Collection Summary

Title: John Kieran Papers
Span Dates: 1917-1985
ID No.: MSS61885
Creator: Kieran, John, 1892-1981
Extent: 400 items ; 2 containers ; .8 linear feet
Language: Collection material in English
Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Summary: Naturalist, author, and sports columnist. Correspondence, annotated transcripts of his World War I diary, nature diary, ornithological notes, essays, notes and drafts of writings, clippings, and a photograph pertaining to Kieran's career as a sports columnist and panelist of the radio and television program, Information Please, as well as to his expertise in ornithology and natural history.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

People
Allen, Fred, 1894-1956--Correspondence.
Atkinson, Brooks, 1894-1984--Correspondence.
Beebe, William, 1877-1962--Correspondence.
Borland, Hal, 1900-1978--Correspondence.
Brooks, Paul--Correspondence.
Cagney, James, 1899-1986--Correspondence.
Croy, Homer, 1883-1965--Correspondence.
Davidson, Garrison H., 1904- --Correspondence.
Davis, Robert H. (Robert Hobart), 1869-1942--Correspondence.
Fadiman, Clifton, 1904-1999--Correspondence.
Kieran, John, 1892-1981.
Krock, Arthur, 1886- --Correspondence.
Marquand, John P. (John Phillips), 1893-1960--Correspondence.
Masefield, John, 1878-1967--Correspondence.
McCord, David Thompson Watson, 1897-1997--Correspondence.
McFee, William, 1881- --Correspondence.
Mullin, Willard, 1902- --Correspondence.
O'Hara, John, 1905-1970--Correspondence.
Phelps, William Lyon, 1865-1943--Correspondence.
Phillips, H. I. (Harry Irving), 1887- --Correspondence.
Reeder, Red, 1902- --Correspondence.
Rickenbacker, Eddie, 1890-1973--Correspondence.
Roosevelt, Theodore, 1887-1944--Correspondence.
Saltonstall, Leverett, 1892-1979--Correspondence.
Smith, Ken, 1902- --Correspondence.
Swope, Herbert Bayard, 1882-1958--Correspondence.
Thomas, Lowell, 1892-1981--Correspondence.
Van Tyne, Josselyn, 1902-1957--Correspondence.
Waring, Fred, 1900-1984--Correspondence.
White, E. B. (Elwyn Brooks), 1899-1985--Correspondence.

Organizations

Subjects
Ornithology.
Quiz shows.
Sports journalism.
World War, 1914-1918.

Occupations
Authors.
Journalists.
Naturalists.

Administrative Information

Provenance
The papers of John Kieran, naturalist, author, and sports columnist, were given to the Library of Congress by his wife, Margaret Ford Kieran in 1985.

Processing History
The papers of John Kieran were arranged and described in 1987. The finding aid was revised in 2010.

Copyright Status
The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of John Kieran is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions
The papers of John Kieran are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation
Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, John Kieran Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date Event
1892, Aug. 2 Born, New York, N. Y.
1908-1911 Attended City College of New York, New York, N.Y.
1912 B.S., Fordham University, New York, N.Y.
1913 Poultry farmer and rural school teacher, Dutchess County, N.Y.
1915-1917 Sports reporter, New York Times
1917-1919 World War I service in France with Eleventh United States Engineers
1919 Married Alma Boldtmann (died 1944)
1922-1925  Sports reporter, *New York Tribune*

1925-1927  Sports reporter, *New York American*


1938-1948  *Information Please* radio show panelist

1941-1944  Sports columnist, *New York Sun*

1947  Married Margaret Ford

1947-1953  Editor, *Information Please Almanac*

1952  *Information Please* television show panelist

1956  Retired to Rockport, Mass., on Cape Ann

1959  Published *A Natural History of New York City*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin


1974  Elected to Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, N.Y.


**Scope and Content Note**

The papers of John Francis Kieran (1892-1981) cover the years 1917-1985 and consist chiefly of correspondence together with annotated typewritten transcripts of his World War I diary, nature diaries, ornithological notes, essays, notes and drafts of writings, clippings, and a photograph.


Kieran transcribed and annotated his World War I diary (1917-1919) shortly after the conflict (“looking back through a year of prohibitionism”). It reflects his daily routine while serving with the Eleventh United States Engineers, who were among the first American troops to land in France in 1917. His wartime experiences are also related in letters from Colonel Red Reeder and General Garrison Davidson, who reminisce in later years about their service with Kieran in France. In the miscellany section are drafts of the first chapter of a World War I narrative based on the diary.

Kieran’s interests in ornithology and natural history are represented by typewritten transcripts of nature diaries kept in the 1960s and 1970s on Cape Ann in Massachusetts together with lists of birds observed there and in San Francisco. The diaries consist of brief entries, noting plants and animals, weather conditions, and seasonal changes.

The miscellany section contains essays, incomplete drafts and notes for books, list of “Information Please” panelists (1938-1948), newspaper clippings, and photographs.
Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged by type of material.
## Container List

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<td>BOX 1</td>
<td>Diaries</td>
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| BOX 1     | Annotated diary, 1917-1919  
            | (4 folders) |
| BOX 1     | Nature diaries, 1965-1975  
            | Ornithological observations, 1960, undated |
| BOX 1     | Correspondence |
| BOX 1     | A-C  
            | (3 folders) |
| BOX 2     | D-W  
            | (12 folders) |
| BOX 2     | Miscellany |
| BOX 2     | Essays, 1954-1964 |
| BOX 2     | Incomplete drafts and notes for books, undated  
            | (3 folders) |
| BOX 2     | List of *Information Please* panelists, 1939-1949, undated |
| BOX 2     | Newspaper clippings, circa 1930-1985 |
| BOX 2     | Photograph, 1975 |