



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

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

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.

Other Finding Aids

[Inventory](#) available.

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.

Conditions Governing Use

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

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.

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.

Arrangement

The collection is divided into two series.

Series 1: Photographs, 1923-1949

Series 2: Articles, undated

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

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 RE, RF, RG Radio Receivers, 1925
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 1, Folder 4 [Three photographs of a type RG radio receiver; front, interior, and coil set],
1926
1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 7.5" x 9.9".)
[Image\(s\)](#)
[Image\(s\)](#)
[Image\(s\)](#)
Laport, Edmund A., Collector
Unrestricted research use on site by appointment. Photographs must be
handled with cotton gloves unless protecte by sleeves.
- Local Numbers
AC0016-0000006.tif (AC Scan No.)
AC0016-0000007.tif (AC Scan No.)
AC0016-0000008.tif (AC Scan No.)
Topic: Radio -- Receivers and reception
- 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. Navey Model TZ Transmitter, 1926
- Box 1, Folder 12 RCA 50-B 50 KW Broadcast Transmitter, 1929
- Box 1, Folder 13 Westinghouse Plant, Home Receiver Production, 1926
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 1, Folder 13 [Home radio receiver production line at the Westinghouse plant in East Springfield, Massachusetts], circa 1926
1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 8.4" x 11.1".)
[Image\(s\)](#)
Westinghouse Electric & Manufacturing Company, Creator
Unrestricted research use on site by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves.
- Local Numbers
AC0016-0000001.tif (AC Scan No.)
Topic: Radio -- Receivers and reception
- 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 RCA 500-KW AM Transmitter installed at Hornby, England Called "Aspidistra" , 1936 - 1937
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 1, Folder 18 [Control desk of the Aspidistra transmitter at Hornby, England], circa 1940
1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 6.2" x 8.3".)
[Image\(s\)](#)
Laport, Edmund A., Collector
H.M. Govt. Communications Centre stamped on reverse.
Unrestricted research use on site by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves.
- Local Numbers
AC0016-0000002.tif (AC Scan No.)
Topic: Aspidistra -- transmitter

Radio -- Transmitters and transmission

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 NBC, Miscellaneous, 1930s-1940s
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 2, Folder 38 TV Cameras on the set (pencil on verso). [Black-and-white photoprint, [1939 or later?], 1939
1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 7-1/8 x 8-7/8".)
[Image\(s\): TV Cameras on the set \(pencil on verso\). \[Black-and-white photoprint, 1939 or later?\]](#)
Laport, Edmund A., Collector
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 from 1956 on, the cameras date from either the late 1940s or early 1950s.

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

Local Numbers
AC0016-0000003.tif (AC scan no.)

Names: WNBT (Television station, New York, N.Y.)
Photographer: National Broadcasting Company, Photographer
Topic: Television
Television cameras -- 1950-1960 -- United States
Television studios

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](#)
Laport, Edmund A., Collector
Television studio showing actors, cameras, and cameramen. Typed caption taped to verso: "TELEVISING 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".

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

Local Numbers

AC0016-0000004.tif (AC scan no.)

Names: Rockefeller Center
Washington, Fredi (Fredericka Carolyn)
Waters, Ethel, 1900-1977

Photographer: National Broadcasting Company, Photographer

Topic: Mamba's Daughters (Television production)
Television
Television cameras
Television studios

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".)

[Image\(s\): Disc recorders in recording room - NBC - New York City.](#)

Laport, Edmund A., Collector

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

Local Numbers

AC0016-0000005.tif (AC Scan No.)

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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