

# Guide to the Carolyn Davidson Hill Diary and Family Papers

MS 2122



compiled by Joshua D. Cochran

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Manuscripts and Archives  
Yale University Library  
P.O. Box 208240  
New Haven, CT 06520-8240  
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beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/>

**CALL NUMBER:** MS 2122

**TITLE:** Carolyn Davidson Hill Diary and Family Papers

**DATES:** Circa 1914-2021

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 3 linear feet (4 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English (Latin script); Chinese (Han (Hanzi, Kanji, Hanja) script)

**SUMMARY:** The Carolyn Davidson Hill diary and family papers consist of the diary Hill kept during the Battle of Shanghai in 1949 as well as photographs and related material on the experiences of Hill, her husband Horace "Hod" Hill, and other workers at the Caltex Oil Terminal. Additional materials in the collection document the Hill's family history, their friends, work, and travel. A letter from a family friend, Paul Bordwell, discusses his experience in Singapore during an anti-colonial riot in December 1950.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.2122>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.2122>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to [http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr\\_copy\\_order.html](http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html). The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box  
f. folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from Tracy Hill Leddy and Ann Elizabeth Hill, 2021

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## Conditions Governing Access

This collection is available for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

Copyright to materials authored or otherwise created by Carolyn Davidson Hill is retained by Ann Elizabeth Hill until January 1, 2050 or until her death, whichever occurs first. Copyright status for other collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

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## Preferred Citation

Carolyn Davidson Hill Diary and Family Papers (MS 2122). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

Carolyn Davidson Hill (née Carolyn Davidson Allen) was born in Dallas, Texas on October 10, 1911. She attended Southern Methodist University, completing a BA in History and French in 1931 and an MA in Political Science the following year. Initially working as a secretary for several companies and individuals in the Dallas, Texas area, she moved to Washington, D.C., in 1941 and was employed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation's Division of Research and Statistics.

During the Second World War, Carolyn Davidson Hill worked as a clerk for the United States State Department at several posts in Africa and Asia. In 1943, she was stationed at the Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Operations in Algiers, Algeria. There she served as a secretary and interpreter for the Chief of Mission. From 1943 to 1945, she was posted in Tehran, Iran with the American Financial Mission. She acted as the secretary for a series of conferences held in Tehran among United States, British, and Iranian officials throughout the war. After the war, Hill was posted to Chongqing, China, where she served from 1945-1946, followed by a posting in Beijing. Her final State Department assignment was in Shanghai, where she worked for the American Consulate General from 1946-1949. In Shanghai, she prepared reports on various financial and political matters. She resigned from the State Department in April 1949.

While in Shanghai, Carolyn Davidson met Horace "Hod" Hill, the superintendent of the Caltex Oil Terminal. Horace Hill was born in 1911 in East Orange, New Jersey and traveled extensively in his youth with his military family. Prior to 1936, Horace was married to Phyllis Abell Hill. From 1939 to 1948, Horace was married to Olivia Whitney Hill, with whom he had two daughters, Tracy (born 1940) and Deborah (born 1942). Horace Hill served in China during the Second World War and began working for the Caltex Petroleum Company in the late 1940s. Carolyn Davidson and Horace Hill married on October 26, 1948.

Living in Shanghai in the late 1940s, Carolyn and Horace Hill experienced the ongoing Chinese Civil War between the Nationalist forces (Kuomintang) and the Communist forces. As the conflict engulfed Shanghai in April 1945, Carolyn Davidson Hill began a diary documenting the experiences and daily life of her, Horace, and Caltex employees over the weeks leading up to the Communist victory in Shanghai in May 1949. The Hills also witnessed the Nationalist bombing of the Anchises, a British freighter in the Huangpu (Whangpoo) River on June 21, 1949, which received international attention.

Carolyn and Horace lived in the Philippines before returning to the United States. The Hills adopted two children, Robert Brinton and Ann Elizabeth. The couple divorced in 1957. After their divorce, Carolyn Davidson Hill lived in California, where she worked for several legal firms and for Stanford University. She died in San Mateo, California on August 10, 1982.

Horace Hill returned to working overseas in Singapore and later settled in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. He married Mary McClees in 1957 and adopted her three children: Hebert, Hugh, and Mary. Horace Hill died in Oak Ridge, Tennessee on December 16, 1989.

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## Scope and Contents

The Carolyn Davidson Hill diary and family papers consist of the diary Hill kept during the Battle of Shanghai in 1949. The diary, photographs, and related material document the experiences of Hill, her husband Horace "Hod" Hill, and other workers at the Caltex Oil Terminal outside of Shanghai as the Nationalist and Communist forces engaged in intense fighting. The diary also discusses the Nationalist bombing of the *Anchises*, a British freighter in the Huangpu (Whangpoo) River on June 21, 1949. Carolyn subsequently compiled and edited the diary and wrote an introduction to it, which is part of this collection.

The collection also includes correspondence about the Hill's family, friends, and travel. A letter from a family friend, Paul Bordwell, discusses his experience in Singapore during an anti-colonial riot in December 1950. Other materials in the collection include notes written by the family, genealogical research conducted by Horace's children, and family photographs.

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## Arrangement

The papers are arranged in two series: I. Battle for Shanghai diary and related materials, 1948-1951, 2019. II. Hill family papers, 1914-2021.

## Collection Contents

### Series I: Battle for Shanghai diary and related materials, 1948–1951, 2019

This series contains the original typescript diary kept by Carolyn Davidson Hill during the Battle of Shanghai in Spring 1949. The series also includes additional, subsequent copies edited by Carolyn and other family members; photographs; newspaper clippings; and reports prepared by Carolyn Davidson Hill while working for the United States State Department in China.

This series is arranged alphabetically by folder title.

b. 1, f. 1	Battle for Shanghai diary, original typescript with annotations by Carolyn Davidson Hill  The first pages in the folder are a letter from Carolyn Davidson Hill to "Joan" dated February 22, 1949. The diary begins with an entry on April 25, 1949 at 2:00 PM. A gap in the diary exists between May 19, 1949 at 8:15 AM (numbered page 22) and May 25, 1949 at 11:25 AM (numbered page 36). Numbered pages 36 through 49 cover the period of May 25-26, 1949. This span of pages also includes some unnumbered pages (e.g., "Radio messages").  The diary has sporadic entries from June 10-27, 1949. The final entries are from August 8-12, 1949.	1949 February– 1949 August
b. 2, f. 1	Battle for Shanghai diary, edited by Carolyn Davidson Hill	1949 April 25 -1949 June 21
b. 2, f. 2	Battle for Shanghai diary, edited by Carolyn Davidson Hill, with introduction edited by Herbert McClees  Includes a hand drawn map of the oil facilities along the Huangpu (Whangpoo) River near Shanghai.	Undated
b. 2, f. 3	Diary introduction, original typescript with annotations by Carolyn Davidson Hill and edited photocopies  Original typescript introduction to the Battle of Shanghai Diary by Carolyn Davidson Hill. The introduction was written after the events of Spring 1949. Folder also includes an edited typescript version of the introduction.	Circa 1949; 2019 February 15
b. 2, f. 4	Horace Hill's exit visa, Chinese currency, and Caltex business cards	Circa 1949
b. 2, f. 5	Newspaper clippings	1948–1951
b. 2, f. 6	Photographs, Shanghai	1948–1949
b. 2, f. 7	The Pootung Poop (Caltex Terminal satirical newsletter)	1949 May
b. 2, f. 8	Research on Caltex Terminal and Chinese Civil War by Herbert McClees	Undated
b. 2, f. 9	"Soak the rich movement in China" essay written by Carolyn Davidson Hill while at the United States Consulate in Shanghai	1948 June 24
b. 2, f. 10	"Travel and tourism in China: supplementary report" written by Carolyn Davidson Hill while at the United States Consulate in Shanghai	1948 October 12
b. 2, f. 11	Wortman, Marc "Sitting on top of liquid dynamite" <i>Time Magazine</i>  Wortman's 2019 article in <i>Time Magazine</i> on the diary, as well as email correspondence with the family and a description of the photographs found in photographs folder.	2019 May 24

## Series II: Hill family papers, Circa 1914–2021

This series contains materials related to the family of Carolyn Davidson Hill and Horace "Hod" Hill. Materials include correspondence, information about their professional work, family photographs, and documentation of their marriage and divorce in 1957. Several folders include explanatory notes added by Horace's children about the family's history.

This series is arranged into three groupings: correspondence, subject files, and family photographs and ephemera.

	Correspondence	1943–1951
b. 3, f. 1	Carolyn Davidson Hill letters	1943–1948
b. 3, f. 2	Hill family letters Letters collected by Deborah Hill, daughter of Horace Hill. Correspondence includes a December 1950 letter from family friend Paul Bordwell describing his experiences while in Singapore during the nationwide anti-colonial riots following the Maria Hertogh custody verdict. Other letters include correspondence between Carolyn and Horace and with their friends while in Shanghai.	1949–1951
b. 3, f. 3	Olivia Hill letters and passage to China	1946
	Subject files	1939–1975
b. 3, f. 4	Carolyn Davidson Hill personal history statement (résumé)	Circa 1965
b. 3, f. 5	Horace "Hod" Hill personal history Includes notes added by the family about Horace Hill.	1946–1989
b. 3, f. 6	Horace Hill divorce paperwork	1939–1975
	Family photographs and ephemera	Circa 1914–2021
b. 3, f. 7	Family ephemera Includes passports, Japanese currency, and notes about family acquaintance Douglas Blaufarb, who was a Central Intelligence Agency station chief in Laos in the 1960s.	1949–2021
b. 3, f. 8	Family photographs	Circa 1914–2012
b. 4, f. 1	Photographs of Horace Hill	Circa 1946–1947
b. 4, f. 2	Retirement certificate for Horace Hill	1970 June 11

## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

Americans -- China  
Anchises (British freighter)  
China--History--Civil War, 1945-1949  
Civil war--China--Shanghai--History  
United States--Foreign relations--China

### **Geographic Names**

Shanghai (China)  
Singapore

### **Names**

Blaufarb, Douglas S., 1918-2000  
Hertogh, Maria, 1937-2009  
Hill, Ann Elizabeth  
Hill, Carolyn Davidson, 1911-1982  
Hill, Deborah  
Hill, Horace, 1911-1989  
Hill, Olivia  
Hill, Phyllis Abell  
Leddy, Tracy Hill  
McClees, Herbert  
McClees, Mary

### **Corporate Bodies**

Caltex Petroleum Corporation  
Zhongguo gong chan dang -- Communist Party  
of China  
Zhongguo guo min dang -- Kuomintang --  
Chinese Nationalist Party