



Smithsonian
National Air and Space Museum

Vernon Dorrell Collection

2016

National Air and Space Museum Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	Vernon Dorrell Collection
Identifier:	NASM.2016.0038
Date:	(bulk 1906-1949)
Extent:	4 Cubic feet ((7 boxes))
Creator:	Dorrell, Loma
Language:	English .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Joy Dorrell, Gift, 2016

Preferred Citation

Vernon Dorrell Collection, Accession 2016-0038, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access.

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Biographical / Historical

Vernon Dorrell (1906-1949) completed his flight training in 1924 and entered the aviation business as a commercial pilot for Lincoln Air Lines, working for flying schools including the California School of Aeronautics, and working in aircraft sales and service. In 1929, Dorrell joined Pickwick Airways as an airline captain on its Latin American routes. In 1930, he joined Pan American Airways (PAA) as an airline captain and he was assigned to their Latin American routes in Mexico and Central America. PAA promoted Dorrell to the position of Division Operations Manager in charge of affiliate company operations between Mexico City - Los Angeles, and Mexico City - El Paso. Dorrell resigned from PAA in 1936 and worked for Lockheed and Vega Aircraft companies as a sales representative and as a demonstration pilot for transport aircraft in England, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. Later in 1936 he became employed by Mid-Continent Airlines as Operations Manager, where he remained, except for a leave of absence in

1938 to work with Vega Airplane Company, until ordered to active duty with the Navy in 1942. He served in the Naval Air Transport Command (NATS) throughout the war, first as the Executive Officer of NATS Squadron One, then as Commanding Officer of NATS Squadron Three (where he later was promoted to the rank of Commander) and finally as the Commanding Officer of Air Transport Squadron 13. When he was released from active duty on December 9, 1946, Dorrell began working for Thomas Ryan, Chairman of the Board of Mid-Continent Airlines. Dorrell then established his own firm of aviation consultants and sales representatives, the Aviation Maintenance Corporation. In 1949, Dorrell crashed his Vultee BT-13 Valiant at Thomas Ryan's ranch in New Mexico; at the time of his death he had over 12,000 flight hours.

Scope and Contents

The collection consists of eight scrapbooks documenting Vernon Dorrell's aeronautical career and Check Point, the 1944 Annual Log Book of Air Transport Squadron Three. The scrapbooks document Dorrell's life and aviation career, and are in chronological order starting with photographs of him as a baby and ending with his obituary and condolence telegrams. Special highlights of the scrapbooks include Dorrell's work with Pan American Airways in Latin America and his service with the Naval Air Transport Command (NATS) throughout World War II. The following types of material are included: photographs, both official company and military images as well as snapshots; telegrams, correspondence; tickets; programs; newspaper articles; cards; menus; certificates; licenses; first day covers; newsletters; and Japanese currency.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Aeronautics
Aeronautics, Commercial

Types of Materials:

Scrapbooks

Names:

Mid-Continent Airlines
Naval Air Transport Command
Pan American World Airways, Inc.