

**An Inventory of the James A. Michener Papers
Owen Laster Collection:
Michener's Unpublished Manuscripts**

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

Collection number: SC 1-46

Title: An Inventory of the James A. Michener Papers, Owen Laster Collection: Michener's Unpublished Manuscripts

Author: Inventory prepared by Shirley Soenksen on May 15, 2006, revised 2006 July 21; slightly revised 2010 November 12.

Dates: 1942-circa 1960s

Creator or Collector: James A. Michener (Creator); Owen Laster (Collector)

Size: 1.5 linear feet

Language: English

Abstract:

This collection consists of two unpublished manuscripts by James A. Michener, "Fortune-Telling" and the untitled "Russia" manuscript, which includes notes, research materials, photographs, and other items.

Scope and Content Note:

This collection consists of two unpublished manuscripts by James A. Michener, "Fortune-Telling" and the untitled "Russia" manuscript, which includes notes, research materials, photographs, and other items.

The untitled "Russia" manuscript is about Russia and Operation Barbarossa during World War II.

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 Owen Laster:

Owen Laster was James A. Michener's longtime literary agent at the William Morris Agency. He is currently Executive Vice-President of the Talent and Literary Agency of the William Morris Agency, Inc.

Arrangement (required for multiple level collections):

This collection is organized into the following series:

- Series 1: Fortune-Telling Manuscript
- Series 2: Russia Manuscript
- Series 3: Notes, Research, Photographs, Etc.

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 Owen Laster Collection: Michener's Unpublished Manuscripts (SC 1-46) , Archival Services, James A. Michener Library, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Colorado.

Acquisition Information (if applicable):

Gift of Owen Laster in September 2003.

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

Subjects:

Michener, James A. (James Albert), 1907-1997
Laster, Owen
World War, 1939-1945 -- Campaigns -- Eastern Front.
World War, 1939-1945 -- Campaigns -- Soviet Union.
Operation Barbarossa.
Soviet Union -- History -- German occupation, 1941-1944.

Inventory:

Series 1: Fortune-Telling Manuscript

Folder 1 -- Fortune-Telling Manuscript

Series 2: Russia Manuscript

Folder 1 -- Original, typed manuscript I , 1965

Folder 2 -- Original, typed manuscript II, 1965

- Folder 3 -- Research notebook I, 1964-1966
- Folder 4 -- Research notebook, pocket II, 1964-1966
- Folder 5 -- Card index, resources, JAM, 1964-1966
- Folder 6 -- Card index, names and addresses of resource people, 1964-1966
- Folder 7 -- Correspondence, Karl Kempf, 1965-1966
- Folder 8 -- Correspondence, William J. Woods, 1965
- Folder 9 -- Correspondence, G.B. Jarrett, 1965-1966
- Folder 10 -- Correspondence, misc., 1966
- Folder 11 -- Weapons, munitions resources, 1964-1966
- Folder 12 -- German army field reports, Russian Front, 1942
- Folder 13 -- Publication: "The German Tank in World War II" , 1962
- Folder 14 -- Publications: German military tactics, WWII, 1945
- Folder 15 -- Tactical maps of German troop movements on the Eastern Front, 1945
- Folder 16 -- German infantry division illustrated reference drawings, 1943
- Folder 17 -- Publication: Reader's Digest, first proof, "The Bridge at Andau," 1957

Series 3: Notes, Research, Photographs, Etc.

- Folder 18 -- Research and reference notes, misc. , 1964-1966
- Folder 19 -- Maps of Leningrad, 1964-1966
- Folder 20 -- Map of Western Europe, National Geographic, 1961
- Folder 21 -- Photos-JAM and Mari in Russia-snapshots, 1964
- Folder 22 -- Photos-reference, German military, 1943
- Folder 23 -- Photos-German military, 1942-1945
- Folder 24 -- Photocopies-sketches of German troops in battle, Eastern Front, 1943
- Folder 25 -- Photos-of sketches by German military artist on Eastern Front, 1943
- Folder 26 -- Photos-of sketches by German military artist on Eastern Front, 1943
- Folder 27 -- Photos-of sketches by German military artist on Eastern Front, portraits, 1943
- Folder 28 -- Newsclippings, 1945, 1965

Folder 29 -- Ephemera-poster of photos of bullfighting, 196?

Folder 30 -- Novel-Russia in WWII Part I, 196?

Folder 31 -- Novel-Russia in WWII Part II, 196?