

**An Inventory of the James A. Michener Papers, Henry C. Jensen Collection: A Finding Aid**

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

**Collection number:** SC 1-09 (formerly Small 3. Jensen, Henry C., 1941-1949)

**Title:** An Inventory of the James A. Michener Papers, Henry C. Jensen Collection

**Author:** Inventory prepared by Shirley Soenksen on May 4, 2006.

**Dates:** 1941-1949

**Creator or Collector:** Henry C. Jensen

**Size:** Less than one linear foot per series.

**Abstract:**

Four letters from James A. Michener to Jensen, a former Michener student at Colorado State College of Education (now the University of Northern Colorado). the letters touch on his views of the War, his decision to enlist, military life and duties, education in time of war and after, gender differences, Greeley, Colorado, his work as an editor at Macmillan, and friendships.

**Scope and Content Note:**

Files in this series are under one linear foot in size and are generally contributed by individuals who knew or had contact with James A. Michener during his life, 1907-1999.

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

**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 Henry C. Jensen:**

Henry C. Jensen and his wife, Pauline Curley, were students at Colorado State College of Education. During the 1940-1941 school year, they both took "Man in His Social World," a class that was taught by Michener and required for sophomores. Jensen was the Principal of Greeley High School (now Greeley Central High School) from 1950 to 1955.

**Arrangement (required for multiple level collections):**

This collection is organized into the following series:

**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), Henry C. Jensen Collection, Archival Services, James A. Michener Library, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Colorado.

**Locations of Originals (if applicable):**

**Acquisition Information (if applicable):**

Donated by Henry C. Jensen in 1998.

**Subjects:**

Michener, James A. (James Albert), 1907-1997  
Jensen, Henry C.

**Inventory:**

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

Letter dated 1941 December 17 from James A. Michener to Henry C. Jensen (2 p.).

Letter dated 1942 April 20 from James A. Michener to Henry C. Jensen (2 p.).

Letter dated 1944 August 5 from James A. Michener to Henry C. Jensen (2 p.).

Letter dated 1949 June 9 from James A. Michener to Henry C. Jensen (1 p.).