

### MEDALIST FOR 1960

*For a lifetime devoted to the development of aeronautics in America.*



### GROVER LOENING

Pioneer, engineer, public servant—Grover Loening was born September 12, 1888, in Bremen, Germany, where his father was United States Consul-General. He received his B.A. from Columbia College in 1908, and M.A. in Aeronautics from Columbia University in 1910—the first such degree awarded in America. His M.A thesis was subsequently published as “Monoplanes and Biplanes.” He received the C.E. degree from Columbia in 1911.

After graduation, Loening joined the Queen Aeroplane Company in New York, building Bleriot for exhibition pilots. In 1912, he built his pioneer Aeroboat. In 1913 Orville Wright employed him as assistant and as Manager of the Dayton factory. In 1914 he was appointed Chief Aeronautical Engineer of the U.S. Army’s Aviation Section in San Diego.

In 1915 Loening published his second book, “Military Aeroplanes,” an Army-88 adopted test which was later officially used by the Royal Air Force, the U.S. Navy, the Canadian armed forces and others. In the same year he became Vice-President of the Sturtevant Aeroplane Company, where he pioneered the first American steel frame airplane. In 1917 he formed the Loening Aeronautical Engineering Corporation to work on a Navy contract for a small plane to be launched from destroyers, and an Army contract for the M-8 two-seat Pursuit monoplane embodying the pioneer use of rigid strut bracing, patented by Loening.

After the war Loening produced the Flying Yacht, a five-seat monoplane boat which established world records and opened up the first significant market for private aircraft. For this he received the Collier Trophy for 1921. His next success was the pioneer Loening Amphibian, with the first practical retractable under-carriage, used by the U.S. Army, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard, and by airlines and private owners all over the world. Among its achievements was the Army’s famous Pan-American Good Will Flight of 1926.

The Loening Aeronautical Engineering Corporation merged with the Curtiss-Wright Corporation in 1928, and Loening subsequently formed the Grover Loening Aircraft Company, building several research aircraft and establishing his first consulting engineering practice.

His third book, “Our Wings Grow Faster,” was published in 1935. He entered public service in 1937 as aircraft advisor to the Maritime Commission, and in 1942 to the War Production

## Daniel Guggenheim Medal

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Board. He became head consultant for the NACA in 1945, and received numerous other government assignments.

When the National Air Museum was founded in 1948, President Truman appointed him as the first of two civilian members of its Advisory Board, an appointment twice renewed by Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy. He was awarded the Medal for Merit in 1946, the Egelston Medal of Columbia University in 1949, the Wright Memorial Trophy in 1950, and the Air Force Medal in 1955. He died February 29, 1976.