

---

## **Guide to the Emil J. Simon Autobiography, and Lee de Forest Memorabilia, 1888-1963**

Processed by The Bancroft Library staff

The Bancroft Library.

University of California, Berkeley

Berkeley, California, 94720-6000

Phone: (510) 642-6481

Fax: (510) 642-7589

Email: [bancref@library.berkeley.edu](mailto:bancref@library.berkeley.edu)

URL: <http://bancroft.berkeley.edu>

© 1997

The Regents of the University of California. All rights reserved.

---

## Guide to the Emil J. Simon Autobiography and Lee de Forest Memorabilia

**Collection number: BANC MSS 72/115 z**

The Bancroft Library



University of California, Berkeley  
Berkeley, California

**Contact Information:**

The Bancroft Library.  
University of California, Berkeley  
Berkeley, California, 94720-6000  
Phone: (510) 642-6481  
Fax: (510) 642-7589  
Email: [bancref@library.berkeley.edu](mailto:bancref@library.berkeley.edu)  
URL: <http://bancroft.berkeley.edu>

Processed by:  
The Bancroft Library staff  
Date Completed:  
1972  
Encoded by:  
Hernán Cortés

© 1997 The Regents of the University of California. All rights reserved.

---

### Collection Summary

**Collection Title:** Emil J. Simon Autobiography, and Lee de Forest Memorabilia,

**Date (inclusive):** 1888-1963

**Collection Number:** BANC MSS 72/115 z

**Creator:** Simon, Emil J. (Emil Jacob), 1888-1963.

**Extent:** Number of containers: 4 boxes, 1 oversize folder  
Linear ft.: 2

**Repository:** The Bancroft Library

Berkeley, California 94720-6000

**Physical Location:** For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog.

**Abstract:** Inserted in the autobiography are letters, clippings, photographs and other materials documenting his life and career as a radio engineer and inventor. The Lee de Forest memorabilia include articles by and about the vacuum tube pioneer, letters, clippings, Simon's reminiscences, etc., and also material relating to the de Forest pioneers.

**Languages Represented:** English

**Access**

Collection is open for research.

**Publication Rights**

---

Copyright has not been assigned to The Bancroft Library. All requests for permission to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted in writing to the Head of Public Services. Permission for publication is given on behalf of The Bancroft Library as the owner of the physical items and is not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder, which must also be obtained by the reader.

**Preferred Citation**

[Identification of item], Emil J. Simon autobiography, and Lee de Forest memorabilia, BANC MSS 72/115 z, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

**Scope and Content**

Emil Jacob Simon was born, October 25, 1888, in New York City to Sigmont and Jennie (Sampter) Simon. He attended schools in New York and in the fall of 1905 entered Columbia University. He majored in engineering and had an active interest in wireless.

In 1906 he met Lee de Forest and in 1909 went to work for him. He stayed with de Forest's company until it failed in December 1910, and then went to work for other companies as an engineer. In 1911 he was with the National Electric Signaling Company and from 1912 to 1915, the Wireless Improvement Company.

In 1915 he started out on his own, making radio transmitters of his own design -the Simon Quenched Spark System for wireless transmission. In the next few years he was involved with various companies making such things as direction finders for ships and a device for talking back and forth in a noisy airplane.

In 1920 he founded Intercity Radio Telegraph Company. It operated the first overland wireless service in the East and initiated service between Berlin, Germany and New York. However, over the next ten years the larger domestic radio communication companies began to push the smaller ones out of business and Intercity failed in 1930.

In 1932 Simon conceived and began development of a direction finder which he called the "Simon Radioguide". In 1934 he incorporated the Radio Navigation Instrument Corporation in order to market it and other radio devices. The Radioguide became popular for use in airplanes.

In 1948 the Radio Navigation Instrument Corporation failed and Simon became an independent consulting engineer specializing in radio patent suits.

Over the years he had continued his friendship with his former employer, Lee de Forest, and became an active charter member of the De Forest Pioneers.

He died in New York in 1963.

The Simon Collection came to The Bancroft Library in January, 1972 as a gift of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. It consists of the holograph manuscript of his autobiography and related material (described in the Key to Arrangement which follows) and letters and papers relating to Lee de Forest and the DeForest Pioneers.

---

Boxes 1-3

**Autobiography**

**Additional Note**

Holograph ms. and, inserted in it, correspondence, newspaper clippings, citations to articles in newspapers, photographs, legal agreements and contracts, patents, brochures, magazine articles, blueprints, deeds, and certificates, documenting Simon's early life; his career as a radio engineer, inventor and president of the Intercity Radio and Telegraph Company and Radio Navigation Instrument Corporation, Inc.; and his interests in amateur radio, radio history, stamp collecting and automobiles. Originally in nine looseleaf binders, with a chronological arrangement. The material has been removed from the binders and placed in folders, with the original order retained and the folders marked with the former volume numbers. Some blueprints have been placed in an oversize folder.

Box 1

**v. I-V, 1888-1932**

Box 2

**v. VI-VII, 1933-1943**

Box 3

**v. VIII-IX, 1944-1969**

**Letters written by Lee de Forest (two folders)**

**Letters written by Marie de Forest (Mrs. Lee de Forest)**

**Letters written by Emil J. Simon to de Forest**

Box 4

**de Forest Memorabilia**

**Additional Note**

Articles by and about de Forest, newspaper clippings, citations for newspaper stories, photographs, correspondence, patents, blue-prints, booklets and Simon's reminiscences, documenting the career of Lee de Forest and his various companies. Arranged chronologically. Included in the correspondence are:

**Copy of a letter, Mar 16, 1956, from Dwight David Eisenhower to de Forest.**

**Copies of letters, Sept 5, 1903 to the Secretary of the Navy; and Jan. 29, 1932 to S. M. Kinter from Reginald Aburey Fessenden.**

**De Forest Pioneers**

**Additional Note**

Membership lists, correspondence, newspaper clippings, photographs, copies of speeches, programs and news releases concerning the activities and organization of the society.

**De Forest Radio Company (brochure)**

**Veteran Wireless Operators Association - Yearbooks, Notices of Meetings and other miscellaneous material.**

**Bailey, George William, 1887-**

**Letter, May 23, 1955; and copy of letter, May 26, 1955, to him in v. IX, part 2.**

**Basset, Preston Rogers, 1892-**

**Letter, Dec 28, 1951; and copy of letter, Dec 20, 1951, to him in v. IX, part 1.**

**Damon, Ralph Shepard, 1897-**

**Copy of a letter, Nov 23, 1948, to him in v. VIII, part 2.**

**de Forest, Lee**

**Letter, Nov 23, 1953 and copies of letters, June 18, 1951, June 20, 1951, Apr. 24, 1954, Apr. 25, 1954, May 11, 1954, May 12, 1954, May 17, 1954 and May 24, 1954 in v. IX, part 1; and letter Feb. 21, 1952 to de Forest in v. II, part 2.**

**Dodge, Marcellus Hartley, 1881-**

**Letter, Oct. 3, 1951, in v. IX, part 1.**

**Dubilier, William, 1888-**

**Letter, June 24, 1957, in v. IX, part 3; and copies of letters to him dated Aug. 29, 1951 in v. IX, part 1.**

**Dunning, John Ray, 1907-1975**

**Letter, Sept 25, 1951, in v. IX, part 1.**

**Eisenhower, Dwight David, 1890-1969**

**Copy of a letter, Nov 4, 1957, to him in v. IX, part 3.**

**Goldsmith, Alfred Norton, 1887-**

**2 letters, May 4, 1954 and May 7, 1954; and copy of a letter, May 11, 1954, to him in v. IX, part 1.**

**Goubeau, Vincent dePaul, 1898-**

**Letter, Jan 3, 1952, and copy of a letter, Jan. 14, 1952, to him in v. IX, part 1.**

**Hull, Cordell, 1871-1955**

**Letter, Oct 13, 1938, in v. VII, part 2.**

**Lippincott, Donald K.**

**Letter, July 12, 1943, in v. VII, part 3.**

**Littlewood, William, 1898-**

**Letter, Nov 27, 1946 (copy), in v. VIII, part 2.**

**Loening, Grover C., 1888-**

**Letter, Feb 27, 1923, in v. V, part 1.**

**Loughren, Arthur Vivian, 1902-**

**Letter, May 16, 1955, and memo, Jan. 13, 1956; and copy of a letter, Apr. 8, 1955, to him in v. IX, part 2.**

**Morgan, Junius Spencer, 1892-**

- Letter, Oct 11, 1939; and copy of a letter, Oct. 9, 1939, to him in v. VII, part 3.
- Pratt, Haraden, 1891-1969**  
Letter, July 26, 1969 (copy) to Charles Süsskind and letter to him from Süsskind, Aug. 5, 1968, in v. IX, part 3.
- Roosevelt, Franklin Delano, 1882-1945**  
Letter, Feb 25, 1969 (copy), inv. VII, part 3.
- Sarnoff, David, 1891-**  
Copies of letters, Dec 17, 1951 and Dec 20, 1951, to him in v. IX, part 1.
- Stone, Ellery Wheeler**  
Letter, Apr 13, 1951; and copy of letter to him, Apr. 4, 1951 in v. IV, part 1. Letter, June 6, 1947; and copy of letter to him, June 3, 1947, in v. VIII, part 2.
- Süsskind, Charles, 1921-**  
Letter, Aug. 5, 1968 to Haraden Pratt; and copy of a letter from Pratt to him, July 26, 1969, in v. IX, part 3.
- Truman, Harry S., 1884-1972**  
Copies of letters, Apr. 6, 1951 and June 20, 1951, to him in v. IX, part 1.
- 
- De Forest, Lee, 1873-1961**  
Copies of letters, July 20, 1959 and Dec. 19, 1960, to him.
- DuMont, Allen Balcom, 1901-**  
Letter, Apr 20, 1962, and letter, Feb 29, 1960; and copies of letters, Mar. 1, 1960 and Nov. 19, 1960, to him.
- Gernsback, Hugo, 1884-1967**  
Letter, June 14, 1956.
- Guy, Raymond Frederick, 1899-**  
5 letters, Jan 8, 1960, Jan 25, 1960, Feb 29, 1960, Apr 21, 1960 and Nov 29, 1960; and copies of letters, Dec. 30, 1959, Jan. 21, 1960, Mar. 30, 1960 and Dec. 19, 1960 to him.
- Hogan, John Vincent Lawless, 1890-**  
2 letters, Feb 18, 1952 and June 18, 1952 (copies); and copy a letter, Mar. 1, 1960 to him.
- Loughren, Arthur Vivian, 1902-**  
Copy of a letter, Mar 28, 1956.
- Stone, Ellery Wheeler**  
Letters, June 25, 1956, June 25, 1956, June 26, 1956 and June 28, 1956; and copies of letters, Feb. 28, 1952, June 29, 1956 and Mar. 1, 1960, to him.