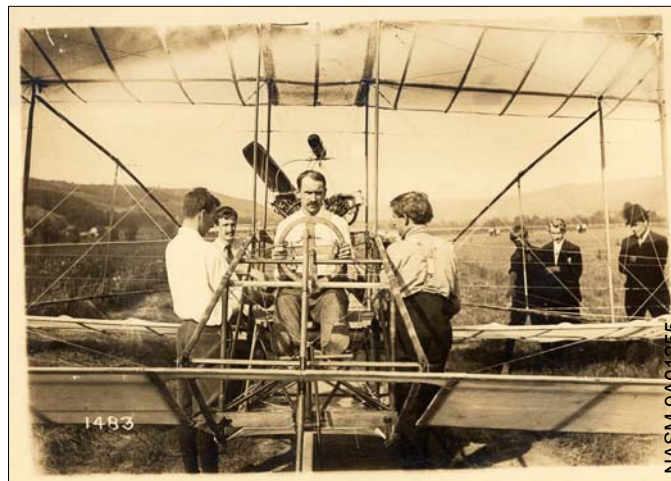


NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE ARCHIVES

Glenn H. Curtiss Collection

Accession No. XXXX-0053



National Air and Space Museum
Smithsonian Institution
Washington, DC

Mark Kahn

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Glenn H. Curtiss Collection 2.70 cu. ft. (6 boxes)

Historical Note

Glenn H. Curtiss was an early aviation pioneer and founder of the Curtiss Aeroplane and Motor Corporation. Born in Hammondsport, New York, on May 21, 1878, Curtiss displayed an early interest in mechanical devices. By 1902, he had already opened a shop for making motors for motorcycles. Two years later, he designed and built a motor for the *California Arrow*, an early dirigible. This success resulted in an order for him to construct the motor for the U.S. Army's first dirigible, *Signal Corps No. 1*. Following these developments, Curtiss turned his attention to heavier-than-air flight. In July 1908, he won the *Scientific American* trophy for the first public airplane flight of one kilometer in the U.S. with his *June Bug*. By 1910-11, he built the first successful seaplanes and flying boats. During World War I, Curtiss' factories manufactured aircraft for the U.S., Britain and Russia. Some of these airplanes included the famous Curtiss JN-4 *Jenny* trainer, as well as the Navy-Curtiss type flying boats. One such Curtiss machine, the *NC-4*, made the first transatlantic flight in May 1919. By the mid 1920s, his Curtiss Aeroplane and Motor Corporation was also producing numerous racer airplanes (a few examples of which won the *Pulitzer and Schneider Cup* races for the U.S.), amphibian aircraft with retractable landing gear and fighters for the U.S. Army. Following complications from a surgical procedure, Curtiss died in Buffalo, New York, on July 23, 1930.

Perhaps Curtiss' single greatest contribution to the field was the development of the aileron. These surfaces, independent of the wings, allowed for far greater lateral control of the aircraft than the wing-warping technique invented and employed by the Wright brothers. Such trailblazing work did spark some controversy. The Wrights claimed that their warping patent covered all means of lateral control in the air. Consequently, litigation ensued between the two sides. The issue was determined when Curtiss was granted a patent for the aileron on December 5, 1911. Curtiss also continued to fend off other patent infringement cases for many years afterward. He even fought a long, protracted legal battle over control of his company and its assets with a former business partner, Augustus M. Herring. This case dragged on in one form or another beyond 1926 – the year when the business partnership the two shared was formally dissolved. After Curtiss died, his wife continued the legal fight on her husband's behalf until a judge decided in Herring's favor in 1931.

Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of the personal papers of Glenn H. Curtiss. These papers relate to his career as an aviation pioneer and aircraft manufacturing business owner. This collection also includes a small amount of personal correspondence. Moreover, materials pertaining to patents filed by Curtiss and the Wright brothers, as well as legal documents and testimony, are found in this collection.

The collection is arranged into two broad series. First, is the material relating to Curtiss' professional life. This includes corporate correspondence, miscellaneous corporate materials, reports, photographs, programs and tributes, books, journals, newsletters, newspaper clippings, patent materials and a scrapbook. The second series contains items pertaining to legal cases involving Curtiss, Augustus M. Herring and the Wright brothers.

In Series I, correspondence, miscellaneous corporate and non-corporate materials, reports, photographs, menus, programs, tributes, books, journals, newsletters, patent materials and legal documents are arranged chronologically. The small amount of personal correspondence found in this collection follows the corporate correspondence in the finding aid. Newspaper clippings, journals, newsletters and articles are grouped by title of publication. Photographs are grouped by subject and then chronologically. Patent materials are organized into two groups: patent applications filed by and issued to Curtiss and those filed by and issued to the Wright brothers. In Series II, the legal documents are organized chronologically by specific legal case.

SERIES ORGANIZATION

SERIES I – Professional Materials

- **Corporate Correspondence**
- **Personal Correspondence**
- **Miscellaneous Corporate Materials**
- **Patent Materials**
- **Reports**
- **Photographs**
- **Menus, Programs and Tributes**
- **Books, Journals, Newsletters and Miscellaneous Materials**
- **Newspaper Clippings and Articles**

SERIES II – Legal Materials

- **Curtiss versus Herring**
- **Curtiss versus Wright Brothers**
- **Lena P. Curtiss versus Herring**

CONTAINER LIST

SERIES I: Professional Materials

This series contains correspondence, miscellaneous corporate materials, reports, photographs, menus, programs, tributes, books, journals, newsletters, newspaper clippings, patent materials and a scrapbook. Correspondence, miscellaneous corporate and non-corporate materials, reports, menus, programs, tributes, and legal documents are organized chronologically. Journals, newspaper clippings, newsletters and articles are arranged by title of publication. Photographs are grouped by subject and then chronologically. Patent materials are organized into two groups: patent applications filed and issued to Curtiss and those filed by and issued to the Wright brothers.

Corporate correspondence

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	
1	1	Correspondence, 1910
	2	Correspondence, 1911
	3	Correspondence, 1912
	4	Correspondence, 1913
	5	Correspondence, 1921-30

Personal correspondence

6	Correspondence, 1911-15
7	Correspondence, 1922-25
8	Correspondence, 1928-29
9	Correspondence, 1931-35

Miscellaneous corporate materials

10	Agreement, Frank Bouton and Curtiss for 1000 shares of stock, October 17, 1905
11	Shipping documents and receipts, to and from Curtiss, 1914-15
12	Miscellaneous materials, Curtiss estate, 1923-25
13	List of exhibits, Curtiss Aeroplane and Motor Corporation, August 27, 1928
14	Blank copy, Curtiss Exhibition Company contract, n.d.

Patent materials are organized into two groups: patent applications filed by and issued to Curtiss and filed by and issued to the Wright brothers. These papers from the United States Patent Office, are further arranged chronologically. This grouping also includes one article from *The Aero* discussing the Wright airplane patents.

Curtiss patent materials:

15	Patent No. 1011106, Flying-Machine, December 5, 1911
16	Patent No. 1108490, Flying-Machine, August 25, 1914
17	Patent No. 1204380, Flying-Machine, November 7, 1916
18	Patent No. 1210373, Exhaust-Heater for Air-Inlets, December 26, 1916
19	Automobile improvement patent application, July 3, 1930

Wright patent materials:

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	
1	20	Patent No. 821393, Flying-Machine, May 22, 1906
	21	Patent No. 908929, Mechanism for Flexing the Rudder of a Flying-Machine or the Like, January 5, 1909
	22	Patent No. 987662, Flying-Machine, March 21, 1911
	23	Patent No. 1075533, Flying-Machine, October 14, 1913
	24	Patent No. 1122348, Flying-Machine, December 29, 1914
	25	Magazine article, <i>The Aero</i> , December 28, 1909

Reports

26	Assets report, Curtiss Aeroplane and Motor Corporation, July 10, 1916
27	Report, <i>Annual Report and Condensed Balance Sheet and Income and Deficit Account of the Curtiss Aeroplane and Motor Corporation</i> , December 31, 1922
28	Report, <i>The Final Report of the Guggenheim Fund for the Promotion of Aeronautics 1929</i> , September 1930

Photographs

29	U.S. Army Dirigible #1 (with engine built by Curtiss), official test, August 12, 1908
30	Curtiss in the <i>June Bug</i> , circa 1908
31	Curtiss Model D airplane, 1911
32	Curtiss in front left seat of McCormick flying boat, May 27, 1913
33	Flight of Curtiss flying boat, <i>America</i> , 1914
34	A.H. Hydro and Group with Curtiss (center), n.d.
35	Curtiss automobiles, airplanes and dirigibles, n.d.
36	Curtiss aircraft plant, Hammondsport, New York, n.d.
37	Curtiss airplane, <i>Silver Dart</i> , n.d.
38	Curtiss at the controls, n.d.
39	Curtiss E- Model flying boat, n.d.
40	Curtiss (far left), n.d.
41	Curtiss Military Flying School, San Diego, California, n.d.
42	Curtiss <i>Owl</i> , three-quarter view short tail boat, n.d.
43	Curtiss with field glasses, n.d.
44	U.S. Army Captain Tom Baldwin and Curtiss, n.d.
45	McCormick flying boat, May 27, 1913
46	H.F. McCormick, n.d.
47	Samuel P. Langley's <i>Aerodrome</i> , Hammondsport, New York, June 2, 1914
48	Blanche Scott, n.d.

Menus, programs, and tributes to Curtiss are arranged chronologically.

2	1	Menu, dinner given to honor Albany-New York flight by Curtiss, Hotel Astor, New York, New York, May 31, 1910
	2	Program, presentation of the Langley Medal to Curtiss by the Smithsonian Institution, May 6, 1913
	3	Program and menu, <i>The Dinner to Pioneers of American Industries</i> , October 24, 1928
	4	Program, <i>Curtiss Marine Trophy Race</i> , Aero Club of Washinton, D.C., May 25, 1929

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	
2	5	Resolution of Tribute for Curtiss, Board of Governors, Aeronautical Chamber of Commerce of America, Inc., July 23, 1930
	6	Sympathy memorial and tribute to Curtiss, Board of Directors, Curtiss-Wright Corporation, August 13, 1930
Journals, newsletters and articles are arranged by title of publication (miscellaneous materials such as a book, scrapbook and a Christmas greeting card are listed at the end of this subseries).		
	7	Journal, <i>Niagara Area Journal of Commerce</i> , vol. 21, August 1930
	8	Journal, <i>The North American Review</i> , vol. 224, no. 3, September-October 1927
	9	Newsletter, <i>The Fyr-Fyter News</i> , vol. 14, no. 18, September 10, 1927
	10	Newsletter, <i>Stepping Stones</i> , Western Union, vol. 2, no. 2, 1941
	11	Excerpted magazine article, <i>Motorcycle Illustrated</i> , August 1, 1910
	12	Article, <i>Value of Airplane</i> , Jacksonville Aeronautic Association, April 25, 1924
	13	Commemorative book, <i>The Flight Across the Atlantic</i> , Curtiss Aeroplane and Motor Corporation, 1919
	14	Illustration, <i>Curtiss Landing at Governor's Island</i> , May 1910
	15	Scrapbook, containing photographs regarding the construction of the Curtiss transatlantic flying boat, <i>America</i> , circa 1914 (please note – this scrapbook is in very fragile condition)
	16	Christmas greeting card, Bell Aircraft Corporation (featuring British <i>Airacobra</i> aircraft, n.d.)

Newspaper clippings are arranged by title of publication. The subject matter varies from patent disputes between Curtiss and the Wrights, development of Curtiss aircraft as well as Curtiss' death and aviation legacy.

	17	<i>The Ashville Citizen</i> , Ashville, North Carolina, October 4, 1928
	18	<i>The Boston Transcript</i> , Boston, Massachusetts, n.d.
	19	<i>The Buffalo Express</i> , Buffalo, New York, February 3, 1910
	20	<i>Cleveland Plain Dealer</i> , Cleveland, Ohio, n.d.
	21	<i>The Courier</i> , Waterloo, Iowa, March 6, 1914
	22	<i>The Curtiss Wright-Er</i> , May 26, 1943
	23	<i>The Detroit Free Press</i> , Detroit, Michigan, January-February 1910
	24	<i>The Detroit Journal</i> , Detroit, Michigan, January 1910
	25	<i>The Detroit News</i> , Detroit, Michigan, January-February 1910
	26	<i>Elmira Sunday Telegram</i> , Elmira, New York, May 30, 1943
	27	<i>The Hammondsport Herald</i> , Hammondsport, New York, August 18, 1920
	28	<i>The Havana Post</i> , Havana, Cuba, February 5-6, 1931
	29	<i>The Miami Daily News</i> , Miami, Florida, June 26, 1932
	30	<i>The Miami Herald</i> , Miami, Florida, March 10, 1929
	31	<i>The New York Herald</i> , New York, New York, 1909-10
	32	<i>The New York Times</i> , New York, New York, 1910-30
	33	<i>The New York Tribune</i> , New York, New York, August 24, 1909
	34	<i>The Rochester Democrat</i> , Rochester, New York, October 21, 1929
	35	<i>The Rochester Republican</i> , Rochester, New York, July 31, 1930
3	1	<i>The San Diego Union</i> , San Diego, California, 1911-31
	2	<i>The Sunday Citizen</i> , Asheville, North Carolina, October 4, 1928
	3	<i>The Union and Advertiser</i> , Rochester, New York, January 6, 1909
	4	Miscellaneous newspaper clippings, 1910-31

Series II: Legal Materials

This series contains materials relating to the long-running legal disputes involving Curtiss. The litigants were Curtiss versus Augustus M. Herring, Curtiss' wife, Lena versus Herring (she replaced her husband in the litigation upon his death in 1930) and Curtiss versus the Wright brothers. The last protracted case involved patent infringement alleged by the Wrights against Curtiss. The other two cases revolved around Herring's false claims of possessing aeronautical patents (Curtiss had hoped to use these patents in his legal battle with the Wrights) and a hostile bid by Herring to win control of the Herring-Curtiss Company in 1910. This failed maneuver did succeed in bankrupting the firm and placing it in receivership.

These papers include U.S. District Court (Western District of New York) and State of New York Supreme Court testimony, other types of court documents (including a court-issued injunction filed by the Wright brothers against Curtiss) as well as Herring-Curtiss Company bankruptcy reports and papers. They are organized chronologically.

Please note that volume 1, 2 and 6 of the Testimony, State of New York Supreme Court, Curtiss versus Herring, is missing from this collection.

Curtiss versus Herring:

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	
3	5	Testimony, U.S. District Court, Western District of New York, concerning bankruptcy of the Curtiss-Herring Company, July 20, 1910
	6	Testimony, U.S. District Court, Western District of New York, concerning bankruptcy of the Curtiss-Herring Company, August 17, 1910
	7	Testimony, U.S. District Court, Western District of New York, concerning bankruptcy of the Curtiss-Herring Company, December 2, 1910
	8	Notes for Curtiss, preparation for testimony, Curtiss versus Herring, circa 1921
	9	Lists of article referring to Curtiss-Herring litigation, compiled September 21, 1921
	10	Testimony, State of New York Supreme Court, Curtiss versus Herring, pp. 1469-2142, vol. 3, circa 1921-22
4	1	Testimony, State of New York Supreme Court, Curtiss versus Herring, pp. 2142-2860, vol. 4, circa 1921-22
	2	Testimony, State of New York Supreme Court, Curtiss versus Herring, pp. 2861-3558, vol. 5, circa 1921-22
	3	Testimony, State of New York Supreme Court, Curtiss versus Herring, pp. 4299-4960, vol. 7, May 17, 1922
5	1	Testimony, State of New York Supreme Court, Curtiss versus Herring, pp. 4961-5705, vol. 8, May 17, 1922
	2	Testimony, State of New York Supreme Court, Curtiss versus Herring, pp. 5707-6372, vol. 9, circa 1922
	3	Testimony, State of New York Supreme Court, Curtiss versus Herring, pp. 6373-7026, vol. 10, circa 1922

Curtiss versus Wright brothers:

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	
6	1	Testimony, (court unknown), Curtiss versus Wrights, October 4, 1911
	2	Injunction, U.S. District Court, Western District of New York, filed by Orville Wright against the Curtiss-Herring Company, September 23, 1914
	3	Paper, <i>Heavier Than Air Flying Machines</i> , author unknown, n.d.

Lena P. Curtiss versus Herring:

4	Legal brief, Supreme Court, Steuben County, New York, Curtiss versus Herring, circa 1930-31
5	Legal brief, Supreme Court, Steuben County, New York, Curtiss versus Herring, circa 1930-31
6	Legal brief, Supreme Court, Steuben County, New York, Curtiss versus Herring, circa 1930-31
7	Legal brief, Supreme Court, Steuben County, New York, Curtiss versus Herring, circa 1930-31
8	Legal brief, Supreme Court, Steuben County, New York, Curtiss versus Herring, circa 1930-31
9	Legal brief, Supreme Court, Steuben County, New York, Curtiss versus Herring, circa 1930-31
10	Legal brief, Supreme Court, Steuben County, New York, Curtiss versus Herring, circa 1930-31
11	Legal brief, Supreme Court, Steuben County, New York, Curtiss versus Herring, circa 1930-31
12	Supreme Court Decison, Steuben County, New York, Curtiss versus Herring, May 23, 1931