

An Inventory of the James A. Michener Papers, Hill School Textbook Collection, 1929-1931

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

Collection number: SC 1-14 (formerly Small 9. Textbooks used by James A. Michener, 1929 to 1931).

Title: Hill School Textbook Collection, 1929-1931

Author: Inventory prepared by Shirley Soenksen on May 8, 2006, revised 2006 July 31 and 2008 August 12; revised on July 22, 2011. Original finding aid created by Richard Gibboney on March 14, 2000.

Dates: 1929-1931

Creator or Collector: Michener, James A. (James Albert), 1907-1997; Bliss, Joy V. (Collector); Dybwad, Gay L. (Collector)

Size: 3 linear feet

Abstract:

A collection of 18 texts used by James A. Michener while he taught at the Hill School in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, during 1929-1931. The collection also includes the original dust cover mark-ups and color composite transparency sheets for *James A. Michener: The Beginning Teacher and His Textbooks* by Gay L. Dybwad and Joy V. Bliss.

Scope and Content Note:

Collection of textbooks, primarily literature and grammar texts, used by James A. Michener in his early teaching career at the Hill School in Pottstown, Pennsylvania. There are underlinings, annotations, handwritten poems, and Michener signatures in some of these 18 texts.

The collection also includes the original dust cover mark-ups and color composite transparency sheets for *James A. Michener: The Beginning Teacher and His Textbooks* by Gay L. Dybwad and Joy V. Bliss.

Historical Note:

G. L. Dybwad acquired this collection at auction scattered among many other unrelated books. Dybwad and Joy M. Bliss used the collection as the basis for their book *James A. Michener: The Beginning Teacher* (1995). The Archives has a copy of this book and there is a copy in the Michener Stacks with the call number PS3525.I19 Z62 1995.

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 Gay L. Dybwad and Joy V. Bliss:

Gay L. Dybwad and Joy V. Bliss are the authors of *James A. Michener: The Beginning Teacher and His Textbooks*. Dybwad and Bliss are currently the editors of the newsletter for the James A. Michener Society.

Arrangement (required for multiple level collections):

This collection is organized into the following series:

Series 1: Textbooks

Series 2: Dust Covers

Restrictions on Access: The collection is open for research unless restrictions are noted.

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, SC 1-14, Textbook Collection Used by James A. Michener, 1929-1931, Archival Services, James A. Michener Library, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Colorado.

Acquisition Information (if applicable):

These books were purchased by the James A. Michener Special Collection ca. 1998 from Gay Dybwad and Joy Bliss.

The original dust cover mark-ups and color composite transparency sheets for *James A. Michener: The Beginning Teacher and His Textbooks* were donated in December 2007.

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

Subjects:

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

Hill School (Pottstown, Penn.)

Dybwad, Gay L.

Bliss, Joy V.

Inventory:

Folder 0 – Finding Aid

Series 1: Textbooks

Folder 1 – Textbooks

Baldwin, James. *The Story of Roland*. Illustrated by Peter Hurd. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1930.

“James A. Michener” is inscribed in pen at the front of the book.

Bement, Howard, ed. *The Sir Roger De Coverley Papers from The Spectator*. Chicago: Laurel Book Company, 1930.

Blackmore, Richard Doddridge. *Lorna Doone: A Romance of Exmoor*. Albert L. Barbour, ed. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1923.

“Paul Reigner, Pennsburg, Pa” is inscribed at front of book.

Boyd, James. *Marching On*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 19270.

Mr. Rolfe's name is inscribed in pencil in the front of this book. Rolfe taught at The Hill School in Pottstown, Pennsylvania. Michener taught at The Hill School during 1930-1931.

Chaucer, Geoffrey, John S. P. Tatlock, and Percy MacKaye. *The Complete Poetical Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*. The Modern Reader's Chaucer. Warwick Goble, ill. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1923.

“Michener” is inscribed in pen at the front of the book.

Dickens, Charles. *Great Expectations*. The World's Classics, CXXVIII, the Works of Charles Dickens—V, Great Expectations. London: Oxford University Press, 1928.

A few handwritten notes in pencil can be found at the back of the book following page 540.

Dickens, Charles. *A Tale of Two Cities*. James Weber Linn, ed. Boston: Ginn and Company, 1906.

“J. Michener” is inscribed at the front of the book.

Drinkwater, John. *The Way of Poetry: An Anthology for Younger Readers*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company; Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1923.

A poem, “Keats & Shakespeare,” by Michener and “James A. Michener” are written in the front of the book in pencil. An outline of poetry is inscribed at the back of the book.

Edgar, Henry C. *Sentence Analysis by Diagram: A Handbook for the Rapid Review of English Syntax*. New York: Newson and Company, 1915.

Edgar was an English instructor at The Hill School in Pottstown, Pennsylvania. Michener taught at The Hill School during 1930-1931.

“J. Michener” is inscribed in pen in the front of the book.

Hardy, Thomas. *The Return of the Native*. The Modern Library of the World's Best Books. New York: The Modern Library, n.d.

“J. Michener” is inscribed in the front of the book. This book has a dust jacket.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The House of the Seven Gables: A Romance*. New York: A. L. Burt Company, Publishers, [1851?].

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The House of the Seven Gables: A Romance*. Everyman's Library. Ernest Rhys, ed. London: J. M. Dent & Sons; New York, E.P. Dutton & Co., 1930.

“W. H. Nalty” is stamped in purple ink at the front and back of the book. The initials “W.H.N.” are written in pencil on the bottom and side of the book.

Hudson, W. H. *Green Mansions: A Romance of the Tropical Forest*. The Modern Library of the World's Best Books. Introduction by John Galsworthy. New York: The Modern Library, [1915?].

“James A. Michener” is inscribed in pencil at the front of the book.

Miller, George Morey, ed. *The Victorian Period*. English Literature. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1930.

“John J. Weinberger, Hill School, March 20, 1931” is inscribed at the front of the book.

Tennyson, Alfred Lord. *Idylls of the Kings*. New York: Charles E. Merrill Company, 1911.

“Ode to Tennyson” by J. A. Michener inscribed at the front of the book.

Series 2: Dust Covers

Folder 2 – Dust Cover Paste-ups

Original dust cover mark-ups and color composite transparency sheets for *James A. Michener: The Beginning Teacher and His Textbooks* by Gay L. Dybwad and Joy V. Bliss.

Transferred to: SC 1-48, Drawer 5, Folder 8