
Descriptive Finding Guide for the Charles Harding Babb Personal Papers SDASM.SC.10009

Finding aid prepared by Katrina Pescador
San Diego Air and Space Museum Library and Archives
2001 Pan American Plaza, Balboa Park
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Title: Charles Harding Babb Personal Papers

Identifier/Call Number: SDASM.SC.10009

Contributing Institution: San Diego Air and Space Museum Library and Archives

Language of Material: English

Physical Description: 0.8 Cubic feet2 manuscript boxes

Date (inclusive): 1920-2001

Abstract: This collection contains correspondence, prototypes, blueprints and other documents from Charles Harding Babb, founder of The Babb Company.

Language of Materials note: English

creator: Babb, Charles Harding, 1899-1952

Biographical/Historical note

Charles Harding Babb was born in Eugene, Oregon in 1899 and went on to study at the University of Oregon. Though injured as a youth in a hunting accident that took his right forearm, in 1919 Babb learned to fly in Venice, California, receiving FAI pilot certificate number 5074 and expert aviator certificate 302. However, it would not be as a pilot that Babb would leave his mark in aviation. In the 1920s, Charlie certified pilots (he issued Amelia Earhart her first license), and while N.A.A. Governor from 1920 to 1928, he was actively involved in organizing air races. From 1928 until 1952, Charles Babb operated The Babb Company, selling new and used aircraft, as well as aircraft parts. His company had a reputation for knowledge, quality, and service; the Babb Company became known as the world's largest international aircraft brokerage. It was in this capacity that Babb met and befriended some of the most influential aviation greats of the period. His peers included Donald Douglas, Jimmy Doolittle, Reuben Fleet, Wiley Post, Jackie Cochran, and Howard Hughes. In addition to running the Babb Co, Mr. Babb also was a founding member and, in 1951, voted president of the Conquistadores del Cielo, an exclusive aviation association. In 1940, Babb was granted the seminal patent on an aircraft cargo fuselage design which allowed for easy front loading nose access. The Babb Co. was selected in 1951 as the exclusive North American distributor for De Havilland's "Beaver" aircraft. Babb passed away unexpectedly in 1952.

Conditions Governing Access note

This collection is open to the public by appointment.

Conditions Governing Use note

For copyright and use restrictions please consult the library director.

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

The collection was donated to the SDASM in two installments.

Scope and Contents note

The collection includes correspondences, the original prototype model of the front-nose loading aircraft, blueprints/illustrations of the front-nose loading aircraft, one of kind photos, many of which are signed by some of Babb's famous friends, and collection appraisal report.

 <https://www.flickr.com/photos/sdasmarchives/sets/72157648947780080/>

Preferred Citation note

[Item], The Personal Collection of Charles Harding Babb, Archives, San Diego Air & Space Museum

Related Archival Materials note

Pima Air Museum Purdue University Libraries, Archives and Special Collections Museum of Flight, Seattle, WA Smithsonian, National Air & Space Museum, Washington D.C.

Subjects and Indexing Terms

Conquistadores del Cielo.

De Havilland Aircraft Co., Ltd..

The Babb Company.

Box 01

Physical Description: Series I: Correspondences and official papers

Folder 01 - Artifacts

Physical Description: 1. Passport for Don's Beachcomber Club. 2. Small black address book. 3. Dicionario de Termos Tecnico de Aviancoa: Portuguese dictionary of aviation terms. 4. Membership card to Hollywood Athletic Club, 1929. 5. Membership card for the Mallard Ponds Duck Club. 6. "Airplane Landing Fields of the West" and supplement dated 1929. 7. One paper with misc. names and addresses.

Folder 02 - Documents

Physical Description: 8. Document from J.R. Westfall & Company, including an appraisal of collection, patent (2,268,009) and a manuscript entitled "Call Charlie Babb" by Bertram Fowler and other misc Xerox copies of articles and images. Approx 55 pages total. 9. Document from David Guerra containing several aircraft related patents. This document concludes that C.H. Babb's patent 2,268,009 was the first and pioneer patent for nose loading aircraft. Approximately 75 pages. 10. List of aircraft belonging to C.H. Babb. 100 pages.

Folder 03, 04 - Documents and Correspondences

Physical Description: 11. Postcard showing Consolidated C-87. Color. 12. One envelope containing numerous newspaper clippings mostly from 1925, "Air Races etc, Charles Secretary Southern California Chapter National Aeronautic Association" written on front. 13. Letter from Charles Babb Jr. to John Roden, dated December 5, 1999. 14. Copy of correspondences between Joseph Westall, Attorney and C.H. Babb, 1941, 3 pages. 15. Copy of a letter dated July 14, 2005 to John W. Myers from Charles Babb Jr. 16. BABBCO Series: General Specifications of the BABBCO Military Cargo Airplane, 4 pages. 17. "Air Cargo, Its History and Promised Future" pamphlet, 18 pages, including letter from John Frederick, University of Texas, to C.H. Babb. 18. Copy of article concerning the use of JATO on Mars aircraft, mention of C.H. Babb in article. 2 pages. 19. Letter from Barney Giles, Brigadier General, to Charles Babb dated March 10, 1942. 20. Copy of Letter from Gibson, Dunn and Crutcher, Lawyers to Mrs. Blanche C. Babb, RE the estate of Charles H. Babb, March 19, 1954. 21. Signed copy of "Boedy's Album", of a cross section of Aviation Personnel, 1939. 22. Description and Engineering Comments of Allied Amphibious Glider, 10 pages. 23. Notes from telcon with Charles Babb Jr. from Aviation Advisory Service, Oct 99, 10 hand written pages. 24. Xerox copy of "Nobody Knew the Business like Babb and Mose" 8 pages. 25. Xerox copy of front page of "Aircraft News and Advertiser" November 15, 1941. 26. C-87 brochure with photos, 8 pages. 27. Large black folder "Babb Aviation, Sales, Service, Supplies" containing letters and Xeroxed articles and certificate from the Governor of New Mexico to Charles Babb. 28. Copy of "Madcaps, Millionaires and 'Mose' a Pictorial history by John Underwood". 29. Letter from the Sheriff of Los Angeles to Mrs. Charles Babb, 2/6/1958. 30. Article from the Honolulu Advertiser featuring Charles Babb. 31. Signed letter from J.H. Doolittle to Blanche Babb, 6/12/1972. 32. Signed letter from R.H. Fleet to Mrs. Charles Babb, 12/20/1963. 33. Signed letter from Dick Byrd to Charles Babb 4/3/1945. 34. Conquistadores del Cielo letterhead.

Box 02

Physical Description: Series II: Photographs and Drawings Series III: Autographed Books

Folder 02 (Legal Sized Binder 2 Count) - Drawings and Photos

Physical Description: 1. Eight drawings of BABBCO's Prototype model of nose-loading cargo aircraft demonstrating various usages. 2. Photo of BABBCO nose-loading cargo aircraft model. 3. Photo North American SNJ-3 signed by Ensign Jim Stevenson, 1/11/1942. 4. Photo of Carl William's Fokker, Mexico. 5. Photo of TACA Airlines hanger, San Jose C.R., 7/1949. 6. Unknown group photo. 7. Photo of a 1912 Curtiss aircraft flying over a B-29 signed by Billy Parker, 1945. 8. Photo of a Curtiss Pusher. 9. Photo of nose-loading cargo aircraft prototype with nose open, 2001. 10. Photo of BABBCO nose-loading cargo aircraft prototype from afar, 2001. 11. Photo of BABBCO cargo plane design submitted to Army for consideration, 3/1937. 12. Photo Charles Babb in front of de Havilland Beaver owned by Deputy Prime Minister of Canada, 1950. 13. Photo of Allied Aviation Corporation model plywood amphibious transport glider. 14. Photo of Amphibian aircraft in front of BABBCO Hanger, 1937. 15. Photo of PBV-5. 16. Photo of Cunningham Hall Aircraft Organization PT-6. 17. Photo of Cunningham Hall Aircraft Organization PT-6 with door opened and interior visible. 18. Photo of Phillipine Mars. First Jet Assist Take off, Hawaii 1946. 19. Photo of Vultee V-11. 20. Photo of Howard Hughes and Charles Babb with Lockheed Vega, 1928-30. 21. Photo of Lockheed Vega. 22. Photo of Lockheed Vega (duplicate). 23. Photo of Northrop Delta at Honeywell, Minneapolis. Max Conrad. 24. Photo of George Armistead and Grandville R-6C "QED", 1935. 25. Photo of navigation equipment. 26. Photo of cabin seating of TACA Airlines plane. 27. Postcard of 1912 Curtiss Pusher and Billy Parker. 28. Photo of Kinner Airster flying over Kinner Airport, Los Angeles 12/16/1920. 29. Photo of Aero Dirigible, John C. Smith, Los Angeles. 30. Postcard of Douglas World Cruiser. 31. Photo of Staggerwood Beach 17 wing used on hunting trip displaying catch of the day. 32. Photo of BABBCO Parts Division, old Glendale office. 33. Photo of Charles Babb Company. 34. Photo of BABBCO Parts Department Interior. 35. Photo of BABBCO Repair Facility Interior, 7/1948. 36. Photo of BABBCO Storage Interior, 1948. 37. Photo of unidentified aircraft flying over Babb Brokerage Firm. 38. Photo of Quebec Facility, circa 1950. 39. Photo of Amelia Earhart presenting trophy. 40. Amelia Earhart. 41. Photo of unknown pilot and Ryan trainer. 42. Photo of Charles Babb in uniform. 43. Photo of Babb fishing in row boat at Elk Lake. 44. Photo of flooding. 45. Photo of Charles Babb and dog. 46. Postcard of Bleriat Monoplane and first U.S Airmail pilot Earl Ovington of Santa Barbara, CA to Charles Babb. 11/17/1935 47. Photo of Wiley Post and Charles Babb, 1935. 48. Photo of unknown air race winner. 49. Photo of camping trip, 9/1948. 50. Photo of Wilber Shaw at Race Track. 51. Photo of Walter Lees (test pilot) and L.M. Woolson (designer) in front of a 1929 Bellanca. 52. Photo of Charles Babb and Lawrence (Al) Phelan, Chief Test Pilot. 53. Photo of BABBCO Christmas Party, Glendale, CA. 54. Photo of Charles and Blanche Babb wedding. General Jimmy Doolittle gave away Blanche. Rochester, New York, 1945. 55. Photo of Charles Babb with Francesco Sarabia, Jr. in Mexico, 1940. 56. Photo of Charles Babb with Sarabia's children. In photo L to R: Maria, Babb, Francesco Jr., and Beatrice in Mexico, 1940. 57. Photo of Charles Babb and Military Officers. In photo: Chief of Civil Aviation, Governor of the State of Pueblo, Brigadier General Harris, Captain Hickey, USN, Captain Whitehead, USA, Charles Babb. 58. Photo of Charles Babb with cigarette, 6/3/1946. 59. Photo of Billy Parker in 1912 Curtiss Pusher. 60. Photo of Blanche Babb before marriage to Charles. 61. Photo of Pilot Fred W. Kelly. 62. Photo of Reuben H. Fleet, 9/3/1942. 63. Photo of J. Carswell. 64. Photo of Captain Lloyd Clevenger, RAF Trans-Atlantic Ferry. 65. Photo of O.L. Wells. 66. Photo of Smokey Rhoads, US Navy. 67. Photo of M.A Lichcast. 68. Photo of Tom last name unknown. 69. Two Photos of members of Captain Kingsford Australian Flight and guests. L to R: Mr. Williams, Lt. Lyons (Navigator on Flight), Charles Babb (NAA Governor of California), Warner (Radio Operator), Col. Henry Baine (L.A County Supervisor) 70. Photo of Herbert Wilkins. 71. Photo of Roy Kualuishue, 3/15/1920. 72. Group Photo of Mississippi Relief Fund # 1. 73. Group Photo of Mississippi Relief Fund, # 2. From Left to Right: Dr. T.C. Young (California Development Assn.), Lt. W.K Burgess (commander of Clover Field), Earl W. Chubb (Sunset Airlines), Mrs. Palmer H. Cook (Red Cross), F.E Samuels (Western Representative Aero Digest), C.H. Brashear, (Traffic Manager Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce), Charles H. Bird (Chairman of the Committee), in front two Red Cross Assistants 74. Photo of fishing from aircraft. 75. Squadron Leader Errol Delaen, RAAF. 76. Photo of Charles Babb on a hunting trip. 77. Photo of Charles Babb on the ranch. 78.

Photo of Charles Babb of offering a loaf of bread. 79. Photo of Charles Babb fishing from a float plane, Alaska 8/1949. 80. Photo of General Dale Gaffney, Lt. Col. Eugene Staursel (Tenth Rescue Squadron), Charles Babb, Russell Chief Pilot for de Havilland. 80. Photo of Charles Babb sitting in the cockpit of a plane. 81. Photo of Charles Babb with friends on a fishing trip in Canada. L to R: Mr. J.P Bickell, Mr. Harry Price, Sir Roy Dobson, Charles Babb. 82. Photo of Therm Dodge, 8/1943. 83. Photo of Ken Boedecker. 84. Photo of Lt. General Ivan C. Eaker. 85. Vern Dorrell, Vega Test Pilot. 86. Lt. Col. Frank Clarke, USAAF, Motion Picture Division, Army Air Forces. 10/27/1945. 87. Photo of Frank Clarke

Series III: Autographed books

Physical Description: 1. Soaring Wings autographed by Palmer Putnam 2. Under the North Pole autographed by author 3. Eddie Rickenbacker by Hans Adams autographed by Rickenbacker