

## Daniel Guggenheim Medal

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### MEDALIST FOR 1945

*For outstanding contributions to the development of civil and military aircraft, and for notable achievement in assuring the success of our wartime aircraft production program.*



### THEODORE PAUL WRIGHT

Distinguished in many fields of aeronautics, Theodore Paul Wright in his unusual career combined the technical contributions of a skilled engineer and scientist with the practical talents of production expert, research manager, university official and government administrator.

Born at Galesburg, Illinois, on May 25, 1895, he was graduated from Lombard College in 1915, received the Bachelor of Science degree from Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1918, and joined the United States Naval Reserve Flying Corps as an ensign. In 1919 he was promoted to Lieutenant, Junior Grade, and to Lieutenant in 1920.

After leaving the Navy, he joined the Curtiss Aeroplane & Motor Company, Inc., as Executive Engineer. In 1925 he became Chief Engineer of the Airplane Division of the Company, and under his supervision many notable aircraft were produced, among them the Hawk, Falcon, Hell Diver, Shrike and Condor, and such civilian craft as the Robin, Fledgling, King Bird and commercial Condor, as well as the Curtiss Tanager, which won the \$100,000 Guggenheim Safe Aircraft Competition in 1929.

In June 1940 he was called to Washington to serve with the Advisory Committee for the Council of National Defense to program the acceleration of aircraft production. In February 1941 he was named Assistant Chief of the Aircraft Branch of the Office of Production Management, which became the War Production Board. When the Aircraft Resources Control office was established in March 1943, Wright became its Director. It was this office which was called upon by the President to direct the procurement of 50,000 planes per year, at the time considered a fantastic goal. It was not only accomplished, however, but the original production rate was doubled.

Wright's appointment as Administrator of Civil Aeronautics was announced on September 20, 1944. In November of that year he served as technical secretary of the International Civil

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Aviation Conference in Chicago. As CAA Administrator he established the Non-scheduled Flying Advisory Committee, and was active in the program for improved aids to air navigation and instrument landing, and airport development. In the same period he was Director of the Aircraft Division of the United States Strategic Bombing Survey, and also served as Vice Chairman of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics and Chairman of its Aerodynamics Committee.

He resigned from the CAA in 1948 to become Vice-President for Research at Cornell University, and President of the Cornell Aeronautical laboratory at Buffalo, in which capacities he served until his retirement in 1960. He was Acting President of Cornell from February 1, 1951 to July 1, 1951, and was Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Daniel and Florence Guggenheim Aviation Safety Center at Cornell from its founding in 1950 until 1961. He died August 21, 1970.