Christopher, Ernest Randell (1897–1967). Records, ca. 1940–1959. 82 feet. Postmaster. Records (ca. 1940–1959) of the U.S. post office in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, of which Christopher was postmaster, including employee records and correspondence with the U.S. Post Office Department in Washington, D.C., regarding service in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. Also publications and correspondence (ca. 1950–1959) of the American Legion organization and its posts in Oklahoma, including information regarding its National American Commission, of which Christopher was a member, and “Man of the Year” awards, which he received.

A chronology of the life of Ernest Randell Christopher, compiled by Joe Randell Christopher, for the Western History Collection at the University of Oklahoma.

1897 May 22--born, Taloga, Oklahoma, son of Clarence Eugene Christopher and Mabel Maude (Randell) Christopher; name was originally spelled Earnest, changed by ERC while he was a schoolboy in 1908 or 1909 (no birth certificates were drawn up in that area of Oklahoma Territory at the time of his birth)

1903 Began school in Taloga; did not complete full year

1904-1906 Attended a subscription school for first, second, and third grades un Herbert (now Wardville), Oklahoma

1907 Attended schools in Clinton, graduating from high school in May or June 1916

1916-1917 Attended the University of Oklahoma, Norman

1918 September 4--inducted in United States Army at Woodward, Oklahoma; Army Serial No. 4862057

1919 May 3--honorably discharged, a Private of Medical Detachment, General Hospital #28, Fort Sheridan, Illinois

1919 Summer--worked in mental hospital, Supply, Oklahoma

1919 Joined American Legion in Norman, Oklahoma

1919-1920 Attended the University of Oklahoma, receiving a Ph.G. in February
1920  Worked at Ph.R. in Fairfax and Pawhuska, Oklahoma. Note: during this period was treasurer and deacon for First Christian Church, Fairfax (where his church membership remained). ERC was the first commander of the American Legion Post No. 232 in Fairfax; he also served as Service Officer for two years in Fairfax and was a member of the Pawhuska posy while there. Also, in Masonry, ERC joined Greyhorse Lodge, No. 124, while at Fairfax; later became a 32° Mason. Finally, in Forty and Eight while at Pawhuska and in Bartlesville: grand Correspondent, 1927-1928; Alternate Chem. (?) National, 1928-1929; Grand Chef de Gare, 1923-933.

1927  Moved to Bartlesville, Oklahoma

1928-1932  Ph.R. for Pioneer Drug Company, Bartlesville (G.R. Kinne, owner)

1931  Married to Blanche Woods (born in Talogo), in Bartlesville

1932-1935  Agent, Metropolitan Life Insurance Company

1935  Appointed Washington County Tag Agent (relieved of duties officially December 12, 1938, although must have resigned several months before)

1935  June 27--birth of first son, Joe Randell Christopher, in Bartlesville (graduated, Ph.D. in English from University of Oklahoma, August 3, 1969)

1936  Nearly killed in automobile accident, Pawhuska, Oklahoma

1938-1939  Commander of James H. Teel Post No. 105 of the American Legion, Bartlesville

1938  Helped begin the American Legion oratorical contests for high school students at Norman, Oklahoma

1938  September 30--appointed acting Postmaster of Bartlesville post office

1939  May 22--appointed Postmaster by United States Senate (signed by President Roosevelt, May 25)

1940  Appointed Chairman of the Civilian Volunteer Recruiting Committee (later called Selective Service) in Bartlesville--served for one or two years

1943  Named to membership on the Oklahoma Department of Americanism Commission of the American Legion

1943-1944  Served as State President, Oklahoma Chapter of the National Association of Postmasters of the United States
1945-1946 Served as Chairman of Oklahoma Department of Americanism Commission of the American Legion (also served this office for 1946-1947 and 1948-1949 and perhaps later). He also regularly held Americanism Chairmanship in James H Teel Post No. 105, Bartlesville. Related to these Americanism positions were lectures on the American Flag, oratorical contests, junior league baseball, and many years service at Oklahoma Boys State, which he and Dr. Thornton organized (ERC was assistant director in 1964 and some other years)

1946 October 4--named "Man of the Year" by the American Legion National Convention, San Francisco, and awarded the $1000 Lewis S. Rosentiel Award

1947 August 5--birth of second son, Thomas Woods Christopher, in Bartlesville (graduated with distinction, BA in Economics, from the University of Oklahoma, August 3, 1969)

1950 Spring--named to Bartlesville Public Library Board during a local library fight in which Miss Ruth Brown, librarian for approximately thirty years, was fired

1958 Named to the National Americanism Commission of the American Legion, a post which he retained at least through 1965

1964 Had the E.R. Christopher Award named after him by the Oklahoma State Convention of the American Legion

1965 September--operated on for lung cancer, malignant

1966 December--retired as postmaster

1967 April 10--died of cancer, at his home in Bartlesville; survived by his wife, two sons, three grandchildren, mother and two sisters
Ernest Randell Christopher Collection

Box 1

Contents relate to: oratorical contests, The American Legion, Boys State, Jr. Baseball, Bartlesville Library

Box 2

Contents relate to: postal service, American Legion, hearings

Box 3

Contents relate to: education, citizenship (Americanism), 4-H Clubs, Jr. Baseball, postal service, American Legion, oratorical contests, various lists

Box 4

Contents relate to: postal service, Bartlesville Kiwanis Club (1954), US Civil Service Commission, American Legion, military funerals, Oklahoma Postmasters Directory (1966), various notes

Box 5

Contents relate to: US Civil Service Commission job pamphlets and job announcements, 1948, 1949

Box 6

Contents relate to: US Civil Service Commission job pamphlets and job announcements, 1949, 1950

Box 7

Contents relate to: postal service, American Legion, Americanism, World War II veterans, various bills (receipts--gas, telephone, groceries), checking account statements, safety, money

Box 8

Contents relate to: postal service, post offices

Box 9
Contains notebooks and textbooks, relating to: sales management, executives, salesmanship, US flag, Oklahoma Christian College Citizenship Seminar, Kiwanis Club, American Legion, postal service, American China Policy Association Inc, Communism, address book, various identification and certification cards

Box 10

Contents relate to: American Legion, Oklahoma Boys States, Americanism

Box 11


Box 12

Contents relate to: postal service, American Legion, Sons of the American Legion, National Americanism Commission, detecting counterfeit money, oratorical contests

Box 13

Contents relate to: American Legion, postal service, Kiwanis Club, Phillips 66, Christianform, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Bartlesville Public Library, Jr. Baseball, community service, Bartlesville Rotary Club, "Wanted" posters, stamp album for US Defense Savings Bonds (empty)

Box 14

Contents relate to: American Legion, Chamber of Commerce, community relations, racial equality, Bartlesville Lions Club, postal service

Box 15

Contents relate to: postal correspondence, National Recovery Administration, certificates of compliance

Box 16

Contents relate to: general postal correspondence

Box 17

Contents relate to: Oklahoma Boys State, American Legion, Bartlesville Chamber of Commerce, US News and World Report magazines (1954), postal information,
correspondence, National Americanism Commission, Committee of the Judiciary, Kiwanis Club, Oklahoma pamphlets

**Box 18**

Contents relate to: elections, Boys State, certificate of Honorary Colonel of Staff of Boys State, Bureau of Government Research, National Association of Postmasters, Jr. Baseball, American Legion

**Box 19**

Contents relate to: American Legion, postal service, Oklahoma Drivers' Manual, Jr. Baseball, immigration and naturalization, oratorical contest, Oklahoma pamphlets, Boys State, Boy Scouts

**Box 20**

Contents relate to: postal service, telephone directory (1939), management bulletins, Price Tower, cataract and dental x-rays of Mrs. Carl Wood (1942), Superintendent of Documents publications, American Legion

**Box 21**

Contents relate to: postal service, US Civil Service Commission, American Legion

**Box 22**

Contents relate to: postal service, US Civil Service Commission, American Legion

**Box 23**

Contents relate to: American Legion, high school oratorical contests, Boys State, Oklahoma Legislature, America, US flag, postal service/postmasters

**Box 24**

Contents relate to: American Legion, New York, Boys State, Cub Scouts, postal service, Kiwanis Club, Arkansas, letter signed "Mother," Minneapolis, Wisconsin, Jr. Baseball

**Box 25**

Contents relate to: American Legion, education, Americanism, baseball, Phillips 66, veterans

**Box 26**
Contents relate to: postal service, pamphlets from various states, American Legion, Norman telephone directory (1953), Oklahoma Boys State, Oklahoma Legislature

Box 27

Contents relate to: American Legion, League of Young Democrats, various notes, articles, addresses, postal service, NAPUS, veterans, US Civil Defense, Communism, various state pamphlets

Box 28

Contents relate to: Communism, postal service/postmasters, American Legion, Boys State

Box 29

Contents relate to: Oklahoma Christian College Freedom Forum, postal service, American Legion, American Legion Firing Line newsletters, Boy Scouts

Box 30

Contents relate to: postal service, US Civil Service, Bartlesville, OU Intramural Handbook (1951-1952)

Box 31

Contents relate to: postal service, American Legion, immigration and naturalization, driving safety

Box 32

Contents relate to: American Legion, high school oratorical contest, World War II veterans

Box 33

Contents relate to: American Legion, Kiwanis Club, education

Box 34

Contents relate to: Committee on Un-American Activities (investigation of Communist activities), Boy Scouts, high school oratorical contest, Foreign Policy Association, Postmasters Gazette magazine

Box 35
Contents relate to: Jr. Baseball, high school oratorical contests, education, American Legion, postal service, letter to son Thomas, overseas, Senate Investigation Committee

Box 36

Contents relate to: Bartlesville Civic and Commercial Clubs, address book, American Legion, Jr. Baseball, postal service

Box 37

Contents relate to: American Legion, oratorical contests, general correspondence, two photographs of Christopher (one as postmaster, one at Boys State), postal service, Oklahoma Boys State, 1957 Constitution of Oklahoma

Box 38

Contents relate to: American Legion, oratorical contest, Americanism, postal service

Box 39

Contents relate to: American Legion, Russia, 1955 Almanacs, Boys State, general correspondence

Box 40

Contents relate to: postal service

Box 41

Contents relate to: postal service, American Legion, travel brochures, Boy Scouts, car insurance policy, Boys State, photograph of Christopher seated at desk wearing American Legion hat, US Constitution Amendments

Box 42

Contents relate to: American Legion, hearings, Americanism, education, postal service

Box 43

Contents relate to: postal service, salary records, stamps, American Legion, life insurance, politics, Charles Haxton, management, veterans

Box 44
Contents relate to: American Legion, oratorical contests, drivers' license records, general correspondence, news clips, postal service, Voiture Nationale, The Forty and Eighter

Box 45

Contents relate to: Americanism, Protect America League, postal service, American Legion, Jr. Baseball, Communism

Box 46

Contents relate to: high school oratorical contests, postal service, American Legion, Americanism, Boy Scouts, Jr. Baseball, citizenship, veterans, education, Kiwanis Club

Box 47

Contents relate to: veterans burial flags, postal service, American Legion

Box 48

Contents relate to: postal service

Box 49

Contents relate to: Oklahoma Tax Commission tag office, registered voters in Washington County (1936), Oklahoma Department of Public Safety, postal service

Box 50

Contents relate to: Washington County voters, progressive photos of Federal Building under construction, Bartlesville (1931-1932), American Legion, postal service, New Mexico, veterans

Box 51

Contents relate to: postal service and correspondence, American Legion, unidentified photographs, 14 American Legion School pins, Kiwanis, pair of glasses, Voiture

Box 52

Contents relate to: postal service, war (newspapers), American Legion, Boy Scouts, Americanism, Washington County elections, Phillips Petroleum Company, vault and safe combinations, US Marines, insurance

Box 53
Contents relate to: Americanism, freedom, American Legion, US Civil Service, postal service, Red Cross membership card, Freedom Train documents (1947-1948), letters from Gene Jennings, news clips with pictures of Christopher, safety, Jr. Baseball, Boys State

Box 54

Contents relate to: postal service, bulletins, correspondence, American Legion, oratorical contests, Americanism

Box 55

Contents relate to: American Legion, Cub Scouts, Americanism, community activities, politics, postal service, US Civil Service Commission

Box 56

Contents relate to: American Legion, Americanism, Oklahoma Boys State, Boy Scouts

Box 57

Contents relate to: postal service, American Legion

Box 58

Contents relate to: postal service, Oklahoma, Bartlesville, American Legion, US Civil Service, 110 sympathy cards for Christopher's death (April 1967), Americanism, Treasury Department

Box 59


Box 60

Contents relate to: postal service, American Legion, Americanism, US Civil Service Commission job announcements

Box 61

Contents relate to: postal service, leadership, education, 1957 world almanac, American Legion, Americanism, business, Women's Army Corps

Box 62
Contents relate to: Americanism, American Legion, Oklahoma Boys State, US flag, Jr. Baseball, Boy Scouts, postal service

Box 63

Contents relate to: American Legion, Boy Scouts, US Senate, Lyndon B. Johnson, postal service, Boys State, Americanism, oratorical contest, UNICEF

Box 64

Contents relate to: postal service, photographs of E.R. Christopher and other past Commanders of the American Legion, Bartlesville parade for Jim Farley, Indians---mostly Osage, postmasters meeting, American Legion, Metropolitan Life Insurance Company

Box 65

Contents relate to: American Legion, oratorical contests, Boys State, 40 and 8, high school oratorical contests

Box 66

Contents relate to: American Legion, oratorical contests, Boys State, veterans, Americanism, Boy Scouts

Box 67

Contents relate to: American Legion, Americanism, Boys State, Jr. Baseball, postal service, oratorical contests

Box 68

Contents relate to: American Legion, Boy Scouts, postal service, old checks

Box 69

Contents relate to: postal service, American Legion

Box 70

Contents relate to: American Legion, postal service, war savings bonds, correspondence

Box 71
Contents relate to: American Legion, Americanism, postal service, US Civil Service Commission, Oklahoma Speech Association, correspondence

**Box 72**

Contents relate to: American Legion, Boy Scouts, Americanism, American Heritage Foundation, American Civil Liberties Union, oratorical contests

**Box 73**

Contents relate to: American Legion, postal service, Boys State, correspondence, newspaper article about Christopher, veterans, Americanism, oratorical contests

**Box 74**

Contents relate to: American Legion, Americanism, Bartlesville Masonic, photographs, Christopher--American Legion Man of the Year, oratorical contests, photographs and negatives--post office workers, parade, American Legion, Boy Scouts, Girls State, dedication ceremonies of American Legion Hall

**Box 75**

Contents relate to: American Legion, Americanism, Bartlesville Kiwanis Club, oratorical contests, community service, education, American Legion Firing Line newsletters, government

**Box 76**

Contents relate to: American Legion, oratorical contests, Boy Scouts, Boys State, Oklahoma laws

**Box 77**

Contents relate to: American Legion, Americanism, postal service

**Box 78**

Contents relate to: American Legion, postal service, Americanism, 40 and 8, Boys State, Boy Scouts, Bartlesville Kiwanis Club

**Box 79**

Contents relate to: postal service, World War II newspapers, enlistments, American Legion, 40 and 8, international correspondence, schools, pharmacy, sales, Boys State

**Box 80**
Contents relate to: 40 and 8, American Legion, oratorical contests, speeches, talks, American Legion membership lists

**Box 81**

Contents relate to: American Legion, Boys State, Boy Scouts, postal service, Oklahoma legislature, Kiwanis, Americanism, 40 and 8, World War II photographs, pharmacy

**Box 82**

Contents relate to: American Legion, American Legion Baseball, Americanism, Army and Navy records, *Life on Punkin Ridge* by Ruth Woods (1992), spiral bound notebook containing handwritten manuscript of *Life on Punkin Ridge*

**Box 83**

Folder:

1. District President Postmasters Association, 1940
2. Community Legion Memorial Campaign, 1949
3. News clippings--Re: Christopher as postmaster, 1940-1965
4. Oratorical Contest, 1957
5. Selective Service, 1940-1946
6. Words to Live By
7. Ruth Brown, Librarian, 1950
8. Correspondence between Christopher and Congressman Wesley Disney, 1938-1943
9. Correspondence--personal, 1953-1964
10. History of Bartlesville Post Office and Postmasters
11. Man of the Year Award, 1939-1963
12. Speeches, 1945-1953
13. Correspondence between Christopher and Congressman Ed Edmondson, 1949-1961
15. Bartlesville, 1946, 1952
16. Price Tower, 1956
17. Biographical material, 1935-1967
18. Correspondence between Christopher and Senators Josh Lee and Elmer Thomas, 1939
19. Correspondence and diary kept during Christopher's operation for lung cancer, 1965
20. Records--Re: the date of birth of Christopher, 1939
22. Postmaster--contains correspondence, forms, and other documents relating to Christopher's tenure Postmaster at Bartlesville, 1938-1957
23. American Legion--contains correspondence and other documents relating to Christopher's membership in the American Legion, 1937-1966
25. Personal--includes correspondence, greeting cards, membership cards, etc. 1929-1963
26. Joe Christopher's letters home from the University of Oklahoma, 1953-1954
27. Politics--contains correspondence, letters to the editor, and other documents concerning Christopher's activities with politics, 1934-1940

American Legion pins and medals
American Legion school award pins for boys and girls
Embossing stamp

Outsize Collection

Box 1--Christopher, E.R.

3 scrapbooks which include newspaper clippings, correspondence, and memoranda regarding Christopher's activities as postmaster and current events

1. Scrapbook, 1941
2. Scrapbook, 1946

3. Scrapbook, 1949-1951

Certificates and Diplomas

Box 2--Christopher, E.R. Collection

1. United States Citizens Service Corps certificate of membership, 1943

2. University of Oklahoma Engineering, Science and Management War Training Diploma, 1943 & 1944


4. US Treasury citation, 1958

5. Commission of Honorary Colonel of the Governor's staff, 1958

6. American Legion Citation of Distinguished Service, 1952 & 1953


9. Oklahoma Boys State Honorary Colonel Commission


11. American Legion Commander's Aide Award, 1953


13. Secretary of the County Election Board for Washington County, 1933


15. Oklahoma Boys State Certificate of Appreciation, 1957


18. American Legion Resolution, not dated

20. Appointment as Postmaster (signed by F.D. Roosevelt), 1939