

Guide to the David Nelson Beach, Jr. Papers

RG 60A



Compiled by Andrea Wong and Martha Lund Smalley

1997

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Yale Divinity Library
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New Haven, CT 06511
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<http://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections>

CALL NUMBER: RG 60A

CREATOR: Beach, David Nelson, 1894-1990

TITLE: David Nelson Beach, Jr. papers

DATES: 1862-1989

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 9 linear feet (24 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: Correspondence, writings, collected material, and biographical records provide valuable documentation of Beach's Yale education, his work with the YMCA in France during World War I, his ministry, his contributions to the Congregational denomination, and the work of the Connecticut Civil Rights Commission. David Nelson Beach, Jr. (1894-1990) was a clergyman in New England and Minnesota, including at First Church of Christ (Center Church) in New Haven from 1943 to 1960. He served on the Connecticut Civil Rights Commission from 1948 to 1960 and played an influential role in the denominational merger that created the United Church of Christ in 1957.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.060a>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use on site, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.060a>.

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

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Barbara Beach Alter.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Preferred Citation

David Nelson Beach, Jr. Papers (RG 60A), Special Collections, Yale Divinity School Library.

Biographical / Historical

Date	Event
1894 June 17	○ Born in Cambridge, MA, son of Lillian Tappan Beach and David Nelson Beach, who was minister of Prospect Street Church, Cambridge, and later President of Bangor Theological Seminary
1912	○ Graduated from Phillips Academy
1916	○ B.A., Yale College, Phi Beta Kappa
1916-1917, 1919-1920	○ Study at Bangor Theological Seminary, before and after YMCA service in France; received B.D. from Bangor in 1927
1917 July 22	○ Married Marguerite Mills, who became the mother of their five children
1918	○ American Expeditionary Force, YMCA service in France
1918-1919	○ Ordained for chaplaincy; post-war service as YMCA Secretary at Boston University and University of Maine
1919-1920	○ Student minister, Congregational Church in Millinocket, ME
1920-1924	○ Minister, First Church, Guilford, CT
1922	○ Finished seminary work, received B.D., Yale Divinity School
1924-1927	○ Minister, Park Place Congregational Church, Pawtucket, RI
1927-1932	○ Minister, Payson Park Church, Belmont, MA
1932-1936	○ Minister, First Church, Springfield, MA
1933	○ D.D., American International College
1936-1943	○ Minister, Plymouth Church, Minneapolis, MN
1943-1960	○ Minister, First Church of Christ (Center Church), New Haven. While in New Haven he was chaplain of the Revolutionary Second Company Governor's Footguard, first Chairman of the Human Relations Council, President of the Yale Divinity School Alumni Council
1948-1960	○ Member of the Connecticut Civil Rights Commission (formerly know as Inter-Racial Commission); Chairman of Commission 1954-1955
1959	○ Chairman of General Council Commission on Interchurch Relations and Christian Unity

Date	Event
1959-1960	○ Moderator of General Association of Connecticut and the New Haven Association
1960-1964	○ Minister, West Dennis Community Church, Cape Cod
1964-1976	○ Part-time pastorate at Short Beach Community Church, Branford, CT
1990 June 25	○ Died

Scope and Contents

These papers continue the record of the Beach Family begun in [Record Group 60](#), which primarily documents the life and work of David Nelson Beach, Jr.'s father, David Nelson Beach, and his uncle, Harlan P. Beach. Descendant of established New England families, graduate of Yale College and Yale Divinity School, David Nelson Beach, Jr. was a respected and influential clergyman for more than half a century, and a systematic "keeper" of records. Besides providing biographical information, Beach's papers include valuable, thorough documentation of two movements in which he was a key player: the movement toward merger of the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church to form the United Church of Christ, and the Connecticut Civil Rights Commission.

The Family Correspondence of Series I all dates from before 1928 and is primarily between Beach and his fiancé/wife Marguerite Mills Beach or Beach and his parents and siblings. Extensive correspondence from the 1915 to 1918 time period documents Beach's life as a student at Yale and Bangor Theological Seminary, and his service with the YMCA in France during World War I.

The General Correspondence of Series II is not extensive, but provides an overview of Beach's activities in the churches and organizations with which he was involved, including First Church (Center Church) in New Haven. Much of the substantial correspondence of the record group is contained in Series IV and V with the records documenting the Congregational merger and the Connecticut Civil Rights Commission.

The notes in Series III date primarily from Beach's years at Yale College, providing a thorough record of his undergraduate coursework. Beach's writings include sermons and articles related to the nature of Congregationalism. Other notes, drafts, and writings by Beach are contained in Series IV and V.

Series IV contains a variety of records related to the merger that formed the United Church of Christ in 1957, including legal briefs, letters, memos, notes, and material documenting the role of Beach and Center Church, New Haven. These records of a key player who was in favor of the merger provide an important complement to similar records in [Record Group No. 52](#), the Papers of Henry David Gray, an influential opponent of the merger.

Beach's twelve years of service on what was first called the Connecticut Inter-Racial Commission and then the Connecticut Civil Rights Commission came at a crucial period in the development and enforcement of civil rights in the United States. The thorough Commission records retained by Beach include minutes, letters, memos, cases of appeal, conference reports, and other documentation providing a vivid picture of the civil rights climate in Connecticut and surrounding states from 1948 to 1960.

Series VI, Biographical Documentation, includes a variety of materials shedding light on Beach as an individual, his family, and the organizations with which he was involved during his long and active career.

Arrangement

- I. Family Correspondence, 1913-1927, undated
- II. General Correspondence, 1913-1989, undated
- III. Notes and Writings, 1913-1984, undated
- IV. Records Related to Merger forming UCC, 1947-1981, undated
- V. Records Related to Civil Rights, 1948-1981, undated

VI. Biographical Documentation, 1898-1985, undated

Collection Contents

Series I: Family correspondence, 1913-1927, undated

To David Nelson Beach, Jr., from Marguerite Mills Beach (his wife)

b. 1, f. 1	1913-1915 August	1913-1915 August
b. 1, f. 2	1915 September-December	1915 September-December
b. 1, f. 3	1916 January-February	1916 January-February
b. 1, f. 4	1916 March-April	1916 March-April
b. 1, f. 5	1916 May-June	1916 May-June
b. 1, f. 6	1916 August-December	1916 August-December
b. 1, f. 7	1917 January-June 12	1917 January-June 12
b. 1, f. 8	1917 June 16- July	1917 June 16-July
b. 1, f. 9	1917 August-December	1917 August-December
b. 1, f. 10	1918 January-April	1918 January-April
b. 2, f. 11	1918 May-December	1918 May-December
b. 2, f. 12	1919	1919
b. 2, f. 13	1923	1923
b. 2, f. 14	1926	1926
From David Nelson Beach, Jr., to Marguerite Mills Beach (his wife)		
b. 2, f. 15	1913-1915 August	1913-1915 August
b. 2, f. 16	1915 September-1916 February	1915 September-1916 February
b. 2, f. 17	1916 March-August	1916 March-August
b. 3, f. 18	1916 September-December	1916 September-December

From David Nelson Beach, Jr., to Marguerite Mills Beach (his wif [...]) (continued)

b. 3, f. 19	1917 January-July	1917 January-July
b. 3, f. 20	1917 August-December	1917 August-December
b. 3, f. 21	1918 January-May	1918 January-May
b. 3, f. 22	1918 June-August	1918 June-August
b. 3, f. 23	1918 November-December	1918 November-December
b. 3, f. 24	1919	1919
b. 3, f. 25	1920-1927	1920-1927
	David Nelson Beach, Jr., from family	
b. 4, f. 26	1908-1927, 1972	1908-1927, 1972
	David Nelson Beach, Jr., to family	
b. 4, f. 27	1916	1916
b. 4, f. 28	1917 January-April	1917 January-April
b. 4, f. 29	1917 May-August 7	1917 May-August 7
b. 4, f. 30	1917 August 11-December	1917 August 11-December
b. 4, f. 31	1918	1918
b. 4, f. 32	1919	1919
b. 4, f. 33	1920	1920
b. 4, f. 34	1921	1921
b. 4, f. 35	1922	1922
b. 4, f. 36	1923	1923
b. 4, f. 37	1924	1924
b. 4, f. 38	1925	1925
b. 4, f. 39	1926	1926

Series II: General correspondence, 1913-1989, undated

Additional correspondence is contained in Series III, IV, and V

b. 5, f. 40	1913-1916	1913-1916
b. 5, f. 41	1917-1918	1917-1918
b. 5, f. 42	1919	1919
b. 5, f. 43	1920	1920
b. 5, f. 44	1921	1921
b. 5, f. 45	1922	1922
b. 5, f. 46	1923	1923
b. 5, f. 47	1924	1924
b. 5, f. 48	1925	1925
b. 5, f. 49	1926, 1939, 1942	1926, 1939, 1942
b. 5, f. 50	1943 March-April Including re: decision to accept pastorate at Center Church, New Haven, letters from Charles R. Brown and Luther A. Weigle	1943 March-April
b. 5, f. 51	1943 May-June Including re: decision to accept pastorate at Center Church, New Haven	1943 May-June
b. 5, f. 52	1943 July-September Including re: move to accept pastorate at Center Church, New Haven	1943 July-September
b. 5, f. 53	1947-1950	1947-1950
b. 5, f. 54	1951-1954	1951-1954
b. 5, f. 55	1955-1957	1955-1957
b. 5, f. 56	1958-1959	1958-1959
b. 6, f. 57	1960-1961	1960-1961
b. 6, f. 58	1962-1964	1962-1964
b. 6, f. 59	1966-1980	1966-1980
b. 6, f. 60	1981-1989	1981-1989
b. 6, f. 61	Undated	Undated

Series III: Notes and writings, 1913-1984, undated

Class notes and essays

New Testament

b. 7, f. 62	Introduction to the Greek New Testament	1916-1917
b. 7, f. 63	New Testament Introduction	undated
b. 7, f. 64	History of New Testament Times	1917
b. 7, f. 65	New Testament Theology (Prof. Frank Chamberlin Porter)	1921-1922
b. 7, f. 66,77	Synoptics	1919?
b. 7, f. 78	Gospel of John, Johannine literature	undated
b. 7, f. 79	Romans 1-8	undated
b. 7, f. 80	Roman 9-16	undated
b. 7, f. 81	Corinthians I and II	undated
b. 7, f. 82	Galatians	undated
b. 7, f. 83	Philippians	undated
b. 7, f. 84	Thessalonians I and II	undated
b. 7, f. 85	Christological epistles	undated
b. 7, f. 86	Pastoral epistles	undated
b. 7, f. 87	Catholic epistles	undated
b. 7, f. 88	Hebrew	undated
b. 7, f. 89	Revelation	undated
Old Testament		
b. 7, f. 90	Old Testament Theology	undated
b. 7, f. 91, 92	Old Testament Literature (Prof. C. G. Cumming, Bangor)	1919-1920
b. 7, f. 93	Ruth	undated
b. 7, f. 94	Jeremiah	undated
b. 7, f. 95	Age of Johnson	1916
b. 8, f. 96, 97	Age of Shakespeare	1915-1916
b. 8, f. 98	Age of Spenser	1916
b. 8, f. 99	Anthropology	1914-1915
b. 8, f. 100	Apologetics (Prof. Garvie)	1916

Class notes and essays (continued)

b. 8, f. 101	Biology	1914
b. 8, f. 102	Christology	undated
b. 8, f. 103	Comparative Politics	1914-1915
b. 8, f. 104	Contemporary Dramatists	1916
b. 8, f. 105	Contemporary Europe	1916
b. 8, f. 106	English	1913-1914
b. 8, f. 107	English Grammar	undated
b. 8, f. 108	English Literature - 17th century	1915-1916
b. 9, f. 109	Ethics	1916, 1917
b. 9, f. 110	European History, 476-1816	undated
b. 9, f. 111	The French Revolution	1915-1916
b. 9, f. 112	Greek History	undated
b. 9, f. 113	Hebrew Language	1916
b. 9, f. 114	History of Philosophy	1914-1915
b. 9, f. 115	Modern Idealism	1916
b. 9, f. 116	Philosophy of Religion	undated
b. 9, f. 117	Poetry of Poe	1916
b. 9, f. 118	Psychology	1916-1917
b. 9, f. 119	Psychology of Childhood (Prof. E. Hershey Sneath)	1920
b. 9, f. 120	Psychology of Christian Experience, Psychology of Religion	1916, 1921
b. 9, f. 121	Roman History	undated
b. 9, f. 122	Systematic Theology (Prof. D. C. Macintosh)	1921
b. 9, f. 123, 124	United States History	1914-1916
b. 9, f. 125-127	Church History - Ages I - III	1917
b. 10, f. 128, 129	Church History - Ages IV-VI	1920, undated
b. 10, f. 130	Church History - modern	undated
b. 10, f. 131	History of Christian Doctrine	undated
b. 10, f. 132	Christianity in England	undated
b. 10, f. 133	China as a Mission Field (Prof. Harlan P. Beach)	1920
b. 10, f. 134	Homiletics (Dean Charles R. Brown)	1915-1916

Class notes and essays (continued)

b. 10, f. 135	Homiletics (Prof. Henry Hallam Tweedy)	1920-1921
b. 10, f. 136	Ministerial Ethics (Prof. Tweedy)	1922
b. 10, f. 137	The Minister's Message (Dean Brown)	1921
b. 10, f. 138	Pastoral Theology	undated
b. 10, f. 138a	Congregational Polity (Prof. Tweedy)	undated
b. 10, f. 139	Miscellaneous class papers and short writings	1917-1920
<p>Writings of David Nelson Beach, Jr. See Box 15 and Box 16 for various drafts and notes by David Nelson Beach, Jr., related to Congregationalism</p> <p>See Box 19 for writings of David Nelson Beach, Jr., related to Civil Rights</p>		
b. 10, f. 140	Thesis: "Certain Conditions and Tendencies in Practical Theology as Taught Today"	1921
b. 10, f. 141	Sermons and talks; "Farewell Sermons preached in Plymouth Church"; "Let Congregationalism March Forward in 1960"; "The Historic Continuities of Conciliar Congregationalism, 1648-1961"; "A Sure Heritage"	1923-1943, 1960-1964
b. 10, f. 142	"Freedom for Responsibility in American Congregationalism"; "A Husband's Tribute to his Wife"; autobiographical writings; miscellaneous sermon notes	1974-1984, undated
b. 10, f. 142a	"Words of Might" - three months' cycle of Scripture passages; "In My Own Right" - an introduction to personal devotions	undated

**Series IV: Records related to merger forming the United Church of Christ (UCC),
1947-1981, undated**

b. 11, f. 143	Proposals for merger of The Congregational Christian Churches and The Evangelical and Reformed Church	1947-1948
b. 11, f. 144	Defendant's trial brief: Cadman Memorial Congregational Society against Helen Kenyon, Moderator of the General Council of the CCC	1949?
Documents, memos and correspondence		
b. 11, f. 145	1949 February-May	1949 February-May
b. 11, f. 146	1949 August-December	1949 August-December
b. 11, f. 147	1950 January-May	1950 January-May
b. 11, f. 148	1950 June-November	1950 June-November
b. 11, f. 149	1951	1951
b. 11, f. 150	1952	1952
b. 11, f. 151	1953 May-November	1953 May-November
b. 11, f. 152	1953 December	1953 December
b. 11, f. 153	1954 January-February	1954 January-February
b. 12, f. 154	1954 March	1954 March
b. 12, f. 155	1954 April-May	1954 April-May
b. 12, f. 156, 157	1954 June	1954 June
b. 12, f. 158	1954 October-December	1954 October-December
b. 12, f. 159	1955 January-March	1955 January-March
b. 12, f. 160	1955 May-September	1955 May-September
b. 12, f. 161	1955 October-November	1955 October-November
b. 12, f. 162	1955 December	1955 December
b. 12, f. 163	1956 January-February	1956 January-February

Documents, memos and correspondence (continued)

b. 12, f. 164	1956 March-May	1956 March-May
b. 13, f. 165	1956 June-December	1956 June-December
b. 13, f. 166-167	1956	1956
b. 13, f. 168	1957 January-July	1957 January-July
b. 13, f. 169	1957 August-November	1957 August-November
b. 13, f. 170	1957	1957
b. 13, f. 171	1958 January-July	1958 January-July
b. 13, f. 172	1958 August-December	1958 August-December
b. 13, f. 173	1959 January-May	1959 January-May
b. 13, f. 174	1959 June	1959 June
b. 14, f. 175	1959 July-December	1959 July-December
b. 14, f. 176	Documents, opinion poll	1959
b. 14, f. 177	Documents, memos, correspondence, recommendation of New Haven Association, Constitution of UCC	1960 January-July
b. 14, f. 178	1960 September-December	1960 September-December
b. 14, f. 179	Review Committees reports, David Nelson Beach, Jr., report to Board of Deacons of Center Church, New Haven, Center Church Amendment	1960-1961
b. 14, f. 180	1961 January-February	1961 January-February
b. 14, f. 181	1961 March-June	1961 March-June
b. 14, f. 182	1961 July-December	1961 July-December
b. 14, f. 183	1962-1964	1962-1964
b. 14, f. 184	"How Church Union Came" by Malcolm K. Burton, article re: Mayflower Congregation Church lawsuit	1966, undated
b. 15, f. 185- 194	Material re: Congregationalism, including memo of John T. Beach re. misuse of term "congregation", notes of David Nelson Beach, Jr.	1974-1981

b. 16, f. 195- 203 Material re: Congregationalism, merger; notes and drafts of David Nelson Beach, Jr. undated

Series V: Records related to civil rights, 1948-1981, undated

Connecticut Inter-Racial Commission		
b. 17, f. 204	Documents, memos, correspondence	1948-1949
b. 17, f. 205	Conference of Commissions of CT, MA, NJ, NY	1949
b. 17, f. 206-208	Documents, memos, correspondence	1949
b. 17, f. 209	Documents, memos, correspondence	1950 January-May
b. 17, f. 210	Documents, memos, correspondence	1950 June-December
b. 17, f. 211	Documents, memos, correspondence; Education Committee	1950
b. 17, f. 212	Eastern States Conference of Commissions Against Discrimination	1950 June
b. 17, f. 213	Documents, memos, correspondence	1951 January-April
b. 17, f. 214	Documents, memos, correspondence	1951 May-June
b. 17, f. 215	Documents, memos, correspondence	1951 July-December
b. 18, f. 216	Documents, memos, correspondence; Education Committee	1951-1952
Civil Rights Commission		
b. 18, f. 217	Documents, memos, correspondence	1952
b. 18, f. 218	Documents, memos, correspondence; Education Committee, Inter-Group Relations Committee	1952-1953
b. 18, f. 219	Documents, memos, correspondence	1953-1954
b. 18, f. 220	Draft of "Training Negroes in the Skilled Trades in Connecticut"	1954
b. 18, f. 221	Documents, memos, correspondence	1955
b. 18, f. 222	Documents, memos, correspondence	1955
b. 19, f. 224	Documents, memos, correspondence	1955
b. 19, f. 225	Documents, memos, correspondence	1956
b. 19, f. 226	Documents, memos, correspondence, including interview with David Nelson Beach, Jr.	1957
b. 19, f. 227	Documents, memos, correspondence	1958-1959
b. 19, f. 228	Report: "Comparative Study of Negro and White Dropouts in Selected Connecticut High Schools" by Henry G. Stetler	1959
b. 19, f. 229	Documents, memos, correspondence	1960

Writings and collected material

Writings and collected material (continued)

b. 19, f. 230	David Nelson Beach, Jr. writings: "The Federal Civil Rights Commission and Compliance by Conciliation", "The Right of Petition and the Programs of State Public Agencies Involved in the Field of Discrimination"	1957, 1972
b. 19, f. 231	David Nelson Beach, Jr. draft writings on civil rights	undated
b. 19, f. 232	Documents, memos, correspondence	1951-1958
b. 19, f. 233	Documents, memos, correspondence	1963-1966
b. 19, f. 234	Newspaper clippings and magazine articles	1962-1978
b. 19, f. 235	David Nelson Beach, Jr. petition to President Reagan re: right to petition of Iran hostages	1981

Series VI: Biographical documentation, 1898-1985, undated

David Nelson Beach, Jr. biographical material

b. 20, f. 236	Youth	circa 1898-1910
b. 20, f. 237	Yale	1916
b. 20, f. 238	Preparations for France	1917 April-July
b. 20, f. 239	In France with YMCA	1917 August-December
b. 20, f. 240	In France with YMCA and writings about it	1917-1919
b. 20, f. 241	Re: YMCA work in France	1918-1921
b. 20, f. 242	In Maine, re: ordination	1918 August-December
b. 20, f. 243	In Maine, New Haven	1919
b. 20, f. 244	In Guilford	1920
b. 21, f. 245	In Guilford, at Yale Divinity School	1921
b. 21, f. 246	In Guilford, Yale Divinity School	1922
b. 21, f. 247	In Guilford	1923
b. 21, f. 248	In Guilford, Pawtucket, RI	1924
b. 21, f. 249, 250	In Pawtucket	1925-1926
b. 21, f. 251	Personal record books - car expenses, shorthand dictionary	1927-1949
b. 21, f. 252	In Springfield, MA , including controversy with Gov. James Curley	1932, 1936
b. 21, f. 253	In New Haven	1951
b. 21, f. 254	In New Haven	1953-1954
b. 22, f. 255	In New Haven	1955-1958
b. 22, f. 256	In West Dennis, MA	1960
b. 22, f. 257	In West Dennis, MA	1961-1963
b. 22, f. 258	In Connecticut; including autobiographical sketch, celebration of 60th anniversary of ordination; genealogical information	1967-1981
b. 22, f. 259	Account ledger sheets	1911-1927
b. 22, f. 260	Account ledger sheets	1928-1929
b. 22, f. 261	Account ledger sheets	1930-1967
Family memorabilia		
b. 22, f. 262	Marguerite Mills Beach: memorabilia	1905-1916

Family memorabilia (continued)

b. 22, f. 263	Marguerite Mills Beach: memorabilia	1916-1923, 1958
b. 22, f. 264	Photographs: David Nelson Beach, Jr. and family	undated
b. 22, f. 265	Photographs: friends, classmates	1912, 1916, undated
b. 22, f. 265a	Re: John T. Beach and other family members	
Collected material		
b. 23, f. 266-267	Miscellaneous programs, worship materials, notes, poems, clippings	undated
b. 23, f. 268	Maps of France	undated
b. 24, f. 269- 273	Program material from churches served by David Nelson Beach, Jr.	1951-1982
b. 24, f. 274	Rotary Club	1955-1979
b. 24, f. 275	Re: Bangor Theological Seminary	1913-1918
b. 24, f. 276	Re: Bangor Theological Seminary	1954-1957
b. 24, f. 277	Re: Bangor Theological Seminary	1960-1961
b. 24, f. 278	Re: Bangor Theological Seminary	1862-1964
b. 24, f. 279	Re: Bangor Theological Seminary	1965-1979
b. 24, f. 280	Re: Bangor Theological Seminary	1982-1985

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

Civil rights -- Connecticut
Clergy
Congregational churches -- United States
Congregationalism

Names

Beach, David Nelson, 1894-1990

Corporate Bodies

First Church in New Haven (New Haven, Conn.)
National Association of Congregational
Christian Churches (U.S.)
United Church of Christ