H.L. (HAROLD LENOIR) DAVIS
(1896-1960)

PAPERS, 1936-1955

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SCOPE AND CONTENT

The papers of H.L. (Harold Lenoir) Davis (1896-1960) are composed of drawings, clippings, a photograph, and letters written by this poet and novelist to Mildred Prewett Ingram (pen name 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; Huntington-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. An article entitled “Everybody’s Protest Novel” by James Baldwin published in the Partisan Review with a typed note by Davis has also 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 (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
1. Clipping, poetry, drawing, photograph
2. Article -- *Partisan Review*, “Everybody’s Protest Novel” by James Baldwin with a note by H.L. Davis
3. Article -- “H.L. Davis in Tennessee” by Bowen Ingram
4. Correspondence -- Ingram, Mildred Prewett, to H.L. Davis, 1947
5. Correspondence -- Davis, H.L., to Mildred Prewett Ingram, 1936-1945
6. Correspondence -- Davis, H.L., to Mildred Prewett Ingram, 1946
7. Correspondence -- Davis, H.L., to Mildred Prewett Ingram, 1947
8. Correspondence -- Davis, H.L., to Mildred Prewett Ingram, 1948-1949
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11. Correspondence -- Davis, H.L., to Mildred Prewett Ingram, 1952
12. Correspondence -- Davis, H.L., to Mildred Prewett Ingram, 1953-1955
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