

Harold R. Harris Papers

MS – 214

Wright State University
Department of Special Collections and Archives

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Introduction

The papers of Harold R. Harris were accessioned into the Wright State University Department of Archives and Special Collections on April 9, 1990. They were donated by the U.S. Air Force Museum.

The papers in this collection date from 1917 to 1988 and fill 19 Hollinger boxes and 168 file folders. The collection is arranged into 8 series as follows:

- Series 1: Correspondence
- Series 2: Pan American Airlines Material
- Series 3: American Overseas Airlines Material
- Series 4: North West Airlines Material
- Series 5: Logbooks
- Series 6: Speeches
- Series 7: Photographs and Awards
- Series 8: Miscellaneous

There are no restrictions on the use of this collection.

Brief Biographical Sketch

Brigadier General Harold R. Harris was born in 1897 in Chicago, Illinois. He moved to Los Angeles, California early in his life. Harris graduated from Manual Arts High School in Los Angeles and the California Institute of Technology, where he played three years of varsity football.

Harold began his flying career during World War I when in 1917 he attended the School of Military Aeronautics in Berkeley, California. He was then sent overseas with a group of American pilots to Foggia, Italy, for Caproni Bomber Operations.

After World War I, from 1918 to 1925 Harris served as Test Pilot Chief of Flight Test Research for the Army Air Corps at McCook Field. He played an active role in setting up and operating the first lighted airway, an 80-mile stretch of land between Columbus and Dayton, Ohio. In 1922, while a test pilot at McCook Field, Harris, then a Lieutenant, became the first pilot in this country to resort to a parachute in an emergency when he bailed out of his disintegrating experimental pursuit plane near Dayton, Ohio. Also during this time, Harris competed in many Aviation meets, and in 1926 held thirteen world flying records.

After leaving the Army Air Corps, Harris helped establish Huff Daland Dusters. In 1928 he helped to found Peruvian Airlines, which later became Pan American-Grace Airlines (PANAGRA), and held the positions of Vice President and General Manager. Between 1929 and 1942, when Peruvian Airlines became Pan American-Grace Airlines, Harris held the positions of Vice-President and Chief Operations Officer.

In 1942, Harris accepted a commission as Colonel in the Army Air Transport Command, resigning his position with Pan American-Grace Airlines to do so. During World War II, Harris served as Assistant Chief of Staff, Plans; Assistant Chief of Staff, Operations; Commanding Officer of Domestic Transportation Division; and was Chief of Staff of the Air Transport Command, with the rank of Brigadier General when he left the service in 1945 to join American Overseas Airlines.

Harris was Vice President and General Manager for American Overseas Airlines until 1948(?) when the airline was incorporated into Pan American Airlines. Once again working for Pan American Airlines, Harris became Vice President in charge of the Atlantic Division. He remained with Pan American Airlines until 1954(?) when he resigned his position to become President of North West Airlines. Harris was President of North West Airlines until he resigned in 1955 due to irreconcilable differences between himself and the North West Airlines Board of Directors.

Decorations which Harris has received are the Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, and the Air Medal (U.S.); Commander British Empire (Great Britain); Corona di Italia, Fatiche de Guerra (Italy); Abdon Calderon (Ecuador); and Orden del Sol (Peru).

After retiring Harris began work on a book of the early days of PANAGRA (Pan American-Grace Airways), however it was never finished and remains unpublished. Harold R. Harris died in 1989 at the age of 92.

Scope and Content

Series I: Correspondence is divided into two parts: business correspondence and private correspondence. The business correspondence consists of letters concerning Pan American Airlines, of which Harris was a vice-president and chief operating officer. These letters are correspondence to and from Harris and another Pan American vice-president John D. MacGregor. The business correspondence also consists of letters from Harris to the Pan American board of directors, and correspondence Harris wrote while on business trips for Pan American Airlines. The correspondence covers such topics as flight schedules, business trips, pilot personnel, Pan American's competition, airplanes, and various other topics. This correspondence is arranged chronologically and spans the years 1929-1939.

The second part of this series is Harris' private correspondence. This correspondence is mainly letters to and from his old colleagues and friends. Much of this private correspondence deals with the early years of Pan American-Grace Airlines (PANAGRA), in Harris' attempt to gather information and documents for his book on PANAGRA. This section is arranged in alphabetical order and each correspondent is given its own file folder. Span Dates for this entire series are 1929-1988.

Series II: Pan American Airlines contains Harris' travel diaries, report, correspondence, newsletters, newspaper clippings, articles, a pre-trial brief, and statement of evidence (concerning anti-trust laws), and Harris' unpublished book about PANAGRA. Some of the more interesting materials are the Pan American Clipper newsletters, PANAGRA history, and the unpublished book about PANAGRA. Span dates for this series are 1929-1952.

Series III: American Overseas Airlines contains articles, correspondence, and reports. One of the most interesting parts of this series is the correspondence concerning the last days of American Overseas Airlines. This series spans the years 1946-1950.

Series IV: North West Airlines contains Presidential Reports, Supplementary Reports, Operating Statement and Financial Reports, Board of Directors minutes, correspondence, and miscellaneous papers and reports. Some of the more interesting materials in this series are the letters and papers concerning Harris' resignation from North West Airlines, and a letter Harris received from President Dwight D. Eisenhower, and a letter to the President of Korea, Dr. Rhee, from Harris. Span dates for this series are 1952-1954.

Series V: Personal Logs contains Harris' personal logs from 1931-1937 (odd years only) and from 1948-1954 (even years only). These logs tell where Harris went, who he met, how he traveled, and what he did. This series also contains a diary for the year 1979.

Series VI: Speeches contains miscellaneous speeches given by Harris. They deal mainly with aviation and Harris' own personal experiences. This series also contains "Tail Daggers and Props," which is recollections from Harris' log books from 1917-1925. "Tail Daggers and Props" highlight old records and plans, flight test personnel, and the rebuttal of false claims. Span dates for this series are 1917-1982.

Series VII: Photographs and Awards contains photographs that are arranged into several categories, including portraits, World War I, World War II, Huff Daland Dusters, Airplanes, and award ceremonies. There are three photo albums in this series. The first contains pictures from Harris' trip to South America in the 1920's, the second pictures are from World War II, and the third pictures are from Pan American Airlines. Two of the more interesting items in this series are a film of the Barling Bomber and of PANAGRA in Argentina and a Citation from King George VI of England to Harris. There is also a file in the oversized drawers that has World War II photographs along with various other photographs. These photographs span the years 1917 to 1988. The contents of boxes 14 and 15 include awards and medals that Harold R. Harris received during his lifetime.

Series VIII: Miscellaneous contains various files concerning aviation records and meets, Harris' emergency parachute jump, Huff Daland Dusters, World War II material, various newspaper clippings, articles, and miscellaneous aviation material. There is also the U.S. Air Force Museum Friends Bulletin in which Harris has a continuing article. However, the file is missing the third installment of the Bulletin. This series also contains Harris' Passport from the 1920s and a map of Europe that is marked with an unknown route. Several "Grace Logs" and a "Peruvian Times" are located in this series.

Container Listing

Series I: Correspondence

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
		Business Correspondence	
1	1	To Harris from MacGregor	Apr. 1929-Oct. 1929
	2	To Harris from MacGregor	Oct. 1929-Apr. 1930
	3	To Harris from MacGregor	Aug. 1930-Jan. 1931
	4	To Harris from MacGregor	June 1931-July 1937
	5	To Harris from MacGregor	Jan. 1938-Jan. 1939
	6	To MacGregor from Harris	Feb. 1930-July 1937
	7	To MacGregor from Harris	Jan. 1938-Dec. 1938
2	1	To Harris from MacGregor	January 1939
	2	Letters to Directors from Harris	Dec. 1938-Jan. 1939
	3	Harris Trip Letters	Aug. 1939-Dec. 1939
	4	Harris Trip Letters	Aug. 1937, Aug. 1938- Oct. 1939
		Private Correspondence	
2	5	Mabry I. Anderson	1987
	6	Mary Alice Beatty	1988
	7	Rose Benas	1988
	8	William Brenimen	1984-1985
	9	Mrs. Ellis O. Briggs	1988
	10	John S. Brumbaugh	1982, 1986
	11	Doug Campbell	1983-1987
	12	W.B. Chamberlain	1982-1986
	13	Cy Collins	1986-1988
	14	Ramon DeMurias	1987
	15	Loyal Domining	1986-1988
	16	Lt. Delos C. Emmons	1917
	17	Thomas Grimm, Jr.	1985, 1987
3	1	Frank Havelick	1985-1986
	2	Frank Havelick	1981, 1986-1988
	3	Capt. E.B. Hummel	1986-1987
	4	Thomas Jardine	1981-82, 1984-86
	5	T.J. Kirkland	1985-1987
	6	W.A. Krusen	1985, 1987-88
	7	Jerome Lederer	1985-1986
	8	John B. Ottiker	1988
	9	Earle Remington	1917
	10	Calvin Rouse	
	11	Dr. J.A.B. Scherer	1917
	12	Chuck Schultz	1986-1988

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
3	13	J.T. Shannon	1984-1986
	14	Warren Smith	
	15	Fred Sterling	1983
	16	Col. R. Uppstrom	1988
	17	Carlos Velarde C.	1987-1988
	18	Miscellaneous Correspondence	1936, 1950, 1952

Series II: Pan American Airlines

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
4	1	Travel Diaries	1930-1941
	2	Reports and Correspondence	
	3	Harris Final Pan American Report	
	4	Miscellaneous Correspondence and Newsletters	1935, 1950, 1951
	5	Newspaper Clippings from India Trip	1952
	6	Newspaper Clippings	1938-1944
	7	PANAGRA Correspondence	1929-1936
	8	PANAGRA Articles	1932, 1940-41, 1946-48
	9	PANAGRA History	1926-1964
	10	PANAGRA Miscellaneous	Span dates: 1937-1984
	11	Transcriptions of Taped Interviews	1981
	12	Accident Reports and Statistical Data	1928-1967, 1981
	13	Photographs and Maps of PANAGRA	
5	1	Report on Importance of PANAGRA to National Defense of Ecuador or Peru (?)	
	2	Pan American Pre-Trial Brief	
	3	Pan American Statement of Evidence	
		PANAGRA Book (unpublished)	
6	1	Chapter One: How PANAGRA started	
	2	Chapter Two: Flight Personnel	
	3	Chapter Three: Aircraft PANAGRA Used 1928-1967	
	4	Chapter Four: Communications	
	5	Chapter Five: Mining Assets	
	6	Chapter Six: Elimination of European Airlines in South America During World War II	
	7	Chapter Seven: Mrs. Wrights Roller-skates	
	8	Chapter Eight: Schedules-Tariff Mileage	
	9	Chapter Nine: Maps	
	10	Chapter Ten: Thumbnail Sketch of History	
	11	Chapter Eleven: Dollars Earned	
	12	Chapter Twelve: Campbell Takes Over	

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
6	13	Miscellaneous Material Not Used in the Book	
	14	Extra Photographs for Book	

Series III: American Overseas Airlines

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
7	1	Annual Activity Report	1947
	2	Operations Department Summary	Oct. 1945-Aug. 1950
	3	Articles and Correspondence	1950
		Stock Report	1946

Series IV: North West Airlines

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
8	1	Equipment Recommendations to the N.W.A. Executive Committee	January 1953
	2	Presidential Report	February 1953
	3	Presidential Report	March 1953
	4	Presidential Report	April 1953
	5	Presidential Report	May 1953
	6	Presidential Report	June 1953
	7	Presidential Report	July 1953
	8	Presidential Report	August 1953
	9	Presidential Report	September 1953
	10	Presidential Report	October 1953
	11	Presidential Report	November 1953
	12	Supplementary Report	November 1953
	13	Special Report	December 1953
9	1	Operating Statement and Financial Report	1952
	2	Operating Statement and Financial Report	January 1953
	3	Operating Statement and Financial Report	February 1953
	4	Operating Statement and Financial Report	March 1953
	5	Operating Statement and Financial Report	April 1953
	6	Operating Statement and Financial Report	May 1953
	7	Operating Statement and Financial Report	June 1953
	8	Budget Plan 6 Months ending	June 30, 1953
	9	Operating Statement and Financial Report	July 1953
	10	Operating Statement and Financial Report	August 1953
	11	Operating Statement and Financial Report	September 1953
	12	Operating Statement and Financial Report	October 1953
	13	Operating Statement and Financial Report	November 1953

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
9	14	Executive Committee Working Papers	March 1953
	15	Miscellaneous Reports	
	16	“Aircraft in N.W.A. History”	
	17	Capital Assets Budget	1954
	18	Special Report	January 1954
	19	Special Report For Year 1953	January 1954
	20	Presidents Report	January 1954
	21	Special Report	January 1954
	22	Operating Statement and Financial Report	January 1954
	23	Memos to Board of Directors	
10	1	Board of Directors Minutes, Correspondence, Reports	
	2	Correspondence, N.W.A. Stock Information	
	3	Correspondence, Press Releases, Miscellaneous Papers	
	4	N.W.A. Miscellaneous	

Series V: Personal Logs

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
11	1	Personal Log	1931
	2	Personal Log	1933
	3	Personal Log	1935
	4	Personal Log	1937
	5	Personal Log	1948
	6	Personal Log	1950
	7	Personal Log	1953
	8	Personal Log	1954
	9	Diary	1979

Series VI: Speeches

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
11	10	“Financing Airlines in the Jet Age”	1961
	11	-Introductory remarks by Robert H. Stepnek, President, Connecticut Aeronautical Historical Association	Oct. 1974
		-“Sixty Years of Aviation History, One Man’s Remembrance”	Oct. 1974
		-“Some Random Recollections of Military Flight Testing in Dayton, 60 and More Years ago”	Oct. 1974 and Nov. 1981
		-“Early Days of Flight Testing un the U.S.: 1918-1925”	May 1982
		-“First American Piloted Airplane to Cross the Alps, Milan, Italy, to Lyon, France” by George M.D. Lewis	July 1984
		-Speech given at Aviation Trail Inc. Awards Dinner	April 1987

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
11	12	-Extracts from the speech given at the Society of Experimental Test Pilots 24 th Annual Banquet	Sept. 1980
		-“A Few Recollections of the Early Airmail Days in the Development of United States Airmail, Given to Dayton Stamp Club	Oct. 1979
		-Talk given at Thurman Bane Hall Dedication	Nov. 1982
		-Background not on incidents leading up to formation and operation of Pan American-Grace Airways	1940
		-“The Value of the Parachute”	1922
		-Talk before Aviation/Space Writers Association	Nov. 1964
13		-Speech given to the Adventurers Club of New York	Dec. 1960
		-1960 Interview	1960
		-Remarks given to Association of Local Transport Airlines Financial Panel	1961
		-Notes for Morrow Committee	
14		-“What Will Jet Air Transport Mean to Circumnavigators and to the World?”	Jan. 1950
		-Address given to Aviation Writers Association	Oct. 1951
		-“Mobilized Air Transport and the National Defense” given to the Philadelphia Chapter of National Defense Transportation Association	Sept. 1952
		-Midway Club Talk	Jan. 1953
		-“Commercial Airlines Future in Minnesota”	Feb. 1953
		-“Development of Commercial Aviation in Minnesota”	April 1953
		-Address to Harvard Business School Club of Milwaukee	May 1953
		-Basic Material for Harris’ addresses before the:	
		=Portland Chamber of Commerce	1953
		=Spokane Chamber of Commerce	1953
		=Yakima Chamber of Commerce	1953
		=Seattle Chamber of Commerce	1953
		-“Up N Atom, Aviations Impact on the United States”	May 1954
		-“Civil Air Transport in the Next War”	Jan. 1955
		-Notes from talk at Essex Club	May 1956
		-Notes from talk at Kiwanis Club-New Canaan, Connecticut	June 1956
		-Talk to Long Island Early Flyers Club	March 1959
		-Notes used in talk given to Association of Local and Territorial Carriers Meeting	April 1959

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
11	15	-“Daddy of the West Coast”, “Army Pilot, With a Hard Head Made to be Used, Drives a Dream to Realization”, and “The Modern Myth of the Air”	1937
		-Notes on talk given to Travel Agents	April 1940
		-Pan American Airlines Week Address	April 1940
		-Notes on talk given to 41-47 Club	May 1940
		-Notes for Radio Talk	May 1940
15		-Talk at Worlds Fair	August 1940
		-Episode #10 of play “Wings Over America”, by Richard McDonagh	August 1940
		-Talk before University Club	April 1941
		-“Importance of Air Cargo in the War Effort”	December 1942
16		-Tail Daggers and Props	
		-Recollections of Harris’ Log Books	

Series VII: Photographs and Awards

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
12	1a	Award Banquet, unknown	
	1b	Negatives to 1a	
	2	Old Business Cards: Huff Daland Dusters, Peruvian Airways; Postcards	
	3	Harris and his family	
	4	Crop Dusting Photos	
	5	Early Photographs – World War I	
	6	World War II	
	7	North West Airlines	1953
	8	Banquet at Wright Patterson Air Force Base	1986
	9	Meeting at Air Force Museum Dedication of Troy St. into Aviation Trail	Nov. 1981
	10	Reception at Air Force Institute of Technology	Nov. 1982
	11	Reception at Smithsonian Air Museum	January 1980
	12	Award Ceremony	1943
	13	Pictures of Harold Harris	
	14	Pictures of other people	
	15	Miscellaneous pictures of receptions, dinners, reunions, and conferences	
	16	Pictures of Airplanes	
	17	American Overseas Airlines	
	18	Miscellaneous Pan American Airlines pictures	
13	1	Pan American Airlines Directors Europe	1951
	2	Miscellaneous North West Airlines picture	
	3	Harding Committees	1955
	4	Loening Crash and Harris’ Parachute jump	

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
13	5	Civil Aviation Photographs, with index	
	6	Continuation of Civil Aviation Photographs	
	7	NASA Photographs	
	8	Pictures from "Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines"	
	9	Copies of the Patents for the Wrights Flying Machine, John Bell's Flying Machine, and others	
	10	Duplicate Photographs	
	11	First letter to Fly by Air Mail around the World	
14	1	Group Picture of Foggia pilots at a reunion	
	2	AIAA Award	
	3	Thank you letter to Harris from the city of Berlin	
	4	First cable gram sent from an airplane in flight	
	5	Citation from King George VI of England to Harris making him an honorary member of the Order of the British Empire Film: 1) 1923 Barling Bomber; 2) PANAGRA, etc., Argentina, 1930-1931	
15	1	Medal: Distinguished Service Award, Republic of Peru	n.d.
	2	Medals: Republic of Italy	n.d.
	3	American Overseas Airlines Picture Book (book one)	1950
	4	American Overseas Airlines Picture Book (book two)	1959
	5	American Overseas Airlines Berlin Picture Book	
	6	American Overseas Airlines Stockholm Picture book	
16	1	Photo Album: Harris in World War II, Mid-East	
17	1	Photo Album: Pan American Airlines Directors Inspection Flight of Mid-East	Feb. 1952
18	1	Photo Album: Harris: Harris in South America	1926-1927
Oversized		Loc. 10, Folder 5 – Miscellaneous photos from World War II (Harris and his staff), Pan American Airlines, and American Overseas Airlines	

Series VIII: Miscellaneous

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
19	1	Aviation Records and Meets	1910-1950
	2	Emergency Parachute Jump Material	1922-1990
	3	Huff Daland Dusters	1925-1972
	4	Miscellaneous World War II Material	1942-1945

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
19	5	Newspaper Clippings	1927-1954
	6	Miscellaneous Aviation Material	
	7	U.S. Air Force Museum "Friends Bulletin"	1986-1987
	8	"The Grace Log" and "Peruvian Times"	1929-1932; 1968
	9	Map of Europe	
10		"Pioneering in Aeronautics: Recipients of the Daniel Guggenheim Medal" book	n.d.
11		Harold R. Harris Biographical Information	