Correspondence, scrapbooks, autobiography drafts, and other materials pertaining to Cookingham’s period of service as city manager of Kansas City and other cities.

BIOGRAPHY:

L. Perry Cookingham was born October 23, 1896 in Chicago, Illinois. His father, Joseph Firch Cookingham, worked for the Chicago and Eastern Railroad and his mother, Ella E. (Gardinier) Cookingham, had been a country school teacher. Cookingham spent his youth in Danville, Illinois.

After high school, Cookingham commenced work on the Chicago and Eastern Railroad, a position which was interrupted by World War I. Shortly after returning from the service, Cookingham joined the staff of the city engineer’s department of Flint, Michigan with an assignment to the design division. In time, Cookingham worked his way up the ladder to become city engineer. While city engineer, he joined the International City Managers Association. In Flint, Cookingham met and married Harriet West.

Cookingham took a cut in pay in 1927 to accept the position of city manager of Clawson, Michigan, a suburb of Detroit. He undertook to improve the city programs and to reduce the city budget. In 1927 Cookingham resigned to accept a similar position in Plymouth, Michigan.

While working for Plymouth, Cookingham also served on the Wayne County emergency relief commission (1933-1934) and as director of the works division for Wayne County and Detroit. He held the position as city manager of Plymouth until the end of 1935 when he resigned to become city manager for Saginaw, Michigan. In Saginaw, Cookingham furthered his reputation as an efficient city
manager. Newspapers and periodicals spoke of his success in reducing the cost of government while improving efficiency.

Cookingham, a proponent of honest, efficient government, was the man Kansas City officials sought to be manager of the city. In 1940 Cookingham assumed that position and continued to serve until 1959 when he resigned. During his nineteen year tenure as city manager of Kansas City, Cookingham counted as his accomplishments the elimination of a $22,000,000 budget deficit, improving the city transportation network, improving and modernizing the fire department and developing a recreation and community centers program.

After leaving Kansas City, Cookingham moved to Fort Worth, Texas, where he served as city manager until 1963. He then accepted a position with Hallmark Cards and returned to Kansas City. He maintained his interest in civic affairs and currently served as Chairman of the Kansas City Parks Board.

PROVENANCE:

The Kansas City Museum of History and Science, gave accession KA0077 on April 22, 1981. L. Perry Cookingham, loaned for microfilming accession KA0078 on April 23, 1981. Additions were received from L. Perry Cookingham on December 9, 1981, as accession KA0120 and on August 6, 1986, as accession KA0374.

COPYRIGHT AND RESTRICTIONS:

The Donor has given and assigned to the University of Missouri all rights of copyright which the Donor has in the Materials and in such of the Donor’s works as may be found among any collections of Materials received by the University from others.

PREFERRED CITATION:

Specific item; folder number; Laurie Perry Cookingham (1896-1992) Papers (K0057); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-KC].

CONTACT:

The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City
302 Newcomb Hall, University of Missouri-Kansas City
5123 Holmes Street, Kansas City, MO 64110-2499
(816) 235-1543 SHSofMO-KC@umsystem.edu
http://shs.umsystem.edu/index.shtml
DESCRIPTION:

The papers consist of correspondence and five scrapbook volumes. The correspondence files pertain to Cookingham's period of service as city manager of Kansas City. The scrapbooks include both earlier and later material.

Folders 1-49, memoranda and correspondence from Cookingham to the Mayor and City Council of Kansas City. This material deals with routine affairs of the city and such things as the city budget, city improvement projects, annexation of outlying areas and wage proposals for city employees. An index to the material is included in folder 2.

Folders 50-56, correspondence with the Board of Advisory Trustees of the Citizens Bond Committee, which consists of requests from Cookingham seeking the Board's approval to re-allocate certain bond funds for city projects. An incomplete set of minutes for the Board of Advisory Trustees is included in folder 56.

Folders 57-107, invitations, including requests for Cookingham to be present at various luncheons, dinners, open houses, movie premiers, receptions, athletic events and the like. In addition to the original invitation, Cookingham's response is indicated either in letter form or a notation of the action to be taken.

Folder 108, photographs, includes three photographs of signboard hill and proposed improvements of the area.

The additions included miscellaneous correspondence, speeches and news clippings. Five books were removed and placed in the SHSMO-KC Library Collection (K0027).

Folders 109-118 are photocopied letters written and received by Cookingham from 1938 through 1980. Cookingham referred to these letters as “letters I like to read and keep.”

Folder 119-139 are his public speeches.

Folder 140-154 contain Cookingham's original manuscript, and William H. Gilbert's first revision of that manuscript, which eventually was published with Gilbert as author entitled This City, This Man: The Cookingham Era in Kansas City (Washington, D.C.: International City Management Association, 1978).

Folder 155-159 are magazine articles by and about Cookingham.

Volumes 1-5, scrapbooks pertaining to Cookingham's years as city manager in various communities from 1932-1963. The clippings are from several newspapers and are arranged in chronological sequence. The focus of the scrapbooks is on Cookingham's success in reducing government expenditures while increasing government services.

INVENTORY:
BOX 001

Folder 1. Articles on L.P. Cookingham
These articles range in date from 1938-1976.

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE

Folder 2. Contents for Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Each communication with the Mayor and City Council was assigned a sequential number. This folder contains a numerical listing of the communications with a description of each.

Folder 3. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 1-24

Folder 4. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 25-50

Folder 5. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 51-75a

Folder 6. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 76-100

Folder 7. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 101-116

Folder 8. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 117-135

Folder 9. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 136-146

Folder 10. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 147-163

Folder 11. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 164-173

Folder 12. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 174-182

Folder 13. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 183-195

Folder 14. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 196-204

Folder 15. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 205-209

Folder 16. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 210-222
BOX 002

Folder 17. Mayor and City Council Correspondence Documents 223-235
Folder 18. Mayor and City Council Correspondence Documents 236-250
Folder 19. Mayor and City Council Correspondence Documents 251-262a
Folder 20. Mayor and City Council Correspondence Documents 263-270
Folder 21. Mayor and City Council Correspondence Documents 271-280
Folder 22. Mayor and City Council Correspondence Documents 281-284
Folder 23. Mayor and City Council Correspondence Documents 285-304
Folder 24. Mayor and City Council Correspondence Documents 305-309
Folder 25. Mayor and City Council Correspondence Documents 310-315
Folder 26. Mayor and City Council Correspondence Documents 316-324
Folder 27. Mayor and City Council Correspondence Documents 325-330
Folder 28. Mayor and City Council Correspondence Documents 331-345
Folder 29. Mayor and City Council Correspondence Documents 346-350
Folder 30. Mayor and City Council Correspondence Documents 351-362
Folder 31. Mayor and City Council Correspondence Document 363
Folder 32. Mayor and City Council Correspondence Documents 364-370
Folder 33. Mayor and City Council Correspondence Documents 371-385
Folder 34. Mayor and City Council Correspondence Documents 386-400
Folder 35. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 401-415

Folder 36. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 416-429

Folder 37. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 430-445

Folder 38. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 446-460

Folder 39. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 461-474

Folder 40. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 475-500

Folder 41. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 501-517

Folder 42. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Document 518

Folder 43. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 519-526

Folder 44. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 527-540

Folder 45. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 541-549

Folder 46. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 550-563

Folder 47. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 564-580

Folder 48. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 581-595

Folder 49. Mayor and City Council Correspondence
Documents 596-620

CITIZENS BOND COMMITTEE CORRESPONDENCE

Folder 50. Board of Advisory Trustees of Citizens Bond Committee
Correspondence, December 31, 1947-September 13, 1950

Folder 51. Board of Advisory Trustees of Citizens Bond Committee
Correspondence, December 1, 1950-June 30, 1953

Folder 52. Board of Advisory Trustees of Citizens Bond Committee
Correspondence, August 7, 1953-June 24, 1955
Folder 53.  Board of Advisory Trustees of Citizens Bond Committee
Correspondence, July 14, 1955-November 13, 1956

Folder 54.  Board of Advisory Trustees of Citizens Bond Committee
Correspondence, January 16, 1957-January 24, 1958

**BOX 003**

Folder 55.  Board of Advisory Trustees of Citizens Bond Committee
Correspondence, March 3, 1958-March 4, 1959

Folder 56.  Board of Advisory Trustees of Citizens Bond Committee
Minutes; November 24, 1947-October 2, 1957, incomplete

**INVITATIONS**

Folder 57.  Invitations, May 10, 1943-January 31, 1944
Folder 58.  Invitations, February 2, 1944-April 28, 1944
Folder 59.  Invitations, May 8, 1944-July 25, 1944
Folder 60.  Invitations, August 2, 1944-December 24, 1944
Folder 61.  Invitations, January 9, 1945-April 6, 1945
Folder 62.  Invitations, May 15, 1945-September 26, 1945
Folder 63.  Invitations, October 8, 1945-November 14, 1945
Folder 64.  Invitations, January 7, 1946-March 16, 1946
Folder 65.  Invitations, April 1, 1946-June 27, 1946
Folder 66.  Invitations, July 1, 1946-September 9, 1946
Folder 67.  Invitations, September 16, 1946-December 27, 1946
Folder 68.  Invitations, January 8, 1947-March 27, 1947
Folder 69.  Invitations, April 7, 1947-June 26, 1947
Folder 70.  Invitations, July 3, 1947-October 15, 1947
Folder 71.  Invitations, October 23, 1947-December 22, 1947
Folder 72.  Invitations, January 3, 1948-March 11, 1948
Folder 73.  Invitations, March 16, 1948-May 28, 1948
Folder 74.  Invitations, June 3, 1948-October 8, 1948
Folder 75.  Invitations, October 20, 1948-December 30, 1948
Folder 76.  Invitations, January 13, 1949-May 27, 1949
Folder 77.  Invitations, June 1, 1949-September 29, 1949
Folder 78.  Invitations, October 3, 1949-December 29, 1949
Folder 79.  Invitations, January 4, 1950-February 25, 1950
Folder 80. Invitations, March 1, 1950-April 17, 1950
Folder 82. Invitations, August 2, 1950-October 18, 1950
Folder 83. Invitations, October 19, 1950-December 29, 1950
Folder 84. Invitations, January 4, 1951-April 13, 1951
Folder 85. Invitations, April 17, 1951-July 27, 1951
Folder 86. Invitations, August 1, 1951-October 31, 1951
Folder 87. Invitations, November 2, 1951-December 31, 1951
Folder 88. Invitations, January 1, 1952-March 31, 1952
Folder 89. Invitations, April 4, 1952-May 28, 1952
Folder 90. Invitations, June 4, 1952-September 22, 1952
Folder 91. Invitations, October 2, 1952-February 16, 1953
Folder 92. Invitations, March 2, 1953-May 27, 1953
Folder 93. Invitations, June 4, 1953-November 12, 1953

BOX 004

Folder 94. Invitations, December 2, 1953-January 26, 1954
Folder 95. Invitations, February 4, 1954-April 28, 1954
Folder 98. Invitations, November 1, 1954-December 30, 1954
Folder 100. Invitations, May 4, 1955-June 22, 1955
Folder 102. Invitations, October 11, 1955-December 16, 1955
Folder 103. Invitations, January 6, 1956-March 30, 1956
Folder 104. Invitations, April 3, 1956-June 28, 1956
Folder 105. Invitations, July 12, 1956-September 18, 1956
Folder 106. Invitations, October 10, 1956-December 27, 1956
Folder 107. Invitations, January 3, 1957-April 27, 1957

PHOTOGRAPHS

Folder 108. Photographs
CORRESPONDENCE

Folder 109. Correspondence, 1938-1939
Folder 110. Correspondence, 1940-1946
Folder 111. Correspondence, 1947-1948
Folder 112. Correspondence, 1950-1951
Folder 113. Correspondence, 1952-1953
Folder 114. Correspondence, 1954-1958
Folder 115. Correspondence, 1959
Folder 116. Correspondence, 1962-1965
Folder 110. Correspondence, 1940-1946
Folder 117. Correspondence, 1970-1979
Folder 118. Correspondence, 1980

SPEECHES

Folder 119. Speeches, 1940
Folder 120. Speeches, 1943
Folder 121. Speeches, 1948
Folder 122. Speeches, 1949
Folder 123. Speeches, 1950
Folder 124. Speeches, 1951
Folder 125. Speeches, 1952
Folder 126. Speeches, 1953
Folder 127. Speeches, 1954
Folder 128. Speeches, 1955
Folder 129. Speeches, 1956
Folder 130. Speeches, 1957
Folder 131. Speeches, 1958
Folder 132. Speeches, 1959
Folder 133. Speeches, 1960
Folder 134. Speeches, 1961
Folder 135. Speeches, 1962
Folder 136. Speeches, 1963
Folder 137. Speeches, 1964
Folder 138. Speeches, 1967
Folder 139. Speeches, 1970

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY DRAFTS**

Folder 140. *This City, This Man*; LPC draft pp. 1-28
Folder 141. *This City, This Man*; LPC draft pp. 29-53
Folder 142. *This City, This Man*; LPC draft pp. 54-80
Folder 143. *This City, This Man*; LPC draft pp. 81-110
Folder 144. *This City, This Man*; LPC draft pp. 111-140
Folder 145. *This City, This Man*; LPC draft pp. 141-170
Folder 146. *This City, This Man*; LPC draft pp. 171-200
Folder 147. *This City, This Man*; LPC draft pp. 201-227
Folder 148. *This City, This Man*; Gilbert draft Index
Folder 149. *This City, This Man*; Gilbert draft pp. 1-30
Folder 150. *This City, This Man*; Gilbert draft pp. 31-60
Folder 151. *This City, This Man*; Gilbert draft pp. 61-90
Folder 152. *This City, This Man*; Gilbert draft pp. 91-120
Folder 153. *This City, This Man*; Gilbert draft pp. 121-150
Folder 154. *This City, This Man*; Gilbert draft pp. 151-175

**ARTICLES AND CLIPPINGS**

Folder 155. Magazine articles, undated

**BOX 005**

Folder 156. Magazine articles, 1937-1939
Folder 157. Magazine articles, 1943-1958
Folder 158. Magazine articles, 1958-1976
Folder 159. Newspaper articles
Collected newspaper articles concerning Cookingham’s tenure as City Manager of Fort Worth, Texas.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Folder 160. Correspondence-Councilman Charles C. Shafer, Jr.
undated, August 17, 1956; February 23, 1959
Folder 161. Correspondence-Fan Mail
January 17, 1963-March 6, 1961
Folder 162. Correspondence-Fort Worth
May 22-December 28, 1959

Folder 163. Correspondence-Fort Worth
January 6, 1962-June 7, 1963

Folder 164. Correspondence-Houston Offer
November 29-December 12, 1942

Folder 165. Correspondence-Joint Center for Urban Studies Meeting
June 28, 1963-January 27, 1966

Folder 166. Correspondence-L.P. Cookingham Career Development Award
Recipients, Articles, etc.
September 1969-September 1983

Folder 167. Correspondence-Letter of Resignation
April 16, 1959

Folder 168. Correspondence-Miscellaneous
January 9, 1952, April 1962-April 12, 1972

Folder 169. Correspondence-People To People
undated, 1961-March 12, 1968

Folder 170. Correspondence-Town Meeting of the Air
December 1952

Folder 171. Correspondence-Yale University, Bureau of Highway Traffic
April 6, 1959-February 20, 1962

Folder 172. Dallas-"The Story of the Dallas Attempt to Lure Cookingham from
Kansas City, October 6 to December 11, 1949."

Folder 173. Dallas-Correspondence and Personal Notes
undated, October 14, 1949-January 25, 1950

Folder 174. Memorandums-Inter-Departmental Communication, Kansas City
August 18, 1958-July 1940

PUBLICITY

Folder 175. Publicity-Correspondence, Award, Miscellaneous
Undated, November 8, 1938-August 1, 1957
oversize item 9

Folder 176. Publicity-Magazine Articles
undated, November 1938-December 1963

Folder 177. Publicity-Newspapers Articles
undated, November 7, 1938-March 30, 1985

Folder 178. Report-Honolulu
Correspondence and Reports
undated, January 19-July 6, 1961
SPEECHES

Folder 179. Speech-“Career Opportunities in Planning, Developing and Managing Cities”, undated

Folder 180. Speech-“The Council-Manager Plan of Local Government,” undated

Folder 181. Speech-Presentation to Citizen’s Services Commission, March 1955

Folder 182. Speech-“The Next Four Years,” April 21, 1955

Folder 183. Speech-“Planning-Key to Accomplishment,” February 6, 1958


Folder 185. Speech-Statement to Department Head’s and Their Budget Officers, November 18, 1958

Folder 186. Speech-“Municipal Budgeting,” February 12, 1959

Folder 187. Speech-“Politics and City Management in Kansas City,” April 20-22, 1959


Folder 189. Speech-“Are Cities Wearing Out? Is Urban Renewal the Answer?” July 7, 1961

Folder 190. Speech-“Available Alternatives,” January 14, 1970

Folder 191. Speech-“If I Had to Do It Over Again, I’d Do It,” April 1976

Folder 192. Speech-“Texas Young Professionals,” March 11, 1977

Folder 193. Speech-“So You Want to Be a City Manager,” April 21, 1977

Folder 194. Speech-“Change in City Manager Position in Past Fifty Years,” November 15, 1979


Folder 196. Speech-“Career Opportunities in Local Government,” September 8, 1982

Folder 197. Speech-Notes for Rotary Talk, January 8, 1985

Folder 198. Speech-Notes for Kiwanis Club Talk, August 13, 1985

Folder 199. Speech-“The Past is Prologue,” December 19, 1985

Folder 200. Statement-Attempted Bribery Incident October 1947

Folder 201. Statement-Liquor Incident, July 1, 1944
Folder 202.  Texas Gridiron Dinner, 1960
Folder 203.  Miscellaneous
Correspondence, Reports, Resolutions, Etc.
Folder 204.  News clippings-Memphis Speech Publicity
October 7-4, 1954
Folder 205.  News clippings-Statements of Council Candidates Prior to 1955
City Election
Folder 206.  Newspapers
Republican, Kansas City, Missouri, December 22, 1947
Yellow Jaundice, Texas, April 1, 1960, May 5, 1961, April 6, 1962
oversize items 10-13
Folder 207.  Scrapbook-News clips
1927-1934

MICROFILM
Volume 1.  Scrapbook, February 1932-March, 1942
Volume 5.  Scrapbook, April, 1959-March, 1963