

## [Waco] Branch Davidians: Ron Armstrong, Inclusive: 1931-1960, undated, Bulk: 1931-1933

### Summary Information

<b>Creator</b>	Houteff, Victor, 1885-1955 (Creator) Roden, Benjamin L., 1902 - 1978 (Creator)
<b>Extent (quantity/size)</b>	2 map tubes and 2 oversized boxes.
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Abstract</b>	The [Waco] Branch Davidians: Ron Armstrong Collection contains twenty-one scrolls produced by the leaders of the Branch Davidian sect. These materials focus primarily on biblical prophecies found in the books of Daniel, Ezekiel, and Revelation, and shed some light on the early beliefs of the Davidians and Branch Davidians.

### Subjects

Branch Davidians. / Eschatology. / Houteff, V.T. 1885-1955. / Mount Carmel Center, Waco, Tex. / Seventh Day Adventists -- History.

### Administrative Information

**Restrictions on Access and Use** The collection is open for research.

Use/Reproduction Restrictions: All requests for copying of materials must be submitted to The Texas Collection in writing. Please use the Request Form for Copying Materials sheet.

**Preferred Citation** When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is:

[Waco] Branch Davidians: Ron Armstrong Collection, Accession #3810, Box#, Folder #, The Texas Collection, Baylor University.

### Scope and Content

The [Waco] Branch Davidians: Ron Armstrong Collection was given to The Texas Collection on 2012 January 12.

The only series in the collection is Series I. Scrolls. As the name suggests, this series is comprised of original scrolls that illustrate some of the core beliefs (apocalyptic literature, eschatology, etc.) of the Davidians (led by Victor Houteff) and the Branch Davidians (led by Benjamin Roden). The materials can be dated from 1931 to 1960, but a few scrolls are undated.

### Administrative/Biographical History

The religious sects known as the Davidians and Branch Davidians were the products of a reform movement within the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. Problems began to arise within the denomination when a group of Adventists, led by Bulgarian immigrant Victor Houteff, began to challenge the traditional hierarchy of the Adventist Church.

Houteff claimed to have received personal revelations from God and published his controversial views in a book entitled *The Shepherd's Rod* (1932). Houteff and his followers believed that the spiritual gift of prophecy was necessary for effective leadership so that King David's earthly kingdom could be re-established on earth prior to the second coming of Jesus Christ. The sect was deeply interested in apocalyptic literature and eschatology, which is reflected in the Ron Armstrong Collection. Numerous scrolls depict the Davidians' interpretations of historical events in relation to the end times.

Over time, the Adventist leadership grew tired of tolerating Houteff and his followers. After the leaders of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church excommunicated his sect, Houteff moved to Waco, Texas, and continued to preach until his death in 1955.

Leadership among the Davidians fragmented afterwards, with Victor's widow Florence Houteff and Benjamin Roden vying for control. Twenty out of the twenty-one scrolls within this collection are attributed to the Davidian leader Victor Houteff; the other one was attributed to the founder of the Branch Davidians, Benjamin Roden.

Ron Armstrong, the donor of this collection, owned a large printing company in Fort Worth, Texas, in the 1970s. He came into possession of the scrolls when an unknown customer delivered them to be copied but never returned. In 2012, Armstrong donated the scrolls to The Texas Collection.

### Related Resources

#### Related citations

"Local Man Offers Insight into Waco." Religion News Report vol. 4, no. 223 (2000 July 4). Available at <http://www.apologeticsindex.org/news/an200704.html#top>. Accessed August 10, 2012.

Lawson, Ronald. "Seventh-Day Adventist Responses to Branch Davidian Notoriety: Patterns of Diversity within a Sect Reducing Tension with Society." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* vol. 34, no. 3 (1995 September): 323-341. [periodical]

Pitts, William L. "DAVDIANS AND BRANCH DAVIDIANS," *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ird01>), accessed August 13, 2012. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

### Archival Arrangement

The entire collection to date is comprised of 21 Branch Davidian scrolls. Prior to processing, 18 of the 21 scrolls were held together by a piece of wood and some screws. These have since been separated, but the original order was maintained and is indicated in the container listing.

Each individual scroll has been wrapped in tissue paper. A label with the title, creator, date, and item number can be found on the scroll. Efforts to digitize these materials are underway.

There were no inventories or finding aids available prior to this finding aid.

Because all of the materials within the collection are scrolls, there is only one series: Series I. Scrolls.

### Series 1. Scrolls. 1931-1960, undated

<b>Extent (quantity/size)</b>	This series contains 2 oversized boxes and 2 map tubes.
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Administrative/Biographical History</b>	This series contains 21 scrolls produced by the leaders of the Branch Davidians. They reveal the strong emphasis Branch Davidians placed on eschatology and prophecy. The materials are in average condition.
<b>Inventory</b>	<p>Box 1 OVZ (Tube). Folder 1. Scroll: Victor Houteff: "3 Days and 3 Nights in the Heart of the Earth", undated</p> <p>Box 2 OVZ (Tube). Folder 2. Scroll: Victor Houteff: "The Mighty River of Ezekiel 47: 1-2", undated</p> <p>Box 3 OVZ. Folder 3. Scroll: Benjamin Roden: "The Deliverance of the Church from the Wilderness", 1960</p> <p>Box 3 OVZ. Folder 4. Scroll: Victor Houteff: "The Flood: Type and Anti-Type" (1 of 18), 1932</p> <p>Box 3 OVZ. Folder 5. Scroll: Victor Houteff: "The Ceremonial Harvest and its Significance" (2 of 18), 1932</p> <p>Box 3 OVZ. Folder 6. Scroll: Victor Houteff: "The Great Image of Daniel 2" (3 of 18), 1944</p> <p>Box 3 OVZ. Folder 7. Scroll: Victor Houteff: "The Truth and the Host Under Foot" (4 of 18), 1931</p> <p>Box 3 OVZ. Folder 8. Scroll: Victor Houteff: "The Old and New Testament Church" (5 of 18), 1944</p> <p>Box 3 OVZ. Folder 9. Scroll: Victor Houteff: "The Temples" (6 of 18), 1932</p> <p>Box 3 OVZ. Folder 10. Scroll: Victor Houteff: "The Church to and back from the Wilderness" (7 of 18), 1933</p> <p>Box 3 OVZ. Folder 11. Scroll: Victor Houteff: "The Harvest" (8 of 18), undated</p> <p>Box 3 OVZ. Folder 12. Scroll: Victor Houteff: "At the 11th Hour" (9 of 18), undated</p> <p>Box 3 OVZ. Folder 13. Scroll: Victor Houteff: "In the Heart of the Earth" (10 of 18), undated</p> <p>Box 3 OVZ. Folder 14. Scroll: Victor Houteff: "The Seven Churches" (11 of 18), 1944</p> <p>Folder Scroll: Victor Houteff: "The Investigative Judgment" (12 of 18), 1931</p> <p>Box 15. Folder 3 OVZ</p> <p>Box 4 OVZ. Folder 16. Scroll: Victor Houteff: "The Seven Trumpets" (13 of 18), undated</p> <p>Box 4 OVZ. Folder 17. Scroll: Victor Houteff: "The Church and the Dragon" (14 of 18), 1932</p> <p>Box 4 OVZ. Folder 18. Scroll: Victor Houteff: "The Living Church" (15 of 18), 1932</p> <p>Box 4 OVZ. Folder 19. Scroll: Victor Houteff: "The World's History in Prophetic Symbols" (16 of 18), 1931</p> <p>Box 4 OVZ. Folder 20. Scroll: Victor Houteff: "Holding the 4 Winds" (17 of 18), undated</p> <p>Box 4 OVZ. Folder 21. Scroll: Victor Houteff: "The Harvest Period and the Close of Probation" (18 of 18), 1931</p>