None

Related archival materials: None

Publication notes: None

Miscellaneous notes: None