

## Baylor University . The Texas Collection

### [Waco] Branch Davidians: "The Facts About Mt. Carmel" Exhibit Collection. Inclusive: 1961-2004, undated, Bulk: 1993-1994

#### Summary Information

<b>Creator</b>	Branch Davidians (Creator) Waco Tribune-Herald (Creator) Maybom Museum (Compiler)
<b>Extent (quantity/size)</b>	Two document boxes.
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Abstract</b>	This collection contains materials collected by various groups and individuals (including Calvin Smith of the Strecker Museum) to organize an exhibit about the history of the Waco Branch Davidians. The exhibit, entitled "The Facts About Mt. Carmel," was featured at the Helen Marie Taylor Museum in Waco, Texas, in February 1994.

#### Subjects

Branch Davidians. / Koresh, David, 1959-1993. / Mount Carmel Center, Waco, Tex / Seventh Day Adventists -- History. / Waco (Tex.) -- History -- 20th Century. / Waco Branch Davidian Disaster, Tex., 1993.

#### 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.

**Originals/Copies** Mx of some originals and some copies

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

[Waco] Branch Davidians: "The Facts About Mt. Carmel" Exhibit Collection, Accession #3811, Box#, Folder #, The Texas Collection, Baylor University.

**Processing Information** Described by Thomas DeShong and released on 2012-09-26.

#### Scope and Content

The [Waco] Branch Davidians: "The Facts About Mt. Carmel" Exhibit Collection was acquired in a single accession from Calvin Smith and the Strecker Museum. It is unknown when the collection was received. The materials in the collection range in date from 1961 to 2004. The largest series is the Literary Productions Series. Calvin Smith and his museum studies students collected a wide array of primary and secondary materials in order to create a fair history of the Branch Davidian sect.

#### Administrative/Biographical History

The religious sect known as the Branch Davidians was the product of a reform movement within the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. Problems began when a group of Adventists, led by Bulgarian immigrant Victor Houteff, began to challenge the traditional hierarchy of the denomination. 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, the Davidians, 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. 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. The group that followed Benjamin Roden would later be known as the Branch Davidians. The 1980s brought about further division within the Branch Davidian sect. A newcomer named Vernon Howell had joined the Branch Davidians in 1981. Three years later, a schism occurred within the Branch Davidians, with Howell leading his own group of followers to a new site in Palestine, Texas. Through a series of confrontations between Howell and George Roden, the son of Benjamin and Lois Roden, control of the Branch Davidians' headquarters in Waco passed to Howell, who legally changed his name to David Koresh in 1990. Rumors concerning polygamy, abuse, and arms-dealing within the Branch Davidian group aroused the suspicions of the federal government. Thus, federal agencies such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives began to monitor the group.

In response to a stockpiling of illegal weapons, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives secured a search warrant for the investigation of the Branch Davidians' compound near Waco, Texas. From 1993 February 28 until April 19, Branch Davidians under the leadership of David Koresh resisted federal agents' attempts to storm their Mount Carmel Center. The fifty-day siege ended when the compound erupted in flames, killing David Koresh and most of his followers.

Due to the negative publicity that Waco was receiving, Mayor Robert Sheehy appointed the Image Task Force to study and interpret the Siege. Calvin Smith, director of the Strecker Museum and professor of Museum Studies at Baylor University, was appointed chair of the Exhibit Committee. Smith and his Museum Studies students collected primary and secondary materials and constructed an exhibit entitled "The Facts About Mt. Carmel." It was scheduled to go on display at the Taylor Museum of Waco History on the one year anniversary of the Siege in February 1994.

#### Related Resources

##### Summary of related Archive materials

This collection is closely tied with the [Waco] Branch Davidians: Mount Carmel Seventh Day Adventist Collection. The latter deals with an earlier stage of Branch Davidian history, but it explains how the Branch Davidians came to the Mount Carmel compound.

##### Related records in other Archive collections

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

##### Related citations

Kerstetter, Todd. "That's Just the American Way: The Branch Davidian Tragedy and Western Religious History."

Western Historical Quarterly vol. 35, no. 4 (2004 Winter): 453-471. [periodical]

"Western Heritage Museum Complex Leadership: Calvin Smith." Available at

<http://www.museumshobbsnm.org/western-heritage-museum-complex-leadership>. Accessed 2012 August 24.

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]

"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 2012 August 24.

Pitts, William L. "DAVIDIANS AND BRANCH DAVIDIANS," *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ird01>), accessed August 24, 2012. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

### Archival Arrangement

Collection manuscripts were in a single banker box with no organization and no supporting documentation. It was thus necessary to create an accession number, title, and preliminary processing plan prior to the processing stage. The [Waco] Branch Davidians: "The Facts About Mt. Carmel" Exhibit Collection is organized into five series: I. Correspondence, II. Legal Documents, III. Literary Productions, IV. Photographic Materials, and V. Maps.

#### Series 1. Correspondence. 1982-1996

- Administrative/Biographical History** This series contains correspondence pertaining to the history of the Branch Davidians, the Museum Association of Waco, and an exhibit created by the Strecker Museum that was displayed at the Helen Marie Taylor Museum. The materials are in excellent condition.
- Inventory**  
 Box 1. Folder 1. Correspondence: Branch Davidians, 1982-1993  
 Box 1. Folder 2. Correspondence: Museum Association of Waco, 1993-1994  
 Box 1. Folder 3. Correspondence: Exhibit, 1995-1996

#### Series 2. Legal Documents. 1985-1986

- Administrative/Biographical History** This series contains materials concerning an internal power struggle among the Waco Branch Davidians, particularly between Lois Roden and her son George Roden. Materials include the proposed will of George Roden and documentation surrounding a trial involving the Roden and other high-ranking Branch Davidians. The materials are in excellent condition.
- Inventory**  
 Box 1. Folder 4. Legal Documents: Will: George Roden, 1985 September 13  
 Box 1. Folder 5. Legal Documents: Brief: George Roden vs. Lois Roden, 1986 November 30  
 Box 1. Folder 6. Legal Documents: Statement of Appeal: George Roden vs. Lois Roden (1 of 2), 1986 December 7  
 Box 1. Folder 7. Legal Documents: Statement of Appeal: George Roden vs. Lois Roden (2 of 2), 1986 December 7

#### Series 3. Literary Productions. 1961-2004, undated

- Administrative/Biographical History** This series contains the primary and secondary research materials used to create the exhibit "The Facts About Mt. Carmel." Articles from periodicals and essays figure prominently within the series. These materials are in excellent condition.
- Inventory**  
 Box 1. Folder 8. Literary Productions: Article: American Hunter: "Waco Probe Failures", 1995 September  
 Box 1. Folder 9. Literary Productions: Article: Bible Review: "Apocalypse at Waco", 1993 October  
 Box 1. Folder 10. Literary Productions: Article: History News, 1994 May-June  
 Box 1. Folder 11. Literary Productions: Article: MMReport: "Let Us Prey", 1994 June  
 Box 1. Folder 12. Literary Productions: Article: Museum News: "Response and Responsibility": Joel Bloom, 1993 Fall  
 Box 1. Folder 13. Literary Productions: Article: Museum News: "The Museum of Ideas": Joseph V. Noble, 1980 October  
 Box 1. Folder 14. Literary Productions: Article: Penthouse: "Holocaust at Waco": Gary Null, 1994 April  
 Box 1. Folder 15. Literary Productions: Article: The Bill of Rights in Action, 1995 Fall  
 Box 1. Folder 16. Literary Productions: Article: Time: "Clearing the Government", 2000 Summer  
 Box 1. Folder 17. Literary Productions: Article: Time: "Cult of Death", 1993 March 15  
 Box 1. Folder 18. Literary Productions: Article: Time: "Tragedy in Waco", 1993 May 3  
 Box 1. Folder 19. Literary Productions: Article: Time: "Waco Burns On", 1995 July 24  
 Box 1. Folder 20. Literary Productions: Article: USA Confidential: "Wacko in Waco", undated  
 Box 1. Folder 21. Literary Productions: Book: Bible Biographies, undated  
 Box 2. Folder 1. Literary Productions: Brochures: Lecture: William L. Pitts, Jr., 1995 February 9  
 Box 2. Folder 2. Literary Productions: Brochure: "The Facts About Mt. Carmel", circa 1994  
 Box 2. Folder 3. Literary Productions: Clippings: Index, 1993-2000  
 Box 2. Folder 4. Literary Productions: Clippings: Leo Palitti, undated  
 Box 2. Folder 5. Literary Productions: Essay: "Evidence of Deadly Gunfire from BATF Helicopters": Carol Moore, 1997

Box2. Folder 6. Literary Productions: Essay: "Exhibiting Recent History", undated  
 Box2. Folder 7. Literary Productions: Essay: "Image Control and History Lessons in Waco", 1994 April 4  
 Box2. Folder 8. Literary Productions: Essay: "Mt. Carmel": Bob Darden, undated  
 Box2. Folder 9. Literary Productions: Essay: "The Decoded Message of the Seven Seals of the Book of Revelation": David Koresh, 1993  
 Box2. Folder 10. Literary Productions: Essay: "The Inheritance": Amo Paul Bishop Roden, 2004 September 14  
 Box2. Folder 11. Literary Productions: Essay: "The Politics of Murder: The why of the Branch Davidian Massacre": Amo Paul Bishop Roden, 1995 May 9  
 Box2. Folder 12. Literary Productions: Essay: "The Survivors Return to Site on Fifth Anniversary", 1998  
 Box2. Folder 13. Literary Productions: Essay: "Waco Questions Congress Refuses to Answer": Carol Moore, undated  
 Box2. Folder 14. Literary Productions: Essay: "Waco Still Emblazoned on the Mind": Mark England, undated  
 Box2. Folder 15. Literary Productions: Excerpts: Strecker Museum, 1994  
 Box2. Folder 16. Literary Productions: Minutes: Davidians, 1961 March 13  
 Box2. Folder 17. Literary Productions: Notes: Brochure: "The Facts About Mt. Carmel", 1994 February 17  
 Box2. Folder 18. Literary Productions: Notes: History of Branch Davidians, undated  
 Box2. Folder 19. Literary Productions: Printed Materials: Mount Carmel Independent Investigation Advocates, 1994  
 Box2. Folder 20. Literary Productions: Transcription: Lyndon Olson, Sr. Interviewed by Bob Darden, undated

#### Series 4. Photographic Materials. 1992-1994, undated

<b>Administrative/Biographical History</b>	This series is comprised of the photographs and copies that were incorporated into the exhibit. There are some fascinating images of the compound that were used to construct the model. The materials are in good condition.
<b>Inventory</b>	Box2. Folder 21. Photographic Materials: Photographs: Aerial: Mt. Carmel Compound, circa 1993 Box2. Folder 22. Photographic Materials: Photographs: Branch Davidians, undated Box2. Folder 23. Photographic Materials: Photographs: David Koresh, 1992-1994, undated Box2. Folder 24. Photographic Materials: Photographs: Model: Mt. Carmel Compound, circa 1994 Box2. Folder 25. Photographic Materials: Photographs: Waco Siege (1 of 2), 1993 Box2. Folder 26. Photographic Materials: Photographs: Waco Siege (2 of 2), 1993 Box2. Folder 27. Photographic Materials: Photographs: Photocopies: Exhibit Material, undated

#### Series 5. Maps. 1991, undated

<b>Administrative/Biographical History</b>	This series contains maps of the larger Waco area as well as a basic outline of the Branch Davidian Compound. The materials are in good condition.
<b>Inventory</b>	Box2. Folder 28. Maps: Branch Davidian Compound, undated Box2. Folder 29. Maps: Waco, 1991