

MS-82: Garnet C. Brown Papers

Collection Number: MS-82

Title: Garnet C. Brown Papers

Dates: 1890-1976

Creator: Brown, Garnet C., 1881-1976

Summary/Abstract: Brown, a native of Springfield, Ohio, was a local engineer and designer who helped pioneer several inventions in the aviation and automobile industries. His papers consist of engineering notebooks, personal and business correspondence, blueprints, photographs, original stories and poems, clippings, and a collection of printed materials reflecting his various interests and hobbies.

Quantity/Physical Description: 4.5 linear feet

Language(s): English

Repository:

Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, OH 45435-0001, (937) 775-2092.

Restrictions on Access: There are no restrictions on accessing material in this collection.

Restrictions on Use:

Copyright restrictions may apply. Unpublished manuscripts are protected by copyright. Permission to publish, quote, or reproduce must be secured from the repository and the copyright holder.

Preferred Citation:

[Description of item, Date, Box #, Folder #], MS-82, Garnet C. Brown Papers, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio.

Acquisition: The Garnet C. Brown Papers were given to Wright State University Archives in April of 1979 by his wife, Mrs. Doris Brown.

Separated Material: Two books were separated from the collection and placed in the reading room:

- *The Birth of an Industry* by Howard Mingos, New York City, 1930.
(Call number TL 521 .M5)
- *A History of the United States Air Force* by Alfred Goldberg, New York. Arro Press, 1974.
(Call number UG 633 .G6 1974)

In addition, one *New York Herald* newspaper dated April 15, 1865 on Lincoln's assassination, was separated to oversize drawer Loc. 111, Folder 9, Item 11.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements:

The lantern slides used by G. Brown in his Kansas City Meeting speech must be handled with great care. Several are cracked.

Processing Information:

The researcher should be aware of the following before using the collection:

Most of the rough drafts for the handwritten stories do not have page numbers. Thus, the researcher will have some difficulty in reading and following the continuity of the stories. The processor has left the unnumbered pages in their original order when donated.

Correspondence has been separated into two parts, general and with his work in the Heli-Coil Corporation. The reasoning behind this is that the Heli-Coil Corporation correspondence contains many interoffice communications and letters to consumers. This adds cohesiveness to G. Brown's years of employment by this corporation.

Revisions: Finding aid revised according to DACS, 2017 September.

Processed by: Susan E. Smith, 1979 May 22

Arrangement:

The collection is arranged into 9 series:

SERIES I: Personal Correspondence, 1912-1976

SERIES II: Garnet C. Brown, 1912-1976

SERIES III: Work of Garnet Brown: Dow Chemical Company & Heli-Coil Corporation, 1939-1975

SERIES IV: Articles, Stories, Verses, 1910-1969, undated

SERIES V: Miniature Cannons, 1950-1976

SERIES VI: Notebooks and Address Books, undated

SERIES VII: Hobbies and Interests of Garnet Brown, circa 1920-1976

SERIES VIII: Photographs, 1890-1971

SERIES IX: Glass-Plate Negatives and Lantern Slides, circa 1900, 1903

Biographical Note:

Garnet C. Brown was an inventor-designer. He helped pioneer both the aviation and the automobile industries. He was credited as the inventor of the Army's first electric bomb rack and designed the trigger motor for synchronized firing through propeller blades. His vocation was that of an engineer.

Born in Springfield, Ohio on December 21, 1881, he had one brother, Horace; two sisters, Ione and Dwina. His father's forebears were of Scotch descent, and his mother's were English. The Browns chose to settle in Springfield because it was a center for farm machinery where both his father and

grandfather were building reapers. For a short time Mr. Brown's family lived in Miamisburg. About 1884, his family moved to Dayton where he attended the city schools. As a 16-year old he attended classes each morning, then worked in a machine shop. The four years spent in the shop gave him the fundamentals of mechanical operations as a basis for an engineering career. He graduated from Steele High School in Dayton. Mr. Brown did not attend college.

At age twenty, Garnet was employed by the Dayton Electrical Manufacturing Company whose foreman was Charles Taylor, the Wright Brothers' mechanic.

In 1903 Garnet found employment in Toledo at the Pope Motor Car Company. From 1906-1909 he was the Service Manager (floor man) for the Imperial Motor Co. in Buffalo, N.Y. In 1912 he joined the Buffalo Electric Motor Carriage Company, where he designed electric motor cars.

Shortly after WW I began in Europe, Mr. Brown joined the Research Engineering Department of Packard in Detroit, Mich. He was with the Packard Motor Car Company from November 1914 to April 1917, working as a layout draftsman and gaining experience on some of the earliest aircraft engines. Here he helped to develop the Twin-Six and developed the carburetor for Ralph DePalma's winning car at the 1915 Indianapolis 500.

Beginning in April, 1917, Mr. Brown spent ten months with the Willys-Overland Company, working on design and layout of aircraft engines.

In January 1918, Garnet began working at McCook Field (North Dayton), in the Engineering Department. He helped design airplane engines and armaments, later became group leader, and invented the electric bomb rack.

Two years after the war ended, Mr. Brown became the sales engineer for the L.H. Gilmer Co. of Philadelphia; a manufacturer of automobile parts.

In 1921, Mr. Brown invented the bomb release that Billy Mitchell used to sink warships during the first demonstrations of air power against ships.

From 1928 until 1936, Garnet Brown was the sales engineer for Bohn Aluminum and Brass Corp. of Detroit. His work was mostly with aircraft. He handled such products as engine bearings, cylinder heads, and other aluminum engine castings. Plus he worked with bronze and brass forgings for engine parts.

For a short period in 1937, he worked for Rov-Day Piston Co. of Detroit, making high quality aircraft aluminum castings. Following this he was employed by the Dow Chemical Co. at Midland, Michigan where he worked on such diverse developments as aircraft wheels and a pump for pumping concrete down oil wells. For two years he was in charge of pattern engineering, designing and standardizing pattern equipment for large volume production of aircraft castings.

In 1942 he married Doris Louisa Dehmel, his second wife, the first Mrs. Brown died in 1934.

Mr. Brown's final employment was as sales engineer for Heli-Coil Corp. for the Detroit area during WW II. Here his work centered around screw thread problems in equipment. Mr. Brown installed and repaired screw threads for Rolls Royce, Packard and many other corporations.

Mr. Brown loved to memorize and compose poetry, and competed in rifle matches. Among his treasures was a Brown Bess musket, used by Cornwallis' men at the 1781 surrender of Yorktown. At the start of the Civil War this gun was issued to his grandfather.

Mr. Garnet C. Brown died April, 1976 and is buried in Woodland Cemetery, Dayton, Ohio.

Scope and Content Note:

SERIES I: Personal Correspondence, contains general and personal correspondence to and from Garnet Brown including all major topics and hobbies with which he was involved. Also contains checks, sales slips, and postcards. This series is arranged chronologically.

SERIES II: Garnet C. Brown, contains family sketches, awards, special interest stories, a paper G. Brown read at a Kansas City meeting, news clippings, pamphlets, booklets, and newsletters.

SERIES III: Work of Garnet Brown: Dow Chemical Company and Heli-Coil Corporation, contains correspondence, diagrams, blueprints, drawings, bulletins, magazines, brochures, manuals, handbooks, and photographs documenting the years G. Brown worked with these companies. The records are arranged chronologically.

SERIES IV: Articles, Stories, Verses, contains original handwritten stories and verses by G. Brown. Includes other stories and verses saved by G. Brown.

SERIES V: Miniature Cannons, documents G. Brown's hobby of modeling small cannons. This series contains all of his blueprints, drawings, and diagrams of his handmade miniature cannons.

SERIES VI: Notebooks and Address Books, include notebooks, hard-bound books, address books, magazines, and booklets owned by G. Brown.

SERIES VII: Hobbies and Interests of Garnet Brown, contains news clippings, pamphlets, magazines, booklets, tickets, brochures, diagrams, manuals, and handbooks. The files are arranged by major topic of interests: aviation, steamboats, boats and riverboats, antique cars, and guns.

SERIES VIII: Photographs, consists of all types of photographs which include pictures of Garnet Brown and relatives, his activities with boats and antique cars, travels through Italy, and battlefields (Gettysburg). The photographs are arranged chronologically.

SERIES IX: Glass Plate Negatives and Lantern Slides, contains glass plate negatives depicting scenes such as a river, mills, covered bridge, Miamisburg train station, an overturned locomotive, and fire engine. The first eleven glass plates are size 4" x 5", and negatives 12-17 measure 8" x 10".

The lantern slides were used in G. Brown's speech at the Kansas City Meeting concerning air screws.

Subject Terms

Persons/Families

Brown, Garnet C., 1881-1976

Organizations/Corporate Names

Heli-Coil Corporation

Dow Chemical Company

Subjects (General)

Screw-threads

Airplanes – Motors -- Design and construction

Bomb racks – Design and construction

Antique and classic cars

Inventors – Ohio – Dayton – 20th century

Material Types

Lantern slides

Glass plate negatives

Photographs

Notebooks

Poems

Writings (documents)

Correspondence

Occupations

Aerospace engineers

Collection Inventory

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
SERIES I:		Personal Correspondence	1912-1976
1	1	Personal correspondence: Includes letters written to G. Brown and a pass dated April 1, 1913 which is signed by Governor James Cox. Topics: guns, patent, resignation from Chief of Engineering in the Belt Dept. at L.H. Gilmer Co.	1912-1927
1	2	Personal correspondence: Includes letters to and from G. Brown, checks, sales slips. Topics: National Muzzle Loading Association, wheels for airplane landing gears.	1935-1939
1	3	Personal correspondence: Includes letters to and from G. Brown. Topics: National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association, U.S. Naval Air Station, Antique Automobile Club, E.M. Farris Muzzle Gun Supplies.	1940-1949
1	4	Personal correspondence: Includes letters to and from G. Brown, sales slips, checks. Topics: E.M. Farris Muzzle Gun Supplies, National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association, Bohn Aluminum and Brass Corporation, American Ordnance Association, William B. Stout, New York Belting and Packing Co.	1950-1954
1	5	Personal correspondence: Includes letters to and from G. Brown. Topics: E.M. Farris, Stanislaus Vocational Workshop, Ohio Covered Bridge Committee	1955-1959
1	6	Personal correspondence: Includes letters to and from G. Brown, postcards, sales slips. Topics: Fairfax Downey, George Stewart, Harold Peterson, Air Force Museum, National Park Service, Antique cars, guns Gettysburg battlefield, Masons, United Theological Society.	1960-1969
1	7	Personal correspondence: Includes letters to and from Brown, rosters, postcards, topics: McCook Field, Aviation Hall of Fame, Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce, Earl Farris.	1970-1976
1	8	Personal correspondence:	1950-1972

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
		Includes letters and a roster all dealing with the Society of Automotive Engineers.	
1	9	Personal correspondence: Includes letters, a membership card, and the constitution and by-laws all dealing with the Lions Club.	1951-1970
1	10	Personal correspondence: Includes letters to Senators and Congressmen such as Rep. John M. Ashbrook, Sen. Frank J. Lausche, and Sen. Robin T. Turner.	1957-1971
1	11	Personal Correspondence: Includes letters and sales slips all dealing with Packard parts for an antique car.	1952-1966
SERIES II: Garnet C. Brown			1912-1976
2	1	Contains a sketch of his family history, plus a number of newspaper articles highlighting events in his life.	1939-1956
2	2	Awards - all types of awards and ribbons honoring Garnet Brown, such as the National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association, Antique Club of America, National Rifle Association, American Ordnance Association.	1927-1967
2	3	Mad Anthony Wayne's Drum Beat Newsletter: Series of newsletters in this organization to which Garnet Brown belonged.	1955-1962
2	4	Special interest story of Mr. Brown's concerning Bill Moose, last of the Ohio Wyandotte Indian Tribes.	1951 Jan
2	5	<i>A Development In Screw Threads.</i> (Paper for the Kansas City Meeting) Box 8 contains the Lantern Slides for G. Brown's presentation - no date.	Undated
2	6	Miscellaneous: A variety of newsletters, news clippings, booklets, pamphlets, etc. all dealing with varied interests of G. Brown such as the Civil War, machinery, and liberty. An envelope containing birch tree stationery is also enclosed. This material encompasses all dates throughout his lifetime.	1912-1976

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
SERIES III:		Work of Garnet Brown: Dow Chemical Company and Heli-Coil Corporation	1939-1975
2	7	Report, diagrams, blueprints, and photographs with the Dow Chemical Company	1939 Jan 4
2	8	Heli-Coil Corporation - Aircraft Screw Products, Inc. Correspondence with consumers and interoffice memos.	1942-1956
2	9	Heli-Coil correspondence - all correspondence between G. Brown and H.W. Cram, Sales Manager.	1950-1975
2	10	Heli-Coil Corporation: Brochures, manuals, handbooks	Undated
2	11	Heli-Coil Corporation: Magazines and Bulletins	Undated
3	1	Heli-Coil Corporation: Drawings and blueprints of aircraft screw products - large blueprints placed in oversize drawer.	1940s
SERIES IV:		Articles, Stories, Verses	1910-1969, undated
3	2	Original stories of G. Brown about the Early Days of the Motor Car	Undated
3	3	Original story - Powder Horns	1945 Oct
3	4	Original story - Guns and Bronze Rifles, Timothy Murphy-Rifleman	1942
3	5	Original story - Flintlock Experiments	1941
3	6	Original story - Tools	Undated
3	7	Original story - Britchin Fixin	Undated
3	8	Original stories - American Indian Day and Indians	Undated
3	9	Handwritten notes and stories – miscellaneous index cards	1955-1956
3	10	Notes, stories, verses, newspaper clippings, and targets for guns	1912, 1939
3	11	Assortment of verses and stories	Circa 1910-1969

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
3	12	Verses, newspaper clippings, pamphlets, poetry religion is the main theme	Circa 1950-1959
SERIES V:		Miniature Cannons	1950-1976
3	13	Larger blueprints, drawings, and diagrams of miniature cannons	1962
4	1-6	Blueprints and drawings of miniature cannons	1950-1976
5	1	Blueprints and drawings of miniature cannons	1960-1969
SERIES VI:		Notebooks and Address Books	Undated
5	2	Two address books of G. Brown's	Undated
5	3	Four series of notebooks concerning alloy for rivets, the Lycoming R-680-D Engine, mould wash, and physical tests of asphaltic base oils	Undated
5	4	Booklet-Heywood Starter Instructions by Sky Specialties Corp.	Undated
SERIES VII:		Hobbies and Interests of Garnet Brown	Circa 1920-1976
5	5	The National Geographic Magazine: Contains articles on aviation	1924 July
6	1	News clippings, pamphlets, magazines, booklets - Aviation	Circa 1950-1976
6	2	Tickets, brochures, news clippings, pamphlets - Steamboats	Circa 1920-1949
6	3	Magazines, pamphlets, news clippings - Boats and Riverboats	Circa 1960-1976
6	4	News clippings, magazines, booklets, diagrams- Antique Cars	Circa 1950-1959
6	5	News clippings, magazines, pamphlets – Guns Copies of Gun Week Newspaper	Circa 1950-1959

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
6	6	Magazines, newspapers, pamphlets – Guns Sixteen manuals and handbooks concerning parts of guns, how to clean guns, types of powder, and types of guns	Circa 1940-1959
SERIES VIII:		Photographs	1890-1971
<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
7	1	Photographs of Garnet Brown from age 8 to 90 and his relatives. Contains two tin types	1890-1971
7	2	G. Brown on his boat	1912
7	3	G. Brown's travels, Pisa in Italy	1908
7	4	McCook Field - General "Black Jack" Pershing - Includes labels	1919
7	5	G. Brown with antique cars and powder horns	Undated
7	6	Dayton photographs by and of G. Brown	1928
7	7	Steamboat cruises	1936-1938
7	8	Gettysburg Battlefield	1961
7	9	Andersonville Prison Park and Cemetery	1961 June 7
7	10	Miscellaneous – Includes many photographs on the Old Air Force Museum	Undated
SERIES IX:		Glass Plate Negatives and Lantern Slides	Circa 1900, 1903
<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
8	1	Glass Plate Negative: River Scene	Circa 1900
8	2	Glass Plate Negative: Two Mills	Circa 1900
8	3	Glass Plate Negative: Covered Bridge	Circa 1900
8	4	Glass Plate Negative: Covered Bridge	Circa 1900
8	5	Glass Plate Negative : Dam	Circa 1900

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
8	6	Glass Plate Negative: Overturned steam locomotive	Circa 1900
8	7	Glass Plate Negative: Men in Front of a Saw Mill	Circa 1900
8	8	Glass Plate Negative: Well	Circa 1900
8	9	Glass Plate Negative: Fire Engine and man watching on bicycle	Circa 1900
8	10	Glass Plate Negative: Miamisburg Train Station	Circa 1900
8	11	Factory Workers	Circa 1900
8	12	Glass Plate Negative: Steamer "City of Louisville" at Cincinnati, Ohio	1903 May
8	13	Glass Plate Negative: Buffalo Harbor	Circa 1900
8	14	Glass Plate Negative: G. Brown's Home in Michigan	Circa 1900
8	15	Glass Plate Negative: G. Brown's Home in Michigan- Antique Car Sitting Outside	Circa 1900
8	16	Glass Plate Negative: G. Brown's Parents and Sister?	Circa 1900
8	17	Glass Plate Negative: New Main Street from Riverdale - Dayton	Circa 1900
8	18-49	Lantern Slides 1-32 for presentation of paper: <i>A Development In Screw Threads</i> at the Kansas City Meeting (see box 2, file 5)	Circa 1900