



All American Engineering Company records 1541

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Summary Information

Repository:	Manuscripts and Archives
Creator:	All American Engineering Company
Title:	All American Engineering Company records
ID:	1541
Date [inclusive]:	1937-1975
Physical Description:	10 Linear Feet
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	The engineering and research unit of All American Aviation, once the principal feeder airline for the mid-Atlantic region, became the All American Engineering Company in 1953. Their records document the early evolution of All American Aviation, the development of its system of air pick-up service, and its use in postal and military applications.

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Historical Note

Incorporated in Delaware on March 5, 1937, All American Aviation, Inc. began as an experimental airmail pick-up company. It was renamed All American Airways, Inc., on September 20, 1948, in response to its evolution into a conventional airline. On January 2, 1953, it spun off its engineering and research units and became Allegheny Airlines, Inc., which was later renamed USAir, Inc., on October 28, 1979. The engineering and research unit was renamed and incorporated as All American Engineering Company on October 31, 1952. It was renamed All American Industries on June 11, 1970 and merged into International Controls Corp. on May 7, 1982.

All American Aviation was originally incorporated by Dr. Lytle S. Adams (1883-1970), who had been experimenting with aerial pick-up devices since the 1920s and was the sole owner of Tri-State Aviation Corporation of Morgantown, West Virginia. The company remained inactive until September 1938, when Ricard C. du Pont (1911-1943) bought \$85,000 in stock and became president. Lytle became vice president and Charles W. Wendt (1904-1990), secretary-treasurer. The other directors were Arthur P. Davis (1895-1968) and A. Felix du Pont, Jr (1905-1996).

All American Aviation began service with an experimental airmail pick-up contract in 1939. The service was made permanent in 1940, serving 86 cities on five routes, primarily in Pennsylvania and West

Virginia. The company developed an improved pick-up system that owed little to Adams, who withdrew from the firm after a bitter dispute.

The company thrived during World War II by developing military applications for its technology, particularly a "man harness" for snatching people aloft like airmail sacks. The system was tried for air rescue missions and for dropping and retrieving intelligence officers behind enemy lines. The company also became involved in the military glider program. Richard du Pont left to head the Army's glider program in 1943 and was killed in a glider accident a few months later.

Support for the airmail pick-up system declined after World War II, in the face of high costs, lower airmail volume and better rural delivery by road. However, the company continued to push its system by proposing to combine it with passenger service, something the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) had consistently opposed. In 1948 the company was designated the principal feeder airline for the mid-Atlantic region. In the 1970s the firm evolved into USAir, a major trunk airline. In 1997 USAir changed its name to US Airways and in 2013 merged with American Airlines.

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Scope and Content

The records describe the early evolution of All American Aviation, the development of its system of air pick-up service, and its use in postal and military applications.

The administrative records cover All American Airways up until the 1953 reorganization and All American Engineering thereafter. They include minutes, organization papers, contracts, financial statements, prospectuses, reports, newsclippings and a route map. They include small amounts from the presidential files of Richard du Pont of All American Aviation and Charles Wendt of All American Engineering. The legal files include copies of CAB and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) decisions, and documents from patent litigation.

The production and contract files include handbooks, test reports and progress reports on contracts, including one for air-sea rescue winches for the Navy. There are also runs of internal company publications. A separate series documents the role of Senator Jennings Randolph of West Virginia as an early sponsor and advocate of the airmail pick-up system. It includes the text of a 40-year review of government relations with the airline industry, delivered in 1975.

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Arrangement

Series I. Administrative records; Series II. Legal files; Series III. Production and contract files; Series IV. Company publications; Series V. Senator Jennings Randolph's files on air pick-up service (photocopies)

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Related Materials

Separated Material

All American Engineering Company photographs (Accession 1976.410), Audiovisual Collections and Digital Initiatives Department, Hagley Museum & Library

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Controlled Access Headings

- Aeronautics
- Air mail service
- Airlines

- Financial statements
- Airplanes
- Aeronautical engineers
- Aeronautics -- Law and legislation
- Patents
- Adams, Lytle S. (Lytle Schuyler), 1883-1970
- All American Aviation (Firm)
- All American Airways, Inc
- United States. Civil Aeronautics Board
- USAir (Firm)
- Wendt, Charles W., 1904-1990
- Du Pont, A. Felix (Alexis Felix), 1905-1996
- Tri-state Aviation Corporation
- Randolph, Jennings, 1902-1998
- Davis, Arthur P. (Arthur Pattison), 1895-1968
- Du Pont, Richard C. (Richard Chichester), 1911-1943
- Allegheny Airlines