

Inventory of the

Biester-Davis
Belvidere-Elgin, Illinois

Papers

In the
Regional History Center

RC 35

INTRODUCTION

This collection was donated to the Northern Illinois Regional History Center by Miss Jamie E. Davis, Fairdale, Illinois, on June 22, 1978.

Property rights in the collection belong to the Regional History Center; literary rights are dedicated to the public. There are no restrictions on access to materials in the collection.

Linear feet of shelf space: .25
Number of containers: 1
Northern Illinois Regional History Center
Collection 35

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The materials in this collection document the perspective held by two individuals regarding the practice of law, national politics, prohibition and various issues of moral integrity during the years 1885-1887.

File folder 1 contains genealogical and biographical material relating to the Davis family. Also included is a typescript copy of the Biester letters to Davis. File folder 2 contains the holograph copies of the Biester letters to Davis. File folder 3 contains a letter and several addresses written by James Davis while he was studying law in Chicago.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

James E. Davis (1860-1888), son of Carl Ludwig Davis and Rose Newman Davis, was born in Flora Township, Illinois, and schooled in Belvidere. After completing his secondary education, he attended the Union College of Law of the University of Chicago and Northwestern University from which he graduated in 1886. The young attorney then journeyed to the Dakota Territory (Huron, S.D.) to practice his profession. One year later he married Viola Van Voorhees in Fielding (Fairdale), Illinois, on July 6, 1887, and they returned together to make their homestead in Carthage, Dakota (near Mitchell, South Dakota). James Davis caught pneumonia during that winter and succumbed to it April 2, 1888, just shy of two months before the birth of his only child, Jamie Elizabeth Davis.

William Biester (1863-1937), son of Christopher and Elizabeth Biester, was born on a farm near Elgin, Illinois, and graduated from South Belvidere High School in 1883. For a short time he was a school teacher in DeKalb County and then took up the study of law, passing his bar examination in 1887. He spent his career as a practicing attorney in Belvidere, Illinois, where he gained prominence in handling cases involving large property interests.

Davis and Biester became friends in high school.

SUBJECT TRACINGS

Belvidere (Ill.)
Biester, William
Davis, James E.
Van Vorhees Family

COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
1	1	Davis Family related genealogy, photographs, typewritten transcript of letters in folder 2
	2	William Biester letters to James Davis, 46 pages; photograph, 1885
	3	James Davis, addresses, letter to relative, 21 pages, 1886
Oversize Drawer 3	13	Chicago Exposition Poster, ca. 1893 Ad: No-To-Bac and Segel Cooper Store
Artifact Room		Glass sign, Wm. Biester, professional shingle used by Biester while practicing law