

An Inventory of the James A. Michener Papers, Mrs. Ruth G. Haman Collection

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

Collection number: SC 1-08

Title: An Inventory of the James A. Michener Papers, Mrs. Ruth G. Haman Collection (formerly Small 2. Haman, Mrs. Ruth G., circa 1975)

Author: Inventory prepared by Shirley Soenksen June 2, 2006.

Dates: circa. 1972

Creator or Collector: Haman, Mrs. Ruth G.

Size: 1 linear foot

Abstract:

This collection includes a White Shoulder perfume box that was originally filled with the artifacts including a "Jews Harp (also called Juice Harp)," a pair of glasses and case, a metal heart, and a book. The "Jews Harp (also called Juice Harp)," was given to Mr. and Mrs. Haman by James A. Michener while he was doing research at the Laramie, Wyoming museum. The other artifacts in the collection were personal items of the Hamans.

Scope and Content Note:

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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.

Arrangement (required for multiple level collections):

This collection is organized into a single series of two boxes.

Restrictions on Access: The collection is open for research.

Restrictions on Use: User is responsible for copyright compliance.

Preferred Citation: [Description of Item], James A. Michener papers (RG SC 1), Collection, Archival Services, James A. Michener Library, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Colorado.

Locations of Originals (if applicable):

Acquisition Information (if applicable):

Gift of Mrs. Ruth G. Haman in October 1997.

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

Subjects:

Michener, James A. (James Albert), 1907-1997
Haman, Mrs. Ruth G.
McDonald, A. Hutchins
McDonald, William
Hutchins, Alma
Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865
Moses, Dona
Dona, Moses
Hutchings, Charles
Hutchins, H. C.

Inventory:

Original finding aid created by Richard Gibboney on March 14, 2000.

Photocopy of a letter dated 1997 October 27 from Ruth G. Haman (Mrs. Friedrich Haman) to Gary Pitkin, Library Dean, University of Northern Colorado Libraries, regarding the donated items and recounting how the Hamans met Michener.

Box 1: White Shoulder Perfume Box (empty). This is the box the artifacts arrived in.

Box 2: Artifacts

“Jews Harp (also called Juice Harp).” Given to Haman by James A. Michener when she and her husband met Michener briefly while he was doing research at the Laramie, Wyoming museum. “In my thoughts I do believe this took place 25 years ago.”

A pair of glasses and case. Inscribed on the case is: "These glasses belong to A Hutchins Grandma McDonald gold glasses. Grandma married Wm. McDonald. after Alma Hutchins, she was married 3 times and lived to be 104 yrs old."

Metal Heart. A metal heart with clasp made by Friedrich Haman for his wife Ruth G. Haman.

Book (first 40 pages missing). A book whose title, author, and date are not available. Remaining are the covers and pages 41-274, some pages indicate "vol.1," and very tiny scraps of backing printed in old German script and English. Contents of the book seem to be morality tales on subjects such as Equity, Bigotry Confessed and Renounced at the Approach of Death, Juvenile Fortitude, and Illustrious English Judges. Inscribed in script on page 274 is "Alma M. Hutchins, his book," who according to Mrs. Ruth G. Haman was her grandfather and "studied with Abe Lincoln." Also inscribed on page 128 is "Moses Dona his hand write," on page 198 is "Charles Hutchings, M.D.," and on page 242 is H. C. Hutchins 7/19 1911 CoBluffs IA."