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UA1990.38

Forrest McDonald Papers

Dates: 1873-1963 (bulk 1955-1959)

Dates reflect research notes based on 19th century records

Creator: McDonald, Forrest (1927 -)

Extent: 2.25 l ft (6 boxes)

Level of description: Folder

Processor & date: Valerie Gerrard Browne, November 1990; updated by K. Young, 2018

Administration Information

Restrictions: None

Copyright: Forrest McDonald retains copyright to his writings and work that may be found within the collection.

Citation: Loyola University Chicago. Archives & Special Collections. Forrest McDonald Papers, 1873-1963. Box #, Folder.

Provenance: Donated by Forrest McDonald, PhD, September 27, 1982.

Separations:

See Also: Samuel Insull papers; John O'Keefe papers; James O'Keefe papers; E. Ogden Ketting papers

Biographical Sketch

Forrest McDonald was born in Orange, Texas, on 7 January 1927 and received his Ph.D. in American History from the University of Texas in 1955. Insull, his biography of Samuel Insull, was published by the University of Chicago Press in 1962. In 1967 the Samuel Insull Papers, which were used extensively in the preparation of Insull, were donated to Loyola University by Samuel Insull, Jr., and forwarded to the University Archives by Forrest McDonald. Included in the shipment were McDonald's own papers relating to the preparation of his Insull biography. These he formally donated to Loyola University of Chicago in 1982. They are described below.

In June of 1953 the Wisconsin Utilities Association contracted with the State Historical Society of Wisconsin (SHSW) to write a history of electric utilities in the state. Forrest McDonald was employed on this "Public Utility History Project" (PUHP) until 1955 when he became executive director of the SHSW's affiliate American History Research Center (AHRC), a position he held until 1959. His first book, Let There Be Light - The Electric Utility Industry in Wisconsin, 1881-1955, published by AHRC in 1957, was the culmination of his PUHP research. His second book, We the People, a study of the United



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States Constitution, was published by the University of Chicago Press under the auspices of AHRC in 1958.

Forrest McDonald and Samuel Insull, Jr., first became acquainted in 1953 when McDonald was doing research for Let There Be Light. In 1955, as a result of these contacts, Forrest McDonald was asked to write the sketch of Samuel Insull which appeared in the Dictionary of American Biography in 1958. In 1956 Samuel Insull, Jr., and his son, Samuel Insull III, contracted with AHRC to employ McDonald to write a biography of Samuel Insull. The original hope was to publish the biography in 1959 in honor of the 100th anniversary of Samuel Insull's birth. In deference to the wishes of Margaret Anna Bird [Gladys] Insull, widow of Samuel Insull, no biography had been authorized while she was living. She died in 1953.

Under the terms of the agreement between the Insulls and AHRC, the Samuel Insull Papers (which were later donated in their totality to Loyola) were made available to AHRC to aid McDonald in writing the biography. Samuel Insull, Jr., further assisted by making contacts with oral history interviewees and research sources. It was also agreed that McDonald's manuscript would be submitted to the Insulls for suggestions as to correctness of fact and interpretation, but that in case of disagreement, McDonald's decision on the final reading of the text would be final.

Samuel Insull, Jr., pledged financial assistance to AHRC and made periodic payments on the pledge to defray out-of-pocket expenses of the biography. In 1958 the AHRC, based on a trust agreement dated 3 February 1954, assigned the property rights to Forrest McDonald's We the People to Samuel Insull, Jr., in exchange for a \$5,000 donation to AHRC to discharge expenses incurred by AHRC in its publication. The Insull family agreed to accept no royalties nor any financial remuneration from the publication of Insull.

In late 1956, based in part on information uncovered in Forrest McDonald's research, Samuel Insull, Jr., began investigating the feasibility of taking action to stop the continued publication of misinformation about Samuel Insull. Thus, in December 1957 he filed a libel suit in the Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois, seeking \$4,000,000 in damages from the New York World-Telegram, Roy W. Howard, Memphis Publishing Company, Edward J. Meeman, Indianapolis Times Publishing Company, Walter Leckrone, E. W. Scripps Company, Louis B. Seltzer, Dick Thornburg, Herald-Post Publishing Co., Edward M. Pooley, Knoxville New-Sentinel Publishing Company, Loye W. Miller, Pittsburgh Press Company, Weldman W. Forster, New Mexico State Tribune Company, Dan Burroughs, Charles T. Lucey, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Houghton Mifflin Company, Kenneth E. Trombley, and Harper & Brothers. He also objected to remarks of Harry S. Truman broadcast on the Columbia Broadcasting System in 1958.



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Based on his research for the biography, Forrest McDonald presented at least two papers. One, "Samuel Insull and the Movement for State Regulatory Commissions," presented at the Midwest Business History Conference in Madison, Wisconsin, on 15 February 1958, was published in Business History Review (Autumn 1958). (Samuel Insull, Jr.'s paper delivered at the same conference was published as "Hidden Regulation," in the May 1958 Michigan Business Review.) McDonald's second paper, "The Fall of the House of Insull," was presented at the American Historical Association annual meeting in Washington, D.C., on 30 December 1958. It advanced startling, new reasons behind Insull's financial failure.

In 1958 Forrest McDonald joined the history faculty of Brown University where he remained until 1967 when he accepted a position in the History Department of Wayne State University. In 1962, while he was at Brown University, the Insull biography was published. It was in the process of his move to Wayne State that the Insull Papers were transferred to Loyola.

In 1976 Forrest McDonald left Wayne State for the University of Alabama where he holds concurrent positions as professor of history and distinguished senior fellow of the Center for the Study of Southern History and Culture. In addition to his contributions to American economic and business history, he has written extensively in his field of specialization, United States history prior to 1800, particularly, United States constitutional history. His work in this area has brought him numerous honors and awards.

Scope and Content

The Forrest McDonald Papers relate primarily to the research, writing, and other activities involved in preparing Insull, his biography of Samuel Insull. These papers date from 1926 to 1963, bulking most heavily in the period from 1955 to 1959, though his research notes are based on resource material which extends back to 1873. Particularly well documented is the involvement of Samuel Insull, Jr., and his relationship with Forrest McDonald.

The Forrest McDonald Papers are divided into five series as follows:

Series 1: The American History Research Center, Samuel Insull, Jr., and the Biography of Samuel Insull, 1939, 1942, 1953-1963. Boxes 1-2.

Copies of legal documents, correspondence, inventories, publicity, clippings, and other material relating primarily to the American History Research Center (AHRC) and its agreement with Samuel Insull, Jr., to have Forrest McDonald write the biography of Samuel Insull. Subjects include the Samuel Insull Papers, finances, responses to publicity, a proposed business history fellowship at Northwestern University, the libel suit brought by Samuel Insull, Jr., to stop the publication of misinformation on Samuel Insull, and the division of Hawthorn Farm, Insull's estate near Libertyville, Illinois. Samuel Insull, Jr., is



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the main correspondent. The materials are arranged topically in a general chronological order.

Series 2: Research Notes for Biography of Samuel Insull, 1873-1959. Box 2.

Composed primarily of Forrest McDonald's research and writing notes for his biography of Samuel Insull, this series also includes some correspondence of Samuel Insull, Jr., and others as well as publications and clippings. The dates reflect the dates of the resource material on which his research notes were based. The files are arranged topically in the order found.

Series 3: Oral Interviews for Biography of Samuel Insull, 1955-1959. Box 3

In preparing his biography of Samuel Insull, Forrest McDonald interviewed a number of individuals. This series is composed of McDonald's notes on these interviews and the transcript of his interview with Samuel Insull, Jr., together with leads, contacts, and schedules for interviews, usually arranged by Samuel Insull, Jr. General files are followed by interviews, arranged chronologically.

Series 4: Insull-related Manuscripts and publications, 1955-1962. Boxes 4-5.

Composed primarily of manuscripts and publications by Forrest McDonald, relating to Samuel Insull and electric utilities, this series also includes correspondence, reviews, and criticism of these manuscripts. Subjects include Let There Be Light - The Electric Utility Industry in Wisconsin, 1881-1955 (1957); a biographical sketch of Samuel Insull prepared for Dictionary of American Biography (1958); "Samuel Insull and the Movement for State Regulatory Commissions," prepared for the Midwestern Conference on Business History (1958) and published in Business History Review (Autumn 1958); "The Fall of the House of Insull" (delivered at the meeting of the American Historical Association, 1958); and Insull, his biography of Samuel Insull. Among the correspondents are Cyrus Eaton and Samuel Insull, Jr. Arrangement is chronological by topic.

Also included in this series is "Hidden Regulation," delivered by Samuel Insull, Jr., at the Midwestern Conference on Business History in 1958 and published in Michigan Business Review (May 1958) as well as "The Impact of State Regulation on the Development of Consumers Power Company," a paper delivered by E. H. Luther at the same conference.

Series 5: Miscellaneous Publications, 1923-1957. Map Drawer 14-2; Box 6.

This series is composed of miscellaneous publications relating primarily to public utilities together with several travel brochures and a promotional piece, promoting Chicago for the headquarters of the United Nations, arranged chronologically.



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Subjects:

Insull, Samuel

Insull, Jr., Samuel

Hawthorn Farm

McDonald, Forrest

Electric utilities



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Accession No.: UA1990.38
Creator: McDonald, Forrest (1927 -)

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Series 1: American history Research Center, Samuel Insull, Jr., and the Biography of Samuel Insull, 1939, 1942, 1953-1963			
1	1	Samuel Insull Papers – Agreements, Inventories	1954-1958
1	2	Agreement to Prepare Biography of Samuel Insull	1955-1957
1	3	Correspondence, General – Forrest McDonald	1953-1958
1	4	Correspondence, General – Samuel Insull, Jr.	1954-1957
1	5	Correspondence, General – Samuel Insull, Jr.,	1957-1962
1	6	Correspondence, General – American history Research Center	1955-1958
1	7	Financial – Samuel Insull, Jr.	1956-1958
1	8	Financial – Assignment of <u>We the People</u> Property Rights to Samuel Insull, Jr.	1958
1	9	Samuel Insull Biography Press Release and Responses	1956-1957
1	10	Samuel Insull Biography Publicity – Nate Gross, <u>Chicago American</u>	1956-1959
1	11	Libel Suit: Samuel Insull vs. <u>New York World- Telegram, et al</u>	1956-1957
1	12	Libel Suit: Samuel Insull vs. <u>New York World- telegram, et al</u>	1957
1	13	Libel Suit: Samuel Insull vs. <u>New York World- Telegram, et al</u>	1958
1	14	“Insull Gets Off the Hot Seat” and the Response of Samuel Insull, Jr.	1957-1958
1	15	Anti-Insull Remarks of Harry S. Truman broadcast by Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS)	1958
1	16	Mary Garden’s Prospective Biographical Presentation and the Response of Samuel Insull, Jr.	1958
1	17	Congressman Barratt O’Hara’s Remarks on Samuel Insull before the U. S. House of Representatives	July 21, 1958
1	18	Northwestern University Business History Fellowship Proposal	1958
1	19	University of Chicago Press Publication Agreement	January 30, 1959
1	20	Margaret Anna Bird Insull – Biographical Data	1959



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1 21 Hawthorn Farm and Samuel Insull Trust 1939, 1942,
1963

**Series 2: Research Notes for Biography of Samuel
Insull, 1873-1959**

1 22 Lake Superior District Power Company 1888-1955
1 23 Peoples Gas Light & Coke Company 1897-1935
1 24 Public Service Company of Northern Illinois 1883-1927
2 1 Wisconsin Power and Light Company 1882-1953
2 2 Insull – Commonwealth Edison Company 1887-1936
2 3 Insull – Commonwealth Edison Company – From 1915-1933
Minute Books and Annual Reports
2 4 Insull, Commonwealth Edison Company 1892-1914
2 5 Insull – general, From Commonwealth Edison 1925-1935
Company Clipping File, 1st folder
2 6 Insull – General, from Commonwealth Edison 1925-1935
Company Clipping File, 2nd Folder
2 7 Illinois and Indiana Utility Service Ca. 1909-
1911
2 8 Insull – Middle West Utilities Company and related 1912-1932,
correspondence 1955-1956
2 9 Insull – Pre-1918 Newspaper Notes, Including Britton Ca. 1892-
I. Budd Scrapbooks 1932
2 10 Insull – Miscellaneous from AEIC (Association of 1892-1938
Edison Illuminating Companies) Minutes and
Newspapers
2 11 Insull – Personal Miscellaneous 1899-1942
2 12 Insull – tax Miscellaneous 1926-1933
2 13 Insull – Miscellaneous 1873-1942
2 14 Insull – Miscellaneous Writing Notes n.d.
2 15 Thomas A. Edison Papers and related correspondence 1879-1944;
1955-1957
2 16 Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village 1957
2 17 Biographical Sketches of Utilities People, A-S 1919-1959
2 18 Clippings 1937-1959,
n.d.
2 19 William H. Stuart – Correspondence 1957-1958
2 20 Matthew Josephson – Correspondence and Notes 1958

Series 3: Oral Interviews, 1955-1959

3 1 Samuel Insull, Jr. – Research and Interview Contacts 1955-1956
3 2 Samuel Insull, Jr. – Research and Interview Contacts 1957-1959



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3	3	Interview Leads, Contacts, Schedules, Notes	n.d.
3	4	Interview: Cyrus Eaton	May 4, 1956
3	5	Interview: Britton I. Budd	Aug. 29, 1956
3	6	Interview: H. C. Orton	Nov. 20, 1956
3	7	Interview: Harry Reid, Lexington, Kentucky	Jan. 6, 1957
3	8	Interview: Peter E. Fleming	Jan. 1, 1958
3	9	Interview: James Kilgallen	Jan. 3, 1958
3	10	Interview: Abner Stilwell	Feb. 4, 1958
3	11	Interview: Col. Ralph Haweis James	May 20, 1958
3	12	Interview: Helen Norris, Retire Dean of Women, Commonwealth Edison Company	Jul. 16, 1958
3	13	Interview: Philip J. McEnroe and Frank Evers, Los Angeles	Sept. 10, 1958
3	14	Interview: Jesse D. Scheinman, Los Angeles	Sept. 11, 1958
3	15	Interview: C. A. Turner	Aug. 17, 1959
3	16	Interview: Leslie E. Salter	Sug. 20, 1959
3	17	Interview: Samuel Insull, Jr. – transcript	Sept. 2, 1959

**Series 4: Insull-related Manuscripts and
Publications, 1955-1962**

4		<u>Let There Be Light</u> A Study of the Electric Industry in Wisconsin, by Forrest McDonald, manuscript	Ca. 1957
5	1	<u>Let There Be Light</u> – review	1958
5	2	Biographical sketch of Samuel Insull by Forrest McDonald for <u>Dictionary of American Biography</u>	1955-1958
5	3	Midwestern Conference on Business History, Madison, Wisconsin Feb. 15, 1958 - :Hidden Regulation,” paper by Samuel Insull, Jr. Published in <u>Michigan Business Review</u> , Vol. X, No. 3	May 1958
5	4	Midwestern Conference on Business History, Madison, Wisconsin, Feb. 15, 1958 – “The Impact of State Regulation on the Development of Consumers Power Company,” paper by E. H. Luther	1958
5	5	Midwestern Conference on Business History, Madison, Wisconsin, Feb. 15, 1958 - “Samuel Insull and the Movement for State Regulatory	1958



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		Commissions,” paper by Forrest McDonald. Research and writing notes.	
5	6	Midwestern Conference on Business History, Madison, Wisconsin, Feb. 15, 1958 – “Samuel Insull and the Movement for State Regulatory Commissions,” paper by Forrest McDonald – draft	1958
5	7	“Samuel Insull and the Movement for State Regulatory Commissions,” by Forrest McDonald, <u>Business History Review</u> , Vol. XXXII, No. 3 (Autumn 1958)	1958
5	8	“The Fall of the House of Insull,” paper by Forrest McDonald for American Historical Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., Dec. 28-30, 1958 – correspondence	1958
5	9	“The Fall of the House of Insull,” paper by Forrest McDonald for American Historical Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., Dec. 28-30, 1958 – writing notes and drafts	1958
5	10	“The Fall of the House of Insull,” paper by Forrest McDonald for American Historical Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., Dec. 29-30, 1958 – Cyrus Eaton’s criticism of manuscript	1958
5	11	“The Fall of the House of Insull,” paper by Forrest McDonald for American Historical Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., Dec. 28-30, 1958 – manuscript criticism	1958
5	12	“The Fall of the House of Insull,” paper by Forrest McDonald for American Historical Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., Dec. 28-30, 1958 – correspondence and criticism of Samuel Insull, Jr.	1958
5	13	“The Fall of the House of Insull,” paper by Forrest McDonald for American Historical Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., Dec. 28-30, 1958 – final manuscript	1958
5	14	<u>Insull</u> by Forrest McDonald, University of Chicago Press – manuscript criticism	1961, n.d.
5	15	<u>Insull</u> by Forrest McDonald, University of Chicago Press – manuscript criticism	1961
5	16	<u>Insull</u> by Forrest McDonald, University of Chicago Press – manuscript criticism of Samuel Insull, Jr., - transcript	1961



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5	17	<u>Insull</u> by Forrest McDonald, University of Chicago Press – manuscript criticism of Leslie E. Salter	1962
5	18	<u>Insull</u> by Forrest McDonald, University of Chicago Press – manuscript criticism of University of Chicago Press	1962
5	19	<u>Insull</u> by Forrest McDonald, University of Chicago Press – manuscript criticism of Samuel Insull, Jr.	1962
		Series 5: Miscellaneous Publications, 1923-1957	
M14	2	“Electrical Transmission Systems in the United States,” compiled by <u>Electrical World</u>	1923
6		<u>A New Epoch at Armour Institute of Technology..</u>	Mar. 18, 1926
		<u>Souvenir Booklet Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the opening of the world’s first hydro-electric central station at Appleton, Wis.</u>	1932
		<u>The Monthly Evening Sky Map.</u> Vol XXVI, Whole No. 311	Nov. 1932
		<u>Wings of a Century: The Romance of Transportation, 1833-1934.</u> Chicago: A Center of Progress International Exposition	1934
		Round South America in the North German Lloyd S.S. Columbus. Travel brochure of Raymond-Whitcomb. Boston, MA	1936
		<u>Announcing S. S. Rotterdam Luxury Cruise Through the Panama Canal, Around South American and the West Indies.</u> Travel brochure of the Holland-American Line in cooperation with American Express Travel Service	Oct. 5, 1936
		Philip Sporn, “Interconnected Electric Power Systems,” R. G. Kloeffler, “Electron Theory” In <u>Electrical Engineering</u>	Jan. 1938
		<u>Electric Light and Power.</u> Vol 18, No. 5	May 1940



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- A Brief History of the Chicago and North Western Line. Chicago: Chicago and North Western Railway Company Feb. 1942
- For the United Nations Headquarters: Chicago. Chicago: Chicago Association of Commerce Ca. 1945
- Wisconsin Michigan power Company Annual Report 1956
- 1957 Financial Statistics, Public Utilities: Electric and Gas Operating Companies. Chicago: C.A. Turner 1957