



State of Tennessee  
Department of State  
**Tennessee State Library and Archives**  
403 Seventh Avenue North  
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0312

**SENATOR HALBERT HARVILL  
TENNESSEE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
RECORDS  
1970-1980**

**RECORD GROUP 75**

*Processed by:*

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## SCOPE AND CONTENT

Halbert Harvill was a State Senator from the 22<sup>nd</sup> district. He was elected in 1964 and retired in 1980.

The bulk of the Senator Harvill Papers concern the years 1970-1980. There is considerable interrelationship between files due to the fact that there was no particular order to them when they arrived at the Archives.

A sizeable portion of the record group concerns education. Since Senator Harvill was chairman of the Senate Education Committee, those files are both extensive and detailed.

Areas of special interest include state kindergartens, counselors in elementary schools, education for the handicapped, and vocational education.

There are also files on the T.E.A., teacher retirement, higher education, teacher training and school finance.

A number of files concern themselves with legislation. The bills and the correspondence that they generate make the majority of this group. Bills on such diverse subjects as abortion, drinking drivers, gambling, insurance, judicial legislation, mental health, obscenity, state parking, taxes, and the sale of wine are included.

Of particular interest are the letters concerning abortion, litter laws, state employees, the right to die bill, and malpractice. There are also a number of papers on legislative interns.

A large group of papers deal with state government. Of special note are files on the Attorney General, elections, various government departments, law enforcement, revenue, TVA and various state officials. Especially interesting are the interoffice memos and letters between legislators and department heads.

A sizeable group of files consist of general information. This group contains files that contain information mentioned nowhere else. It includes such things as a list of World War I comrades to send Christmas greetings, information on the Clarksville Chamber of Commerce, news releases, premature children, invitations, recommendations, and tourism. Of special interest is a brief autobiography written by Senator Harvill in 1976. It is included in the Montgomery County Files.

There are twenty-eight files of miscellaneous information included in this group. Most of this information is mentioned elsewhere but for some reason not filed under the subject.

Other types of information included in the Senator's papers are travel invoices, pamphlets, posters, photographs, letters written by school children, an essay written by the staff on why Shakespeare should be studied in school.

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

Halbert Harvill was borne in Tottys, Hickman County, Tennessee on November 28, 1893.

He attended rural schools through the eighth grade, and graduated from high school after teaching one year of school.

After graduation he taught school until the outbreak of World War I. He was the first man from Hickman County to volunteer for the army.

Serving with Company L, 325<sup>th</sup> Infantry, Senator Harvill saw considerable combat, before being selected for special training. There he was commissioned a second lieutenant and finished the war as an officer.

After the war he returned to Tennessee and Teaching. During this period he taught, was a principal and continued his education at night and during the summers. It took six years to earn his bachelors degree.

In 1929 he was hired as a history instructor at the new Austin Peay College. Before the first year was over he was also dean-registrar. Before the second year was out he was teaching all P.E. activities, coaching both men and women's basketball and baseball as well as his regular duties as history instructor and dean-registrar, while studying of his masters at Peabody.

In 1938 he served as state commissioner of education for Governor Browning. Upon leaving that office he returned to Austin Peay until World War II broke out.

Harvill served four years in the army as a recruiting officer and in special services.

Upon his return at the wars end, he was appointed president of Austin Peay, replacing the aged president Claxton.

In 1962, Mr. Harvill retired and for two years he was active in community affairs, before being nominated for the state senate.

At an age when most people would feel that they had earned a rest, Halbert Harvill began his political life.

He was elected to the Senate four times, retiring for the last time in 1980 at the age of 87.

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