

Daniel Guggenheim Medal

MEDALIST FOR 1954

For initiating and organizing commercial air routes and services, promoting aeronautical research, development and production of aircraft and engines, and advancing the art of aeronautics.



CLARENCE DECATUR HOWE

A Canadian citizen by choice, Clarence Decatur Howe contributed much to the emergence of Canada as an industrial nation and particularly to the development of her transportation and communication systems.

Born January 15, 1886, at Waltham, Massachusetts, he received the degree of Bachelor of Science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1907 and immediately joined the staff as an instructor. In 1908, recommended by the Institute, he was appointed Professor of Civil Engineering at Dalhousie University Halifax. Five years later he became Chief Engineer of the Board of Grain Commissioners, having supervision of the construction of grain elevators. In 1916 he formed his own firm, C. D. Howe and Company, and during the following twenty years built grain elevators, docks and factories, became a recognized expert on elevator construction, and acquired a fortune.

In 1935 Howe was elected to the House of Commons and joined the Cabinet as Minister of Railways and Canals, and Minister of Marine. Merging these departments and the Civil Aviation Branch of the Department of National Defence, he next year became Minister of Transport, established the National Harbours Board and the Canadian Broadcasting Commission, and reorganized the administration of the Canadian National Railways.

Recognizing the vital importance of air transportation to Canada—where by the early thirties more air freight was being carried than in any other country—and the need of interurban and transcontinental air services, Howe introduced the Trans Canada Air Line Act, which passed in 1937. Having already initiated the provision of ground and operating services, he pressed forward with all the resources at his command. To focus public attention on his favorite project he made a dawn-to-dusk flight from Montreal to Vancouver in July. By 1940 regular transcontinental passenger services were operating.

With the outbreak of war, Howe became Minister of Munitions and Supply, and directed the vast industrial war effort. He provided more than 100 ground installations and thousands of aircraft for the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, developed an industry which produced

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over 13,000 aircraft, the greatest per capita output in the free world, and built great aerodromes for ferrying bombers overseas and for defense units on the coasts.

While he was Minister of Reconstruction and Supply, in 1944, Turbo Research Limited, a Crown company, was organized for research and development of gas turbines. Later, as a commercial firm, it designed the Orenda and produced nearly 3800 of these aircraft engines installed in nearly 700 Canuck twin-jet long-range all-weather fighters and in many of the 1800 Sabres built in Canada for the Royal Canadian Air Force.

Howe was serving as Minister of Trade and Commerce when, after more than twenty years in power, the Government was defeated in 1957. He died in Montreal, December 31, 1960.