



# Harbor Hill, Mackay/Hechler Collection, 1900-2000

Special Collections Department/Long Island Studies Institute

Contact Information:  
Special Collections Department  
Axinn Library, Room 032  
123 Hofstra University  
Hempstead, NY 11549  
Phone: (516) 463-6411, or 463-6404  
Fax: (516) 463-6442  
E-mail: LISI@hofstra.edu  
<http://www.hofstra.edu/Libraries/SpecialCollections>

Compiled by:	[C. Bishop]
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Harbor Hill, Mackay/Hechler Collection; 1900-2000  
5.4 cubic feet

The Harbor Hill estate was given to Clarence H. Mackay and Katherine Duer as a wedding gift in 1898. It totaled 648 acres, which included formal gardens, terraces surrounding the main house, a 70 acre farm and park, a fountain, a superintendent's house, an indoor pool, tennis courts, squash courts, and a carriage house. The main house, whose exterior looked like a French chateau, cost \$781, 483 to build and in 1901 the major buildings of the estate were complete. Harbor Hill held an extensive art collection that Clarence Mackay purchased: a collection of arms and armor acquired from 1906-1937, including a mounted knight from 1560; paintings; tapestries; and antique battle flags. The house was the site of many elaborate parties, including grand celebrations for the Prince of Wales and for Charles Lindbergh. Harbor Hill was demolished in 1947 by Clarence's son, John W. Mackay, to stop vandalism, lower property taxes, and to prepare the grounds for future real estate development.

Clarence H. Mackay was born in San Francisco, California, in 1874. He was the son of John W. Mackay and Marie Louise Antoinette Hungerford, who also had another son, John W. Mackay, who died at the age of 25. His family was extremely wealthy due to his father's various business ventures, including mining and a cable/telegraph business. Clarence spent his youth living in New York, Paris, and London. In 1898 he married Katherine Duer and they had three children. In 1902, upon the death of his father, he was named president of the Commercial Cable Company and Postal Telegraph Cable Company. In 1909 he was stricken with cancer and was operated on by Dr. Joseph Blake, who saved his life. His wife left him for Dr. Blake and Clarence and Katherine divorced in 1914; their children stayed with Clarence. In 1944 Clarence founded the Mackay Radio Company where he integrated cables, telegraph, and radio. In 1931, after Katherine's death, Clarence married his friend Anna Case. In the 1930s, during the Great Depression, he started to have difficulty with his finances. He sold some of his artwork and moved into the superintendent's house to save money, but by 1935 his finances improved so he reopened Harbor Hill. In 1936 his cancer returned and two years later he left Harbor Hill for his apartment in New York City where he died at the age of 64.

Katherine Duer Mackay was born in New York City in 1880. She came from a high society family and met Clarence on a steamship from New York to England in 1897. Katherine fought for women's rights and became the first woman on the Roslyn School Board in 1905. In 1906 she built and dedicated the Trinity Episcopal Church to her parents. She later became Mrs. Joseph A. Blake, after leaving her husband for his doctor. She returned to New York in 1930 after her divorce from Dr. Blake and tried to rekindle her marriage with Clarence. She died of cancer that same year.

Katherine Mackay, nicknamed "K," was Clarence and Katherine's first daughter, born in 1900. She attended St. Timothy's School of Catonsville, in Maryland, and made her debut into society in 1919. She married lawyer Kenneth O'Brien on September 22, 1922, and had the reception in her father's Harbor Hill Estate with 3,000 guests in attendance;

they eventually had three children but divorced in 1937. In 1938 Robert Ziemer Hawkins and Katherine Mackay were married. At the time of her death she was living in Nevada.

Ellin was their second child, born in 1903. She was educated at private schools and took special classes at Barnard College. She eloped with Irving Berlin in 1926 and her father disinherited her because he disapproved of Irving's Jewish background. She became a novelist and had four children; her only son died in infancy. She was married to Irving Berlin until she died in 1988.

John William III, was their third child, born in 1907. He married Josephine Gwendolyn Rose in 1929 and they had three children. He lived on Long Island at the time of his death.

Anna Case, born in 1888, was an Opera/Concert singer. In 1916 she sang at the home of Clarence H. Mackay. Clarence and Anna were married in 1931, following the death of his first wife. As a wedding present, Anna was given a large emerald and diamond necklace, which is now housed at the Smithsonian Institute. She helped Clarence through his difficult financial times and died in 1984.

Charles Hechler, the superintendent of Harbor Hill, served for over thirty years, from 1907-1938. He was born in 1881 in Dalton, Chariton County, Missouri, and attended the University of Missouri. He was interested in education and taught animal husbandry at the University. Due to his knowledge and expertise he was hired by Clarence Mackay to become Superintendent of Harbor Hill. He was a Republican and held office as the township councilman on Long Island and was also the vice-president of the Roslyn National Bank and Trust Company. He was active in real estate and died on Long Island in 1962.

Catherine E. Hechler was born in Ballwin near Kirkwood, outside of the city of St. Louis, Missouri, in 1880. She was interested in education and attended Central Wesleyan College, a small college in Warrenton, Missouri. She moved to Long Island in the early 1900s after Charles had relocated there. She was a Republican as well, became active in the Roslyn chapter of the Red Cross and the Roslyn Heights Garden Club, and was the Vice President of the Nassau County Women's Republican Federation. She died in 1976 on Long Island.

George Hechler, their first son, was born in 1910 and was named after his grandfather. He died around 1939.

Charles Hechler Jr., was born in 1912 on Long Island and attended Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio; Amherst College; Harvard University; and eventually got his degree from New York University. He was a Republican like his parents and remained in the Roslyn family home where he grew up. As a lifelong resident of Long Island, he served as the East Hills historian. Although considered the handsome one by his family, he never married and died in Roslyn in 1995.

Kenneth Hechler, the third and youngest son, went to Roslyn High School where he graduated 2<sup>nd</sup> in his class as the salutatorian. He went to Swarthmore College, outside of Philadelphia, as a journalism major. After he graduated he went to Columbia University for graduate work in teaching. He taught at Barnard and Columbia and earned his Ph.D. in 1940 from Columbia. He was a major in the U.S. Army during World War II and eventually moved to West Virginia to become active in politics as a Democrat. From 1959-1977 he was elected to congress and later served as secretary of state of West Virginia. Some interesting facts about him are that he never married; he marched with Martin Luther King Jr.; and he wrote *The Bridge at Remagen*, which became a movie.

The Harbor Hill, Mackay/Hechler collection is composed of numerous pieces of correspondence from the members of the Mackay and Hechler Families, newspaper clippings about Anna Case and the wedding between Anna Case and Clarence Mackay, bills, photographs of the Mackay and Hechler families and of Harbor Hill, and many collected pieces of ephemera and maps.

## **SUBJECTS**

### **Names:**

- Berlin, Ellin Mackay.
- Hechler, Catherine.
- Hechler, Charles.
- Hechler, Charles, Jr.
- Hechler, Kenneth.
- Mackay, Anna Case.
- Mackay, Clarence H. (Clarence Hungerford), 1874-1938
- Mackay, Katherine Duer, 1880-1930
- O'Brien, Katherine Mackay

### **Subjects:**

- Estates--New York (State)--Roslyn

### **Places:**

- East Hills (N.Y.)--History
- Harbor Hill Estate (N.Y.).
- Long Island--History
- Roslyn (N.Y.)--History

### **Form and Genre Terms:**

- Collected Materials.
- Correspondence.
- Ephemera.
- Magazines.
- News clippings.
- Photographs.
- Sketches.

The Harbor Hill, Mackay/Hechler Collection is arranged in Fourteen Series:

- I. Harbor Hill - Business records, print materials, lantern slides, and photographs - arranged chronologically.
- II. Clarence H. Mackay – Correspondence - arranged chronologically.
- III. Katherine Duer Mackay - Correspondence and photographs - arranged chronologically.
- IV. Katherine Mackay O'Brien – Wedding and other photos.
- V. Ellin Mackay Berlin - Magazine of her coming out.
- VI. Anna Case Mackay – Announcements and newspaper clippings copied from part of a scrap book.
- VII. Charles Hechler - Correspondence, business papers, personal papers photograph - arranged chronologically.
- VIII. Catherine Hechler – Business materials, printed materials, correspondence, photographs - arranged chronologically. Also includes hats and watch.
- IX. Charles Hechler Jr. - Personal papers business papers - arranged chronologically
- X. Kenneth Hechler – Photographs, undated
- XI. Unidentified, undated correspondence
- XII. Unidentified Photographs and Negatives (including glass plate negatives)
- XIII. Maps/Blueprints - Arranged chronologically.
- XIV. Collected Materials – Bills, budget materials, calendar, election materials, ephemera, letterhead, magazines, newspapers, proclamation, publications, reports - arranged chronologically.

Harbor Hill Mackay/Hechler Collection; 1900-2000

Box and Folder Listing

Series I: Harbor Hill

Box 1

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
1	Business records	1907-1942
2	Print materials	1922-2000

Box 4

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
1	Lantern slide-chart	n.d.
2	Lantern slide-chart	n.d.
3	Lantern slide-chart	n.d.
4	Lantern slide-chart	n.d.
5	Lantern slide-chart	n.d.
6	Lantern slide-chart	n.d.
7	Lantern slide-chart	n.d.
8	Lantern slide-chart	n.d.
9	Lantern slide-chart	n.d.
10	Lantern slide-chart	n.d.
11	Lantern slide-chart	n.d.
12	Lantern slide-chart	n.d.
13	Lantern slide-chart	n.d.
14	Lantern slide-chart	n.d.
15	Lantern slide-cow	n.d.
16	Lantern slide-cow	n.d.
17	Lantern slide-cow	n.d.
18	Lantern slide-cow	n.d.
19	Lantern slide-cow	n.d.

Series I: Harbor Hill

Box 5

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
1	Photograph	n.d.

Series II: Clarence H. Mackay

Box 1

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
3	Correspondence	1907-1934

Series: III: Katherine Duer Mackay

Box 1

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
4	Correspondence	1907
5	Photograph	1908

Box 5

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
2	Photograph	n.d.

Series IV: Katherine Mackay O'Brien

Box 1

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
6	Photographs	1922

Box 5

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
3	Photograph	n.d.

Series V: Ellin Mackay Berlin

Box 1

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
7	Magazine	1922

Series VI: Anna Case Mackay

Box 1

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
8	Announcements	1931

Box 5

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
4	Newspaper clippings (copies) (Original are wrapped and at bottom of box)	1931-1932

Series VII: Charles Hechler

Box 1

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
9	Bill	1928
10	Business papers	1958 n.d.
11	Correspondence	Mar.23, 1907-Apr. 27, 1907
12	Correspondence	May 1, 1907-June 29, 1907
13	Correspondence	July 8, 1907-Aug. 30,1907
14	Correspondence	September 2, 1907-Dec. 7, 1907
15	Correspondence	Jan. 4, 1908-Feb. 1, 1935
16	Personal papers	1890
17	Print materials	1907

Box 5

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
6	Photograph	n.d.

Series VIII: Catherine Hechler

Box 1

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
18	Business materials	n.d.
19	Correspondence	1940-1947n.d.
20	Printed materials	1900-1931

Box 3

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
	Hats and watch	Hats, n.d., watch c.1940

Box 5

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
6	Photograph	n.d.

Series IX: Charles Hechler Jr.

Box 1

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
21	Personal papers	1944



Series IX: Charles Hechler Jr.

Box 5

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
7	Business plans	1965

Series X: Kenneth Hechler

Box 1

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
22	Photographs	c. 1939-1945

Series XI: Unidentified Correspondence

Box 1

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
23	Correspondence	n.d.

Series XII: Unidentified Photographs and Negatives

Box 1

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
24	Photographs and negatives	n.d.

Box 4

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
20	Glass plate negative	n.d.
21	Glass plate negative	n.d.
22	Glass plate negative	n.d.
23	Glass plate negative	n.d.

Series XIII: Maps and Blueprints

Box 1

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
25	Maps	1907-1940

Box 5

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
8	Maps/blueprints	1928-1951

Map Case 1-6

<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
Maps and blueprints	1920-1958
Maps and blueprints	1930-1948
Maps and blueprints	1952-1957

Series XIV: Collected Materials

Box 1

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
26	Bills	1929-1931
27	Budget materials	1932-1955
28	Calendar	1958-1959
29	Election materials	1933
30	Ephemera	1932-1969
31	Letterhead	n.d.

Box 2

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
1	Magazines	1917-1951
2	Newspaper	1925
3	Ordinance	1945
4	Proclamation	1936
5	Publications	1925-1963n.d.
6	Reports	1938-1951

Box 5

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Inclusive dates</u>
9	Drawings	c. 1917-1934
10	Election results/publication	1927-1950
11	Newspaper clippings	1916-1965