



Smithsonian

National Air and Space Museum

Edgar S. Gorrell Collection

Amy Lewellen

2004



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Collection Overview

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| Repository: | National Air and Space Museum Archives |
| Title: | Edgar S. Gorrell Collection |
| Date: | 1893-1943 |
| Identifier: | NASM.XXXX.0057 |
| Creator: | Gorrell, Edgar S. (Edgar Staley), 1891-1945 |
| Extent: | 3.95 Cubic feet (9 boxes) |
| Language: | English . |
| Summary: | This collection contains documents relating mainly to Gorrell's activities as president of the Air Transportation Association of America. The materials include copies of Gorrell's addresses and Congressional testimony, as well as press clippings concerning Gorrell's activities. The collection also includes albums of World War I vintage photographs collected by or presented to Gorrell. |

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

No donor information, gift, unknown, XXXX-0057

Processing Information

Encoded by Tyler Love, 2013; Elizabeth Borja, 2019.

Preferred Citation

Edgar S. Gorrell Collection, Acc. XXXX-0057, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical Note

Colonel Edgar S. Gorrell (1891-1945) was a pilot and an advocate for aviation safety. He graduated from West Point in 1912 and then spent two years as an infantryman in Alaska before transferring to the Signal Corps, where he joined the 1st Aero Squadron, serving under Gen. John J. Pershing in Mexico. On one of his flying missions in

Mexico, Gorrell ran out of gas and was stranded in the desert for several days before being rescued. Upon returning to his unit, he began to criticize the poor equipment US pilots were forced to use, both in terms of actual aircraft components and the signals and communication equipment used on land. In 1917 he was promoted to Captain, and in World War I he became the Chief Engineering Officer for the Air Service, and eventually the Chief of Staff for the Air Service, with the rank of Colonel. After the war, Gorrell remained in Europe representing the US at conferences and peace talks.

In March 1920, he resigned his commission in the Army and joined the automobile business. He served as the vice president of Marmon Motor Car Company until 1925. Then he became vice president, director, and general manager, and later president, of the Stutz Motor Car company of America. In January 1936, Gorrell again switched fields when he was elected the first president of the Air Transport Association of America, shortly after its conception. It was with this organization that he was known for his role in promoting safety in civil aeronautics. He was a strong advocate for the Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938 which provided government control and regulation of civil aeronautics, and he provided testimony before congressional committees several times. Gorrell continued to support civil aeronautics, especially through his role as president of the Air Transport Association of America, until his death, in 1945.

Scope and Contents

The Edgar S. Gorrell Collection is largely comprised of material relating to Gorrell's career as president of the Air Transport Association of America. The material includes his correspondence and speeches, the Congressional hearings and reports for the bills he advocated, and publications and newspaper articles about him and his career. Also in the collection are several photographs and photograph albums from World War I and other miscellaneous material.

Note: The digital images in this finding aid were repurposed from scans made by an outside contractor for a commercial product and may show irregular cropping and orientation in addition to color variations resulting from damage to and deterioration of the original objects.

Arrangement

Arranged into two series:

Series 1: GENERAL. This series contains correspondence, addresses delivered by E.S. Gorrell, and publications and newspaper articles, some written by Gorrell. There are also Congressional hearings and reports, and some miscellaneous material. The documents are arranged in chronological order.

Series 2: PHOTOGRAPHS/ALBUMS. This series contains photographs and photo albums. Many of these are aerial photographs of trenches taken c. 1916 --1918, but there are also many photographs of aerial and land transport equipment.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Aeronautics
- Aeronautics, Commercial -- United States
- Aeronautics, Military
- Periodicals
- World War, 1914-1918

Types of Materials:

Correspondence
Photographs
Publications

Names:

Air Transport Association of America
Gorrell, Edgar S. (Edgar Staley), 1891-1945
United States. Army. American Expeditionary Forces

Container Listing

Series 1: GENERAL, 1893-1943

Box 1

Language: English.

Scope: This series contains correspondence, addresses delivered by Gorrell, and publications and newspaper articles, some written by Gorrell. There are also Congressional hearings and reports, and some miscellaneous material.

Arrangement: The documents are arranged in chronological order.

Box 1, Folder 1 [Correspondence, 1936](#)

Box 1, Folder 2 [Speeches, 1936](#)

Notes: *Current Trends in Air Transportation*, Address delivered at the Conference on Transportation, Cambridge, MA, June 8, 1936

Air Transportation in Foreign Commerce, Address delivered before the National Foreign Trade Convention, Chicago, IL, Nov. 19, 1936 (2 copies)

The Airline Industry Today, Address delivered at the National Aeronautic Association Conference, Chicago, IL, Nov. 30 & Dec. 1, 1936

Box 1, Folder 3 [Speeches, 1937](#)

Notes: Address delivered before the Boston Chamber of Commerce at the Transportation Conference, Boston, MA, Jan. 14, 1937

The Future of Transportation in the United States from the Viewpoint of: Air, Address delivered before the Chamber of Commerce of the United States at their 25th Annual Meeting, Apr. 28, 1937

Standing Upon the Threshold of a Profession, Address delivered at the graduation exercises of Norwich University, Northfield, VT, June 7, 1937 (2 copies)

America's National Policy on Aeronautics, Address delivered at Western Aviation Planning Conference, Sacramento, CA, Sept. 23, 1937 (2 copies)

Aviation, Yesterday and Today, Address delivered at the 8th Annual Mountain State Forest Festival, Elkins, WV, Oct. 9, 1937

Rationalization of Air Transport, Address delivered before the 7th Annual Convention of the National Association of State Aviation Officials, Miami, FL, Dec. 3, 1937 (2 copies)

The Why of S.2 and H.R.7273, Address delivered at the 7th Annual Convention of the National Association of State Aviation Officials, Miami, FL, Dec. 3, 1937 (2 copies)

Box 1, Folder 4 [Speeches, 1938](#)

Notes: *Will History Repeat Itself?*, Address delivered before the First National Aviation Planning Conference during the Annual Convention of the National Aeronautics Assn., Cleveland, OH, Jan. 10, 1938 (2 copies)

The Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938 And The Air Carrier Traffic Man, Address delivered at the Conference of Air Line Traffic Men, July 12, 1938 (2 copies)

The Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938 And Air Carrier Maintenance, Address delivered at the Air Line Engineering and Maintenance Conference, Chicago, IL, Jul. 14, 1938 (2 copies)

The Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938 And The Aircraft Manufacturer, Address delivered at the Air Line Engineering and Maintenance Conference, Chicago, IL, July 15, 1938 (2 copies)

The Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938 And The Private Flier, Address delivered at the Air Line Engineering and Maintenance Conference, Chicago, IL, July 16, 1938 (2 copies)

The Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938 And The Air Line Feeder, Address delivered at the National Airmail Feeder Conference, Kansas City, MO, Oct. 7, 1938 (2 copies)

The Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938 And Democratic Government, Address delivered at the 8th Annual Convention of the National Association of State Aviation Officials, Omaha, NE, Oct. 15, 1938 (2 copies)

Box 1, Folder 5

[Speeches, 1939](#)

Notes: *The Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938 And Self Government in the Industries*, Address delivered at the Annual Convention of the National Aeronautic Association, St. Louis, MO, Jan. 17, 1939 (2 copies)

Shall Air Transport be Stifled?, Address delivered at the National Aviation Forum, Washington, DC, Feb. 21, 1939 (2 copies)

The Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938 And The Postal Service, Address delivered before the Young Men's Business Club, New Orleans, LA, Mar. 8, 1939 (2 copies)

Shall America's Aviation Set the Pace?, Address delivered before the National Petroleum Association, Cleveland, OH, Apr. 14, 1939 (2 copies)

Aeronautical Research and Air Transportation, Address delivered before the students at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, May 4, 1939 (2 copies)

Address delivered at the ceremony of the opening of the Aviation Exhibit in the New York World's Fair, May 20, 1939

Progress Ratified; Lethargy Rejected, Address delivered at the dedication of the Civil Aeronautics Authority's Experimental Station, Indianapolis, IN, May 29, 1939 (2 copies)

The Civil Aeronautics Authority --A Vital Part of Our National Life, Address delivered before the Kiwanis Club of Dallas, Dallas, TX, July 18, 1939

The Civil Aeronautics Authority: A Successful Agency of Government, Address delivered before the Southwest Chamber of Commerce Secretaries' School, Dallas, TX, July 19, 1939 (2 copies)

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| Box 1, Folder 6 | <p>Speeches, 1940</p> <p>Notes: <i>The Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938 And Airport Development</i>, Address delivered at the Annual Convention of the American Road Builders Association, Chicago, IL, Jan. 31, 1940 (2 copies)</p> <p><i>Government and Private Management in Air Transportation</i>, Address delivered at the Engineering and Maintenance Conference, Kansas City, MO, Feb. 5, 1940</p> <p><i>The Measure of America's World War Aeronautical Effort</i>, Lecture delivered under the James Jackson Cabot Professorship of Air Transportation at Norwich University, Northfield, VT, Nov. 26, 1940</p> |
| Box 1, Folder 7 | <p>Congressional Hearings - U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Military Affairs. Aircraft Production, Vol. II. 65th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1918</p> |
| Box 1, Folder 8 | <p>Congressional Hearings - U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Appropriations. First Deficiency Appropriation Bill for 1936. 74th Cong., 2nd Sess. H.R. 12624, 1936</p> |
| Box 2, Folder 1 | <p>Congressional Hearings - U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Commerce. Safety in the Air, Part 3. 75th Cong., 1st Sess., Jan. 13, Feb. 2 and 16, 1937. S. Res. 146, 1937</p> |
| Box 2, Folder 2 | <p>Congressional Hearings - U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce. Aviation. 75th Cong., 1st Sess., Mar. 30, 31, Apr. 1, 2, 6, 7, and 8, 1937. H.R. 5234 and H.R. 4652, 1937</p> |
| Box 2, Folder 3 | <p>Congressional Hearings - U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Interstate Commerce. Regulation of Transportation of Passenger and Property by Aircraft. 75th Cong., 1st Sess., Mar. 8 to Apr. 12, 1937. S. 2 and S. 1760, 1937</p> |
| Box 2, Folder 4 | <p>Congressional Hearings - U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Appropriation. Department of Commerce Appropriation Bill for 1938. 75th Cong., 1st Sess. [Copy 1], 1937</p> |
| Box 2, Folder 5 | <p>Congressional Hearings - U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Appropriation. Department of Commerce Appropriation Bill for 1938. 75th Cong., 1st Sess. [Copy 2], 1937</p> |
| Box 3, Folder 1 | <p>Congressional Hearings - U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce. To Create a Civil Aeronautics Authority. 75th Cong., 3rd Sess., Mar. 10, 11, 22, 23, 24, 25, 29, 30, 31 and Apr. 1, 1938. H.R. 9738, 1938</p> |

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| Box 3, Folder 2 | Congressional Hearings - U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Appropriation. Department of Commerce Appropriation Bill for 1939. 75th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1938 |
| Box 3, Folder 3 | Congressional Hearings - U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce. Omnibus Transportation Bill, (excerpt). 76th Cong., 1st Sess., Mar. 23, 1939. H.R. 2531 and H.R. 4862 (2 copies), 1939 |
| Box 3, Folder 4 | Congressional Hearings - U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Interstate Commerce. Transportation Act of 1939. 76th Cong., 1st Sess., Apr. 3 to 14, 1939. S. 1310, S. 2016, S. 1869, and S. 2009, 1939 |
| Box 3, Folder 5 | Congressional Hearings - U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Appropriations. Agricultural Appropriation Bill for 1940. 76th Cong., 1st Sess., 1939. H.R. 5269, 1939 |
| Box 4, Folder 1 | Congressional Hearings - U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Appropriations. Supplemental Military Appropriation Bill for 1940. 76th Cong., 1st Sess., 1939 |
| Box 4, Folder 2 | Congressional Reports - U.S. Congress. Senate. Report of the Committee on Military Affairs on Aircraft Production in the United States. 65th Cong., 2nd Sess., Aug. 22, 1918. No. 555, 1918 August 22 |
| Box 4, Folder 3 | Congressional Reports - Report of the President's Aircraft Board, 1925 November 30 |
| Box 4, Folder 4 | <p>Congressional Reports, 1936-1937</p> <p>Notes: U.S. Congress. Senate. <i>Preliminary report of the Committee on Commerce on Safety in the Air</i>. 74th Cong., 2nd Sess., Jun. 15, 1936. No. 2455 (2 copies)</p> <p>U.S. Congress. Senate. <i>Report of the Committee on Commerce on Safety in the Air</i>. 75th Cong., 1st Sess., Mar. 17, 1937. No. 185 (2 copies)</p> |
| Box 4, Folder 5 | <p>Congressional Reports, 1938</p> <p>Notes: U.S. Congress. <i>Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938</i>. 75th Cong., 3rd Sess. S. 3845</p> <p>U.S. Congress. House. <i>Report of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce on the Civil Aeronautics Bill</i>, part 1. 75th Cong., 3rd Sess., Apr. 28, 1938. No. 2254 (2 copies)</p> <p>U.S. Congress. House. <i>Report of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce on the Civil Aeronautics Bill</i>, part 2. 75th Cong., 3rd Sess., May 5, 1938. No. 2254, Part 2</p> <p>U.S. Congress. Senate. <i>Congressional Records</i>. 75th Cong., 3rd Sess., May 7, 1938. No. 94</p> <p>U.S. Congress. Senate. <i>Congressional Records</i>. 75th Cong., 3rd Sess., May 9, 1938. No. 95</p> |

U.S. Congress. *Congressional Records --Appendix*, (missing pages).
Feb. 13, 1938

U.S. Congress. Senate. *Congressional Records*, (missing pages).
Aug. 18, 193

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| Box 4, Folder 6 | Congressional Reports - U.S. Congress. Congressional Questions No. 130, 1939 June 29 |
| Box 4, Folder 7 | Congressional Reports - U.S. Congress. House. Report of the Committee to Investigate Air Accidents. 78th Cong., 1st Sess., Jan. 7, 1943. H. Res. 125 and 403, 1943 January 7 |
| Box 4, Folder 8 | Bills/Laws - U.S. Congress. Senate. First Bill Introduced for an Appropriation for Aeronautics. 53rd Cong., 2nd Sess., Dec. 20, 1893. S. 1344, 1893 December 20 |
| Box 4, Folder 9 | Bills/Laws - Criticisms and Suggestions for the Proposed Law of Airflight, 1937 September 3 |
| Box 4, Folder 10 | Bills/Laws - U.S. Congress. House. Civil Aeronautics Authority Bill. 75th Cong., 3rd Sess. H.R. 9738 [Report No. 2254], 1938 March 4 and 1938 April 28 |
| Box 4, Folder 11 | Publications, articles by E.S. Gorrell, 1932-1939 |
| Box 4, Folder 12 | Testimonies and Statements, E.S. Gorrell, 1936-1939 |
| Box 4, Folder 13 | What! No Airplanes, E.S. Gorrell, undated |
| Box 5, Folder 1 | Weather Bureau "Gaps" and Inadequacies In Our System of Federal Airways, E.S. Gorrell. Preprinted from The Journal of Air Law and Commerce (2 copies), April 1939 |
| Box 5, Folder 2 | Newspaper Articles, 1936-1939 |
| Box 5, Folder 3 | Kelly, Clyde. United States Postal Policy. D. Appleton and Co.: New York, 1931 |
| Box 5, Folder 4 | Miscellaneous, 1939 Notes: National Aviation Forum invitation, Feb. 20-21, 1939 Tintype, subject unknown Postcards of London and New Brunswick Government Evacuation Scheme pamphlet Building and Grounds map of West Point, NY |
| Box 5, Folder 5 | Miscellaneous Newspaper Articles, , undated, undated |
| Box 9, Folder 2 | Fortune Magazine [Oversize], April 1937 |
| Box 9, Folder 5 | Magazine and Newspaper Articles [Oversize], May 1939 - June 1939 |

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| | Notes: | Newspaper Articles on the Inauguration of Transatlantic Air Service: <i>The Moncton Daily Times</i> , 1939 June 26; <i>The Irish Press</i> , 1939 June 29; <i>The Irish Times</i> , 1939 June 29 |
| Box 9, Folder 6 | | The Times War Atlas Gazeteer, undated |
| Box 189 (Shared) | | First Day Covers |

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Series 2: PHOTOGRAPHS/ALBUMS, circa 1916 - circa 1919

Box 5-9

Scope and Contents: This series contains photographs and photo albums. Many of these are aerial photographs of trenches taken c. 1916 --1918, but there are also many photographs of aerial and land transport equipment.

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| Box 5, Folder 6 | Photographs - Photos of Nieuport airplane at Washington D.C. Navy Yard, undated |
| Box 5, Folder 7 | Photographs - Photos of Transport Park at Bourg and French farmland in Cote d'Or, circa 1919 |
| Box 5, Folder 8 | Photographs - Photos of truck and aircraft dump from War Department, St. Cyr, France, late 1918 |
| Box 5, Folder 9 | Photographs - Aerial Photos of trenches, 1917-1918 |
| Box 5, Folder 10 | Envelopes Addressed [Empty], 1930s |
| Box 6 | Albums - Photos of Signal Corps depicting aircraft engines, lifejackets, parachutes, trucks, pilots, tool chest, wireless, etc, undated |
| Box 7 | Albums - Signal Corps Aviation School, North Island, California, 1914-1915 |
| Box 8 | Albums - [Aerial Photography], Photographic Section, Air Service, American Expeditionary Forces (AEF), 1918-1919 |
| Box 9, Folder 1 | Album - Aerial Photographs with Interpretations: Taking - of - Cantigny by the 28th Inf. Regiment 1st Div. U.S. Army May 28, 1918, U.S. Air Service. [American Expeditionary Forces] A.E.F. Photographic Section, 1918 May 28 |
| Box 9, Folder 3 | Album - Aerial Photographs Chateau-Thierry Sector with Ground Photographs and Interpretations, Sector Held by 1st Corps, U.S. Army, July 1918, Prepared by Photographic Section, Issued by Information Section U.S. Air Service--American E.F. [American Expeditionary Forces], July 1918 |
| Box 9, Folder 4 | Oversize Photograph - [Fortifications, possibly France], circa 1918 |

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