

Grover Cleveland Loening Papers
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Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2022

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Manuscript Division staff

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2007
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Collection Summary

Title: Grover Cleveland Loening Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1900-1975

Bulk Dates: 1913-1962

ID No.: MSS30437

Creator: Loening, Grover Cleveland, 1888-1976

Extent: 26,000 items

Extent: 73 containers plus 1 oversize

Extent: 35 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm79030437>

Summary: Businessman, engineer, airplane manufacturer, and author. Correspondence, memoranda, reports, minutes, plans and drawings, notes, photographs, patents, legal documents, speeches and writings, scrapbooks, clippings, and printed matter documenting Loening's career in aviation.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Aldrich, Winthrop W. (Winthrop Williams), 1885-1974--Correspondence.

Arnold, Henry Harley, 1886-1950--Correspondence.

Astor, Vincent, 1891-1959--Correspondence.

Byrd, Richard Evelyn, 1888-1957--Correspondence.

Byrd, Richard Evelyn, 1888-1957.

Eaker, Ira, 1896-1987--Correspondence.

Hopkins, Harry L. (Harry Lloyd), 1890-1946--Correspondence.

Kennedy, Joseph P. (Joseph Patrick), 1888-1969--Correspondence.

Lindbergh, Charles A. (Charles Augustus), 1902-1974.

Loening, Grover, 1888-1976.

Mellon, Andrew W. (Andrew William), 1855-1937--Correspondence.

Mitchell, William, 1879-1936--Correspondence.

Rickenbacker, Eddie, 1890-1973--Correspondence.

Rockefeller, Winthrop, 1912-1973--Correspondence.

Sikorsky, Igor Ivan, 1889-1972--Correspondence.

Vanderbilt, Harold S. (Harold Stirling), 1884-1970--Correspondence.

Wright, Orville, 1871-1948--Correspondence.

Wright, Orville, 1871-1948.

Wright, Wilbur, 1867-1912--Correspondence.

Wright, Wilbur, 1867-1912.

Organizations

All American Aviation (Firm)

Columbia University--Students.

Curtiss-Wright Corporation.

Fairchild Engine and Airplane Corporation.

Grover Loening Aircraft Company.

Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation.

National Air Museum (U.S.)

New York Airways, Inc.

Pan American Airways Corporation.

Platt-LePage Aircraft Corporation.

Smithsonian Institution.
Sturtevant Aeroplane Company.
United States. Army. Signal Corps. Aviation Section.
United States. National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics.
United States. President's Air Policy Commission.
United States. War Production Board.
Wright Aeronautical Corporation.

Subjects

Aeronautics, Commercial--United States.
Aeronautics, Military--United States.
Aeronautics.
Aircraft industry--Patents.
Aircraft industry--United States.
Airplanes--Design and construction.
Flight.
Helicopters--Design and construction.
Inventions.
World War, 1939-1945--Aerial operations.

Places

Antarctica--Discovery and exploration.

Occupations

Aircraft manufacturers.
Authors.
Aviation consultants.
Businessmen.
Engineers.

Acquisition Information

The papers of Grover Cleveland Loening, businessman, engineer, airplane manufacturer, and author, were given to the Library of Congress by Loening between 1956 and 1975. The Science, Technology, and Business Division transferred an item to the Manuscript Division in 1962. Additional material was purchased in 2022.

Processing History

The papers of Grover Cleveland Loening were arranged in 1957 by William J. Lynch and described in a published register in 1959. Material given to the Library after the initial organization of the collection was processed and described as the 1957 Addition by Joseph C. Vance. The collection was expanded and the register revised in 1996 by Margaret McAleer. The register was revised in 2007. Material purchased in 2022 was arranged and described as the 2022 Addition by Pang H. Xiong.

Additional Guides

A description of the Loening Papers appears in the *Library of Congress Quarterly Journal of Current Acquisitions*, 14 (May 1957): 123.

Transfers

A sound recording of a speech on aviation delivered by Loening in 1961 has been transferred to the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division where it is identified as part of the Grover Cleveland Loening Papers. Patrons

are encouraged to contact the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division in advance of a research visit. Duplicate photographs were transferred to the Smithsonian Institution in 1959.

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Grover Cleveland Loening in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress has been dedicated to the public.

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Grover Cleveland Loening are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Grover Cleveland Loening Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1888, Sept. 12	Born, Bremen, Germany
1908	B.S., Columbia University, New York, N.Y.
1910	M.A., aeronautics, Columbia University, New York, N.Y.
1911	Published <i>Monoplanes and Biplanes: Their Design, Construction and Operation</i> (New York: Munn & Co. 331 pp.)
1911-1912	Chief engineer, Queen Aeroplane Co., New York, N.Y.
1913-1914	Chief engineer and general manager, Wright Co., Dayton, Ohio
1914-1916	Chief aeronautical engineer, United States Army Signal Corps, Aviation Section, San Diego, Calif.
1915	Published <i>Military Aeroplanes: An Explanatory Consideration of Their Characteristics, Performances, Construction, Maintenance and Operation, for the Use of Aviators</i> (San Diego: Frye & Smith. 17 pp.)
1916-1917	Vice president and general manager, Sturtevant Aeroplane Co., Boston, Mass.
1917-1918	President, Loening Aeronautical Engineering Corp., New York, N.Y.
1919	Awarded Distinguished Service Award by the War Department for the design of a two-seater fighting plane
1921	Awarded Wright and Collier trophies for the Loening Monoplane Flying Yacht
1922	Founder and president, Aeronautical Chamber of Commerce of America
1923	Designed the Loening Cabin Amphibian airplane
1928	Designed the Loening Air Yacht, a six-passenger amphibian airplane Merger, Loening Aeronautical Engineering Corp. and Curtiss-Wright Corp.
1928-1929	Director and consulting engineer, Curtiss-Wright Corp., Buffalo, N.Y.
1929	Director, Roosevelt Field, Mineola, N.Y.
1930	Married Marka Truesdale (divorced 1940)
1930-1938	President, Grover Loening Aircraft Co., Garden City, N.Y.
1935	Published <i>Our Wings Grow Faster</i> (Garden City, N.J.: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 203 pp.)
1937-1938	Aeronautical advisor, United States Maritime Commission

1938-1975	Consulting engineer for the United States government and private industries after retiring from aircraft manufacturing
1939	Director and consulting engineer, All American Aviation, Pittsburgh, Penn.
1942-1945	Aircraft consultant, War Production Board, Washington, D.C.
1942-1943	Technical consultant and coordinator, British Aircraft Engineering Mission headed by Roy Fedden
1945	Appointed to the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics Consultant for the United States Navy on experimental aircraft
1947	Chief of research, President's Air Policy Commission
1948	Awarded Medal for Merit
1948-1970	Member, National Air Museum Advisory Board
1950	Awarded Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy
1951-1969	Director and consultant, New York Airways, New York, N.Y.
1955	Published <i>Fifty Years of Flying Progress</i> (Washington, D.C. 216 pp.)
1960	Awarded Daniel Guggenheim Medal, Society of Automotive Engineers
1966	Published <i>Takeoff Into Greatness: How American Aviation Grew So Big So Fast</i> (New York: Putnam. 256 pp.)
1970	Published <i>The Conquering Wing</i> (Philadelphia: Chilton Book Co. 196 pp.)
1973	Published <i>Amphibian: The Story of the Loening Biplane</i> (Greenwich, Conn.: New York Graphic Society. 196 pp.)
1976, Apr. 30	Died, Miami, Fla.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Grover Cleveland Loening (1888-1976) span the years 1900-1975, with the bulk of material dating from 1913 to 1962. The collection documents Loening's career as an aircraft engineer, manufacturer, businessman, and consultant. The papers are in English and arranged in seven series: [General Correspondence](#), [Subject File](#), [Clippings](#), [Photographs](#), [Scrapbooks](#), [Additions](#), and [Oversize](#).

The [General Correspondence](#) series documents the development of Loening's interest in aviation while a student at Columbia University; his early employment with the Wright Aeronautical Corporation, the Aviation Section of the United States Army Signal Corps, and the Sturtevant Aeroplane Company; and the subsequent establishment of his own aircraft companies. The series includes letters from Wilbur and Orville Wright as well as Loening's correspondence as chief engineer for the Wright Aeronautical Corporation which discusses many aspects of the company's work from 1913 to 1914. There are numerous letters to and from Richard Evelyn Byrd between 1925 and 1930, many regarding Byrd's first Antarctic expedition. Other correspondents include Winthrop W. Aldrich, Vincent Astor, Ira Eaker, Harry Hopkins, Joseph P. Kennedy, Andrew W. Mellon, William Mitchell, Eddie Rickenbacker, Winthrop Rockefeller, Igor Ivan Sikorsky, and Harold S. Vanderbilt.

The [Subject File](#) contains patents, drawings, reports, and promotional literature pertaining to a number of Loening's aircraft designs, most notably his amphibian planes. The series also includes material relating to various consulting contracts following his retirement as president of the Grover Loening Aircraft Company in 1938. Many of Loening's articles and speeches are included in the [Subject File](#), along with drafts and related correspondence concerning *Monoplanes and Biplanes*, Loening's master's thesis; *Military Aeroplanes*, a military training manual; and *Our Wings Grow Faster*. Additional speeches and writings can be found in the [1957 Addition](#), [1996 Addition](#), and [2022 Addition](#).

The collection includes a large [Photograph](#) series depicting the construction and testing of aircraft designed by Loening and others. A [Clippings](#) file, dating primarily from the mid-1920s, and twenty-five [scrapbooks](#) deal with almost every aspect of aeronautical interest as well as Loening's own company. The scrapbooks cover the years 1918-1922, 1928-1933, and 1937-1941 and include clippings on Richard Evelyn Byrd's expedition and material on Charles A. Lindbergh.

The [1996 Addition](#) largely concerns Loening's career after 1942. The bulk of the addition consists of a chronological file containing correspondence, memoranda, reports, minutes, photographs, clippings, and other printed matter. Much of this material concerns Loening's activities as a consultant for the United States government and private industry. His appointments to the War Production Board, National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, President's Air Policy

Commission, and the National Air Museum Advisory Board are well documented. Significant amounts of material concern Loening's involvement with All American Aviation, Curtiss-Wright Corporation, Fairchild Engine and Airplane Corporation, Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation, New York Airways, Pan American Airways Corporation, and Platt-LePage Aircraft Corporation. A small subject file relates to a number of these activities in addition to Loening's investigation of early helicopter design and production.

The [2022 Addition](#) includes correspondence on various aviation topics. Letters between Charles M. Manly, Charles D. Walcott, and Orville Wright provide insight into the Smithsonian Institution and Orville Wright's dispute over the Wright Flyer. Letters between Loening and Samuel Reber relate to Loening's work with the United States Army Signal Corps in San Diego, California, and letters between Loening and John A. Macready discuss a transpacific flight. Other correspondents in the general correspondence include Henry Harley Arnold, Ira Eaker, John F. Kennedy, Richard M. Nixon, and Igor Ivan Sikorsky. The addition also contains documentation about the patent infringement suit relating to the Sikorsky S-43 landing gear, Loening's noncommercial pilot's license issued in 1935, Loening's prepared testimony about the amphibian plane for William Mitchell's court-martial, and a few Wright brothers patents.

Arrangement of the Collection

This collection is arranged in seven series:

- [General Correspondence, 1900-1942](#)
- [Subject File, 1910-1942](#)
- [Clippings, 1910-1942](#)
- [Photographs, 1914-1954](#)
- [Scrapbooks, 1918-1941](#)
- [Additions, 1901-1975](#)
- [Oversize, 1918-1926](#)

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Oversize, 1918

Container

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(2 folders)