

SMS 73
 Updated 12/9/21
 Tawnie Mizer

**EMME, EUGENE M. COL. USAFA
 1919-1985**

**Linear ft.: .2
 Approx. no. pgs.: 560**

Collection Date: 1951-1973

Biographical Note

Eugene M. Emme was born on 3 November 1919 in Evanston, Illinois. He graduated from Morningside College in Sioux City, Iowa in 1941. Before the December 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor he was a CPT pilot. After the United States joined the war he became a naval aviator.^[1] He served in the Pacific theater.^[2] In 1948 he transferred to the United States Air Force Reserve. In 1949 Emme received his Ph.D. in Modern European History from the University of Iowa.^[1] He became a member of the civilian faculty of the Air University (United States Air Force) in 1949.^[2] He was a pioneer in oral history, and interviewed Lord Dowding of the British Royal Air Force, Field Marshal Erhard Milch at Landsberg Prison in 1952, and Dwight D. Eisenhower.^[1] In 1958 he moved to Battle Creek, Michigan, as project director in the operations research office of the Office of Civil Defense.^[2]

Emme became NASA's first historian in 1959. As a pioneer in aerospace history he advocated solid research and documentation. Emme had to address the challenges of obtaining solid support within NASA for historical research while developing scholars who would establish the basis for documenting and interpreting aerospace history, a new discipline that would largely rely on material from NASA programs. In 1962 Emme arranged for the annual Society for the History of Technology (SHOT) meeting to have a special session on the history of rocketry. This led to *Technology and Culture* devoting its entire Fall 1963 issue to rocketry.^[2] The papers were republished in 1964 as *The History of Rocket Technology*.^[3]

In 1965 Emme published *A History of Space Flight*, aimed at younger readers.^[4] The book lays out the timeline of developments in rocket and satellite technology from ancient times, with many photographs. It explains the vehicles' scientific purpose, technology, objectives and performance. It is a valuable reference tool with a useful bibliography. However, the book added little information that was not already publicly available, and avoided discussion of controversies such as the decision by President John F. Kennedy to ignore his advisers and send a manned flight to the moon.^[5]

Emme became co-chair of the history committee of the International Academy of Astronautics, and in this role attended congresses in Paris, Warsaw, Madrid, Constance, Vienna and Moscow. He was a member of the Reserve Officers Association, Air Force Historical Foundation, Air Force Association and Society for the History of Technology.^[1] Emme retired from the Ready Reserve as a colonel in 1972. He retired from NASA in 1978.^[2]

Emme was a member of the Marvin Methodist Church of Silver Spring, Maryland near Washington, D.C..^[1] He died of cancer on 24 June 1985 at the Holy Cross Hospital in Silver Spring, and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. He was survived by his wife and three children.

Source: Biography taken from “Eugene M. Emme — 1919-1985: Veteran Space Historian.” *Aerospace Historian*, vol. 32, no. 4, Air Force Historical Foundation, 1985, pp. 272–272, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44524121> (accessed 12/7/21)

Scope and Content Note

This collection contains information concerning space exploration, NASA, and Air Defense written by Eugene M. Emme during the period he was historian for NASA and Air War College between 1951-1973. This collection consists of four series divided into three folders. **Series 1) Lectures folder 1** contains lectures written and given by Eugene Emme concerning space exploration around World War II. **Series 2) Articles folder 2** consists of academic articles written by Eugene Emme concerning flight, and air power. **Series 3) Pamphlets folder 3** contains pamphlets concerning flight and air power. **Series 4) Postcard folder 3** consists of a postcard depicting Peter Carne’s first balloon ascension in America. This collection was donated by Eugene M. Emme between 1962-1979.

Keywords and Terms: 1951-1973; World War II; NASA; space; space exploration; Aeronautics and Space Administration; flight; aeronautics; air defense; air power; Luftwaffe; first balloon ascension; Battle of Britain; Air War College; Hitler’s Blitz Bomber; Air University Quarterly Review; Aerospace Historian; lectures; articles; pamphlets; postcards; finding aids

Names: Emme, Eugene M. Dr.; Carne, Peter; Goddard, Robert H. Dr.; Webb, James E.; Dryden, Hugh Latimer

Places: Washington, D.C.; Montgomery, Alabama United States; Detroit, Michigan;

Arrangement and Description

SERIES ONE

LECTURES

Box 1

Folder 1

"Space and the Historian" by Eugene M. Emme

"With a View to Their Practical Solution" Sixty Years with the NACA and NASA 1915-1965 by Eugene M. Emme 9 February 1976

"Perspective on Space Exploration" address by Eugene M. Emme

Historian of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration,
Washington D.C. 1 November 1963

"Administration and the Conquest of Space," by James E. Webb,
Administrator of NASA at the National Conference of the American
Society for Public Administration Detroit, Michigan, 13 April 1962

"Research and Writing" by Dr. Eugene M. Emme lecture to the Air War
College 13 September 1956

"An Analysis of Air Defense in World War II" by Dr. Eugene M. Emme
lecture to the Air War College 19 January 1954

"The Luftwaffe and the Battle of Britain" by Dr. Eugene M. Emme lecture
to the Air War College 9 February 1951

"The Eurasian Landmass and Its Relationship to World Power" by Dr.
Eugene M. Emme Air University 28 June 1951

SERIES TWO

ARTICLES

Box 1 Folder 2

Introduction, "Perspectives on the History of Flight In America
Astronautical Biography, Hugh Latimer Dryden 1898-1965" by Eugene
M. Emme

"The Reichsminister and the Luftwaffe." Air University Quarterly Review
Vol V No. 1 Winter 1951-1952 by Eugene M. Emme

"Lessons from the Luftwaffe" by Eugene M. Emme Air University
Quarterly Review, Vol. VII No. 3 Winter 1954-1955 (2 copies)

"Some Fallacies Concerning Air Power." By Eugene M. Emme, 1955

"Space, Past, and Future" By Eugene M. Emme, 1968

"Historical Perspectives on Apollo" Dr. Eugene M. Emme NASA Journal
of Space Craft and Rockets Vol 5 No. 4 April 1968

"Air University Plan for the Development of Air Force Professional
Education, 1963-1973." Air University, March 1963

"Yesterday's Dream...Today's Reality A Biographical Sketch of the
American Rocket Pioneer Dr. Robert H Goddard" by Dr. Eugene M.

Emme, October 1960

"Politico-Military Aspects of Western Defense under the North Atlantic Pact" Dr. Eugene M. Emme Air University quarterly Review Vol. 4 Fall 1950

NASA Historical Report No. 6, "Historical Origins of N.A.S.A." March 1962 by Eugene M. Emme

"Thoughts on Air Power as a Political Weapon," (2 copies) by Eugene M. Emme, Air War College, September 1953

"The Reichsminister and the Luftwaffe" by Dr. Eugene M. Emme Air University Quarterly Review Vol. V No. 1 Winter 1951-1952

"Some Fallacies Concerning Air Power" by Eugene M. Emme Air War College , 1955p

SERIES THREE PAMPHLETS

Box 1

Folder 3

Air Intelligence Training Bulletin, 5 Mar 1951

"Hitler's Blitzbomber," Documentary Research Study Air University, Dec 1951

Aerospace Historian

Vol. XIII No. 2 summer 1966

Vol. XIII No. 3 autumn 1966

SERIES FOUR POSTCARD

Box 1

Folder 3

Postcard and print (duplicate) depicting Peter Carne's first balloon ascension in America.