

DeKalb History Center

William J. Cordes Collection

Scope and content: The William J. Cordes Collection consists primarily of the diaries kept by Cordes from 1944 until his death in 1968. The collection contains detailed schedules of his daily work activities as a lawyer from 1952-1968 as well as a photograph of him in a World War I uniform and at his desk at the Retail Credit Company of Atlanta. There is also Cordes' certificate of appointment as Captain of Infantry from 1931. The documents in the collection range from 1931 until 1968.

Provenance: Gift of Mary C. Kelley (Accession #1985.207)

Access: Single photocopies may be made for research purposes. Permission to publish materials from this collection must be requested from the archivist, DeKalb History Center. Citation should be as follows:

Description of specific item; William J. Cordes Collection, DeKalb History Center Archives.

Processed by Jill Sweetapple, Archivist, 2011.

Size: 1 box of diaries and 3 folders. Ephemera in museum storage.

Biographical Sketch of William J. Cordes (1890-1968): Cordes was born in Boston, Massachusetts and after moving to Atlanta in 1934, was an attorney for the Retail Credit Company, which is now known as Equifax. In 1944, he was elected General Counsel, a post he held until his retirement in 1956. He served in World War II and kept diaries steadily from 1952 until 1968. He and his wife Marian Marsh Cordes lived on Lullwater Road in DeKalb County. The donation of the collection included a book of letters written by and about their son Marine Lt. Marsh Cordes, killed while leading a rifle platoon in Korea in 1952, for which he was awarded the Silver Star.

Description: The William J. Cordes collection contains primarily desk diaries Cordes kept from 1944 until his death in 1968. In fact, his daughter who donated the collection writes in the 1968 diary that he died during an operation and gives a few details. There is an itinerary from a European tour, a Western Union telegram, correspondence, photographs and a certificate naming him a Captain of Infantry in 1931. There is even a photocopy of his draft registration card, filled out when he was 27. There is also a book of Marsh Cordes' letters, *Letters of Lieutenant of Marines Marsh Cordes*, as he served in the Korean War. The book was compiled by his mother, Marian Marsh Cordes. There is also a copy of George Bernard Shaw's *On Going to Church*.

Subject Headings: Where possible, Library of Congress Subject Headings have been used.

Main Entry: Cordes, William Joseph (1890-1968)

Subject/Added Entries: Cordes, Marian Marsh
 DeKalb County (Ga.)
 Cordes, Gilbert Marsh (x-1952)
 Retail Credit Company
 Equifax, Inc.
 World War I, 1914-1918
 World War II, 1939-1945

Folder List

Box	Folder	Contents	Date(s)
1	1	Journal items removed from diary	1952
	2	Miscellaneous Documents	1919-1956
	3	Photographs	

Letters of Lieutenant of Marines Marsh Cordes, Marian Marsh Cordes, library collection in reading room

On Going to Church, George Bernard Shaw, rare books box 1, stacks shelf A3

The Cordes Collection also includes items that are stored in museum storage, including furniture and decorative items.

See also: Cordes family history book, library collection in reading room, possibly from another donor