



Smithsonian

*National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center*

## Guide to the Edmund A. Laport Collection

NMAH.AC.0016

Robert S. Harding

1994



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## Collection Overview

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>Repository:</b> | Archives Center, National Museum of American History  |
| <b>Title:</b>      | Edmund A. Laport Collection   |
| <b>Date:</b>       | 1923 - 1949   |
| <b>Identifier:</b> | NMAH.AC.0016  |
| <b>Creator:</b>    | Laport, Edmund A. (Creator)   |
| <b>Extent:</b>     | 0.66 Cubic feet (2 boxes)   |
| <b>Language:</b>   | English .   |
| <b>Summary:</b>    | The collection documents Edmund A. Laport, a former director of broadcast engineering for the Radio Corporation of America. |

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Donated by Edmund A. Laport, circa 1971.

### Provenance

The collection was transferred from the Division of Electricity (now the Division of Work and Industry) on April 13, 1983.

### Processing Information

Processed by Robert Harding, archivist, April 1994.

### Preferred Citation

Edmund A. Laport Collection, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

### Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

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## Biographical / Historical

Six months after graduation from Concord, New Hampshire High School in 1920, Edmund A. Laport obtained a commercial first grade radio operator's license from the Department of Commerce in Chicago. The autumn of 1921 found him as a radio operator at KDKF in New York City. However, due to lack of funds this station closed shortly

after he arrived. In December of 1921, he moved to the New York Service Department of Westinghouse installing radio receivers.

On January 2, 1923 he joined General Electric and was made laboratory assistant to I.F. Byrnes, who was in charge of low-power transmitter design. However, Laport decided he wanted to be a forest ranger and left in July of 1923 and headed back to the woods of New Hampshire. In early 1924 LaPort began working in Montana as a forest ranger. Within a very short time, however, he realized that he was more interested in radio. Before the year was out he returned to Westinghouse where he worked largely on high power transmitters until the spring of 1933. On one assignment he traveled to Peking, China where he helped build three short-wave broadcasting stations.

The Depression proved difficult for fledgling radio companies with many going out of business shortly after opening up. Laport worked for one of these unfortunate firms before settling in at Wired Radio, Inc. in Newark, New Jersey. Here he gained invaluable experience helping to develop equipment for commercial program transmission over power distribution systems.

In May of 1936 he joined RCA in Camden, New Jersey where he headed up the formation of their first high-power transmitter operation. He stayed with RCA until he retired in 1967. In December of 1938 he moved to Montreal where he helped RCA Victor Co., Ltd. start the development and manufacture of military and professional equipment. He organized engineering and manufacturing facilities and trained personnel. He also took a role in leading the company in developing aviation navigational equipment.

In July 1944 he returned to the United States to become chief engineer of the newly formed RCA International Division. Over the next ten years he traveled widely, undertaking many important field construction projects and consulted with other governments in communications, broadcasting, aviation, and marine matters.

Edmund A. Laport was a director of broadcast engineering for the Radio Corporation of America. From 1954 until 1967 he worked with others in a corporate level engineering consulting group to coordinate work in the many RCA plants in all aspects of communications. He authored Radio Antenna Engineering which was published by McGraw-Hill in 1952.

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## Scope and Contents

This collection, assembled by Laport, consists of approximately three hundred photo prints of antennas and broadcast installations. Mr. Laport's original order for these photo prints has been maintained. His extensive captions for these photo prints can be found in the individual folders. Series two contains three articles by Laport on aspects of radio and an autobiographical essay.

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## Arrangement

The collection is divided into two series.

Series 1: Photographs, 1923-1949

Series 2: Articles, undated

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Antennas (Electronics)  
Radio

Radio -- Antennas  
Radio -- Transmitters and transmission  
Radio broadcasting  
Television

Types of Materials:

Articles  
Photographs -- 1900-1950

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Photographs, 1923 - 1949

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Box 1, Folder 1  | U.S. Navy Type MB Spotting Set, 1925  |
| Box 1, Folder 2  | (2) 500 Watt and (1) 1000 Watt transmitters for installation in China, 1928   |
| Box 1, Folder 3  | TV, TW, TX Radio Telegraph Transmitters, 1925 - 1927  |
| Box 1, Folder 4  | <a href="#">RE, RF, RG Radio Receivers, 1925</a>  |
| Box 1, Folder 4  | <p>[Three photographs of a type RG radio receiver; front, interior, and coil set], 1926<br/> 1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 7.5" x 9.9".)<br/> <a href="#">Image(s)</a><br/> <a href="#">Image(s)</a><br/> <a href="#">Image(s)</a><br/> Collector: Laport, Edmund A.<br/> Language: English.<br/> Notes: AC0016-0000006.tif (AC Scan No.)<br/> AC0016-0000007.tif (AC Scan No.)<br/> AC0016-0000008.tif (AC Scan No.)<br/> Unrestricted research use on site by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves.<br/> Topic: Radio -- Receivers and reception</p> |
| Box 1, Folder 5  | Miscellaneous Radio & Audio Equipment, undated  |
| Box 1, Folder 6  | RCA, Type 50-A, 1927 May-1927 June  |
| Box 1, Folder 7  | RCA 50KW HF & AM Type 50F, 1940s  |
| Box 1, Folder 8  | Cone-of-Silence Transmitter and Antenna, 1940 - 1942  |
| Box 1, Folder 9  | RCAF-AT 3 Transmitter, 1939   |
| Box 1, Folder 10 | RCA CW-1,4 gc Microwave Relay, 1947   |
| Box 1, Folder 11 | U.S. Navy Model TZ Transmitter, 1926  |
| Box 1, Folder 12 | RCA 50-B 50 KW Broadcast Transmitter, 1929  |
| Box 1, Folder 13 | <a href="#">Westinghouse Plant, Home Receiver Production, 1926</a>  |

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Box 1, Folder 13 | <p><a href="#">[Home radio receiver production line at the Westinghouse plant in East Springfield, Massachusetts], circa 1926</a><br/>1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 8.4" x 11.1".)<br/>Creator: Westinghouse Electric &amp; Manufacturing Company<br/>Language: English.<br/>Notes: AC0016-0000001.tif (AC Scan No.)<br/>Unrestricted research use on site by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves.<br/>Topic: Radio -- Receivers and reception</p>                            |
| Box 1, Folder 14 | Westinghouse Automatic HF Telephone System for Carrier-Current Communication Over Utility Power Lines, 1925   |
| Box 1, Folder 15 | RCA 100 KW AM Broadcast Transmitter Type 100 D for Norway, 1937   |
| Box 1, Folder 16 | RCA TE-260A Telegraph Transmitter and TE-343 20-30 KW Transmitter, 1942 - 1943  |
| Box 1, Folder 17 | RCA 75-MC Transportable Cone-of-Silence Transmitter, 1940 - 1942  |
| Box 1, Folder 18 | <a href="#">RCA 500-KW AM Transmitter installed at Hornby, England Called "Aspedistra", 1936 - 1937</a>   |
| Box 1, Folder 18 | <p><a href="#">[Control desk of the Aspidistra transmitter at Hornby, England], circa 1940</a><br/>1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 6.2" x 8.3".)<br/>Collector: Laport, Edmund A.<br/>Language: English.<br/>Notes: AC0016-0000002.tif (AC Scan No.)<br/>Unrestricted research use on site by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves.<br/>H.M. Govt. Communications Centre stamped on reverse.<br/>Topic: Aspidistra -- transmitter<br/>Radio -- Transmitters and transmission</p> |
| Box 1, Folder 19 | Broadcast Station Speech Input Equipment, 1928  |
| Box 1, Folder 20 | Station 2XAR (WJZ) 30 KW on 760 KC at Bound Brook, New Jersey, 1926   |
| Box 1, Folder 21 | Westinghouse Aircraft Radio Communication Equipment Sold to Royal Japanese Navy, 1927   |
| Box 1, Folder 22 | U.S. Army Signal Corps BC-137 Receiver, 1926  |
| Box 1, Folder 23 | Westinghouse 200W 2000-3000 KC Telegraph Transmitter, 1928  |
| Box 1, Folder 23 | Westinghouse 20 KW HF Model T-7 Transmitter, Modulator, and Amplifier, 1927   |

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Box 1, Folder 24    | U.S. Army BC-127 Mobile Telephone-telegraph Transmitter 250-400 W at 150 to 350KC, 1923   |
| Box 1, Folder 25    | Stati Photographs, 1924 - 1925  |
| Box 1, Folder 25    | ERA Antennas, Equipment, and Possible Later Model Amplifier, 1924 - 1925  |
| Box 1, Folder 26    | Westinghouse 200 W CW and MCW 200 to 500 KC Shipboard Model, 1926   |
| Box 2, Folder 27    | RCA Victor (Montreal) Type TE-147 50-80 KW Telegraph Transmitter, undated   |
| Box 2, Folder 28    | Westinghouse, high power, low frequency Transmitter, circa 1926-1927  |
| Box 2, Folder 29    | Turnstile Antennas, undated   |
| Box 2, Folder 30    | Wide Band Television Antenna development stages at RCA Laboratories, Rocky Point, New York, undated   |
| Box 2, Folder 31    | Electronic production photos at RCA Victor Company, Ltd., Montreal, 1942  |
| Box 2, Folder 32    | Royal Canadian Air Force AT-12 HF & LF Radio Equipment, 1943  |
| Box 2, Folder 33    | RCA SSB-1, 60 Watt HF single-sideband complete communication system, undated  |
| Box 2, Folder 34-35 | Radiomarine Corporation of America, undated   |
| Box 2, Folder 36    | High Frequency Broadcast Monitoring Equipment, Vatican Radio, 1949  |
| Box 2, Folder 37    | Pacific Communication Program, undated  |
| Box 2, Folder 38    | <a href="#">NBC, Miscellaneous, 1930s-1940s</a>   |
| Box 2, Folder 38    | <p>TV Cameras on the set (pencil on verso). [Black-and-white photoprint, [1939 or later?], 1939<br/> 1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 7-1/8 x 8-7/8".)<br/> <a href="#">Image(s): TV Cameras on the set (pencil on verso). [Black-and-white photoprint, 1939 or later?]</a><br/> Collector: Laport, Edmund A.<br/> Language: English.<br/> Notes: AC0016-0000003.tif (AC scan no.)</p> <p>Unrestricted research use on site by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves. Three television cameras, marked "NBC" and "WNBT," with bank of lights, photographed from a low angle. The print is marked "1939" in ink in bottom right margin, presumably by Laport, but this may be erroneous because the cameras shown seem to be later. According to information supplied on 23 Jan. 2009 by the Rev. B. Woods Mattingley, a television cameraman beginning</p> |



from 1956 on, the cameras date from either the late 1940s or early 1950s.

Names: WNBT (Television station, New York, N.Y.)  
 Photographer: National Broadcasting Company  
 Topic: Television studios  
 Television cameras -- 1950-1960 -- United States  
 Television  
 Place: New York (N.Y.)  
 Genre/Form: Photographs -- 1940-1950 -- 1940 -- Black-and-white  
 photoprints -- Silver gelatin

## Box 2, Folder 38

Televising Mamba's Daughters: Ethel Waters and Fredi Washington... [pencil on verso]. [Black-and-white photoprint], 1939  
 1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 8"x 10-1/8".)

[Image\(s\): Televising Mamba's Daughters: Ethel Waters and Fredi Washington](#)

Collector: Laport, Edmund A.  
 Language: English.  
 Notes: AC0016-0000004.tif (AC scan no.)

Unrestricted research use on site by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves.

Television studio showing actors, cameras, and cameramen. Typed caption taped to verso: "TELEVISION MAMBA'S DAUGHTERS / Ethel Waters and Fredi Washington, Broadway players, appeared in one of NBC television's outstanding 1939 dramatic productions, "Mamba's Daughters," in which vehicle Ethel Waters won critical acclaim on the Great White Way. / NBC Photo / 12/26/39". Pencil below typed label: "Television Studio 311, Radio City / NY".

Names: Waters, Ethel, 1900-1977  
 Washington, Fredi (Fredericka Carolyn)  
 Rockefeller Center  
 Photographer: National Broadcasting Company  
 Topic: Mamba's Daughters (Television production}  
 Television cameras  
 Television studios  
 Television  
 Place: New York (N.Y.)  
 Genre/Form: Photographs -- 1940-1950 -- 1940 -- Black-and-white  
 photoprints -- Silver gelatin

## Box 2, Folder 38

[Disc recorders in recording room - NBC - New York City, 1938](#)

1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 8.2" x 9.9".)

Collector: Laport, Edmund A.  
 Language: English.  
 Notes: AC0016-0000005.tif (AC Scan No.)

Unrestricted research use on site by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves.

Names: National Broadcasting Company  
 Topic: Sound -- Recording and reproducing

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Box 2, Folder 39 | RCA ET-4332; RCA ET-4336 Telegraph Transmitters, undated   |
| Box 2, Folder 40 | RCA Communications, Inc., undated  |
| Box 2, Folder 41 | Royal Canadian Air Force GT-24 5 kw Transmitter, undated   |
| Box 2, Folder 42 | U.S. Navy Type TAH 5 kw low frequency Telegraph Transmitter, undated   |
| Box 2, Folder 43 | 500 Watt 150/200 kc Telegraph Transmitter TE 237, 1941   |
| Box 2, Folder 44 | U.S. Navy TAK Shipboard Radio Telegraph Transmitter, 1929 - 1930   |
| Box 2, Folder 45 | Wired Radio Inc. suppressed carrier single sideband Exciter, undated   |
| Box 2, Folder 46 | 200 watt LF Radio Telegraph Transmitter, 1925  |
| Box 2, Folder 47 | NBC 50 KW Broadcasting Station WEAJ (Later WNBC), undated  |
| Box 2, Folder 48 | Navy Transmitter, possibly TBQ, 1932   |
| Box 2, Folder 49 | 10 KW Low-Frequency Transmitter, 1926 - 1927   |
| Box 2, Folder 50 | CTR-140 VHP Radio Relay Equipment, undated   |
| Box 2, Folder 51 | Pre 1955 RCA Test & Measuring Equipment, undated   |
| Box 2, Folder 52 | WCFL of the Chicago Federation of Labor, Navy Pier, Chicago, 1931  |
| Box 2, Folder 53 | Phasing and Impedance-matching Networks for Broadcast Directive Antennas, undated  |
| Box 2, Folder 54 | Inspector's Wavemeter, 270-550 KC, 1926  |
| Box 2, Folder 55 | Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Broadcast Studio Control and Switching System, 1941  |
| Box 2, Folder 56 | RCA 250 watt & 5000 watt AM Broadcast Transmitters, circa 1944   |
| Box 2, Folder 57 | Production of Electronic Equipment, RCA Camden Plant, during WWII, undated   |
| Box 2, Folder 58 | Developmental low-power HF Radio Transmitter, 1940   |
| Box 2, Folder 59 | Schmidt Optical System Control Console & RCA Large-Screen Home Television, 1940s, circa 1940s                                |
| Box 2, Folder 60 | Fixed-Frequency Receivers for Airport Traffic Control, Canadian Department of Transportation, Airport Receiver Console, 1940 |

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Box 2, Folder 61 | RCA 15 watt Hailing System, Royal Canadian Navy, 1942        |
| Box 2, Folder 62 | RCA Type PM-45 Portable Sound Film Recording Equipment, 1943 |
| Box 2, Folder 63 | U.S. Navy TBH Radio Telegraph Transmitter, undated           |
| Box 2, Folder 64 | 40,000 watt Broadcast Transmitter, Khobarsk, 1927 - 1928     |
| Box 2, Folder 65 | Photo album of Finnish Transmitters, undated                 |

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## Series 2: Laport Articles, undated

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Box 2, Folder 66 | "Notes on Radio Instrumentation," and "Modulation Systems for Amplitude Modulation", undated  |
| Box 2, Folder 67 | "Technical Evolution of American Broadcast Transmitters, " and "Brief Outline of Career of Edmund A. LaPort in Radio Engineering" (autobiographical), undated |

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