



Smithsonian

National Air and Space Museum

Paul Studenski Collection

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National Air and Space Museum Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	Paul Studenski Collection
Date:	1887-1961
Identifier:	NASM.1989.0012
Creator:	Studenski, Paul, 1887-1961
Extent:	1 Cubic foot (1 box and 2 scrapbooks)
Language:	English .
Summary:	This collection contains two scrapbooks and the personal papers of Dr. Paul Studenski, an early aviator who flew from 1910-1913. Born in St. Petersburg, Studenski studied law and medicine before earning the 292nd license from L'Aero Club de France. He immigrated to the United States in 1911 and exercised his prodigious flying skills as instructor, test pilot and exhibition pilot before retiring from flying to distinguish himself in the fields of economics and government service.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Dr. Eugene Studenski and Dr. Vera Zorn, gift, 1988, 1989-0012

Processing Information

The National Air and Space Museum (NASM) received this collection in 1989, a donation from Professor Vera Zorn and Dr. Eugene Studenski, Paul Studenski's children. The collection includes correspondence, photographs and scrapbooks. It spans fifty years, roughly from 1910 to 1960, excepting a folder of correspondence between Professor Zorn and an author, Lee David Hamilton, concerning the Paul Studenski material.

Lee David Hamilton had evidently had much of the Studenski material in his possession for a period of time, during which it is believed that he did some preliminary processing of the collection. Although it is not certain that the organizational structure evident in the material upon its donation to NASM originated with Hamilton, this order, where identified, has been maintained.

It should be noted that during Paul Studenski's early career, including all the years in which he was actively involved in aviation, the subject spelled his name Studensky. However, signatures reveal that in later years, he had changed the spelling of his surname to Studenski.

As Paul Studenski possessed some proficiency in five languages, the researcher will find that some of the correspondence and a few of the newspaper clippings in this collection are in languages other than English. No translations for these items are available at this time.

Additional Materials: This collection also contained the following materials which were transferred to the National Air and Space Museum Aeronautics Division -- one jacket, boots, one helmet and a small doll.

Preferred Citation

Paul Studenski Collection, Acc. 1989-0012, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access

Conditions Governing Use

[Permissions Requests](#)

Biographical Note

Paul Studenski was born November 13, 1887 and raised in Saint Petersburg, Russia. Possessed of great intellectual talent, Studenski studied law at the University of Saint Petersburg, Russia, from which he graduated in 1908. He then attended the Sorbonne in Paris for a year, where he became a medical student. Paris was then a particularly exciting place for a young man of energy and curiosity and after Louis Blériot flew the English Channel in 1909, Studenski's plans for the immediate future dramatically changed. He soon suspended his academic coursework and spent his entire inheritance in learning to fly.

Studenski enrolled at L'École Blériot in Étampes, France. He first soloed on November 8, 1910 and received the 292nd license from L'Aéro Club de France. After flying the experimental monoplane Gremaud at Pau throughout the winter of 1910-1911, he immigrated to the United States, where he showed himself to be an extremely versatile pilot, skilled with vastly dissimilar types of aircraft. After a stint of barnstorming, he accepted employment with the National Aeroplane Company, operating out of Galveston, Texas and Cicero, Illinois. For National, he served as instructor, test pilot and exhibition pilot. On March 17, 1912, he carried the first authorized mail in Texas, indeed the first air mail carrying flights in the South. In 1913, Studenski signed on with the Silver Lake Aviation Company, operating near Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio.

Later that year, Studenski acceded to his wife Ester's request and retired from aviation. Although his aviation career spanned only four years, these were marked by skill and sound judgement.

Studenski returned to academe, attending New York University between 1915 and 1917. The next year he entered Columbia University, where he received a doctorate in 1921. The following years were spent in a highly regarded career in teaching and government service. He was to serve as Professor of Economics at New York University for many years, from 1927 to 1955. He followed this with a two year tenure as Director of the Albany Graduate Program in Public Administration. Subsequently, Paul Studenski served as Professor Emeritus of Economics at New York University and devoted more of his efforts to consulting work, advising many entities, including municipal commissions, various state and city governments, federal agencies and private organizations. Both President Franklin Roosevelt and New York Governor Thomas Dewey were to thank him for his efforts. Among the many books he authored were *The Income of Nations* and *Financial History of the United States*.

Paul Studenski was the a member of several associations relating to his careers in aviation and economics, including the Early Birds of Aviation, Inc. and the Long Island Early Fliers Club.

This accomplished pilot flew, during four scant years, Curtiss, Nieuport and Farman machines, the Beech-National biplane (at the time the largest airplane in the United States) and several Blériot models, including Earle Ovington's U.S. Air Mail Carrier No. 1. Paul Studenski, a gentle and accomplished man, pioneer aviator and fiscal expert, died November 2, 1961, while browsing in a bookstore.

Scope and Content

The Paul Studenski Collection (accession 1989-0012) contains approximately one cubic foot of material relating to the aviation career of this early pilot.

Arrangement

Container List: Series I: Correspondence; Series II: Aviation career and activities; Series III: Scrapbooks; Series IV: Oversized materials

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Aeronautics
- Aeronautics -- Exhibitions
- Air mail service
- Airplane racing
- Flight training
- Periodicals

Types of Materials:

- Correspondence
- Photographs
- Publications

Names:

- Studenski, Paul, 1887-1961

Container Listing

Series 1: Correspondence

Scope and Content: Having been educated in the law while in Russia, Studenski was mindful of saving all legal documentation concerning his contracts during the years in which he was employed in the field of aviation. These are contained within this series, along with legal motions and statements concerning the lawsuit pursued by Studenski against the Silver Lake Company for breach of contract.

Box 1, Folder 1	Correspondence and Legal Documentation, 1910
Box 1, Folder 2	Correspondence and Legal Documentation, 1911
Box 1, Folder 3	Correspondence and Legal Documentation, 1912
Box 1, Folder 4	Correspondence and Legal Documentation, 1913
Box 1, Folder 5	Correspondence and Legal Documentation, 1914
Box 1, Folder 6	Correspondence, 1915
Box 1, Folder 7	Correspondence between Vera Zorn, Lee David Hamilton and Firm of Winer, Neuburger and Sive, 1971-1975

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Series 2: Aviation Career and Activities

Box 1, Folder 8	Early Birds of Aviation, Inc.
Box 1, Folder 9	Other Aviation Organizations
Box 1, Folder 10	Newspaper Clippings, 1912-1961
Box 1, Folder 11	Photographs
Box 1, Folder 12	Miscellaneous

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Series 3: Scrapbooks

Box 1, Folder 13 [Scrapbook, Volume 2 \(1 of 2\), 1915-1961](#)

Box 1, Folder 14 [Scrapbook, Volume 2 \(2 of 2\), 1915-1961](#)

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Series 4: Oversized Materials

Box OS, Item 1	Scrapbook labeled Reminiscences of a Flier: To My Wife for Whom I Discontinued Flying; Paul Studenski
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Box OS, Item 2	Photograph Mounted on Board labeled Hamilton's Accident
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