

# Traces of the Mount Carmel Community

## Documentation and Access

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Matthew D. Wittmer

*We should remember, we must remember what we've gained. It's important that people are interested. It's God's way of thinking about us.*

Sheila Martin  
Waco Branch Davidian survivor<sup>1</sup>

**ABSTRACT:** This article highlights some of the Waco Branch Davidian material holdings acquired by the Texas Collection at Baylor University and provides general information about the kinds of materials that have been acquired about this community and the siege and fire that occurred in 1993. I cite related materials in other collections to provide an overview of the kinds of records that are accessible, restricted, or inaccessible to the public regarding the David Koresh community and previous generations of religious communities who resided on the Mount Carmel property. To date, the collections at Baylor University and Texas State University–San Marcos are two of the most comprehensive efforts to preserve and provide access to a range of documentation about this community's history.

In the last decade, two university repositories in Texas have acquired material collections pertaining to the history of the Branch Davidians of Waco, as well as copies of various documents related to the 1993 siege, and the events and insights that have developed in the aftermath of the deaths of eighty-six people that occurred between 28 February and 19 April 1993. The collections are the collated results of

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the research efforts of individuals who, for various reasons, have become personally invested in this community and/or its history. Since most of the personal possessions of the community were destroyed in the culmination of events in 1993 (and, for the most part, materials in federal custody are inaccessible to the public), these university collections now function as information resource centers that preserve aspects of the community's history. Collectively, over eighty-three linear feet of materials pertaining to the Mount Carmel community are accessible for research in the collections at Baylor University in Waco and Texas State University–San Marcos. Institutionally, these collections are the most formal efforts to consolidate publicly accessible information about the Mount Carmel community.

## **MOUNT CARMEL COMMUNITY RECORDS**

### **The Texas Collection, Baylor University**

The mission of the Texas Collection at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, is to retain materials relevant to the history of the state. Davidian and Branch Davidian history have been an active part of Waco's history since 1935, when the community resided within the city limits.<sup>2</sup> The Texas Collection has acquired several collections of materials that document various aspects of religious activity at Mount Carmel Center, which is located about eight miles outside the city's eastern border and has been home to Davidian and Branch Davidian communities since 1957. The Branch Davidian holdings at the Texas Collection comprise original (and/or copies of) correspondence from past community members, original printed literature from successive generations, photographs, court transcripts, a variety of periodical and newspaper clippings, audio/video tape evidence, recorded television and independently produced programs/documentaries about the David Koresh (1959–1993) community at Mount Carmel (Koresh's ministry spanned 1983 to 1993),<sup>3</sup> various interview transcripts, manuscripts, and a few artifacts. These materials are open to the public by appointment and can be accessed in a state-of-the-art research room on the second floor of Carroll Library on the Baylor University campus. Although these particular materials are limited in their ability to provide detailed personal information about many of the people who died at Mount Carmel in 1993, they are a valuable cache of evidentiary and informational documentation that captures the religious history of the communities on that property. The David Koresh community gained worldwide attention as a result of the well-publicized Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) raid at the Mount Carmel property on 28 February, and the fifty-one-day FBI siege that ensued until 19 April. Four BATF agents died as a result of the assault on 28 February, and a forensic investigation found



**Fig. 1. Waco Branch Davidian survivors Sheila Martin, Clive Doyle, and Catherine Matteson in the Texas Collection, August 2008. Photo by Matthew Wittmer.**

that an estimated eighty-two members of the Branch Davidian community died as a result of events of the raid, the siege, and the fire on 19 April.<sup>4</sup>

The Branch Davidian holdings at the Texas Collection currently consist of seven primary collections. The descriptions in this paper highlight some of the materials in each of these. This information was acquired by the author during a week-long research visit to the Texas Collection in August 2008 and a follow-up visit in February 2009. My interest in these materials extends from an interest in archives about (and the archiving of materials related to) the Mount Carmel community and in learning more about the community survivors themselves.<sup>5</sup> As part of this visit, I coordinated a meeting between the collection's archivist, Ellen Brown, and Branch Davidian survivors Clive Doyle, Sheila Martin, and Catherine Matteson. These survivors have remained in the Waco area since 1993, but Sheila Martin and Catherine Matteson had never visited the collection to see these materials. Clive Doyle had been there only once before. This meeting was an initial step to acquaint local survivors with the repository's materials and interest in Davidian and Branch Davidian history, a history of which all survivors are an important part. After my review of the material holdings and issues pertaining to accessibility, I provide a few observations about this visit.

The Mark Swett Collection was acquired by the Texas Collection in 2003 and has approximately three linear feet of textual Branch Davidian

materials. These include original issues of the *SHEkinah* newsprint magazines produced by Branch Davidian prophet, Lois Roden (1916–1986),<sup>6</sup> whose leadership of the Branch Davidian community at Mount Carmel followed that of her husband, Branch Davidian prophet Ben Roden (1902–1978).<sup>7</sup> Other materials include the Rodens' correspondence with long-time community member Don Bunds, Ben Roden's scripture lessons from the late 1950s to the early 1960s, and printed tracts from Ben Roden's ministry (which spanned 1955 to 1978) as well as from Lois Roden's ministry (which spanned 1978 to 1986).<sup>8</sup> A copy of the *104th Congress, Second Session, Investigation into the Activities of Federal Law Enforcement Agencies Toward the Branch Davidians, 13th Report* (a printed and bound government document) is also included. Swett's collection contains some correspondence with survivors Jaime Castillo (who passed away in southern California in December 2008 at age 40 from complications of a medical condition), Clive Doyle (who has remained in the Waco area since being acquitted in the criminal trial in 1994), Ruth Riddle (who was deported to Canada following her release from prison in 1997), Renos Avraam (who was released from prison in 2006), Graeme Craddock (who was deported to Australia following his release from prison in 2006), and Livingstone Fagan (who was deported to the United Kingdom after his release from prison in 2007).<sup>9</sup> Fagan's hand-corrected typescript entitled "The Unseen Reality" is in this collection, as is a folder of materials about Don Adair, a Davidian from Victor Houteff's community who started his own Branch Davidian community in South Carolina. (Coincidentally, it was Don's brother, Dale, who was murdered by George Roden, son of Ben and Lois Roden).<sup>10</sup> The Swett Collection contains approximately 450 audiocassette tapes of negotiations between Mount Carmel residents and ATF and FBI negotiators that occurred throughout the siege, as well as recordings the FBI captured of residents' conversations using hidden surveillance devices. These audiotapes were acquired by Swett over a period of years and remain minimally labeled and organized in the manner he initially received them.<sup>11</sup> Additional audio recordings of David Koresh and Ben Roden have been converted to MP3 files that are on compact discs and in varied conditions of usability.

Joe Roberts, author of *Beyond the Flames*,<sup>12</sup> which recounts his perspective of the siege and effort to document the historical aspects of this community as a local outsider to the Mount Carmel community, donated his materials to the Texas Collection and consists of about two linear feet of papers. These include photos taken during and after the siege, two of which are of the Mount Carmel complex from a distance and one is of the fire on 19 April. Also included are: a program from the 1995 memorial service conducted by survivors on the Mount Carmel property; a 1936 letter from Waco's initial Davidian prophet, Victor Houteff (1885–1955),<sup>13</sup> whose Waco-area ministry spanned 1935 to

1955; a bound book-like version of many of Houteff's *Shepherd's Rod* tracts<sup>14</sup>; a Bible signed by the founding Branch Davidian prophet, Ben Roden, to his daughter, Rebekah Kathleen Roden; and self-published literature by Amo Paul Bishop (also known as Amo Bishop Roden). Amo Roden was a common-law wife of George Roden (ca. 1938–1998),<sup>15</sup> the son of Ben and Lois Roden, who renamed the Mount Carmel property "Rodenville" sometime around 1985 up until 1988 when he had primary control of the property.<sup>16</sup> Roberts' collection also includes copies of George Roden's mental health records. Other photos include images of FBI agent Bob Ricks during the siege press briefings and images of the property taken weeks after the fire, when the water tower (which survived the fire) was knocked over and cut up into small pieces.<sup>17</sup> Images from the 1995 memorial service depict Clive Doyle and his mother Edna Doyle (d. 2001)<sup>18</sup> in front of where the building once stood planting a memorial crape myrtle tree for each resident who was killed on the property in 1993.<sup>19</sup> Clive Doyle has labeled the functions of the Mount Carmel buildings on a copy of an aerial photo in Roberts' collection. Many original copies of Lois Roden's booklets and issues of *SHEkinah* magazine are in Roberts' collection, as well as Roberts' interview notes and typescripts of his audio interviews with survivors Sheila Martin and Edna Doyle (as well as George Roden). A hand-bound copy of multiple tracts printed in 1948 at the initial Mount Carmel site (frequently referred to as "Old Mt. Carmel" by survivors) entitled *Llamadas Oportunas* (*Opportune Calls*) is also included.<sup>20</sup>

Associate Professor of Journalism at Baylor University Robert Darden, co-author of *Mad Man in Waco*,<sup>21</sup> contributed about one linear foot of his Branch Davidian research materials to the Texas Collection. These include copies of property maps and legal documentation of George Roden's conflicts with various people and organizations, including David Koresh, the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and the Axtel, Texas, Independent School District. Darden's materials include newspaper clippings about the community and writings produced during Ben and Lois Roden's ministry (1955–1986). "Literary production" papers of Davidian community founder Victor Houteff are included and information about Seventh-day Adventist prophet Ellen G. White have been retained. Interview transcripts from other individuals knowledgeable about the General Association of Branch Davidian Seventh-day Adventist community (the Roden through the Koresh community) include information about or from Glen Green, Bonnie Smith, Sidney Smith, George Saether, Barry McCann, Dan McGee, and Pat Piazza. Undated copies of typescript statements by former Mount Carmel community member Marc Breault reveal his recollections and allegations concerning David Koresh.

Bill Smith (now deceased) was a local Waco businessman who became an advocate for the Mount Carmel community during and after

the siege.<sup>22</sup> Smith's documents at the Texas Collection include one linear foot of copies of articles critical of the federal government's handling of the events of 1993 (such as James Pate's work for *Soldier of Fortune* magazine), and copies of court documents regarding survivors Jaime Castillo, Brad Branch, and Oliver Gyarfas. Telephone transcripts of some calls made by Mount Carmel residents to 911 dispatchers during the 28 February ATF raid are also included, as are copies of statements by former Attorney General Janet Reno and ATF director Steven Higgins made following the 19 April fire. A copy of Harvard Professor of Psychiatry and Law Alan Stone's "Report and Recommendations Concerning the Handling of Incidents Such as the Branch Davidian Standoff in Waco, Texas," originally submitted to Deputy Attorney General Philip Heymann on 8 November 1993, examines how law enforcement strategies "contributed to the tragic ending at Waco" by examining the "possible causal relationships between the FBI's pressure tactics and David Koresh's orders to the Branch Davidians," which Stone claims "official reports have shied away from."<sup>23</sup> Smith's collection also contains approximately forty VHS tapes labeled to contain programs about the siege, including the "Constitutional Foundational Association Theory," "Mt. Carmel: A Day of Information,"<sup>24</sup> prime-time talk shows focused on the events, news coverage recorded during the siege, and videos made of the 19 April 1995 memorial service coordinated by survivors on the Mount Carmel property. These memorial tapes include personal testimonies from survivors Clive Doyle and David Thibodeau, Steve Schneider's defense attorney Jack Zimmerman (who was retained during the siege), and investigative journalist Dick Reavis. Several of the VHS tapes in this collection are minimally labeled and must be viewed to ascertain their contents, which I discovered did not always reflect the handwritten label descriptions. This collection also contains about thirty-five audiocassette recordings of the 911 phone calls made during the 28 February ATF raid, talk show host Ron Engelman's "audio reports,"<sup>25</sup> and Bible study sessions given by Vernon Howell (David Koresh) recorded in the mid-1980s.

Branch Davidian defense attorney Kirk T. Lyons' collection is approximately seven linear feet and includes thirty-three bound transcript volumes of the entire 1994 criminal trial. It also includes copies of the "Fire Development Analysis of Mount Carmel" by James G. Quintiere and Frederick Mowrer (from September 1993; see Fig. 2), hard copy autopsy reports for some of the bodies recovered from the 19 April fire by Tarrant county medical examiners,<sup>26</sup> and a variety of additional independent investigative reports and articles regarding the events of the siege and activities that occurred on 19 April.

Two copies of independent Branch Davidian advocate Ron Cole's work, "Sinister Twilight," are included, one of which has survivor Catherine Matteson's address label still tacked inside.<sup>27</sup> Lyons's collection

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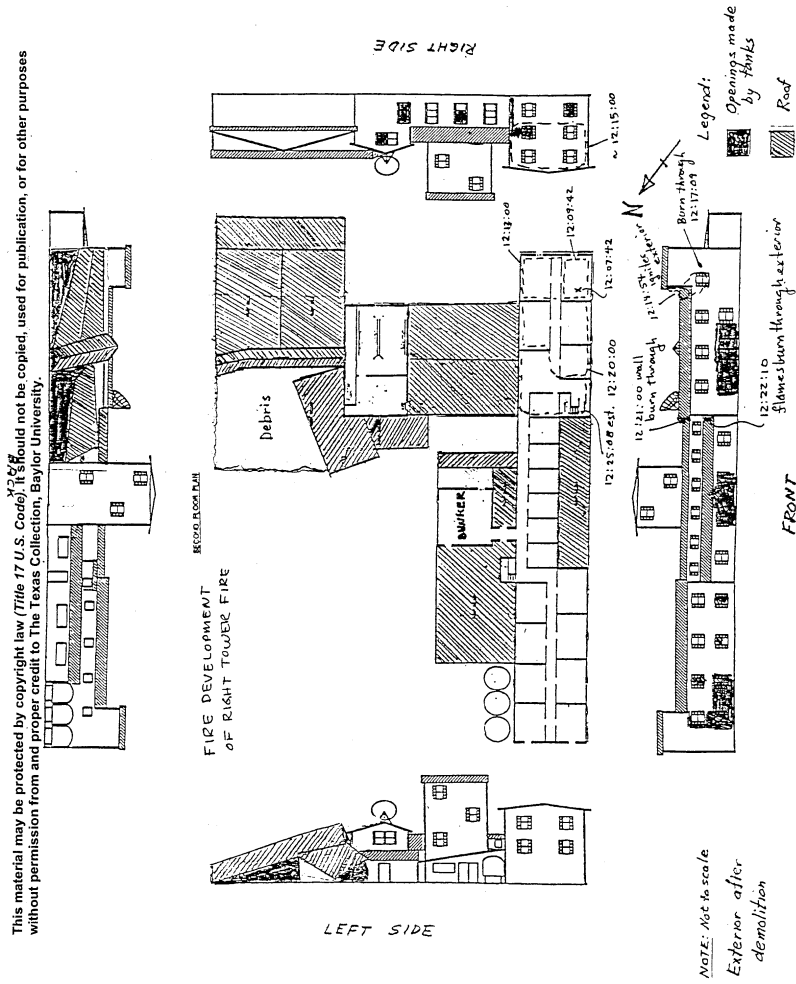


Fig. 2. One of several different illustrations in the September 1993 "Fire Development Analysis of Mount Carmel" by James G. Quintiere and Frederick Mowrer in the Kirk T. Lyons Collection, Texas Collection, Baylor University, Waco, Texas.



also contains a copy of the “Sun Reflection Geometry Report” by Maurice Cox, which examines technical interpretation assertions about aerial F.L.I.R. (Forward Looking InfraRed) imagery that the FBI recorded during the tank and CS gas assault at Mount Carmel hours prior to the fire. Other items include political activist Carol Moore’s manuscript, “The Massacre of the Branch Davidians: A Study of Government Violation of Rights, Excessive Force and Cover Up,”<sup>28</sup> a copy of survivor Paul Fatta’s sentence appeal, and two United States District Court affidavits filed by survivors Clive Doyle and David Koresh’s mother, Bonnie Haldeman (1944–2009),<sup>29</sup> which support the survivors’ motion requesting that Judge Walter S. Smith, Jr. be disqualified from presiding over the civil trial due to the judge’s prejudicial statements (see Fig. 3).

Don Marion, a KXXV-TV reporter, contributed his handwritten notes taken during the attempted murder trial of Vernon Howell (David Koresh), in 1988. Less than a linear foot in extent, I found many of these notes illegible. Amo Bishop Roden has contributed about the same amount of materials, consisting of her own detailed interpretations and explanations of Branch Davidian theology, as well as her personal experiences of being around and on the Mount Carmel property at various times between the 1980s and 2003 (she was not a member of the Koresh community). Amo Roden has been donating copies of her self-published, typescript writings (which include copies of her own photos) to this repository since 1998.<sup>30</sup>

Additional audio and video materials included in the Branch Davidian holdings at Baylor University include a 1978 audio recording of prophet Ben Roden’s funeral and a somewhat grainy but viewable copy of the aerial F.L.I.R. footage FBI agents shot on 19 April 1993. This video reveals a virtually uncut progression of the tank activity at Mount Carmel, the duration of the fire, and individuals walking around the building site as the fire subsided. A 1987 VHS Bible study video of a then-bearded Vernon Howell (David Koresh) is included, as is a 1995 videotaped lecture given by David Thibodeau in Independence, Missouri, about his experiences at Mount Carmel and as a survivor of 19 April. The initial red jacket VHS cut of Michael McNulty and William Gazecki’s award-winning documentary *Waco: The Rules of Engagement* (1997)<sup>31</sup> is in the collection, as is a VHS copy of McNulty’s *The F.L.I.R. Project* (2001), which is a response to the F.L.I.R. reenactment footage created during the 2000 civil trial and Senator John C. Danforth’s investigation interpretations of the F.L.I.R. imagery taken of Mount Carmel on 19 April.

Other documentaries on VHS are also included in the Texas Collection holdings, such as *Waco: A New Revelation* (a McNulty film directed by Jason Van Vleet and released in 1999), Linda D. Thompson’s *Waco: The Big Lie* (1993), and Richard Mosley’s *Day 51: The True Story of*



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3. The only reason for the existence of our Church was for religious purposes. Mt. Carmel was a place of Bible study and worship. A great part of each day was spend in Bible readings and discussions. It was for the purpose of studying the Bible that members came from many countries. In order to facilitate this study many made Mt. Carmel their temporary home.

4. We never considered ourselves a "cult." We understood this was a very negative term. We believed in the right of everyone to choose the religion they believed in. Our faith was a subject of constant discussion and analysis. Our members were free to choose and exercise their religious faith. This created vital religious discussion and deep faith.

5. We never heard the Church center called a compound until this tragedy. It was a religious center for worship, living, work, education and recreation. It is outrageous and ridiculous, and certainly contemptuous, to call the center a fortress. It was church and home. To say the "fort style" of the Church was a reflection of David's apocalyptic mentality is not at all true. Many people contributed to the way the Church building grew, like Topsy perhaps, but serviceable for religious services and studies with its large chapel and adjacent areas for study and prayer; for living with large kitchen and dining room areas and small private family quarters with a gym, pool and outdoor areas and equipment for recreation. It was made of cheap wood, homemade construction and not fancy, but we loved it.

6. David was a serious Bible scholar from childhood. He read and discussed the Bible and religion constantly. It was real and important to him. He could quote more, and more accurately, from the Bible than anyone I ever knew. After all he was surrounded by people who read the Bible every day often for hours. Of course David was thoroughly familiar with the Golden Rule and often discussed it. He believed in it. Judge Smith doesn't know anything about David's religion and has no basis to condemn it or to call it paramilitary, or to call David a false prophet. Our Church believes in prophecy and prophets. We search the Bible for the truth. We love our children, try to teach them to be good people and Judge Smith has no right to judge David or our religion. We will let the Lord tell us who the true prophets are.

7. David changed his name from Vernon Wayne Howell to David Koresh, under God's guidance, partly because of Bible prophecy having to do with the last days, and partly to help forward his religious music. The name David Koresh had symbolic meaning for this time. He changed his name legally down at the Courthouse. Judge Smith has no right to place a slur on his

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**Fig. 3. One page excerpt of "Affidavit of Bonnie Clark Haldeman," Appendix C in the *Brief of Amicus Curiae in Support of Joint Petition for Writ of Certiorari*, The Supreme Court of the United States October Term, 1996, the Kirk T. Lyons Collection, Texas Collection, Baylor University, Waco, Texas.**

*Waco* (1994), as well as many televised segments that include interviews. Some materials that were once available to the public through a Visitor's Center Museum at Mount Carmel (maintained by Clive Doyle between 1998 and 2006) are also in the Branch Davidian holdings at the Texas Collection. These include compilations of David Koresh's music and sermons, as well as a VHS video of residents and children that Mount Carmel residents made inside the residence for the FBI during the siege (titled "Inside Mount Carmel").

### **DICK J. REAVIS COLLECTION, TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY–SAN MARCOS**

Another sizable collection of related materials is housed in the Southwestern Writers Collection (SWWC) at Texas State University–San Marcos. In 2006 the SWWC officially processed sixty-five boxes of material that investigative journalist and author Dick J. Reavis assembled while writing his book, *The Ashes of Waco*.<sup>32</sup> This collection includes dozens of audiocassette recordings of the FBI negotiations with Mount Carmel residents, which processing archivist Joel Minor reports have been the most popular items requested by researchers.<sup>33</sup> Among other materials, it also includes negotiation transcripts, personal correspondence and writings of Branch Davidians, and a wide variety of videos. These materials are available for public review and can be accessed by making an appointment through the SWWC archivists. A finding aid (i.e., an indexed list of collection holdings) for Reavis's material is publicly available online and provides informative descriptions about the collection.<sup>34</sup> In 2008 the SWWC received a \$20,000 grant from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission to create an online Web site exhibit and improve Internet access to Reavis's Branch Davidian research. In October 2008, Minor and Digital Repository Intern Kurt Johnson established a blog to share progress on the project with the public.<sup>35</sup> The online exhibit will include a detailed descriptive record of each item in the collection and digitized surrogates of selected items.

### **RESTRICTED AND INACCESSIBLE RECORDS**

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in College Park, Maryland, holds 155 video cassette recordings that contain "footage used as evidence" in the 1995 United States Senate's Committee on the Judiciary Investigation into the events "at Waco." Between the Senate and the House of Representatives, 615 audio cassettes are also held pertaining to these congressional investigations.<sup>36</sup> Citing "National Security" and "House Rule VII," all of these tapes have been "Fully Restricted" from public access for fifty years, including Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.<sup>37</sup> With the projected functionality of

an analog cassette averaging approximately twenty-five years, these tapes are being held twice the length of their life expectancy without access or use. Whether these records have been slated for migration to another format remains a decision that NARA will most likely balance with the tens of thousands of other cassettes in their holdings, which span fourteen regional facilities outside of the College Park location.

The Texas Rangers used to possess “twelve tons of materials . . . video tapes, audio tapes, documents, and materials recovered from the fire,”<sup>38</sup> part of which independent researcher Michael McNulty was able to access and examine, and which formed the basis for the documentary, *Waco: A New Revelation*. However, the only remaining evidence the Texas Rangers retain are their official reports which are freely accessible online.<sup>39</sup> Michael McNulty and Clive Doyle both believe that the majority of physical evidence used in both trials, and which was held first by the Texas Rangers and later by the courts, was likely destroyed following the 2000 civil trial.<sup>40</sup>

Both the ATF and FBI were well equipped with video and still cameras to record their activities on the Mount Carmel property during the initial raid and the siege that followed, yet despite repeated requests much of this material has never been produced by either agency.<sup>41</sup> During the wrongful death lawsuits that followed the fire, Freedom of Information Act requests from attorney David Hardy revealed that the FBI possessed “over 171,000 pages of Waco written materials, plus hundreds of video tapes, thousands of audio tapes, and over 10,000 photographs [pertaining to the events at Mt. Carmel] . . . The military admits to [having] 30,000 pages, of which no fewer than 7,000 were, it insisted, classified as military secrets . . . [and] the White House itself admitted to [having] 580 pages, part of which it insisted was covered by a claim of executive privilege.”<sup>42</sup> Moreover, since the raid and siege, the Department of Justice has repeatedly refused to cooperate with ongoing court mandates to provide over 7,000 records from the events at Mount Carmel.<sup>43</sup> Former Attorney General Janet Reno had to direct United States Marshals to “take custody of” Hostage Rescue Team evidence from FBI headquarters due to the FBI’s uncooperative responses to government investigations.<sup>44</sup>

## **PUBLISHED ORAL HISTORIES AND PERSPECTIVES OF LOCAL SURVIVORS**

Mount Carmel community survivors Bonnie Haldeman, Sheila Martin, Clive Doyle, and Catherine Matteson have each worked individually with Catherine Wessinger since 2004 to create recorded oral histories that Wessinger has carefully transcribed and is in the process of editing for publication.<sup>45</sup> These oral histories and survivor accounts are valuable narratives that contextualize events in ways that historical writings

and official reports often cannot.<sup>46</sup> In this respect, the survivors's published oral histories are contributing to the "raw data of historical scholarship . . . and expand the limits of our historical knowledge"<sup>47</sup> about the Mount Carmel community.

During their visit to the Texas Collection at Baylor in August 2008, Clive Doyle, Sheila Martin, and Catherine Matteson each shared insights with the author about many items in the holdings at Baylor University. This information, if captured in some way, would be valuable for researchers, but it has not been documented in any formal way. Listening to their insights about the materials, I realized that these collections—while about Branch Davidian history—are not representative of the survivors' identities. Even how this documentation is preserved for research (organized in boxes that are kept away from general view, retrievable only by research request) runs counter to these survivors's desire to display documents in an accessible space such as they had in their Visitors' Center Museum on the Mount Carmel property. For them, exhibiting documents publicly was an important way to memorialize and give voice to so many of their family and friends who have each been silenced forever by their traumatic and untimely deaths. Sharing their historical materials in a publicly exhibited memorial space is especially important to Clive Doyle and Sheila Martin and this is important to acknowledge because survivor perspectives are a critical component in understanding the Mount Carmel community.

### **CLOSING REMARKS**

Most of the Mount Carmel community's individual possessions were destroyed in the 19 April fire,<sup>48</sup> and survivors have become part of a diaspora that spans four countries on three continents. A significant amount of records pertaining to the 1993 events at Mount Carmel remain restricted or inaccessible for public review. The collections of materials acquired by the Texas Collection at Baylor University and by the Southwestern Writers Collection at Texas State University–San Marcos, provide comparatively rare access to collated documentation about this community and its history. It is evidentiary and informational in scope and is accessible to the public. These collections have largely been the result of independent research efforts and now constitute the largest collated body of accessible information about the Mount Carmel community. As these collections are accessed and expanded, perspectives on the community (as well as the various efforts to understand the events of 1993) will be afforded an opportunity to broaden.

My ongoing research has also revealed that informative documentation exists in the personal collections of the surviving members of the Koresh community, with others who participated in the events of 1993, and with independent researchers who have exchanged information to

some degree with these two groups of people. Each of these personal collections, much like those retained in the repositories discussed in this essay, have the potential to shed further light on both the community and the events of 1993. Identifying, retaining, and affording public access to these materials will help ensure that society has access to records of the history of, the issues related to, and many people affected by the Waco tragedy of 1993, as well as the history of Davidian and Branch Davidian communities on the Mount Carmel property that preceded this tragedy.<sup>49</sup>

*Research of Branch Davidian materials at the Texas Collection was made possible in part through a Burney Parker fellowship the author received from the Texas Collection. I wish to extend a special thanks to Ellen Brown and her entire staff at the Texas Collection for this fellowship and for providing nothing short of excellent research accommodations. Thank you to Catherine Wessinger, Douglas Cowan, Rebecca Moore, and Ken Fawcett for their helpful comments in developing this paper, as well as Joel Minor and Kurt Johnson. This piece would not have been possible without the ongoing encouragement and insight from Catherine Wessinger, whose work to document the survivors's voices encourages me. Lastly, I would like to thank Clive Doyle, Sheila Martin, Catherine Matteson—and the late Bonnie Haldeman and Edna Doyle—each of whom graciously opened their doors to share their memories, hopes, and thoughts about their family and community.*

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Sheila Martin, interview with the author, Waco, Texas, 7 August 2008.

<sup>2</sup> For a mapping of events and timeline of the religious ministries that have occurred on this property, see the annotated “Chart A” available on the author’s Web site. Matthew D. Wittmer, “Memorializing Mount Carmel Center in Waco, Texas,” <[www.stormbound.org/waco.html](http://www.stormbound.org/waco.html)>.

<sup>3</sup> According to survivors, not all members of the community in David Koresh’s ministry defined themselves as “Branch Davidians.” Therefore in this essay, this community is referred to as the “Mount Carmel” or “Koresh” community. While Vernon Howell (who changed his name to David Koresh in 1990) arrived at Mount Carmel in 1981, it was over the next four years (as he made three pilgrimage trips to Israel) that he received his message from God. Clive Doyle, telephone conversation with the author, 9 November 2008.

<sup>4</sup> Michael A. Graham, “Forensic Pathology Evaluation of the 1993 Branch Davidian Deaths and Other Pertinent Issues (Appendix J),” 26 September 2000, 1–151, submitted for the full report: The Office of Special Counsel John C. Danforth, *Final Report to the Deputy Attorney General: Concerning the 1993*

*Confrontation at the Mt. Carmel Complex, Waco, Texas, Section (e)*, Pursuant to Order no. 2256-99, 8 November 2000.

<sup>5</sup> In 1999 I created a wooden model of the Mount Carmel Center complex, which survivor Clive Doyle installed in a Visitors' Center Museum he helped build and manage on the property between 1998 and 2006. The museum exhibited photographs, artifacts, literature, and served as a resource center to memorialize the community under David's ministry, as well as the events of 1993. Clive Doyle and I have maintained contact since I began visiting in 2000 and coordinated the installation of my model. Since Clive Doyle moved off the property in 2006, local survivors no longer have materials exhibited or available for distribution in this center (the model has been removed as well). See Wittmer, "Chart A" (note 2 above), for further details about the property history.

<sup>6</sup> Lois Roden's birth year is cited in Kenneth G. C. Newport, *The Branch Davidians of Waco: The History and Beliefs of an Apocalyptic Sect* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 157. Her death date is confirmed by Clive Doyle, who vividly recalls learning about her death while living in a camp near Palestine, Texas, where David Koresh's community resided between 1984 and 1988. Clive Doyle, telephone conversation with the author, 9 November 2008.

<sup>7</sup> Ben Roden's birth is cited by Newport, *Branch Davidians of Waco*, 117. Ben Roden's death date is confirmed by a digitized and dated audio recording of his funeral in the Branch Davidian holdings at the Texas Collection, Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

<sup>8</sup> For an annotated chronology of the ministry dates of the prophets on and acknowledged by local Mount Carmel community survivors, (see note 2) Wittmer, "Chart A."

<sup>9</sup> Release dates were obtained from Federal Bureau of Prisons, "Inmate Locator," United States Department of Justice, <[www.bop.gov/iloc2/LocateInmate.jsp](http://www.bop.gov/iloc2/LocateInmate.jsp)>. Deportation information was communicated to the author by Clive Doyle over the last year in various personal calls and visits.

<sup>10</sup> Clive Doyle, telephone conversation with the author, 17 January 2009. George Roden was tried and found guilty for the murder of Dale Adair. A seven-hour oral history of Don Adair, with an accompanying fourteen-page transcript can be found in Baylor University's Institute for Oral History. See <<http://contentdm.baylor.edu/index.php>> and search "AdairDW".

<sup>11</sup> Mark Swett assisted authors Dick Reavis, James Tabor, and researcher Michael McNulty with research on their respective projects about the events at Mount Carmel and acquired many copies of cassette tapes during these collaborations. Many of these are copies that the United States government supplied Branch Davidian defense attorneys during the criminal trial. Swett regards himself as one of the foremost experts/investigators who has processed and analyzed information from audio recordings made during the siege. He is cited four times in Appendix G of John C. Danforth's 2000 investigative report entitled "Network International Forensic Science Division: Title III, FLIR Tape and FBI Video Analysis, Events at Waco, Texas, 19th of April 1993," prepared for the Office of Special Counsel by C. M. Mills I.Eng. F.IIE (elec).AM.IAFP: 5,10 (see note 4 for full Danforth report citation). Mark Swett, telephone interview with the author, 16 January 2009.

<sup>12</sup> J. J. Robertson, *Beyond the Flames* (San Diego: Promotion Publishing, 1996). “J. J. Robertson” is likely a pen name for Joe Roberts, as the materials in the Joe Roberts Collection are the source materials for the book by J. J. Robertson.

<sup>13</sup> Newport, *Branch Davidians of Waco*, 47.

<sup>14</sup> Several Davidians in Houteff’s ministry had Houteff’s loose-leaf tracts bound together into single, book-like units. Reproductions of these tracts were later compiled and published in book format in 1931. Clive Doyle, telephone interview with the author, 17 January 2009. Citation for the book format version is: Victor T. Houteff, *The Shepherd’s Rod: The 144,000 of Revelation—Call for Reformation* (Los Angeles: Universal Publishing Association, 1931).

<sup>15</sup> Newport cites George’s birth and death dates in *The Branch Davidians of Waco*, 117, 131. According to her typescript, “The Second Standoff,” which I obtained from her in early 2009, Amo Roden states she and George created their own marriage contract on 21 October 1987. A copy of this 144-page document is also in the Amo Roden Collection, Texas Collection, Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

<sup>16</sup> Alan Nelson and Sandra Gines, “Crying in the Wilderness: A Religious Commune Sets Up a Dwelling Place in the Woods Amid a Struggle between Rival Prophets,” *Waco Tribune-Herald*, 17 January 1988, in the Robert Darden Collection, Texas Collection, Baylor University, Waco, Texas; Newport, *Branch Davidians of Waco*, 157.

<sup>17</sup> Ken Fawcett, personal interview with the author, 26 April 2009. Fawcett photographed the destruction of the water tower, which occurred just after the first memorial that was held in May 1993. He shared this documentation with the author during this visit. He also photographed the simultaneous destruction of a 1968 Chevy winch truck on the property that was also cut up into small pieces. Fawcett states that Mount Carmel community member Rita Riddle, with whom he had frequent contact after she exited the residence in March 1993, ordered the destruction of both the tower and the truck so that, according to her, the scrap could be sold to provide defense attorneys with some financial compensation. Fawcett photographed Peter Gent’s attorney Kirk Lyons, as well as local resident and *Beyond the Flames* author, Joe Roberts, on the property the day of the destruction. Roberts and Lyons had the roof and hatch section of the water tower, as well as the circular plywood floor of the water tower’s interior fourth level (which had Peter Gent’s blood on it), lifted into a pickup truck and then driven off the property. The destruction of the water tower, as with the elusive remaining physical evidence, has not been officially documented anywhere, which leaves questions about the reasons for its destruction.

<sup>18</sup> Edna Doyle passed away in July 2001 (Clive Doyle, telephone interview with the author, 5 July 2001). Edna is buried on the Mount Carmel property alongside a few others in a small cemetery the community maintained, which can be seen southeast just past the front gate to the property’s driveway.

<sup>19</sup> I documented the survivors’s original arrangement of the memorial trees and name stones and have posted a map and rubbings taken of each memorial stone on my website, <[www.stormbound.org/waco.html](http://www.stormbound.org/waco.html)>, as well as graves for the community members in the paupers’s field area in Restland Cemetery, Waco, Texas. Rick Donaldson, a Texan local to the Dallas area who has been



involved in promoting awareness about misinformation communicated during the siege, helped spearhead the planting of these trees (Ken Fawcett, personal interview with the author, Los Angeles, 25 April 2009). Current property resident Charles Pace (who was not a member of the Koresh community but who has resided on the property since around 1995) removed all the stones from these trees in 2006 (Cindy V. Culp, "Branch Davidians Caught in Yet Another Power Struggle," *Waco Tribune-Herald* [20 April 2003]: 1A, 6A) at which time he destroyed David Koresh's tree and name stone. Sometime between March and April 2009, Pace uprooted each of the remaining crape myrtle trees, cut all of them short, and replanted the roots along the property's gravel driveway, which extends from Double EE Road to the chapel that was built in 2001 (personal visits to the property since 2000 and recently in August 2008, and February and April 2009).

<sup>20</sup> This book of bound tracts may consist of translations of Houteff's "Shepherd's Rod" tracts, as Houteff had these translated into to Spanish and Ukrainian. Many Canadian Davidians in his congregation were of Ukrainian descent and he also reached out to those who spoke Spanish (Clive Doyle, telephone interview with the author, 17 January 2009).

<sup>21</sup> Brad Baily and Bob Darden, *Mad Man in Waco* (Waco, Tex.: WRS Publishing, 1993).

<sup>22</sup> Clive Doyle remembers Bill Smith as a "patriot type" who sold VHS copies of Richard Mosley's *Day 51* documentary and other items immediately following the siege (Clive Doyle, telephone interview with the author, 17 January 2009).

<sup>23</sup> Alan A. Stone, "Report and Recommendations Concerning the Handling of Incidents Such As the Branch Davidian Standoff in Waco Texas," November 8, 1993, for Deputy Attorney General Philip Heymann (Section I. Preamble and Section IV. Analysis). A 10 November 1993 version of this report, which is almost identical to the 8 November version, is available online at PBS, "Report and Recommendations Concerning the Handling of Incidents Such As the Branch Davidian Standoff in Waco Texas," *Frontline: Waco—The Inside Story*, <[www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/waco/stonerpt.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/waco/stonerpt.html)>, accessed 7 June 2009.

<sup>24</sup> The "Constitutional Foundational Association Theory" program began being created on 16 March 1993 to report on misinformation about the initial evidence of the raid. Although it was privately distributed about one week after the fire, the intent behind creating this program during the siege was to distribute it on 19 April in hopes that public reaction would be so significant that it would be widely broadcast and provide hope for those inside Mount Carmel who were listening to radio coverage. However, the assault and fire changed this (Ken Fawcett, personal interview with the author, 9 May 2009). It was Ken Fawcett who, by speaking on the Ron Engelman talk radio show during the siege, suggested that Mount Carmel residents rotate their satellite dish back and forth to communicate with the outside world—which they did. Peter J. Brown, "On the Trial in Texas," *ONSTAT: America's Weekly Satellite Guide*, 24–30 May 1993: C10–C12. Ken Fawcett spoke at "Mt. Carmel: A Day of Information," narrated the program "Constitutional Foundational Association Theory," and recorded continuous news feed footage that was being transmitted via satellite during the siege.

<sup>25</sup> Ron Engelman (spelled Engleman in various sources) passed away on 29 August 2007 and was acknowledged at the survivors's 19 April 2009 memorial for

his work in helping expose misinformation during the siege. A video montage of photographs of Engelman's last days is posted on YouTube: Lilz32b, "Remembering One of Radio's Finest-A Daughter's Tribute," <[www.youtube.com/watch?v=nq\\_FE-pYJsY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nq_FE-pYJsY)>, accessed 7 June 2009.

<sup>26</sup> A more extensive listing of autopsy reports that matches the selected hard copies at Baylor University can be found at Carol A. Valentine, "List of Autopsy Reports: Provided by the Justice of the Peace, McLennan County, Precinct 2," Waco Electronic Museum, <[www.public-action.com/SkyWriter/WacoMuseum/death/map/d\\_list00.html](http://www.public-action.com/SkyWriter/WacoMuseum/death/map/d_list00.html)>, founded in 1996 (accessed 7 June 2009). The Web site includes autopsy photographs and related testimony transcript excerpts from the criminal trial.

<sup>27</sup> An article about Ron Cole is featured in Alex Heard, "Apocalypse Soon: Ron Cole Had a Revolutionary Web Site, a Cache of Automatic Weapons, and a Millennialist Dream to Overthrow the Government," *Wired*, February 1999, <[www.wired.com/wired/archive/7.02/cole.html](http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/7.02/cole.html)>, accessed 7 June 2009.

<sup>28</sup> Published as Carol Moore, *The Davidian Massacre: Disturbing Questions about Waco which Must Be Answered* (Franklin, Tenn.: Legacy Communications and Gun Owners Foundation, 1995); available online at <<http://carolmoore.net/waco/>>, accessed 7 June 2009.

<sup>29</sup> Bonnie Haldeman was stabbed to death on 23 January 2009, and the author attended her funeral in Chandler, Texas, on 26 January 2009. Haldeman's sister, Beverly Clark, is in custody at the time of this writing and has been charged with Haldeman's death.

<sup>30</sup> Ellen Brown, Texas Collection Archivist, personal email to the author, 25 November 2008. Amo Roden now maintains her own Web site: "AMO RODEN HERSELF," <[www.amoroden.com](http://www.amoroden.com)>.

<sup>31</sup> This version of *Waco: The Rules of Engagement* is approximately twenty-five minutes longer than the more widely distributed Somford version. The red jacket version is also edited differently than the Somford version, which went on to win several awards. Michael McNulty, personal email to the author, 19 April 2000.

<sup>32</sup> Dick Reavis, *The Ashes of Waco: An Investigation* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995).

<sup>33</sup> Joel Minor, SWWC Archivist, telephone interview with the author, 24 September 2008.

<sup>34</sup> The Wittliff Collections, "Dick J. Reavis Papers," Southwestern Writers Collection, Alkek Library, Texas State University–San Marcos, Collection #086, 103 boxes (51 linear feet), <<http://alkek.library.txstate.edu/swwc/archives/writers/reavis.html>>.

<sup>35</sup> The Wittliff Collections, "Ashes of Waco: A blog about the digitization and online presentation of archival materials in the Dick J. Reavis Papers," Southwestern Writers Collection, Alkek Library, Texas State University–San Marcos, <<http://alkeklibrarynews.typepad.com/ashesofwaco>>. Entries on the blog include an audio recording of Clive Doyle's initial speech at the 19 April 2009 memorial.

<sup>36</sup> Senate materials are ARC ID #657591, #657590. Both series belong to Record Group 46. House materials are ARC ID #1667879, belonging to Record Group

233. Proof of these holdings is available via the National Archives and Records Administration's Archival Records Catalog (ARC) at <[www.archives.gov/research/arc](http://www.archives.gov/research/arc)>, accessed 7 June 2009.

<sup>37</sup> Once the records of the House of Representatives are archived, "the Clerk of the House is responsible for them. Any overriding of the standard access terms as prescribed in House Rule VII must be done by the Clerk." As for the Senate records, only the creating committee can change the access policy. Kristen Wilhelm of the Center for the Legislative Archives at NARA, personal email to the author, 5 May 2009.

<sup>38</sup> David T. Hardy and Rex Kimball, *This is Not an Assault: Penetrating the Web of Official Lies Regarding the Waco Incident*, (Tinicum, Penn.: Xlibris Corporation, 2001), 88–89.

<sup>39</sup> Linda Block, Texas Department of Public Safety Public Information Officer, personal email to the author, 13 October 2008. The Texas Rangers report can be found at: <[www.txdps.state.tx.us/director\\_staff/public\\_information/branch\\_davidian/indexfirst.htm](http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/director_staff/public_information/branch_davidian/indexfirst.htm)>, accessed 7 June 2009.

<sup>40</sup> Clive Doyle, telephone interview with the author, 11 October 2008; Michael McNulty, telephone interview with the author, 9 October 2008.

<sup>41</sup> Hardy and Kimball, *This Is Not an Assault*, 34.

<sup>42</sup> Hardy and Kimball, *This Is Not an Assault*, 107.

<sup>43</sup> Lee Hancock, "U.S. Warned to Release Waco Siege Documents: Judge Again Threatens Government with Contempt," *Dallas Morning News*, 3 November 1999, <[www.mcsn.org/waco24.html](http://www.mcsn.org/waco24.html)>. Research materials collected by reporter Lee Hancock have been placed in the Southwestern Writers Collection at Texas State University-San Marcos.

<sup>44</sup> Elaine Shannon, "Feuding over Waco: Sects, Files and Videotape Fuel the Face-off between Justice and the FBI over the Branch Davidians," *Time*, 13 September 1999, 29–30; Paul Craig Roberts, "The Waco Coverup Begins to Unravel: Lawyers and Investigators involved in the Wrongful Suits Say They Have Powerful Evidence that the Federal Government is Guilty of Criminal Assault, Criminal Negligence, and Reckless Endangerment," *Washington Times*, 4 August 1999.

<sup>45</sup> The accounts given by Bonnie Haldeman and Sheila Martin have been published in Bonnie Haldeman, *Memories of the Branch Davidians: The Autobiography of David Koresh's Mother*, ed. Catherine Wessinger (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2007); Sheila Martin, *When They Were Mine: Memoirs of a Branch Davidian Wife and Mother*, ed. Catherine Wessinger (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2009). Transcripts of interviews with Catherine Matteson have been placed in the Texas Collection, Baylor University. Catherine Wessinger and Matthew Wittmer are currently editing thirty-four transcripts of interviews with Clive Doyle for a forthcoming autobiography.

<sup>46</sup> Thad Sitton, George Mehaffy, and O. L. Davis, Jr., *Oral History: A Guide for Teachers and Others* (Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 1983), 11; John C. Danforth's final report cites survivor David Thibodeau's published account (with Leon Whiteson), *A Place Called Waco: A Survivor's Story* (New York: Public Affairs, 1999) as a source that Special Counsel investigators consulted concerning the events that occurred at Mount Carmel in 1993.

<sup>47</sup> Sitton, Mehaffy and Davis, Jr., *Oral History*, 4.

<sup>48</sup> Clive Doyle has told the author many times over the years that in addition to the enormous loss of life that occurred between 28 February and 19 April 1993, all personal effects owned by the community at Mount Carmel were destroyed in the fire, leaving little if any physical record (i.e., photos and other records) of those who lived in the building. The catalyst for the Visitors' Center Museum was to provide a space that exhibited photographs and materials from survivors, surviving family members, and the public about the Mount Carmel community—and the events of 1993. Artifacts recovered on the property were also exhibited. This exhibit was removed in 2006 when Clive Doyle left the property and moved to Waco. The building that housed the exhibit has not been utilized for anything since that time. Personal visits to the property between 2000 and 2009 confirm this.

<sup>49</sup> This is especially important in light of the recent and untimely deaths of survivors Bonnie Haldeman and Jaime Castillo, as well as the deaths of others involved with the community or events. People might not be aware of the importance that their own records, photos, and materials can contribute to the accessible information preserved in repositories dedicated to the Mount Carmel community history in Waco, which is extremely important to the history of the state of Texas, law enforcement, religious studies, and the sociology of religion.