

Harold Gatty Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2023

Contact information: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm78022046>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms013013>

Prepared by Manuscript Division Staff

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2013
Revised 2023 May

Collection Summary

Title: Harold Gatty Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1901-1957

ID No.: MSS22046

Creator: Gatty, Harold, 1903-1957

Extent: 7,000 items

Extent: 43 containers plus 4 oversize

Extent: 14 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm78022046>

Summary: Aviator, navigator, naturalist, and inventor. Research notes, subject files, and indexes used in preparation of Gatty's books, *Raft Book: Lore of the Sea and Sky* (1943) and *Nature Is Your Guide* (1958), together with correspondence, charts, maps, drawings, bibliographies, clippings, and other papers relating to navigation.

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

Bromley, Harold, 1898-1998.

Douglas, Donald W. (Donald Wills), 1892-1981.

Gatty, Harold, 1903-1957.

Gatty, Harold, 1903-1957. *Nature is your guide*. 1958.

Gatty, Harold, 1903-1957. *Raft book: lore of the sea & sky*. 1943.

Mills, Enos A., 1870-1922. *Adventures of a nature guide*. 1920.

Organizations

Pan American Airways Corporation.

South Seas Commercial Company.

Subjects

Airways--Pacific area.

Navigation (Aeronautics)

Navigation--Antarctica.

Navigation--Arctic regions.

Navigation--Polynesia.

Navigation.

Transpacific flights.

Occupations

Aviators.

Inventors.

Naturalists.

Navigators.

Acquisition Information

The papers of Harold Gatty, aviator, navigator, naturalist, and inventor, were given to the Library of Congress by his widow, Allerdina Fenna Bolderhey Gatty Scott, in 1965.

Processing History

The collection was processed in 1965. The finding aid was revised in 2012. The finding aid was updated in 2023 by Maria Farmer as part of a division-wide remediation project by the Inclusive Description Working Group.

Transfers

Three-dimensional objects, including a ground-speed indicator and a drift meter, have been transferred to the Smithsonian Institution.

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Harold Gatty in the collection of papers in the Library of Congress has been dedicated to the public.

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Harold Gatty 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, Harold Gatty Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1903, Jan. 5	Born, Campbelltown, Tasmania, Australia
1915-1916	Attended St. Virgil's College, Hobart, Australia
1916-1920	Attended Royal Australian Naval College, Jervis Bay, Australia
1920-1923	Apprentice in service on ships of Patrick Steamship Co., Ltd.
1923	Officer aboard SS <i>Maheno</i>
1924	Officer aboard SS <i>Orowati</i>
1925	Married Vera McCulloch
1927	Immigrated to the United States
1928	Established school of navigation for flyers, Los Angeles, Calif.
1930	Attempted with Harold Bromley the first non-stop crossing of the North Pacific
1931	Perfected ground-speed and drift indicator for air navigation
1931	Flew around the world in eight days (23 June-1 July) with Wiley Post
	Appointed senior air navigation research engineer, United States Army Air Corps
1934-1935	Surveyed and negotiated for bases for airline operations in South Pacific
1939-1941	Appointed group captain in the Australian Air Force and director of Allied Air Transport in South Pacific
1942-1943	In charge of Air Navigation Research Training, United States Army Air Corps
1944	Investigated navigational methodology in the Arctic and Antarctic and published confidential report on the subject for the United States Navy
1945-1957	Resided in Fiji Islands where he owned plantations and operated Fiji Airways
1957	Died in Fiji Islands

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Harold Gatty (1903-1957) span the years 1901-1957, with most of the collection concerning the history of land and nautical navigation. Comparatively little relates to the Wiley Post-Harold Gatty eight-day flight around the world in 1931. The collection is organized into nine series following the basic outline established by Gatty: [Book File](#), [Navigation File](#), [Ground-Speed and Drift Indicator](#), [Transoceanic Flights](#), [Pacific Airline Routes](#), [Printed Matter](#), [Miscellany](#), [Bibliographic File](#), and [Oversize](#).

Material relating to Gatty's published works in the [Book File](#), *The Raft Book*; *Lore of the Sea and Sky* and *Nature Is Your Guide*, consists mainly of notes, charts, drawings, reprinted articles, photocopies of navigation charts and instruments, and drafts of the books. Included is a typed manuscript of *Adventures of a Nature Guide* by Enos Abijah Mills, published in 1920. There is frequently more than one draft of chapters from Gatty's books and some material for chapters not included in the final version of the two books.

The [Navigation File](#) contains manuscript material concerned with navigation, its history, and its methodology. This section consists mainly of articles from books and journals that have been recopied and in some cases translated from the original language. Included is bibliographical material, biographical sketches, and a file of articles on navigational activities from the *Geographical Journal*. There is also a brief background to the navigational theory of the Polynesians that allowed them to cross thousands of miles of uncharted seas without the use of navigational instruments. The material in this section indicates that Gatty was attempting to write a book on navigation. Included are outlines, sketched chapters, and a large amount of background information, but the work was not completed.

Closely connected with the files on navigation is Gatty's bibliography of the subject on index cards. Also in the [Bibliographic File](#) are index cards on the Arctic and Antarctica used as the basis for a confidential report for the United States Navy in 1944 on navigational methods in the two regions.

Correspondence, charts, maps, notes, and aeronautical timetables in the [Pacific Airline Routes](#) series relate to the South Seas Commercial Company that Gatty started with Donald W. Douglas of Douglas Aircraft in 1934. The founders hoped to obtain leases or concessions on islands in the Pacific for the construction of landing facilities for airline operations from the Pacific coast of the United States to Honolulu, continuing one line to Pago-Pago, New Zealand, and Australia, and another to the Philippines and China. The company was later dissolved and Pan American Airlines assumed control of the routes; Gatty then worked for the new owners. Correspondence in the series indicates that, despite the claims of others, Gatty surveyed the original routes in the Pacific. Some of the communications were sent to him in secret code, and not all have been decoded.

Also in the collection is material on Gatty's two 1931 inventions, the ground-speed indicator and the drift meter. Included in the [Ground-Speed and Drift Indicator](#) series are foreign and domestic patent applications, lists and reports of patents in the United States Patent Office concerning navigation, blueprints, diagrams, correspondence, and other material relating to the inventions.

The [Miscellany](#) includes newspaper clippings on Gatty's attempted transpacific flight with Harold Bromley in 1931. Printed matter consists of pamphlets and clippings from magazines and journals mainly concerned with navigation, nature, and navigational theory.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in nine series:

- [Book File](#)
- [Navigation File](#)
- [Ground-Speed and Drift Indicator, 1931-1945](#)
- [Transoceanic Flights, 1901-1935](#)
- [Pacific Airline Routes, 1933-1940](#)
- [Printed Matter, 1902-1947](#)
- [Miscellany, 1921-1945](#)
- [Bibliographic File](#)
- [Oversize](#)

Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1-8	<p><u>Book File</u></p> <p>Drafts, notes, maps, photographs, tables, charts, and other material relating to <i>Nature Is Your Guide</i> and <i>Raft Book: Lore of the Sea and Sky</i>. Also included is the typed manuscript of <i>Adventures of a Nature Guide</i> by Enos Abijah Mills, published in 1920.</p> <p>Arranged by title of book and therein by type of material.</p>
BOX 9-15	<p><u>Navigation File</u></p> <p>Reprints and copies of articles from books and journals, including biographical sketches, bibliographic outlines, a file of articles from the <i>Geographic Journal</i>, photocopies of navigational charts and instruments, and material on Polynesian navigation.</p> <p>Arranged by topic or type of material with dated articles organized chronologically according to the year of their writing.</p>
BOX 16-17	<p><u>Ground-Speed and Drift Indicator, 1931-1945</u></p> <p>Patent correspondence and applications, both domestic and foreign, results of experiments about Gatty's invention, photographs and charts, miscellaneous notes, blueprints, and diagrams. Included is an index and a description of patents concerning navigational instruments granted by the United States Patent Office.</p> <p>Arranged by type of material.</p>
BOX 18	<p><u>Transoceanic Flights, 1901-1935</u></p> <p>Correspondence, maps, reports, notes, and press releases.</p> <p>Arranged chronologically.</p>
BOX 19	<p><u>Pacific Airline Routes, 1933-1940</u></p> <p>Correspondence, reports, notes, and drawings pertaining to Gatty's activities as an agent for airline companies in the South Pacific.</p> <p>Arranged chronologically.</p>
BOX 20-21	<p><u>Printed Matter, 1902-1947</u></p> <p>Pamphlets and clippings from magazines and newspapers.</p> <p>Magazine clippings are arranged chronologically. Pamphlets and newspaper clippings are arranged by subject heading.</p>
BOX 22	<p><u>Miscellany, 1921-1945</u></p> <p>Sketches, reprinted articles, bibliographic material, congratulatory messages, star-finders, correspondence, photographs, notebooks, maps, speeches, position books, honorary awards and maps.</p> <p>Arranged by type of material.</p>
BOX 23-43	<p><u>Bibliographic File</u></p> <p>Bibliographic index cards on navigational topics.</p> <p>Arranged in card trays in sequences created by Gatty.</p>
BOX OV 1-OV 4	<p><u>Oversize</u></p> <p>Maps, awards, certificates, portrait, and miscellaneous printed matter.</p>

Arranged and described according to the series and container from which the material was removed.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1-8	Book File Drafts, notes, maps, photographs, tables, charts, and other material relating to <i>Nature Is Your Guide</i> and <i>Raft Book: Lore of the Sea and Sky</i> . Also included is the typed manuscript of <i>Adventures of a Nature Guide</i> by Enos Abijah Mills, published in 1920. Arranged by title of book and therein by type of material.
BOX 1	<i>Nature is Your Guide</i>
BOX 1	Drafts and notes
BOX 1	Foreword to Chapter 3
BOX 2	Chapter 3
BOX 3	Chapters 4-9
BOX 4	Chapters 11-13
BOX 5	Chapters 14-25
BOX 6	Miscellaneous
BOX 6	Manuscript draft of book by E. Mills
BOX 7	<i>Raft Book: Lore of the Sea and Sky, drafts</i>
BOX 7	Pages 1-38
BOX 8	Pages 39-140
BOX 9-15	Navigation File Reprints and copies of articles from books and journals, including biographical sketches, bibliographic outlines, a file of articles from the <i>Geographic Journal</i> , photocopies of navigational charts and instruments, and material on Polynesian navigation. Arranged by topic or type of material with dated articles organized chronologically according to the year of their writing.
BOX 9	Articles
BOX 9	578 B.C.-1895 A.D.
BOX 10	1897-1932
BOX 11	1932-1940
BOX 11	Biographical and bibliographic material
BOX 12	Articles, undated
BOX 13	Articles from <i>Geographical Journal</i>
BOX 13	Miscellany
BOX 14	Photocopies of navigational charts and instruments
BOX 15	Polynesia
BOX 16-17	Ground-Speed and Drift Indicator, 1931-1945 Patent correspondence and applications, both domestic and foreign, results of experiments about Gatty's invention, photographs and charts, miscellaneous notes, blueprints, and diagrams. Included is an index and a description of patents concerning navigational instruments granted by the United States Patent Office. Arranged by type of material.

Ground-Speed and Drift Indicator, 1931-1945

Container	Contents
BOX 16	Correspondence and patent material, 1931-1945
BOX 17	Patents from United States patent office and notes and drawings
BOX 18	Transoceanic Flights, 1901-1935 Correspondence, maps, reports, notes, and press releases. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 18	Maps, correspondence, notes and reports, 1901-1935 <i>See also Oversize</i>
BOX 19	Pacific Airline Routes, 1933-1940 Correspondence, reports, notes, and drawings pertaining to Gatty's activities as an agent for airline companies in the South Pacific. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 19	Route maps, correspondence, and notes and drawings, 1933-1940
BOX 20-21	Printed Matter, 1902-1947 Pamphlets and clippings from magazines and newspapers. Magazine clippings are arranged chronologically. Pamphlets and newspaper clippings are arranged by subject heading.
BOX 20	Magazine clippings 1902-1943, undated
BOX 21	Pamphlet and newspaper clippings
BOX 22	Miscellany, 1921-1945 Sketches, reprinted articles, bibliographic material, congratulatory messages, star-finders, correspondence, photographs, notebooks, maps, speeches, position books, honorary awards and maps. Arranged by type of material.
BOX 22	Sketches of airplanes on linen paper
BOX 22	Reprints of articles from International Congress of Transoceanic Aviators, Rome, Italy, May 1932
BOX 22	Typed bibliography of Arctic writings
BOX 22	Congratulatory messages, 1931
BOX 22	Special rude star finder, 1940
BOX 22	Material validating claim to the first invention of the quadrant
BOX 22	Notes and sketches on sextants
BOX 22	Book of navigation extracts, 1939
BOX 22	Position book while serving on S.S. <i>Drowaite</i> , 1923
BOX 22	Personal photographs
BOX 22	Small notebook on facts and figures
BOX 22	Artist sketches
BOX 22	Photocopy of an old map with comment in Latin
BOX 22	Speech by Gatty
BOX 22	Awards, certificates, portrait, and printed matter <i>See Oversize</i>

Miscellany, 1921-1945

Container	Contents
BOX 22	Miscellaneous maps and charts <i>See Oversize</i>
BOX 23-43	Bibliographic File Bibliographic index cards on navigational topics. Arranged in card trays in sequences created by Gatty.
BOX 23	Navigation
BOX 23	Alphabetical
BOX 23	A-Bo
BOX 24	Bo-D
BOX 25	D-Gi
BOX 26	Gi-J
BOX 27	J-Map
BOX 28	Map-Pl
BOX 29	Pi-Si
BOX 30	Si-We
BOX 31	We-Z
BOX 31	Unsorted alphabetical
BOX 31	A-C
BOX 32	C-K
BOX 33	K-S
BOX 34	S-Z
BOX 34	By subject
BOX 34	No. 1
BOX 35	No. 2
BOX 36	No. 3
BOX 37	No. 4
BOX 37	Chronological
BOX 37	No. 1
BOX 38	No. 2
BOX 39	No. 3
BOX 40	No. 4
BOX 41	No. 5
BOX 42	Antarctic
BOX 42	A-M
BOX 43	M-Z
BOX OV 1-OV 4	Oversize Maps, awards, certificates, portrait, and miscellaneous printed matter. Arranged and described according to the series and container from which the material was removed.
BOX OV 1	Transoceanic Flights (Container 18)
BOX OV 1	Maps
BOX OV 2	Maps with writing
BOX OV 3	Miscellany (Container 22)
BOX OV 3	Awards, certificates, portrait, and printed matter

Oversize

Container

Contents

BOX OV 4

Miscellaneous maps and charts