Collection Summary

Title: Edgar Kobak Papers
Span Dates: 1916-1966
Bulk Dates: (bulk 1949-1962)
ID No.: MSS28878
Creator: Kobak, Edgar, 1895-1962
Extent: 2,000 items
Extent: 9 containers
Extent: 3.6 linear feet
Language: Collection material in English
Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
LC Catalog record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mm79028878

Summary: Publicist, broadcasting executive, and consultant. Correspondence, autobiographical memoir, speeches and writings, business papers, clippings, and scrapbooks relating primarily to Kobak's work with McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, the National Broadcasting Company, and the Mutual Broadcasting System and to the early years of radio and television broadcasting and to his expertise in the field of public relations and communications.

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
Clark, Tom C. (Tom Campbell), 1899-1977--Correspondence.
Clay, Lucius D. (Lucius DuBignon), 1897-1978--Correspondence.
Conrad, John, 1915 or 1916- --Correspondence.
Conrad, Nicholas J., -1956--Correspondence.
Denny, George Vernon, 1899-1959--Correspondence.
Kennedy, John F. (John Fitzgerald), 1917-1963--Correspondence.
Kobak, Edgar H.--Correspondence.
Mehren, Edward J. (Edward John), 1881- --Correspondence.
Stevenson, Adlai E. (Adlai Ewing), 1900-1965--Correspondence.
Truman, Harry S., 1884-1972--Correspondence.

Organizations
A.C. Nielsen Company--Correspondence.
Mutual Broadcasting System.
National Association of Broadcasters--Correspondence.
National Broadcasting Company.
S&C Electric Company--Correspondence.

Subjects
Communication.
Public relations.
Radio broadcasting.
Television broadcasting.

Occupations
Consultants.
Executives.
Publicists.
Provenance
The papers of Edgar Kobak, publicist, broadcasting executive, and consultant, were given to the Library of Congress by Evelyn H. Kobak in 1967.

Processing History
The papers of Edgar Kobak were arranged and described in 1974. The finding aid was revised in 1979 and again in 2012.

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The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Edgar Kobak is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions
The papers of Edgar Kobak 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, Edgar Kobak Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1895, 18 Apr.</td>
<td>Born, Chicago, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>circa 1912-1916</td>
<td>Employed in testing department, Georgia Railway and Electric Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914-1915</td>
<td>Attended Georgia School of Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>Married Evelyn Elizabeth Hubert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916-1922</td>
<td>Employed by McGraw-Hill Publishing Co., became successively assistant engineering editor, advertising sales representative, and business manager of the firm's publication, Electrical World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>Elected vice president and director of McGraw-Hill Publishing Co.; also appointed publisher of electrical and radio publications and put in charge of sales of the firm's publications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934-1936</td>
<td>Vice president in charge of sales, National Broadcasting Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936-1940</td>
<td>Vice president, Lord and Thomas advertising agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940-1942</td>
<td>Vice president, sales, National Broadcasting Co's. Blue Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942-1944</td>
<td>Executive vice president of the Blue Network Co. (later the American Broadcasting Co.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944-1949</td>
<td>President, Mutual Broadcasting System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949-1958</td>
<td>Business consultant, New York, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962, June 3</td>
<td>Died, Atlantic City, N.J</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scope and Content Note
The papers of Edgar Kobak span the years 1916-1966, with the bulk of the material concentrated in the period 1949-1962, during Kobak's semi-retirement as a business consultant and communications expert in New York. The collection consists of five series: Autobiographical Interview, General Correspondence and Related Papers, Speeches and Writings.
Business Papers, and Miscellany. Included are subject files of personal business affairs and miscellaneous clippings and scrapbooks. In the correspondence is an autograph file of letters from prominent individuals who wrote to Kobak during his career with McGraw-Hill, the National Broadcasting Company, and other business firms for which he was either a consultant or director.

A key feature of the collection is an autobiographical account of the years Kobak spent at McGraw-Hill Publishing Company. Also of importance is the General Correspondence of letters sent and received from notable politicians, philanthropists, and military figures, mostly from the 1950s. The main portion of the correspondence, however, deals with companies that used Kobak's consulting service and with the various advertising and philanthropic organizations with which Kobak was associated in the last fifteen years of his life. Among the most significant and substantive of these letters are those from the National Association of Broadcasters, the S & C Electric Company, and the A. C. Nielsen Company.

There are also several folders of papers for the period before 1949, as for example the correspondence files for the Mutual Broadcasting System and the National Broadcasting Company. Only a small amount of Kobak's personal correspondence is present in these papers, most of it with his son, Edgar H. Kobak.

The Speeches and Writings series, which covers the years 1928-1962, offers perhaps the best representation of Kobak's work in broadcasting. In them can be found material relating to the first generation of radio and television, to Kobak's expertise in public relations, and to federal policy concerning communications. A smaller and less significant part of the collection is the Business Papers file. It is devoted exclusively to Kobak's private business ventures with a farm and radio station in Thomson, Georgia.

Correspondents in addition to those cited include John Conrad, Nicholas J. Conrad, George Vernon Denny, Edward J. Mehren, and A. C. Nielsen. The autograph file contains brief notes, usually thank-you letters, from individuals such as John F. Kennedy, Adlai Stevenson (1900-1964), Harry S. Truman, Lucius D. Clay, and Tom Clark.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in five series:

• Autobiographical Interview, circa 1916-1934
• General Correspondence and Related Papers, 1916-1966
• Speeches and Writings, 1928-1962
• Business Papers, 1948-1962
• Miscellany, circa 1929-1962
Description of Series

Container  Series

BOX 1  Autobiographical Interview, circa 1916-1934

BOX 1-3  General Correspondence and Related Papers, 1916-1966
  Letters sent or received by Edgar Kobak, including interoffice memoranda, public relations publications, and a few speeches, articles, and clippings.
  Arranged alphabetically by correspondent and chronologically thereunder. Miscellaneous correspondence is gathered separately and arranged alphabetically, as is an autograph file.

BOX 4  Speeches and Writings, 1928-1962
  Reprints, clippings, typescripts, and near-print duplications of Kobak's articles, speeches, and public statements, including notes for speeches and a transcript of a discussion.
  Arranged chronologically.

BOX 5  Business Papers, 1948-1962
  Correspondence and miscellaneous business papers.
  Arranged chronologically.

BOX 6-9  Miscellany, circa 1929-1962
  Scrapbooks, clippings, experience records, sketches of Kobak, memorabilia, fragments, miscellaneous tributes, and photographs.
  Arranged by type of material.
## Container List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| BOX 1 | Autobiographical Interview, circa 1916-1934  
| BOX 1 | Autobiography |
| BOX 1-3 | General Correspondence and Related Papers, 1916-1966  
Letters sent or received by Edgar Kobak, including interoffice memoranda, public relations publications, and a few speeches, articles, and clippings.  
Arranged alphabetically by correspondent and chronologically thereunder. Miscellaneous correspondence is gathered separately and arranged alphabetically, as is an autograph file. |
| BOX 1 | Advertising Federation of America, 1934-1956, undated |
| BOX 1 | Advertising Research Foundation, 1953-1955 |
| BOX 1 | Autograph file, 1933-1961 |
| BOX 1 | Blue Network (American Broadcasting Co.), 1944, 1957-1960 |
| BOX 1 | Broadcasters' Advisory Council, 1947 |
| BOX 1 | Federal Communications Commission, 1960-1961 |
| BOX 1 | General Mills, Inc., 1949-1954 |
| BOX 1 | Kobak, Edgar H., 1934-1945, 1959-1962 |
(3 folders) |
| BOX 2 | Mehren, Edward J., 1953-1961 |
| BOX 2 | Mutual Broadcasting System, 1944-1962 |
| BOX 2 | National Association of Broadcasters, 1950-1962 |
| BOX 2 | National Broadcasting Co.  
Interdepartmental correspondence, 1935  
General, 1934-1960 |
| BOX 2 | National Recovery Administration, 1933-1934 |
| BOX 2 | National Society for Crippled Children and Adults, 1950-1962 |
| BOX 2 | Nielsen (AC) Co., 1949-1962 |
| BOX 3 | Peabody Awards, 1961 |
| BOX 3 | S & C Electric Co., 1952-1962 |
| BOX 3 | Toll (subscription) television, 1955 |
| BOX 3 | Town Hall, 1951 |
| BOX 3 | Variety, 1955-1961 |
| BOX 3 | Miscellaneous  
A-E, 1940-1962  
F-L, 1916-1962  
M-S, 1933-1962 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOX 3</td>
<td>T-Z, 1949-1966</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| BOX 4     | **Speeches and Writings, 1928-1962**  
Reprints, clippings, typescripts, and near-print duplications of Kobak's articles, speeches, and  
public statements, including notes for speeches and a transcript of a discussion.  
Arranged chronologically. |
| BOX 4     | 1928-1962, undated  
(7 folders) |
| BOX 5     | **Business Papers, 1948-1962**  
Correspondence and miscellaneous business papers.  
Arranged chronologically. |
| BOX 5     | Business affairs, Thomson, Ga., 1948-1962, undated  
(8 folders) |
| BOX 6-9   | **Miscellany, circa 1929-1962**  
Scrapbooks, clippings, experience records, sketches of Kobak, memorabilia, fragments,  
miscellaneous tributes, and photographs.  
Arranged by type of material. |
| BOX 6     | Business, financial, and personal papers |
| BOX 6     | Printed material, memorabilia, and photographs |
| BOX 6     | Clippings, 1932-1962, undated  
(6 folders) |
| BOX 7     | Scrapbooks |
| BOX 7     | 1929-1945 |
| BOX 8     | 1945-1954 |
| BOX 9     | 1953-1962 |