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Guide to the LeRoy T. Carlson Papers 1927-2012



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier	ICU.SPCL.CARLSONL
Title	Carlson, LeRoy T. Papers
Date	1927-2012
Size	14 linear feet (7 boxes)
Repository	Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract LeRoy T. Carlson (1916-) graduated from the College at the University of Chicago in 1938, going on to earn his M.B.A. from Harvard University in 1941. He served with the Persian Gulf Command during World War II, helping secure supply lines to Russia in Iran. From 1942 to 1943, he worked as an assistant treasurer at the General Motors plant in Calcutta, India. Carlson founded Telephone and Data Systems in 1970, a Fortune 500 company, and has maintained a relationship with the University of Chicago, sponsoring the LeRoy T. and Margaret Deffenbaugh Carlson University Professorship. The bulk of his collection contains materials from his time spent abroad during the years 1942 to 1944.

Information on Use

Access

This collection is open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Carlson, LeRoy T. Papers, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

Biographical Note

LeRoy T. Carlson was born in Chicago in 1916. He attended Chicago's Morgan Park Junior College (an extension of the Morgan Park Academy founded by William Rainey Harper) from 1933 to 1935, going on to earn his B.S. from the College at the University of Chicago in 1938 and his M.B.A. from Harvard in 1941.

Carlson served in the U.S. Army Ordnance Department from 1941 to 1943, leaving the United States in 1942 for stations in Accra, Gold Coast (now Ghana) and Cairo, Egypt. In January 1943, Carlson went to Iran with the Persian Gulf Service Command as part of the Ordnance's

Iran mission to secure supply lines to Russia. Carlson was stationed at a truck assembly plant in Andimeshk (TAP One), in western Iran. These truck assembly plants were operated by General Motors Overseas Operations until 1 July 1943, at which point they were taken over by Ordnance-run companies, utilizing native labor. Carlson arrived in India in August of 1943 (Box 6, Folder 4), staying in that country to work as the assistant treasurer for the General Motors plant in Calcutta (now Kolkata), where he would stay until October of 1944 (Box 3, Folder 10). He served in the U.S. Navy from 1945 to 1946.

Carlson worked at the Merchandise Mart from 1946 to 1949 and then at the Acme Steel Company until 1951. He subsequently held positions at a series of telephone companies, eventually incorporating Telephone and Data Systems (TDS) in Chicago in 1968 after acquiring ten small rural phone companies in Wisconsin. Today, TDS is a Fortune 500 company, serving over six million customers across the country with its subsidiaries US Cellular, TDS Telecom, OneNeck IT Solutions, and Baja Broadband. He was CEO of TDS until 1986, chairman until 2002, and is now chairman emeritus. His son, LeRoy T. Carlson, Jr., is the current CEO of the company.

Scope Note

The bulk of this collection contains materials from the period 1942 to 1944, encompassing Carlson's time in the military service in what was then Africa's Gold Coast, Egypt, and Iran from 1942 to 1943 and his time working at the General Motors plant in Calcutta, India from 1943 to 1944. The collection contains, in varying conditions, a rich array of photographs, newspapers and newspaper clippings, and other memorabilia from these travels as well as an extensive amount of documentation related to the management and operation of the treasury department in the GM plant in Calcutta.

The LeRoy T. Carlson Papers are organized into five series: Series I, Ephemera; Series II, Calcutta; Series III, University of Chicago; Series IV, Audio-Visual; and Series V, Oversize.

Series I, Ephemera, contains items of personal interest prior to 1942, including souvenir pamphlets, brochures, and bulletins related to the Chicago World's Fair and the production and history of the Chicago Tribune. A second folder contains a government-issued pamphlet outlining the 1939 revision of the Industrial Mobilization Plan and some charts illustrating chains of command related to national defense. This series is arranged chronologically.

Series II, Calcutta, contains materials from Carlson's time in Calcutta, India working at the General Motors plant there. This series is organized into two subseries: Subseries I, General Motors, contains documentation and materials related to the design and organization of the plant as well as the operation of the treasury department; Subseries II, General, contains materials more generally related to Carlson's time living in Calcutta, including travel and

informational guides and ephemera. Materials are organized chronologically within each subseries.

Series III, University of Chicago, contains materials related to Carlson's relations with the University as an alumnus and donor to the business school, including correspondences, directories of other donors, and materials from a fiftieth reunion in 1988. Two folders are dedicated to alumni relations, followed by one folder with materials from the fiftieth reunion.

Series IV, Audio-Visual, contains an extensive collection of photographs from Carlson's time in Calcutta, containing photographs of colleagues, coworkers, and friends in addition to observational and sight-seeing photographs of India. Some include handwritten notes. Eight folders are dedicated to small snapshots, followed by an unlabeled group photo presumed to be of Carlson and some of his coworkers at the factory and a framed group photo of the treasury department and collectively signed note marking Carlson's departure from the plant.

Series V, Oversize, is the largest series in the collection and is arranged as follows. Boxes 4 and 5 contain a disassembled scrapbook containing materials (photographs, newspapers, magazines booklets, and ephemera) from Carlson's travels in northern Africa, Iran, and India from 1942 to 1944. Box 6 contains scrapbooks of newspaper clippings related to the U.S. economy, elections, and the World's Fair, all from 1933, a 1934 issue of a bulletin entitled *The New Deal*, and an issue of the *The Command Post* from 1944. Box 7 contains loose newspaper clippings and an issue of the *Egyptian Mail* from 1944. Finally, there is an Oversize Folder containing a blueprint "T.U.P. Assembly Plant Map of Employees" from the General Motors plant in Calcutta where Carlson worked, dating from 1943.

Related Resources

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html>

Lindblad, Andrew. Collection

Albert, Allen D., Reports on World's Fair

Harlan, Robert and Lois. Papers

Subject Headings

- General Motors Overseas Operations
- General Motors India
- United States. Army. Ordnance Dept.

- United States. Persian Gulf Command
- World War II
- Gold Coast
- Accra (Ghana)
- Cairo (Egypt)
- Iran
- India

INVENTORY

Series I: Ephemera

Box 1

Folder 1

Early Personal Ephemera, 1932-1934

Box 1

Folder 2

"Industrial Mobilization Plan Revision of 1939" and National Defense Charts, 1939-1941

Series II: Calcutta

Subseries 1: General Motors

Box 1

Folder 3

Notes on Proposed Calcutta Plant, 1943

Box 1

Folder 4

Factory Payroll, 1943-1944

Box 1

Folder 5

Employment, Overtime, Termination of Service and Leave Procedure, 1943-1944

Box 1

Folder 6

Accounting Procedure Forms, 1943-1944

Box 1

Folder 7

Treasury Department Progress Chart, 1943-1944

Box 1

Folder 8

Treasury, Supply, and Long Office Building Staff Layout, 1943-1944

Box 1

Folder 9

Treasury Department Forms, 1943-1944

Box 1

Folder 10

Treasury Department Procedure Guidelines, 1943-1944

Box 1

Folder 11

General Motors World, vol. 23, no. 1, 3, 6, 1944

Subseries 2: General

Box 1

Folder 12

The Visitor's Guide to Calcutta + Newspaper Clippings, circa 1927-1931

Box 2

Folder 1

Wonderful India and Three of Her Beautiful Neighbors, circa 1938-1943

Box 2

Folder 2

Introduction to India, 1943

Box 2

Folder 3

Ephemera – Recreation and Holidays in Calcutta, 1942-1944

Box 2

Folder 4

"Black Hole of Calcutta" printout, 2012

Series III: University of Chicago

Box 2

Folder 5

U of C Alumni Correspondence, Brochures, Pamphlets, Donor Materials [1/2], 1983-1997

Box 2

Folder 6

U of C Alumni Correspondence, Brochures, Pamphlets, Donor Materials [2/2], 1989-1993

Box 2

Folder 7

Class of 1938 Fiftieth Reunion Materials, 1988

Series IV: Audio-Visual

Box 3

Folder 1

Calcutta Photographs [1/8], 1943-1944

Box 3

Folder 2

Calcutta Photographs [2/8], 1943-1944

Box 3

Folder 3

Calcutta Photographs [3/8], 1943-1944

Box 3

Folder 4

Calcutta Photographs [4/8], 1943-1944

Box 3

Folder 5

Calcutta Photographs [5/8], 1943-1944

Box 3

Folder 6

Calcutta Photographs [6/8], 1943-1944

Box 3

Folder 7

Calcutta Photographs [7/8], 1943-1944

Box 3

Folder 8

Calcutta Photographs [8/8], 1943-1944

Box 3

Folder 9

GM Calcutta Plant – Group Photo, circa 1943-1944

Box 3

Folder 10

Farewell Ceremony for Mr. L.T. Carlson – Group Photo, 1944

Series V: Oversize

Box 4

Folder 1

Scrapbook (Part 1) – Covers, circa 1942-1944

Box 4

Folder 2

Scrapbook (Part 1) – Leaves 1-3, 1942

Box 4

Folder 3

Scrapbook (Part 1) – Leaves 4-6, circa 1942-1944

Box 4

Folder 4

Scrapbook (Part 1) – Leaves 7-9, circa 1942

Box 4

Folder 5

Scrapbook (Part 1) – Leaves 10-12, 1942

Box 4

Folder 6

Scrapbook (Part 1) – Leaves 13-15, 1942-1943

Box 4

Folder 7

Scrapbook (Part 1) – Leaves 16-17, 1942-1943

Box 5

Folder 1

Scrapbook (Part 2) – Leaves 18-20, 1943

Box 5

Folder 2

Scrapbook (Part 2) – Leaves 21-23, 1943

Box 5

Folder 3

Scrapbook (Part 2) – Leaves 24-26, 1943

Box 5

Folder 4

Scrapbook (Part 2) – Leaves 27-29, 1942-1943

Box 5

Folder 5

Scrapbook (Part 2) – Leaves 30-32, 1943-1944

Box 5

Folder 6

Scrapbook (Part 2) – Leaves 33-35, circa 1943

Box 5

Folder 7

Scrapbook (Part 2) – Leaves 36-38, circa 1944

Box 5

Folder 8

Scrapbook (Part 2) – Leaves 39-41, 1944

Box 5

Folder 9

Scrapbook (Part 2) – Leaves 42-44, circa 1944

Box 5

Folder 10

Scrapbook (Part 2) – Leaves 45-47, circa 1943

Box 5

Folder 11

Scrapbook (Part 2) – Leaves 48-50, 1944

Box 5

Folder 12

Scrapbook (Part 2) – Leaves 51-53, 1944

Box 5

Folder 13

Scrapbook (Part 2) – Leaves 54-57, 1944

Box 5

Folder 14

General Motors Folks vol. 7 no. 2-4, 1944

Box 5

Folder 15

"U.S. Military Mission" – "TAP 1/5" metal sign, N.D.

Box 6

Folder 1

Scrapbook of Newspaper Clippings: U.S. Economy, 1933

Box 6

Folder 2

Scrapbook of Newspaper Clippings: Chicago World's Fair, 1933

Box 6

Folder 3

Scrapbook of Newspaper Clippings: Elections, 1933

Box 6

Folder 4

The New Deal newspaper, 1934

Box 6

Folder 5

The Command Post vol. 1 no. 8, 1944

Box 7

Folder 1

Loose newspaper clippings, 1933

Box 7

Folder 2

The Egyptian Mail, November 24, 1944

Box Oversize Folder 1

General Motors India, Calcutta Branch – T.U.P. Assembly Plant Map of Employees, 1943