

Christopher, George William, Papers

George William Christopher Papers

1961-1991



Title Statement

Christopher, George William, PapersGeorge William Christopher Papers, 1961-1991 Ms.1991.031

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Publication Statement

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

Ms.1991.031

Unit Date

1961-1991

Language

The materials in the collection are in English.

Abstract

This collection includes an autobiographical memoir titled *Pioneer Pilot from the Texas Panhandle: Stories from a Flier's Life* by George William Christopher, a flight instructor and barnstormer in the Texas panhandle area in 1930s and a pilot in the United States Air Force during World War II and post-war period. Also includes an outline for an article drawn from the book and a newspaper clipping about Christopher being awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal in Italy.

Creator

Christopher, George William, 1908-2002

Extent

0.1 Cubic Feet 1 folder

Repository

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research.

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Source of Acquisition

The George William Christopher Papers were donated to Special Collections and University Archives in 1991.

Processing Information

The processing, arrangement, and description of the George William Christopher Papers was completed in September 2013.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], George William Christopher Papers, Ms1991-031, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

Biographical Note

George William Christopher (1908-2002) was born to Van B. and Laura Gilliland Christopher in Texhoma, Oklahoma, on September 17, 1908. The younger Christopher later moved with his family to southern Kansas and the Texas panhandle, where he worked variously as a fireman, mechanic, and electrician.

In 1933, Christopher purchased a Waco 10 biplane, and the following year, he became a professional flight instructor. Through the 1930s, Christopher continued work as a flight instructor and also barnstormed throughout the area. During World War II, he instructed air cadets at Love Field (Dallas, Texas) before joining the Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) in Santa Monica, California, as an engineering test pilot, then went on active duty as a reserve officer with the Army Air Forces. From 1947 until his retirement, Christopher served as a regular officer in the U.S. Air Force. He was awarded numerous medals and honors, including the Distinguished Flying Cross during the Korean War, the Air Medal, and the Air Force Commendation Medal while serving with Allied Air Forces, Southern Europe, a NATO command in Naples, Italy.

In 1941, Christopher married Geneva Weatherspoon (1907-1994), and the couple had one child. Following Christopher's retirement from the U. S. Air Force as a lieutenant colonel, the Christophers lived in El Paso, Texas. George William Christopher died on April 22, 2002 and was buried at Fort Bliss National Cemetery, Texas.

Scope and Content

This collection contains the papers of George William Christopher, a pilot who worked as a flight instructor and barnstormer in the Texas panhandle region in the 1930s, then served with the U. S. Air Force during World War II and the post-war period. The collection includes a copy of Christopher's autobiographical memoir *Pioneer Pilot from the Texas Panhandle: Stories from a Flier's Life*. The collection also contains an outline for an article proposed by Christopher for *American Aviation Historical Society Journal*, to be titled "Flying in the Thirties in Texas," and a newspaper clipping about Christopher receiving the Air Force Commendation Medal.

Separated Materials

A second copy of Christopher's memoir was separated to the Rare Book Collection.

Keywords

Air pilots

Archives of American Aerospace Exploration (AAAE)

Rights Statement for Archival Description

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Description of Subordinate Components

Pioneer Pilot from the Texas Panhandle: Stories from a Flier's Life

Unit Date 1991

folder 1

Half-tone reproductions of photos in book

Unit Date undated

folder 1

Outline for proposed "Flying in the Thirties in Texas" journal article

Unit Date 1991

folder 1

"Veteran Pilot from Amarillo is Honored" newspaper clipping

Unit Date 1961

folder 1

"The Golden Age" (extracted from The Smithsonian Book of Flight) [photocopy]

Unit Date 1987

folder 1