

Melville Eastham Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2011

Contact information: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

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Prepared by Manuscript Division Staff
Revised by Melinda K. Friend

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2011
Revised 2013 August

Collection Summary

Title: Melville Eastham Papers

Span Dates: 1908-1973

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1930-1964)

ID No.: MSS52381

Creator: Eastham, Melville, 1885-1964

Extent: 5,800 items

Extent: 32 containers

Extent: 12.8 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm82052381>

Summary: Radio engineer and manufacturer. Correspondence, diaries, blueprints, sketches, plans, notebooks, company files, photographs, reports, clippings, and printed matter largely related to Eastham's career as a radio engineer and as head of the General Radio Company, but also to his avocation of collecting early maps and atlases.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Barton, Fred S.--Correspondence.

Benham, Cedric M. (Cedric Minett), 1904- --Correspondence.

Bown, Ralph, 1891-1971--Correspondence.

Bush, Vannevar, 1890-1974--Correspondence.

Clark, Trevor--Correspondence.

Compton, K. T. (Karl Taylor), 1887-1954--Correspondence.

Conant, James Bryant, 1893-1978--Correspondence.

Eastham, Melville, 1885-1964.

Friedrichs, George--Correspondence.

Friedrichs, Nicole--Correspondence.

Grover, Charles S.--Correspondence.

Loomis, Alfred L. (Alfred Lee), 1887-1975--Correspondence.

Lyons, Claude--Correspondence.

Mears, Henry S.--Correspondence.

Murphy, William P., 1923- --Correspondence.

Schaefer, Marie E.--Correspondence.

Shaw, Henry Southworth, Jr.--Correspondence.

Organizations

General Radio Company.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Radiation Laboratory.

Subjects

Atlases--Collectors and collecting.

Loran.

Maps--Collectors and collecting.

Navigation.

Radar.

Radio.

Occupations

Engineers.

Manufacturers.

Provenance

The papers of Melville Eastham, radio engineer and manufacturer, were given to the Library of Congress by his wife, Jessie Chase Eastham, in 1974.

Processing History

The papers of Melville Eastham were arranged and described in 1974. The collection and finding aid were revised in 2011.

Additional Guides

A listing of the printed matter in Containers 23-32 is available in the Manuscript Division Reading Room and as a [PDF document](#).

Transfers

Maps have been transferred to the Geography and Map Division where they are identified as part of the Melville Eastham Papers .

Copyright Status

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

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Melville Eastham 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, Melville Eastham Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

| Date | Event |
|---------------|---|
| 1885, June 26 | Born, Oregon City, Ore. |
| 1905 | Worked for Ovington X-ray Co., New York, N.Y. |
| 1906 | Founded with J. Emery Clapp and William O. Eddy, the Clapp, Eddy, and Eastham Co., Boston, Mass., manufacturing x-ray equipment |
| 1908 | Established Clapp-Eastham Co., after departure of Eddy, and shifted to manufacturing receiving and transmitting equipment; Clapp sold his interest in the company to Otis Kerro Luscomb in 1910 |
| circa 1914 | Married Jessie Chase (died 1979) |

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| 1915 | Founded with Luscomb, General Radio Co., Cambridge, Mass., manufacturing precision electrical measuring instruments; moved to Concord, Mass., in 1950s |
| 1915-1944 | President, General Radio Co. |
| 1917 | Sold interest in Clapp-Eastham Co. to Luscomb; Luscomb sold interest in General Radio Co. to Eastham |
| 1917-1919 | Produced radio equipment for the American forces during World War I |
| 1920s | Joined in General Radio Co. by Henry Southworth Shaw (1884-) |
| 1925 | Named as fellow, Institute of Radio Engineers |
| 1937 | Awarded medal of honor, Institute of Radio Engineers |
| circa 1942-1944 | Led LORAN radio navigation development efforts, Radiation Laboratory, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass., during World War II |
| 1944-1950 | Chief engineer, General Radio Co. |
| 1946 | Named as fellow, American Institute of Electrical Engineers |
| 1950 | Retired from General Radio Co. |
| 1964, May 6 | Died, Boston, Mass. |

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Melville Eastham (1885-1964) span the years 1908-1973, with the bulk of the material dating from 1930 to 1964. The papers are in English and are organized as received allowing a single topic to occur in various containers throughout the collection. Approximate span dates are given for half of the containers. The papers are roughly grouped into personal files including diaries, correspondence, and investments, General Radio Company and equipment files, files relating to the LORAN project at the Radiation Laboratory, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and material relating to Eastham's avocation of collecting sixteenth- and seventeenth-century atlases and maps.

Correspondents include Fred S. Barton, Cedric M. Benham, Ralph Bown, Vannevar Bush, Trevor Clark, K. T. Compton, James Bryant Conant, George and Nicole Friedrichs, Charles S. Grover, Alfred L. Loomis, Claude Lyons, Henry S. Mears, William P. Murphy, Jr., Marie E. Schaefer, and Henry Southworth Shaw (1884-).

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged as received.

Container List

| Container | Contents |
|-----------|--|
| BOX 1 | circa 1955-circa 1964 |
| BOX 1 | Avoca Investment Co. |
| BOX 1 | Benham, Cedric M. |
| BOX 1 | Bureau of Standards |
| BOX 1 | Clark, Trevor |
| BOX 1 | Cordis Corp. |
| BOX 1 | County Bank and Trust Co., Cambridge, Mass., checking account statements |
| BOX 1 | “D-E” miscellaneous |
| BOX 1 | Dawe Instruments |
| BOX 1 | Diaries, 1961-1963 |
| BOX 1 | Erwood, Inc. |
| BOX 1 | European correspondence |
| BOX 1 | Friedrichs, George and Nicole |
| BOX 1 | General Radio Co. |
| BOX 1 | Mico Instrument Co. |
| BOX 1 | Murphy, William P., Jr. |
| BOX 1 | Personal correspondence (4 folders) |
| BOX 2 | circa 1942-circa 1962 |
| BOX 2 | Scientific societies |
| BOX 2 | Technicolor |
| BOX 2 | Compton, K. T. |
| BOX 2 | “A-C” miscellaneous |
| BOX 2 | Dawe Instruments |
| BOX 2 | European correspondence |
| BOX 2 | Friedrichs, George and Nicole |
| BOX 2 | Maps, correspondence concerning |
| BOX 2 | Personal correspondence (2 folders) |
| BOX 2 | Personal correspondence, Europe (2 folders) |
| BOX 2 | Personal business |
| BOX 2 | Racal Engineering |
| BOX 2 | Radio Club of America |
| BOX 2 | Raytheon Manufacturing Co. |
| BOX 2 | “S-W” miscellaneous |
| BOX 2 | Wayne-Kerr Corp. |
| BOX 2 | Will |
| BOX 2 | Mico Instrument Co. (2 folders) |
| BOX 2 | Murphy, William P., Jr., and Cordis Corp. |
| BOX 2 | “O-R” miscellaneous |

Container List

| Container | Contents |
|-----------|--|
| BOX 2 | O'Connor, Johnson |
| BOX 2 | Oregon property |
| BOX 3 | circa 1938-circa 1951 |
| BOX 3 | British correspondence |
| BOX 3 | Clapp-Eastham Co. |
| BOX 3 | European correspondence |
| BOX 3 | General Radio Co |
| BOX 3 | Blueprints and plans |
| BOX 3 | Employee benefit plans |
| BOX 3 | Correspondence |
| BOX 3 | Pension scheme |
| BOX 3 | Pensions and trusts |
| BOX 3 | Printed matter |
| BOX 3 | Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. |
| BOX 3 | Joint Technical Advisory Committee, Institute of Radio Engineers and Radio Manufacturers Association |
| BOX 3 | Maps, correspondence concerning |
| BOX 3 | Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass. |
| BOX 3 | Library |
| BOX 3 | Miscellaneous |
| BOX 3 | Mico Instrument Co. |
| BOX 3 | Personal correspondence |
| BOX 3 | Personal business |
| BOX 3 | Personal correspondence, Pacific Coast |
| BOX 3 | Personal correspondence, retirement letters |
| BOX 3 | Catalogs of books, maps, and manuscripts |
| BOX 4 | circa 1909-circa 1955 |
| BOX 4 | British correspondence (2 folders) |
| BOX 4 | European correspondence (2 folders) |
| BOX 4 | General Radio Co. |
| BOX 4 | Miscellaneous (2 folders) |
| BOX 4 | Pensions and trusts |
| BOX 4 | Patents (2 folders) |
| BOX 4 | circa 1909-circa 1955 |
| BOX 4 | LORAN (2 folders) |
| BOX 4 | Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass. |
| BOX 4 | General |
| BOX 4 | Radiation Laboratory |
| BOX 4 | Miscellaneous |
| BOX 4 | National Defense Research Committee |
| BOX 4 | Personal |

Container List

| Container | Contents |
|-----------|---|
| BOX 4 | Personal correspondence (2 folders) |
| BOX 4 | Printed matter |
| BOX 4 | Research Construction Co. |
| BOX 5 | circa 1909-circa 1950 |
| BOX 5 | Maps, correspondence concerning (5 folders) |
| BOX 5 | Books |
| BOX 5 | Cost quotations |
| BOX 5 | Bills |
| BOX 5 | Library of Congress, Map Division |
| BOX 5 | <i>Imago Mundi</i> |
| BOX 5 | Henry Stevens, Son & Stiles |
| BOX 5 | Miscellaneous |
| BOX 5 | Francis Edwards Ltd. |
| BOX 5 | Schaefer, Marie E. |
| BOX 5 | Printed matter |
| BOX 5 | Bureau of Standards |
| BOX 5 | Catalog and article on maps |
| BOX 5 | Radio Club of America |
| BOX 5 | Radios, telescopes, and telephones |
| BOX 6 | circa 1944-circa 1963 |
| BOX 6 | Aerials-radiation |
| BOX 6 | Alternators |
| BOX 6 | Condensers |
| BOX 6 | Condensers-dielectric losses |
| BOX 6 | Dielectric loss data |
| BOX 6 | Detectors-receivers, blueprints |
| BOX 6 | Wave meters |
| BOX 6 | Mico Instrument Co. (2 folders) |
| BOX 6 | General Radio Pension Association |
| BOX 6 | Family genealogy |
| BOX 6 | Furniture |
| BOX 6 | Grover, Charles S. |
| BOX 6 | "H-K" miscellaneous |
| BOX 6 | Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. |
| BOX 6 | House, 8 Gray Garden East, Cambridge, Mass. |
| BOX 7 | circa 1951-circa 1963 |
| BOX 7 | Institute of Radio Engineers (3 folders) |
| BOX 7 | Institute of Radio Engineers and American Institute of Electrical Engineers |
| BOX 7 | Insurance |
| BOX 7 | Library of Congress, Map Division |
| BOX 7 | Lyons, Claude |
| BOX 7 | Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass. (3 folders) |

Container List

| Container | Contents |
|-----------|------------------------------------|
| BOX 7 | Mears, Henry S. |
| BOX 7 | Medical statements |
| BOX 8 | circa 1930-circa 1962 |
| BOX 8 | Signal generator |
| BOX 8 | Transformers (3 folders) |
| BOX 8 | Lasers |
| BOX 8 | Variac |
| BOX 8 | Vibrators |
| BOX 8 | Wave length frequency |
| BOX 8 | Wax (resin) |
| BOX 8 | Winding machine |
| BOX 8 | Microscope |
| BOX 8 | James Millen Manufacturing Co. |
| BOX 8 | Miscellaneous |
| BOX 8 | Motor grinder |
| BOX 8 | Optical resonance targets |
| BOX 9 | circa 1912-circa 1962 |
| BOX 9 | Optical bench lamp |
| BOX 9 | Paint |
| BOX 9 | Plugs and jacks |
| BOX 9 | Projectors |
| BOX 9 | Punch press |
| BOX 9 | Recorder |
| BOX 9 | Resistance measurements |
| BOX 9 | Resistors |
| BOX 9 | Rheostats |
| BOX 9 | Soldering |
| BOX 9 | Printed matter |
| BOX 10 | circa 1950-circa 1961 |
| BOX 10 | Machines, France and Germany |
| BOX 10 | Materials (2 folders) |
| BOX 10 | David W. Mann, Inc. |
| BOX 10 | Metrix (Co.), France |
| BOX 10 | Mico Instrument Co. |
| BOX 10 | Printed matter |
| BOX 11 | circa 1937-circa 1961 |
| BOX 11 | Components |
| BOX 11 | Contacts and contact materials |
| BOX 11 | Cordis Corp. |
| BOX 11 | Corning Glass Works (2 folders) |
| BOX 11 | Dielectrics |
| BOX 11 | Dust cores |
| BOX 11 | Electro-Measurements, Inc. |
| BOX 11 | Employee compensation |

Container List

| Container | Contents |
|-----------|--|
| BOX 11 | Exakta Camera Co. |
| BOX 11 | Fans |
| BOX 11 | Filters |
| BOX 11 | Printed matter |
| BOX 12 | circa 1945-circa 1959 |
| BOX 12 | General Radio Co., photographs from Concord, Mass. |
| BOX 12 | Grinder |
| BOX 12 | Harmonic generator |
| BOX 12 | Inductor coils |
| BOX 12 | Instructions, operating |
| BOX 12 | Insulating materials |
| BOX 12 | Johanson Manufacturing Corp. |
| BOX 12 | Lamps |
| BOX 12 | Layout machine |
| BOX 12 | Low-frequency br. |
| BOX 12 | Lyons, Claude |
| BOX 12 | Machinery |
| BOX 12 | Potentiometer |
| BOX 12 | Printed matter |
| BOX 12 | Banana plugs |
| BOX 12 | Beat-frequency oscillators |
| BOX 12 | Bind posts and terminals |
| BOX 12 | Brakes |
| BOX 12 | Bridge (high-frequency) |
| BOX 12 | Bridges |
| BOX 12 | Bridges |
| BOX 12 | Trans type |
| BOX 12 | Wayne-Kerr Corp. |
| BOX 12 | Buzzers |
| BOX 12 | Standard capacitors, calculation of |
| BOX 12 | Capacitor measurements |
| BOX 12 | Capacitor designs |
| BOX 12 | Capacitor standards |
| BOX 12 | Condensers |
| BOX 12 | C.A.T.T., assembly and parts |
| BOX 12 | Charts |
| BOX 12 | Printed matter |
| BOX 13 | circa 1945-circa 1964 |
| BOX 13 | Personnel correspondence |
| BOX 13 | Personal correspondence, Europe |
| BOX 13 | Dawe Instruments (2 folders) |
| BOX 13 | Clock bills |
| BOX 13 | Circuits (2 folders) |
| BOX 13 | Friedrichs, George and Nicole |

Container List

| Container | Contents |
|-----------|---|
| BOX 13 | General data |
| BOX 13 | General letters |
| BOX 13 | General Radio Co. |
| BOX 13 | Miscellaneous |
| BOX 13 | Parts |
| BOX 13 | Pension |
| BOX 13 | Personnel |
| BOX 13 | Institute of Radio Engineers (3 folders) |
| BOX 13 | Latady Development Co. |
| BOX 13 | Letters to be kept |
| BOX 13 | Lyons, Claude |
| BOX 13 | Mears, Henry S. |
| BOX 13 | Oregon State College, Corvallis, Ore. |
| BOX 14 | circa 1908-circa 1963 |
| BOX 14 | Automobile |
| BOX 14 | Clapp-Eastham Co., photographs and printed matter |
| BOX 14 | General Radio Co. |
| BOX 14 | Medical statements |
| BOX 14 | Murphy, William P., Jr. |
| BOX 14 | Personal correspondence, certificate, and memorabilia |
| BOX 14 | "P" miscellaneous |
| BOX 14 | Shaw, Henry Southworth (1884-) |
| BOX 14 | Taxes |
| BOX 14 | Technology Instrument Corp. |
| BOX 14 | Trusts |
| BOX 14 | Printed matter |
| BOX 15 | circa 1956-circa 1963 |
| BOX 15 | Barton, Fred S. |
| BOX 15 | Benham, Cedric M. |
| BOX 15 | Bown, Ralph |
| BOX 15 | Cambridge Trust Co. |
| BOX 15 | General Radio Co. (4 folders) |
| BOX 15 | Hewlett-Packard Co. Investments (2 folders) |
| BOX 15 | Maps, correspondence concerning |
| BOX 15 | Personal correspondence |
| BOX 15 | England |
| BOX 15 | France |
| BOX 15 | Pacific Coast |
| BOX 15 | Scandinavia |
| BOX 15 | Radiophon, Paul Fabricant |
| BOX 15 | Scientific societies |
| BOX 15 | Shaw, Henry Southworth (1884-) |
| BOX 16 | circa 1935-circa 1973 |
| BOX 16 | Addresses |

Container List

| Container | Contents |
|-----------|--|
| BOX 16 | American Geographical Society |
| BOX 16 | American Institute of Electrical Engineers and Institute of Electrical Engineers |
| BOX 16 | Automobile |
| BOX 16 | Avoca Investment Co. |
| BOX 16 | General Radio Co. |
| BOX 16 | New York restaurants |
| BOX 16 | Piezo-Electric resonators |
| BOX 16 | Printed matter |
| BOX 16 | Charts |
| BOX 17 | Diaries, 1949-1960 |
| BOX 17 | Address books |
| BOX 17 | <i>Wireless Telegraphist's Pocket Book</i> , 1915 |
| BOX 18 | Notebooks on |
| BOX 18 | Maps and map makers (3 vols.) |
| BOX 19 | Cartography books, old books, and Ptolemy (3 vols.) |
| BOX 20 | Materials, tools, and machinery and jig bores (3 vols.) |
| BOX 21 | Eng. and Ele. E5 coils (2 vols.) |
| BOX 22 | Notes, articles, reports, and miscellaneous printed matter |
| BOX 23-32 | Printed matter <i>See PDF for list of contents</i> |
| BOX 23-29 | Bookseller catalogs |
| BOX 30 | Bookseller catalogs |
| BOX 30 | Books, pamphlets, and journal articles |
| BOX 30 | Newspapers |
| BOX 31 | Books |
| BOX 32 | Photographs, certificates, blueprints, and drawings |