

CHENNAULT (LT. GENERAL CLAIRE LEE) FAMILY PAPERS
Ms. 3042
Inventory

Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections
Special Collections, Hill Memorial Library
Louisiana State University Libraries
Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University

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SUMMARY

Size.	111 items (0.3 linear ft.)
Geographic locations.	Louisiana, China
Inclusive dates.	1943-1956
Language.	English
Summary.	The collection includes letters from Lt. Gen. Chennault to his son David. Also includes letters from David to his wife during WWII and their correspondence while he was working in China for the CAT Aviation Co. during the Korean War. One black-and-white photograph of Lt. Gen. Chennault is also included.
Restrictions on access.	None
Related collections.	Dille Elizabeth Young Chennault Papers, Mss. 3769 James A. Noe Collection, Mss. 4117
Copyright.	Copyright of the original materials is retained by descendants of the creators in accordance with U.S. copyright law.
Citation.	Lt. General Claire Lee Chennault Family Papers, Mss. 3042, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.
Stack locations.	W:30

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

Lt. Gen. Claire Lee Chennault (1893-1958) was born in Texas to Jessie (Lee) and John Stonewall Jackson Chennault, and grew up in Franklin Parish and Tensas Parish, Louisiana. He attended Louisiana State University (1909-1910), graduated from Officer's School at the beginning of World War I, and was transferred to the Aviation Division of the Army Signal Corps. He resigned from the U.S. Army Air Corps in 1937, went to China and joined a small group of American civilians training Chinese airmen. In 1941 he was made a brigadier general in the Chinese Air Force and put in charge of recruiting pursuit pilots for the American Volunteer Group who became known as the Flying Tigers.

Chennault was recalled to active duty by the Army Air Force in 1942 as a colonel and promoted to brigadier general a week later. He became commanding general of the U.S. Air Force in China and in 1943 was promoted to major general and named to command the 14th Air Force in China. In 1950, Chennault became president of Civil Air Transports in China.

Chennault was married twice and had a total of ten children, eight with Nell Thompson Chennault (1893-1977), and two with his second wife, Chen Xiangmei (known as Anna Chen). His children with Nell Thompson include John Stephen Chennault (1913-1977), Max Thompson Chennault (1914-2001), Charles Lee Chennault (1918-1967), Peggy Sue Chennault Lee (b. 1919), Claire Patterson Chennault Keyes (d. 1945), David Wallace Chennault (1923-1980), Robert Kenneth Chennault (1925-2006), and Rosemary Louise Chennault Simrall (b. 1928). His children with Anna Chen include Claire Anna Chennault (b. 1948) and Cynthia Louise Chennault (b. 1950). He died in New Orleans in 1958.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Letters of Claire Lee Chennault written chiefly to his son, David W. Chennault are primarily personal, with occasional references to Civil Air Transport, Inc. and world and Louisiana politics. Correspondence from David to his wife, Mary, and other relatives and friends contains observations about life aboard a ship in the Pacific Fleet during the Second World War (1944-1945). Gen. Chennault's letters also describe conditions in Nationalist China during the Korean War (1952-1954) and the Civil Air Transport Aviation Company and its operations in China, Hong Kong, and other Far East locations (1950-1954). Letters from Chennault to Louisiana Governor James A. Noe and to Judge Robert F. Kennon concern alleged kickbacks to the Earl Long-Carlos Spaht campaign fund by members of the Louisiana State Police (March 1952). A black and white photograph of Chennault taken in Taipei, Formosa, on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 22, 1951, showing him in shirtsleeves, picking beans, is also included.

CROSS REFERENCES

Subject	Date	Description of relevant documents
Aeronautics--Taiwan.	1950-1954	Observations on the CAT Aviation Company and its operations in China, Hong Kong, and other locations in the Far East.
Franklin Parish (La.)	1943-1956	Letters and personal observations of General Claire Lee Chennault and his family while residents in China.
Louisiana--Politics and government--1951-	1952	Two letters of General Claire Lee Chennault to Governor James A. Noe (Mar. 18); and to Judge Robert F. Kennon (Mar. 3), concerning alleged kickbacks to the Earl Long-Carlos Spaht campaign fund by members of the Louisiana State Police.
Photographic prints.	Nov. 22, 1951	Black/white photograph of General Chennault taken in Taipei, Formosa, on Thanksgiving Day showing him in shirtsleeves and picking beans.
Taiwan--History--1945-	1952-1954	Letters containing personal observations about life in China during the Korean War.
United States--History, Military--20th century.	1944-1945	Personal observations of life aboard a ship during the last two years of WWII by an enlisted man in the navy sent to his wife in Louisiana.

CONTAINER LIST

<u>Stack</u> <u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folders</u>	<u>Contents (with dates)</u>
W:30	1	1	Photograph, Nov. 22, 1951
		2a	Correspondence, May 1943-Sept. 1944
		2b	Correspondence, Mar. 1945-Nov. 1951
		3	Correspondence, Jan. 1952-Oct. 1952
		4	Correspondence, Oct. 1952-Dec. 1952
		5	Correspondence, Jan. 1953-Nov. 1953
		6	Correspondence, Jan. 1954-Mar. 1956, undated