

**An Inventory of the James A. Michener Papers
Floyd E. Merrill Collection**

Repository: University of Northern Colorado, James A. Michener Library, Archival Services

Collection number: SC 1-43

Accession number: 10.50

Title: An Inventory of the James A. Michener Papers, Floyd E. Merrill Collection

Author: Inventory prepared by Shirley Soenksen on 2010 October 27.

Dates: 1939-1970

Creator or Collector: Michener, James A. (James Albert), 1907-1997; Michener, Patti Koon; Merrill, Floyd E., 1895-1970.

Size: 1.5 inches, 1 box

Language: English

Abstract: This collection consists of correspondence between Floyd E. Merrill and James A. Michener from 1939 to 1970, as well as correspondence from Patti Koon Michener to the Merrills from 1944 to 1945. The collection also includes clippings, a photograph, negatives, and miscellaneous items.

Scope and Content Note: This collection consists of correspondence between Floyd E. Merrill and James A. Michener from 1939 to 1970, as well as correspondence from Patti Koon Michener to the Merrills from 1944 to 1945. The collection also includes clippings, a photograph, negatives, and miscellaneous items.

Biography of James A. Michener:

James Albert Michener was born in 1907 to unknown parents and raised as an orphan in the care of widow Mabel Michener of Doylestown, Pennsylvania. By the time he graduated from high school in 1925, he had visited 45 out of the 48 states. He was given a scholarship to Swarthmore, and after graduating summa cum laude in 1929, he traveled and continued his education at nine universities inside and outside the United States. During this time, he also taught in Pennsylvania, Colorado, and at the Harvard School of Education.

When he was not teaching, Michener worked as a textbook editor in New York, and he joined the British Merchant Marines. During WWII, he joined the Navy, making use of his experience in the British Merchant Marines to climb through the ranks to lieutenant and his knowledge of history to carry out sensitive assignments in the South Pacific. It was this experience that brought about *Tales of the South Pacific* in 1947, which won a Pulitzer Prize. Michener used this novel as the cornerstone of his writing career, publishing almost 50 books in the next 50 years, including *Sayonara*, *Hawaii*, *The Source*, *Iberia*, *Caravans*, *The Covenant*, *Sports in America*, and *Poland*.

In 1977, a four-part public television series called *The World of Michener* covered Israel, Hawaii, Spain, and Poland, just a few of the countries upon which his books have been based. Several other books have been turned into movies or miniseries, and two of his novels have been turned into musicals (most notably *South Pacific*, which won its own Pulitzer Prize).

During the time that he was publishing, however, Michener did not ignore the world around him. He ran for Congress in 1962 and held positions on several committees, including the Pennsylvania Constitutional Convention, the U.S. Postal Service stamp committee, and an

advisory position on a council for NASA. He also spoke often at congressional hearings and at functions of those organizations in which he held particular interest.

James A. Michener died at the age of 90 on October 16, 1997 in Texas, three years after his third wife, Mari Yoriko Sabusawa. He had no children.

Biography of Floyd E. Merrill:

Floyd E. Merrill was editor of the Greeley Tribune for many years. He is one of three men listed in the dedication of Michener's novel *Centennial*.

Floyd E. Merrill was born to on July 19, 1895 in Mediapolis, Iowa. He attended the University of Colorado at Boulder where he was the editor of the school newspaper Silver and Gold in his sophomore year. While a junior at the University he worked for the Boulder Morning Star and later became a full-time staff member.

Merrill came to Greeley in 1916 as a reporter for the *Greeley Morning Spokesman*. Two years later he became night editor of the *Greeley Tribune* and editor a year later. He worked at the *Greeley Tribune* as editor almost continuously until his retirement in July, 1960.

Sources consulted:

"A Great Newspaperman is Gone," *Greeley Tribune*, June 11, 1970, p. 4.

"A Job Well Done," Editorial, *Greeley Tribune*, July 6, 1960, p. 4.

"Former Editor of Tribune, Floyd E. Merrill, Dies," *Greeley Tribune*, June 6, 190, p. 1.

Arrangement (required for multiple level collections):

This collection is organized into the following series:

Series 1: Clippings

Series 2: Correspondence

Series 3: Photographs & Negatives

Series 4: Miscellaneous

Restrictions on Access: The collection is open for research.

Restrictions on Use: Copyright restrictions may apply. User is responsible for all copyright compliance. Please contact the UNC University Libraries Archival Services Department at library.archives@unco.edu or 970-351-2854 for further information.

Preferred Citation: [Description of Item], James A. Michener Papers, Floyd E. Merrill Collection (SC 1-43), Archival Services, James A. Michener Library, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Colorado.

Acquisition Information (if applicable):

Gift of AnnaMarie Merrill on October 26, 2010,

Documentation relating to the acquisition is on file in Archives, RG 13 S1 F11-2.

Subjects:

Michener, James A. (James Albert), 1907-1997.

Michener, Patti Koon;

Merrill, Floyd E., 1895-1970.

University of Northern Colorado. Libraries. James A. Michener Special Collection.

Inventory:

Box 1

Folder 0 – Finding Aid

Series 1: Clippings

Series Scope and Content:

The series contains clippings about Floyd E. Merrill which were photocopied by Archival Services staff. The clippings in Folder 2 relate to James A. Michener.

Folder 1 -- Merrill, Floyd E. – Biographical clippings

Folder 2 -- Clippings

Series 2: Correspondence

Series Scope and Content:

The series contains correspondence between James A. Michener and Floyd E. Merrill as well as correspondence between Patti Koon Michener and the Merrills.

Folder 3 – Correspondence, 1939 Jan. 5 – Oct. 26. (4 letters)

Folder 4 – Correspondence, 1940s

Folder 5 – Correspondence, 1950s

Folder 6 – Correspondence, 1960s

Folder 7 – Correspondence, 1970

Folder 8 – Correspondence, Patti Michener, 1944-1945

Series 3: Photograph & Negatives

Series Scope and Content:

The series contains one photograph of James A. Michener and several color negative strips that are not identified. The photograph of Michener appears in the undated *South Pacific* program listed in Series 4.

Folder 9 -- Photograph & Negatives

Series 4: Miscellaneous

Series Scope and Content:

The series contains a one page chronology of Michener's activities and writings ca 1936-1963 and an invitation to attend the seventy-first annual commencement at Temple University on June 13, 1957 at which time Michener received an honorary Doctor of Laws. The series also contains two programs for the musical *South Pacific* featuring Janet Blair and Richard Eastham. One

program is for the musical held September 12-16, [1950] at the Denver Auditorium in Denver, Colorado. The other program is undated.

Folder 10 – Miscellaneous

Folder 11 – South Pacific -- Musical