

**Robert A. Lavender Papers**  
**A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress**



**Manuscript Division, Library of Congress**  
**Washington, D.C.**  
**2024**

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm2017086198>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms024009>

Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

Finding aid encoded by Manuscript Division staff, 2024

## Collection Summary

**Title:** Robert A. Lavender Papers

**Inclusive Dates:** 1911-1976

**ID No.:** MSS86198

**Creator:** Lavender, Robert A., 1889-1976

**Extent:** 1,000 items

**Extent:** 5 containers plus 1 oversize

**Extent:** 3.8 linear feet

**Extent:** 136 digital files (8.48 GB)

**Language:** Collection material in English

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

**LC Catalog record:** <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm2017086198>

**Summary:** United States Navy officer and attorney. Diaries, logbooks, military records, biographical material, clippings, photographs, and other material related to Lavender's naval and legal careers.

## Acquisition Information

The papers of Robert A. Lavender were given to the Library of Congress by his granddaughter, Roberta Anne Vena, in 2017.

## Processing History

The papers of Robert A. Lavender were arranged and described by Melissa Capozio Jones in 2024.

Digital files were received as part of the Robert A. Lavender Papers on a variety of storage media, each of which was assigned a unique digital ID number. Use the digital ID number to request access copie of the files associated with the media. A description of standard processes taken on born digital records can be found in the Processing History Note: Born Digital Collection Material at <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.digital>.

## Transfers

Audiovisual material has been transferred to the National Audio-Visual Conservation Center where they are identified as part of the Robert A. Lavender Papers. Patrons are encouraged to contact the National Audio-Visual Conservation Center in advance of a research visit.

## Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Robert A. Lavender is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

## Access and Restrictions

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

## Technical Requirements

Digital files were created in an unknown operating system. The content is primarily moving image files (.VOB) and image files (.jpeg).

## Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container or digital ID number, Robert A. Lavender Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Note

Date	Event
1889, Sept. 17	Born, Rockwell City, Iowa
1912	B.S., United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.
1913-1914	Member, United States Scientific Commission
1916	Married Margaret Ellen Long
1916-1917	Radio officer, Destroyer Force, United States Navy, Annapolis, Md.
1917-1919	Chief of Research and Development Aircraft Radio Section, Radio Division, Bureau of Engineering, United States Navy
1919	Radio officer, NC-3 transatlantic flight
1919-1920	Postgraduate courses, United States Naval Academy
1921	M.S., electronics engineering, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.
1921-1922	Radio officer, United States Asiatic Fleet, United States Navy
1922-1924	Communication superintendent, United States Asian Station, United States Navy
1924-1927	Chief, Patent Division, Office of the Judge Advocate of the Navy, United States Navy
1927	LL.B., George Washington University Law School, Washington, D.C.
1927-1929	Flag secretary, United States Asiatic Fleet, United States Navy
1929-1930	Commander, <i>Nevada</i> (battleship), United States Navy
1930-1933	Chief, Patent Division, Office of the Judge Advocate of the Navy, United States Navy
1933-1934	Flag secretary, United States Fleet, United States Navy
1938-1939	Commander and executive officer, <i>Tuscaloosa</i> (cruiser), United States Navy
1939	Retired from the United States Navy at the rank of captain Attorney, Stockbridge & Borst, New York City, N.Y.
1941	Recalled to active duty, legal officer, Bureau of Ships, United States Navy
circa 1942-1947	Patent advisor, Office of Scientific Research and Development and Atomic Energy Commission, and chief counsel on patents, Atomic Bomb Project, United States Navy
1947	Attorney, Stockbridge & Borst, New York City, N.Y.
1976, July 13	Died, Bethesda, Md.

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Robert A. Lavender span the years 1911-1976. The collection documents Lavender's extensive career as a naval officer and his legal work with the United States Navy. The collection is arranged alphabetically by subject or type of material.

The collection consists of material related to Lavender's approximately four decades in the United States Navy, focusing primarily on his early naval career, his work as radio officer and crew of the first transatlantic flight of the Navy-Curtiss (NC-3 and NC-4) flying boats. It also covers the investigation into Admiral Husband Edward Kimmel's role in the Pearl Harbor attack, for which Lavender provided legal counsel, and Lavender's work with patent law. Material includes diaries, journals, and excerpts documenting the daily activities of Lavender's early tours of duty. Files on the Admiral Husband Edward Kimmel Pearl Harbor investigation consist of Lavender's comprehensive research on the Pearl Harbor attack, the congressional investigative report, and supplemental books. Also included are biographical material and a small amount of general correspondence.

The collection contains digitized personal film footage shot by Lavender between 1919 and 1970. The digital video files include footage from naval tours in Japan and China circa 1929, the NC-3 and NC-4 flying boats before the first transatlantic flight, and the South American cruise of the United States Navy Cruiser Division 7. Also included are home movies of Lavender's family, personal travels in the United States, Europe, Asia, and Africa, and the 1934 Rose Bowl Parade.

## **Arrangement of the Collection**

This collection is arranged alphabetically by subject or type of material.

## **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**

Kimmel, Husband Edward, 1882-1968.

Lavender family.

Lavender, Robert A., 1889-1976--Travel.

Lavender, Robert A., 1889-1976.

### **Organizations**

Tournament of Roses.

United States. Navy--Aviation.

United States. Navy--Foreign service--Pacific Area.

United States. Navy--Foreign service--South America.

United States. Navy.

United States. Navy. Cruiser Division Seven.

### **Subjects**

Aeronautics, Military.

Curtiss NC flying boats.

Patent law and legislation--United States.

Pearl Harbor (Hawaii), Attack on, 1941.

Seaplanes--United States.

Transatlantic flights.

World War, 1939-1945.

### **Occupations**

Lawyers.

Naval officers.

# Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Biographical material
BOX 1	Awards and certificates, 1907-1912, 1920-1956
BOX OV 1	Awards and certificates, 1907-1912, 1921-1941 (15 folders)
BOX 1	Clippings, 1969
BOX 1	Photographs, circa 1920-1930s
BOX 1	Résumés, circa 1950s
BOX 1	Correspondence, 1919-1960, 1976
BOX 1	Diaries and journals, 1929-1939 (3 folders)
BOX 2	Diaries and journals, 1937-1939 (3 folders)
BOX 2	Diaries excerpts, 1911-1917, 1936-1962 (15 folders)
DF	Home movies (video files), 1919-circa 1970, undated <b>Digital ID:</b> mss86198_140_001 <b>Digital ID:</b> mss86198_140_002 <b>Digital ID:</b> mss86198_140_003
BOX 2	Kimmel, Husband Edward, Admiral, investigation and trial <i>F.D.R.: My Exploited Father-in-Law</i> by Curtis B. Dall, 1967
BOX 3	<i>Pearl Harbor</i> by Charles Sweeney, 1946
BOX 3	<i>Report of the Joint Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack</i> , 1946
BOX 3	Research notes, 1946-1969, undated (4 folders)
BOX 3	<i>The Skeleton in Uncle Sam's Closet</i> by Hartford Van Dyke, 1973
BOX 3	Naval service record
BOX 3	Miscellany, 1993, undated
BOX 3	Orders of duty, 1924-1948
BOX 4	Navy-Curtiss flying boats/transatlantic flight
BOX 4	Articles and clippings, 1919, 1937, 1969, 1976 (3 folders)
BOX 4	Correspondence, 1919, 1965-1974
BOX 4	NC seaplane flight notes, 1919, circa 1960s (2 folders)
BOX 4	NC-3 logbook, 1919, May
BOX 4	Photographs, circa 1919
BOX 4	Reports, 1919
BOX 5	Reports, 1919
BOX 5	Office of Science Research and Development/Atomic Energy Commission, 1945-1951, undated
BOX OV 1	Office of Scientific Research and Development/Atomic Energy Commission, 1951
BOX 5	Patents and patent law, 1931, 1946-1950, 1963