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“Eddie Breen was a legendary figure in Ohio political life. Growing up in the hotel business gave Eddie a window on a sophisticated world and taught him how to move in it, as did the family good fortune that made it possible for him to travel and gain insights far beyond those typical of someone from a small Mid-western city in early-to mid-20th century. He was a genuine war hero who upon his return used his talents throughout the rest of his life to better his home state. The book portrays a fascinating array of people in an America that no longer exists, chronicling their rise from poor immigrants to citizens solidly woven into the fabric of the nation. It is a story that we all should read and remember, as it reminds us what has made this country great.”

**The Honorable Tony P. Hall,
United Nations Ambassador, former Ohio Congressman, and three-time Nobel Peace Prize nominee:**

Lucky Eddie

**The Life, Times, and Family of former
U. S. Congressman, Edward G. Breen**

by Edward Focke Breen

Preface by the Honorable Tony P. Hall

The astonishing story of one man and one family who went from hardworking immigrants to wealth and political power. It is a cultural history of America from the mid-19th through the mid-20th centuries, as the central character and his extended family encountered the luminaries of their day who were shaping ideas and history, featuring for example: Ohio Governor and newspaper magnate Jim Cox, Aviator Amelia Earhart, Presidents Harry S. Truman and, John F. Kennedy, Miss America, and many more.

The book includes:

- The classic American “rags to riches” saga of the German ancestor who entered the country as a poor tailor only to emerge from the Civil War a wealthy man after inventing a process for mass producing uniforms for the Union Army;
- The uneducated son of an Irish immigrant who goes on to become one of the nation’s leading hoteliers;
- The son of that hotelier (Lucky Eddie of the title), who through a combination of luck, charm, intelligence, and leadership ability, became friends with everyone from hotel barmen to Amelia Earhart while serving as the youngest manager of a luxury hotel in the United States before going on to a successful military and political career.

The book illustrates themes such as the importance of telling family stories, generation to generation, and how that enriches lives; racial and religious tolerance; and the importance of service.

Especially compelling are Edward G. Breen’s stories from his service in the Mediterranean theater during World War II, and his sister Mary Louise Breen’s service in Europe during the same period, (it is believed she was a spy for the OSS).

Breen collected a treasure trove of photographs at the time of the conflict, many of which appear in the book. The family saved documentation throughout the entire time period covered by the book and it is richly illustrated.



Wartime photos: United States Army. Front cover photo of E. G. Breen, and photos of John F. Kennedy and Harry S. Truman above copyright Dayton Newspapers, Inc., all rights reserved, reprinted with permission. Sketch of Clarence "Mack" McLin courtesy Dayton Mayor Rhine L. McLin. Remaining photos are from the author's archives.

THE AUTHOR

The author is an Ohio native and school teacher who has spent a lifetime traveling in Europe, North Africa, and the Americas. A graduate of Capital University who has done post-graduate work at Antioch University, he is married to Catherine Taylor, a writer and former magazine editor. They and their two sons live in the Dayton area and spend summers at their home in coastal Maine.



Photo by Robert Breen

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