

# William H. Dabney collectionMS.0508

William H. Dabney collection  
1960-2006

---

## Title Statement

William H. Dabney collectionMS.0508

## Publication Statement

**Publisher:** Virginia Military Institute Archives

VMI Archives  
Preston Library  
Lexington, VA 24450  
Business Number: 540-464-7516  
archives@vmi.edu  
URL: <http://www.vmi.edu/archives>

---

## Profile Description

**Creation:** This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2025-04-09 17:51:02 -0400.

**Language Usage:** Description is written in: Undetermined, Code for undetermined script script.

## Descriptive Summary

**Unit ID**

MS.0508

**Unit ID**

/repositories/3/resources/732

**Unit Date**

1960-2006

**Language**

English .

**Creator**

Dabney, William H. (William Howard), 1934-2012

**Extent**

1.5 cubic feet 2 boxes

**Physical Location**

Manuscripts stacks

**Repository**

Virginia Military Institute Archives

## Administrative Information

**Conditions Governing Access**

There are no restrictions

## Conditions Governing Use

Manuscript collections in the VMI Archives are made available for educational and research use. The VMI Archives should be cited as the source. The user assumes all responsibility for identifying and satisfying any copyright holders. Materials from our collections may not be redistributed, published or reproduced without permission from the VMI Archives. Contact the VMI Archives for additional information.

## Preferred Citation

William H. Dabney collection, 1960-1991. VMI Archives, Virginia Military Institute, Lexington, Virginia.

## Biographical / Historical

William Howard Dabney was born in 1934 in St. Johns, New Brunswick, Canada to Hugh Keane Dabney (1893-1972) and Mary Hennessey Dabney (1905-?). He attended Yale University and then enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1954. He attained the rank of Sergeant before enrolling at VMI and graduating with the class of 1961. Dabney married Virginia McCandlish Puller (1940-2018), daughter of Lieutenant General Lewis Burwell "Chesty" Puller in September, 1961.

An infantry officer, Dabney served 37 years in the United States Marine Corps, including two tours in Vietnam. He earned numerous citations, including the Silver Star, two Bronze Stars, two Vietnamese Crosses of Gallantry, and the Navy Cross. While in Vietnam, he commanded India Company, 3rd Battalion, 26th Marines, on Hill 881S during the Battle of Khe Sanh, for which he was awarded the Navy Cross in 2005.

In 1987 Dabney reported to VMI as Professor of Naval Science and head of the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) unit. He was subsequently appointed Commandant of Cadets and retired from VMI in May 1990. He spent his retirement years in Lexington, Virginia, where he died in 2012.

## Scope and Contents

This collection consists of items related to William H. Dabney, including: Oral history interviews Printed material Articles and clippings Citations for military awards Photographs Military papers Incoming correspondence This collection also includes information about Dabney's role in the Battle of Khe Sanh, Vietnam, defense of Hill 881S.

## Keywords

Vietnam War (1961-1975)

United States. Marine Corps—Officers—Biography

United States -- Marine Corps -- History -- Vietnamese Conflict, 1961-1975

Khe Sanh, Battle of (Vietnam : 1968)

Military records

Oral histories

Military decorations

Correspondence

Photographs

## Online Access

William H. Dabney's 2005 oral history interview is available online.

A photograph of United States flag flying on Hill 881S during Battle of Khe Sanh, Vietnam (1968) is available online.

## Description of Subordinate Components

### **Correspondence, incoming**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/3913

**Unit Date** 1968-2005

**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Container** 1 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Extent** 1 Folder approximately 20 items

#### **Scope and Contents**

This file contains incoming personal correspondence, including items relating to Battle of Khe Sanh, Vietnam (1968).

### **Military career documents**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/3914

**Unit Date** 1960-1981

**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Container** 2 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Extent** 1 Folder

#### **Scope and Contents**

This folder includes photocopies of declassified documents relating to Battle of Khe Sanh, Vietnam (1968), personal records, and citations.

### **Oral history interview**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/3915

**Unit Date** 1982 May 20

**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Container** 3 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Creator** Frank, Benis M.

**Extent** 2 items

#### **Scope and Contents**

Two copies of a typewritten transcript of interview with William H. Dabney by Benis M. Frank, Head, Oral History Section, History and Museum Division, Marines Corps Historical Center.

#### **Keywords**

Oral histories

### **Oral history interview**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/3916

**Unit Date** 2005 September 8

**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Container** 4 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Creator** Dittrich, James F.

#### **Scope and Contents**

Transcription of an oral history interview with William H. Dabney, conducted by James F. Dittrich (VMI Class of 1976).

#### **Keywords**

Oral histories

**Oral history interview**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/3917

**Unit Date** 2006 May 21

**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Container** 5 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Scope and Contents**

Transcript of oral history conducted with William H. Dabney by Captain Alexander J. Monroe, United States Navy.

**Keywords**

Oral histories

**"Sniper" article**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/3918

**Unit Date** 1984

**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Container** 6 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Scope and Contents**

Preprint and draft copy of the article "Sniper" written by William H. Dabney. The article concerns the defense of Hill 881S.

**Photographs, Khe Sanh, Vietnam**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/3919

**Unit Date** 1968

**Image** 1 (box)

**Container** 7 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Extent** 30 items approximately 30 images in folder

**Scope and Contents**

The bulk of these items are color photographs taken at Khe Sanh during the Vietnam War. Photographs include soldiers in India Company, 3rd Battalion, 26th Marines, the United States flag flying on Hill 881S, and related images taken during battle.

**Military citations**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/4673

**Mixed Materials** 2 (box)

**Language** English.