



**OHIO GENEALOGICAL  
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## OGS FINDING AIDS

When citing materials from this collection in your research, please include the following in your bibliography:

Item name or title. Collection title, MSS number, box number, file number, item number (if available). Lyle H. West Archives, Ohio Genealogical Society, Bellville, Ohio.

### MSS 007 files 1-3

**Title:** Benson Family Papers, Guernsey County, Ohio

**Location:** Ohio Genealogical Society, Lyle H. West Archives, 611 SR 97 W, Bellville, Ohio, 44813

**Preferred Citation:** Benson Family Papers, Guernsey County, Ohio. MSS 007, file number. Lyle H. West Archives, Ohio Genealogical Society, Bellville, Ohio.

**Dates:** 1700-1960s

**Creator(s):** Viola D. Romans (1863-1946); Blanche Romans McVey (1888-1973)

**Donor(s):** Unknown

**Biography of creators:** *From obituary for Viola D. Romans in Dayton Daily News, Sunday, June 30, 1946, page 6—*

“COLUMBUS, JUNE 29--Mrs. Viola D. Romans, Ohio’s first woman member of the Ohio General Assembly, died here tonight after a long illness. A native of Guernsey county, she taught at Muskingum College and the former Wesleyan College for Women in Cincinnati prior to becoming president of the Woman’s Republican Club of Ohio. She was nominated and elected to Ohio House of Representatives in 1924 and served two terms from Franklin county. She was president of the Ohio WCTU from 1932 until she became ill in 1939.”

Majority of the family is buried in Northwood Cemetery, Cambridge, Guernsey County, Ohio. Older family members buried in Friends Cemetery, Quaker City, Guernsey County, Ohio.

**Scope and Content:** The collection contains genealogy research of Viola Doudna Romans (1863-1946) and Blanche Romans McVey (1888-1973), mother and daughter, on their direct ancestors, being descended from Levi Benson (1783-1865) and Rachel Lancaster Benson (1790-1886), Levi’s second wife, of Maryland, and later of Guernsey County, Ohio. Materials include correspondence between Viola and her extended family members regarding their lineage back

to their Revolutionary War ancestor Benjamin Benson (1749-1812) and his wife Rachel Scott (1752-1805). Benjamin Benson served in the 3<sup>rd</sup> company of Capt. James Denny's Militia of Chester County, Pennsylvania; DAR applications for Viola and Blanche are included in the collection. The collection also contains reminiscences and narratives from older family members, describing the Benson family's move from Maryland to Guernsey County, Ohio and other memories. Significant research on Viola's father's side, the Doudna and Webster families, also from Guernsey County, Ohio.

Some research on the children of Levi Bensons' first wife, Mary Maulsby Benson (1781-1817), particularly their daughters who married into the Harlan family of Maryland and Pennsylvania.

**Extent:** 3 files

**Access:** No access restrictions.

**Language:** English

**Provenance:** Unknown, donated to the OGS prior to 1990

**Related archival materials:** Viola D. Romans photograph series (temperance meetings and family portraits) at Ohio History Collection, Columbus, Ohio:  
<https://aspace.ohiohistory.org/repositories/2/resources/11739>. Romans's papers related to her work as an Ohio representative also available at Ohio History Connection, MSS 270:  
<https://ohiohistory.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1292612812>.

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## **Box 1:**

**File 0:** Finding aids, context

**File 1:** Benjamin Benson Line – DAR application of Blanche Romans McVey, Benson family recollections, Benjamin Benson's Will, correspondence, Memoir of Dr. Levi L. Benson (1829-1914)

**File 2:** Doudna, Webster & Beal Families – Doudna and Benson births and deaths, Frank B. Doudna testimonials and a poem, copy of John Webster’s Will, Beal connections and clippings

**File 3:** Viola D. Romans (member of Ohio House of Representatives from 1925-1928) – correspondence, notes, family trees and papers, DAR records, miscellaneous clippings, photographs, and Barnardt and Harlan family condensed history

**Key Words:** Franklin County; Guernsey County; Morrow County; Benson; Doudna; Harlan; Bardhardt; Webster; Beal; Romans.

**Processed by:** Jim Evans, OSU Work Study Intern, 2004.

**Finding aid created by:** Jim Evans, OSU Work Study Intern, 2004; revisions and updates by Jenna Kish, OGS Archivist, December 2025.