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Office of the President
George H. Shafer
1918-2003

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Arranged and Described
by
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February, 2003
Willimantic, Connecticut

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DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

Name	George Herbert Shafer
Title	Office of the President, George H. Shafer, 1918-2003.
Extent	.5 linear feet. 2 boxes.
Arrangement	This collection was created by the University Archives staff. The material was divided into six series and arranged chronologically within each series.
Provenance	This collection was brought together and organized from documents and material sent to the University Archives from many sources including but not limited to the Office of the President
Finding Aid	Printed finding aid available in repository. Electronic version: http://ecsu.archives.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/
Preferred Citation	[Series, Folder description, Date]. Office of the President, George H. Shafer, 1918-2003. University Archives, J. Eugene Smith Library, Eastern Connecticut State University, Willimantic, Connecticut 06226.
Access points	Teachers colleges. Teacher educators. College presidents. Willimantic State Normal School Willimantic State Teachers College
Occupation	Educator. Principal - Willimantic State Normal School. 1 st President - Willimantic State Teachers College. Connecticut.
Restrictions	None.
Document types	Administrative Records. News clippings. Photographs

BIOGRAPHY:

George Herbert Shafer was born March 8, 1879 in Saylorburg, Pennsylvania.⁵ He received an A. B. degree from Allegheny College in 1900, and went on to work as the superintendent of schools in Del Norte, Colorado from 1902-1905. In 1906 he received a M.A. at the University of Chattanooga, Tennessee. He served as an Instructor in Education at the Normal School of Edinboro, Pennsylvania from 1908-1910. In 1911, he was a university fellow in psychology at Clark University then served as head of the educational department of the Normal School at Fairmont, West Virginia from 1911-1915. In 1915 he came to Connecticut and from 1915-1918 worked as director of the Bridgeport City Training School. In 1918, he became the fourth Principal of the Willimantic State Normal School.⁴

A strong supporter of “modern” education, Principal Shafer continued his education with graduate work at New York University and Columbia University and encouraged continuing education among the teaching faculty. During his tenure, the program expanded from offering two and three year teaching certificates to a four year Bachelor of Arts degrees in education. This change in program coincided with other changes including a change in the name of the school. The school became the Willimantic State Teacher’s College and Principal Shafer was installed as the college’s first president in 1937.⁷

Principal/President Shafer led the school through a number of serious problems. In 1924 the Model School, the school’s primary teacher training facility, was destroyed by fire. It took four years to rebuild but the new Windham Street Model School would serve as a teacher training school for another fifty years. He led the school through the lean years following the Great Depression, a serious threat by Governor Baldwin to close the college in 1939 and kept the school going and morale high after the main building was destroyed by fire in 1943 while the legislature debated whether or not to rebuild.⁷

In 1945 ground was broken for a new administration/classroom building and the cornerstone was laid in 1946. However, President Shafer would not see the new building completed. President Shafer retired on January 1, 1947 and died the following year on March 7, 1948.⁷ Shafer auditorium was named for him in 1949 and the building named Shafer Hall in 1969.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE:

The Office of the President Collection contains materials and information gathered to document the tenure of the principals and presidents of this public institution. Due to a fire in 1943 that destroyed the administration/classroom building, much of the original documentation pertaining to the early principals and principal/president Shafer was lost. The information collected documenting that era has been taken from local newspapers and publications as well as from the donations of generous alumni.

This collection includes speeches delivered by Dr. Shafer, news clippings of special events and photographs of George H. Shafer our fourth principal (1918-1937) of the Willimantic State Normal School and first president (1937-1947) of the Willimantic State Teacher’s College.

SERIES DESCRIPTION:

Series I - Committees

This series includes lists of the administration and faculty during the tenure of Dr. Shafer.

Series II - Events

This series includes information about important school events including the laying of the cornerstone of the new administration building in 1946 and later, the naming, Shafer Hall, in 1949.

Series III - News clippings

This series offers a collection of newspaper articles concerning school events including June graduation, activities at the Model School, notices of Principal Shafer's installation as president in 1937 and his retirement in 1947. It also includes copies of his obituary.

Series IV - Papers/Speeches

This series includes speeches given at his inauguration as president, the dedication of Burr Hall and an address to the "Schoolmen of Eastern Connecticut".

Series V - Reports

This series includes copies of annual reports submitted to the CT State Board of Education early in President Shafer's time at the school.

Series VI - Photographs

This series includes a photocopy of a portrait of President Shafer and a few candid photos.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

¹- *Annual Report of the Board of Education of the State of Connecticut to the Governor, together with The Report of the Secretary of the Board.* Hartford, CT: State of Connecticut, 1921.

²- *Annual Report of the Board of Education of the State of Connecticut submitted to the Governor, together with The Report of the Secretary of the Board.* Hartford, CT: State of Connecticut, 1924.

³- *Annual Report of the Board of Education of the State of Connecticut submitted to the Governor, together with The Report of the Secretary of the Board.* Hartford, CT: State of Connecticut, 1925.

⁴- "Dr. George H. Shafer Succumbs in Florida". *Willimantic Daily Chronicle*, 57, March 8, 1948, p. 1, 7.

⁵- United States. Federal Census. Pennsylvania. 1880. #1255156, T9-1156, p. 223A.

⁶- Willey, C. Francis. "Willimantic State Teacher's College (1889-1947)". *Teacher Education Quarterly* 7 (Fall 1949).

⁷- Series IV – News clippings, "Obituaries for Former President Shafer (2)", March 1948. Office of the President, George Herbert Shafer, 1918-1947. University Archives, J. Eugene Smith Library, Eastern Connecticut State University, Willimantic, Connecticut 06226.

RELATED COLLECTIONS:

Related information may be found in the following collections: University Events/Inaugurations, Photograph Collection and in the following publications: undergraduate catalogs, scrapbooks and yearbooks (1922-1947).

The University Archives has a substantial collection of university archives material and also houses the Connecticut Studies Collection. For more detailed information on these collections please speak with a staff member, call 860-465-5563 or visit the Smith Library Archives & Special Collections online at <http://ecs.u.archives.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/>

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<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Date</u>
George Herbert Shafer, 1918-1937, 4th Principal 1937-1947, 1st President		
Series I - Committees		
1	Faculty lists	1918-1937
	Administration & Faculty lists	1938-1947
Series II - Events		
	Laying of the Cornerstone-Administration Building	November 1946
	Dedication of Shafer Auditorium	1949
	Naming of Shafer Hall	1969
	Alumni Weekend remembrances – President Shafer	May 2003
Series III - News clippings		
	Graduation exercises	1920
	Windham Street School fire	30 January 1924
	Staff changes	September 1929
	Registration increases	September 1932
	Track meet at the Model School	15 June 1933
	Staff news	September 1933
	Holiday programs	December 1933
	Passage of Hurley Bill (4 year curriculum)	28 May 1935
	New staff	25 September 1935
	Students petition for teaching certificates	4 March 1936
	New staff	23 August 1936
	New faculty and “new” president	September 1937
	Installation as President	28 September 1937
	27 Bachelor of Education degrees conferred	16 June 1938
	Governor’s budget proposes closing the college	January 1939
	Support for retaining the college	February 1939
	Governor loses support for closing colleges	April 1939
	50 th Anniversary of the college	Oct-Nov 1939
	Extension course; Hot Lunch program	Jan-Feb 1940
	50 th Anniversary WSTC Chorus performance	18 May 1940
	College extension courses offered	January 1941
	Kappa Delta Pi – chapter installed	14 April 1943
	Teacher’s College – May Queen & Robin Hood events	May 1943
	Teacher’s College Destroyed by Fire	30 August 1943
	Graduation exercises at the Windham Street School	22 June 1944
	Eleanor Roosevelt speaks at the college	[April] 1946
	New Administration Building - cornerstone laid	14 November 1946
	President George H. Shafer Retires	Spring 1947
	Obituaries for Former President Shafer (2)	March 1948
	Biographical information	1948; 1989

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Date</u>
Series IV - Papers/Speeches		
1	Address before the Schoolmen of Eastern Connecticut	[1936-1937]
	Installation as President	1937
	Burr Hall Dedication	1940
Series V - Reports		
	Annual Report to the CT State Board of Education	1919-1920
	Annual Report to the CT State Board of Education (2)	1920-1922
	Annual Report to the CT State Board of Education	1923-1924
	History of the alcohol policy & approved places (notes)	1931-1940
Series VI - Photographs		
1	George H. Shafer, portrait photograph (Grube)	n.d.
2	George H. Shafer (3) w/1 transparency & 1 mounted	[1938/1939]
3	George H. Shafer (3)	1938, 1939
4	George and Grace Shafer (2)	n.d./1946