Collection Summary

Title
George Banker Owens Collection

Date
1887-1982

Extent
4 archival boxes

Name and Location of Repository
Midwest Genealogy Center, Independence (Mo.)

Reference code: MGC 1107-GBOC

Processed by: Jolene Clark, 2018; finding aid created by Jolene Clark, 2018.

Name of Creator
Lorraine Owens

Biographical History
George Banker Owens was born in a covered wagon, near Ottawa, Kansas, on July 4, 1887 to Alfred E. Owens and Amelia Madden. Charles Bartberger came from Karlsruhe, Germany and settled in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. His son, Erwin G Bartberger, married Elizabeth (Lizzie) Anderson and the moved to Shanwee, Johnson County, Kansas during the 1880s. Their daughter Ethel P Bartberger was born on December 24, 1892.

George and Ethel married in 1923 and together they had one son. During World War I and World War II, he was a Captain and pilot with the United States Air Force. Occupations during his lifetime included lawyer, teacher, principal, and business owner. He taught in the Wyandotte County schools from 1906 to 1940 and was later a principal at Turner High and Piper High schools. He was president of Owens Construction Company. In 1972, the Owens Foundation donated 70 acres of land to the city of Independence for a nature park for the youth and families of Independence. In 1977, the park was dedicated to George B. Owens. He died in 1982 in Kansas City, Missouri at the age of 94 and is buried in George Owens Nature Park in Independence, Missouri. Ethel was a teacher and a high school superintendent. Ethel died in 1973 and is buried in Pleasant View Cemetery in Shawnee, Kansas.

Scope and Content

The collection consists of photos, documents, correspondence, and artifacts relating to the life of George B. Owens. Although many of the items relate to his personal life, they also have a broader context. As a student and later a teacher in Johnson County, Kansas and Wyandotte County, Kansas schools, many of the photos are not only not only of him, but class photos, and photos of school buildings. The collection helps form a history of the early rural schools in the area. The photos and artifacts relating to his military career include many early photos of airplanes from World War I.
Collection Inventory

System of Arrangement
These records are arranged in 8 series.

Box 1,
Series 1, History
Folder 1, Transcribed autobiography
Folder 2, Handwritten autobiography
Folder 3, Genealogical charts and forms

Series 2, Education
Folder 1, High School Graduation, Johnson County Kansas Schools, 1903
Folder 2, Central College of Business and Shorthand, 1903
Folder 3, Wilson High School and Mather College of Kansas City University, 1907-1918
Folder 4, Dillenbeck Schol of Expression, 1913
Folder 5, University of Kansas, 1918-1940
Folder 6, Kansas City School of Law, 1921-1925
Folder 7, Colorado State College, 1935

Series 3, Teaching Career
Folder 1, Wyandotte County, KS Teacher Certificates, Examinations, and Contracts, 1907-1940
Folder 2, Wyandotte County school class photos, 1912-1916
Folder 3, Piper High School yearbook and photos, 1921
Folder 4, State of Kansas Teaching Certificates, 1922-1925
Folder 5, Ethel Owens substitute teacher, 1945
Folder 6, Wyandotte County school photos

Series 4, Military
Folder 1, World War I documents and photos
Folder 2, Military, 1920s-1930s
Folder 3, World War II documents and photos

Box 2,
Series 5, Family and Personal Life
Folder 1, Misc. documents 1910s-1980s
Folder 2, Wedding, 1923
Folder 3, Photos, 1890s-1970s
Folder 4, Church, Organization memberships and fraternal organizations, 1930s-1970s
Folder 5, Amelia C Owens death, 1938
Folder 6, Family reunion “Family of Alfred and Amelia Owens”, circa 1930s
Folder 7, Will, 1943
Folder 8, George Owens Nature Center
Folder 9, Ethel P. Owens death, 1973
Folder 10, 89th Birthday booklet
Folder 11, George B. Owens death, 1982
Folder 12, Posthumous awards
Folder 13, By-Laws of Wyandotte Shrine No. 4 of the Order of the White Shrine of Jerusalem, 1954 (Accrual, 2018)
Series 6, Correspondence
  Folder 1, Undated correspondence
  Folder 2, 1907-1915
  Folder 3, 1918-1919 (World War I)
  Folder 4, 1921
  Folder 5, Jun 1922-Aug 1922, Correspondence between George Owens and Ethel Bartberger
  Folder 6, 1923-1936
  Folder 7, 1942-1944 (World War II)

Box 4
Series 7, Military artifacts
  Item 1, Pocket Bible in box
  Item 2, Pocket sized grooming kit
  Item 3, Mirror in sleeve
  Item 4, Pilot’s Book 1918 to 1942
  Item 5, Belt
  Item 6, World War I dog tags (2)
  Item 7, World War II dog tags
  Item 8, Rank pins (2)
  Item 9, Flying cap
  Item 10, Service stripes
  Item 11, Name pin
  Item 12, Blood chit-China, Burma, India theater (2)
  Item 13, World War I victory bar (2)
  Item 14, Pilot’s wings (2)
  Item 15, Instructor’s wings (2)
  Item 16, Star pin
  Item 17, White cross

Series 8, Bartberger (Accrual, Dec 2018)
  Item 1, Photo album of Bartberger family
  Item 2, Poems of Inspiration, 1914 belonging to Ethel Bartberger
  Item 3, Voices of the Night Ballads and Other Poems by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow belonging to Elizabeth Bartberger
  Item 4, Limited edition of The Old Curiosity Shop, Vol. 1 and Vol. 2 by Charles Dickens, 1899 belonging to Erwin G Bartberger
  Item 5, Book of Common Prayers belonging to Erwin G Bartberger
  Item 6, Hurlbut’s Story of the Bible used by Ethel Owens when she was a Sunday School teacher at the Methodist Church
  Item 7, Cacchen-Wörterbuch ber Englifchen und Deutfchen Sprache, 1856 belonging to Charles M Bartberger
  Item 8, Bartberger crest
Rights and Access

Conditions Governing Access
The collection is open for research use by appointment.

Physical Access
Most records within this collection are housed in sheet protectors and file folders.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use
Permission to publish, quote, or reproduce must be secured from the Midwest Genealogy Center.

Languages and Scripts of the Material
Materials in the collection are entirely in English.

Immediate Source of Acquisition
This collection was donated by Lorraine Owens.

Accruals
Accruals to collection added December 2018.

Existence and Location of Originals
Originals owned by the Midwest Genealogy Center.

Related Items:
Added to MGC book collection:
Gibson, Betty S. Pride of the Golden Bear, 1981
Kansas City University yearbook, 1917
Piper High School yearbook, 1921
University of Kansas yearbook, The Jayhawker, 1916

MGC archival collection:
Lorraine Hopkins Owens Collection (MGC 1177-LHOC)

Notes
The following sources were consulted during the preparation of the biographical history:

- Archival materials within this collection