

C Symington, Stuart, Jr., Interview, 1994
4159 1 folder, 4 audio cassettes

This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri](http://www.mshs.org). If you would like more information, please contact us at shsresearch@umsystem.edu.

INTRODUCTION

Interview of Stuart Symington, Jr. about his father, Stuart Symington, covering his life and political career. The interview was conducted by Dr. Linda G. McFarland in 1994.

DONOR INFORMATION

The interview material was donated to the University of Missouri by Dr. Linda McFarland on 16 April 2001 (Accession No. 5874).

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

William Stuart Symington was born in Amherst, Massachusetts, on June 26, 1901, to William Stuart Symington, a Baltimore, Maryland, lawyer and former professor of Romance Languages at Amherst College, and his wife, Emily Haxall Harrison Symington also of Baltimore. Professor Symington originally obtained his Ph.D. in French folklore from Johns Hopkins in Baltimore before studying law. He began practicing law at the age of 35. Emily Haxall Harrison descended from a wealthy Virginia family.

Soon after his birth, the Symington family moved to Baltimore where Stuart Symington attended public schools, graduating from Baltimore City College in 1917. He enlisted as a private in the United States Army at age 17, entered officer training school, and was discharged with the rank of second lieutenant in 1919. He enrolled at Yale University but left in 1923, short of mathematics credits. Yale did award him his degree retroactively in 1945, however. Symington worked summers as a reporter for a Baltimore newspaper. He moved to Rochester, New York, where he worked as an iron molder and lathe operator from 1923 to 1926, studying mechanical and electrical engineering at night and by correspondence. He served as an executive with several radio and steel companies from 1926 to 1937 before moving to St. Louis, Missouri, to become president of Emerson Electric Manufacturing Company, a post he held until 1945.

Symington married Evelyn Wadsworth on March 1, 1924. Wadsworth was the daughter of New York Republican Senator James Wolcott Wadsworth, Jr., and granddaughter of John Hay. The couple had two sons, William Stuart Symington, Jr., a lawyer in St. Louis, and James Wadsworth Symington, former Congressman from Missouri and a lawyer in Washington, D.C.

Symington entered public service with an appointment as chairman of the Surplus Property Board in Washington, D.C. and was Surplus Property Administrator from 1945 to 1946. Other federal appointments quickly followed: Assistant Secretary of War for Air (1946-1947), first Secretary of the Air Force (1947-1950), Chairman of the National Security Resources Board (1950-1951), and Reconstruction Finance Corporation Administrator (1951-1952). He resigned from the latter position to run as a Democrat for the U.S. Senate in 1952.

After an unsuccessful run for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1960, he was reelected to the U.S. Senate in 1958, 1964, and 1970 where he served until his retirement on December 27, 1976. The death of Evelyn Wadsworth Symington on December 24, 1972, and his own health caused the Senator to not to run for reelection in 1976. Symington married Ann Hemingway Watson on June 16, 1978, and lived in New Canaan, Connecticut, until his death of heart disease on December 14, 1988. He is interred in a crypt in Washington National Cathedral, Washington, D.C.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The material consists of an oral history interview with Stuart Symington, Jr., about his father, Senator Stuart Symington.

FOLDER LIST

- f. 1 Transcription of interview with Stuart Symington, Jr., regarding the political career of his father, Senator Stuart Symington. Ladue, Missouri, October 8, 1994. Interview conducted by Dr. Linda G. McFarland and transcription edited by Stuart Symington, Jr.

INDEX TERMS

Subject	Folders	Other
Business and Politics	1	
Cold war	1	
Eisenhower, Dwight D. (1890-1969)	1	
Military History	1	
Politicians	1	
Symington, Stuart (1901-1988)	1	a.c. 1-4
United States-Politics and Government	1	