The Federal Aviation Administration: A Historical Perspective, 1903-2008

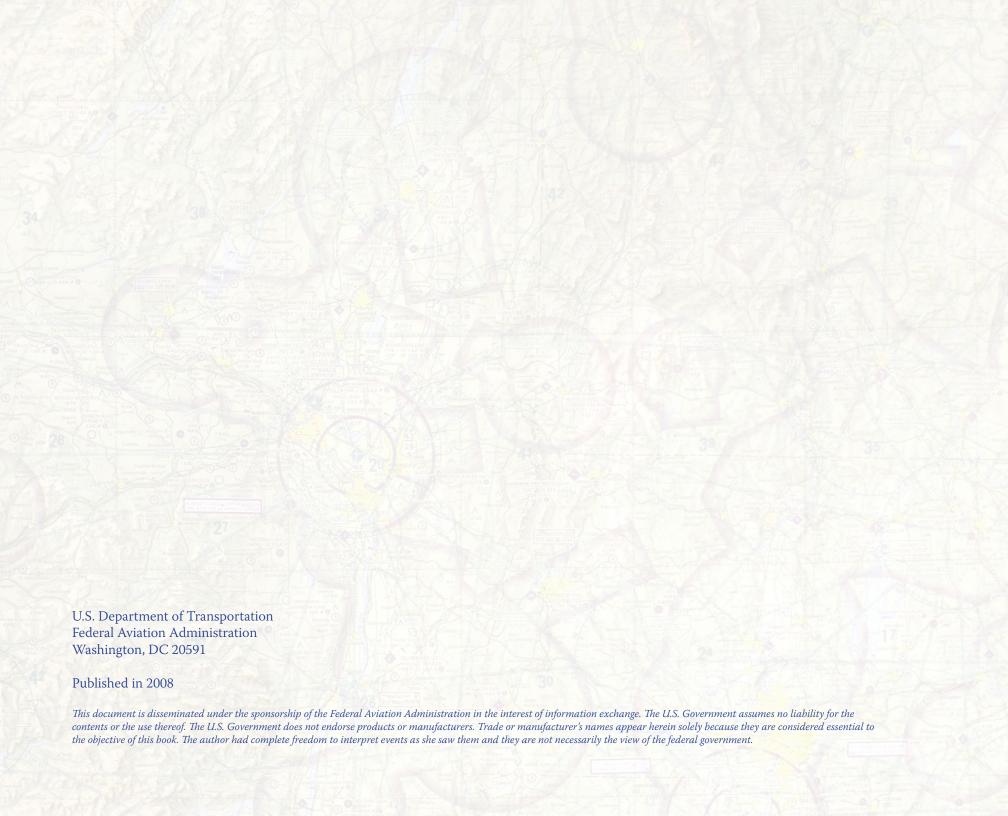


In the Beginning...









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Ву

Theresa L. Kraus

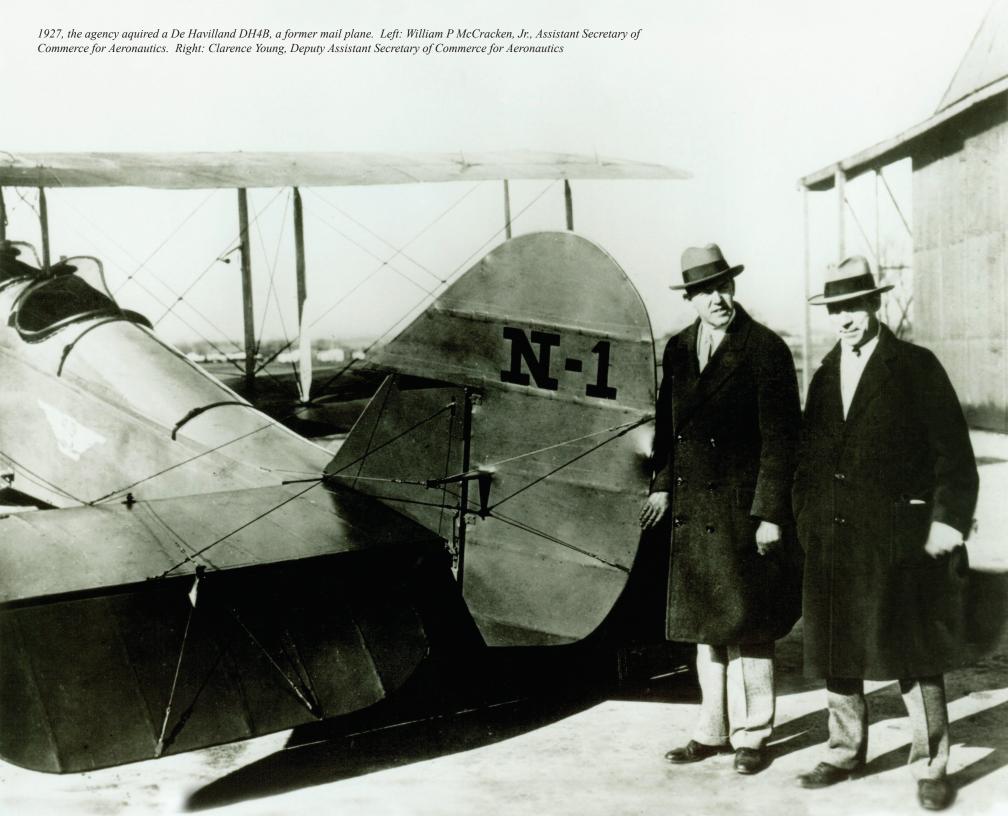


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A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE







Author's Preface

am grateful that I had the opportunity to contribute, in a small way, to the celebration of FAA's fiftieth anniversary. In its short history, the agency has faced a number of challenges such as global security threats, a need for greater capacity, an aging airspace system infrastructure, union unrest, aircraft and system safety concerns, and environmental issues. No matter the challenge, however, the men and the women of the FAA have always kept the system safe for the flying public. Their dedication and hard work have made the FAA into what it is today — a strong agency proud of its heritage and ready and willing to confront any future challenges. Our legacy is one of safety, efficiency, and global leadership; a tradition we will carry into the future.

I would like to thank the approximately 48,000 FAA employees who work 24/7 to ensure the U.S. national aerospace system remains the best in the world. They are the inspiration for this work.

It is important to recognize Dr. Wilson Felder, Gerald Lavey, Kerry Long, and James Whitlow — FAA executives who proposed this work and provided invaluable support and encouragement. They are true champions of the FAA and saw the need to document its history. I am also grateful to my managers, Victoria Cox, Barry Scott, and Dr. Paul Krois, who allowed me time away from my regular duties in the Air Traffic Organization's Operations Planning office to prepare this history. I also want to thank FAA's lines of business, Air Traffic Organization, Aviation Safety, Airports, and Commercial Space for providing the resources to publish this work.

I owe FAA's last official historians, Dr. Edmund Preston and Dr. Nick Komons and the agency historians who preceded them, a debt of gratitude for laying the foundations for this document.

Their tireless work to record FAA's past in the five-volume agency history series made my work possible.

I also enjoyed the gracious help of several individuals who selflessly agreed to review, edit, and help produce this short history. Dr. R. Paul Murphy is by far the best editor I have ever worked with. He not only ensured my "t's" were crossed and my "i's" dotted, but was critical to completion of this short history on a very tight deadline. Dr. Rebecca Kraus, former FAA executives John Kern, Tony Broderick, Paul Dykeman, Frank Frisbie, and Dr. Andres Zellweger, Scott A. Thompson at the FAA Sacramento Flight Inspection Field Office, and Don A. Roberts of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University carefully reviewed the manuscript, asking questions and forcing me to dig deeper to ensure a thorough effort. I want to give special thanks to Annette Harrell, Lana Haug, and Kimberly Galiazzi at the FAA William J. Hughes Technical Center and Toby Tomlinson at FAA Headquarters for helping with photo research, Sharon Glasgow in FAA's Airport office for providing airport statistics and information, and Marcia Alexander-Adams in FAA's Communications office and Mary Lou Dordan at the FAA William J. Hughes Technical Center's Technical Strategies and Integration Group for always being ready to lend a hand. Laurie Zaleski, president of Art-Z Graphics, did a magnificent job of designing and laying out this work. Her extraordinary skills ensured this wonderful final product.

And, last, but not least, thanks to my father, Walter L. Kraus, a career Air Force historian who will always be my role model, and to my husband, John Henry King, whose encouragement and support knows no bounds.

Theresa L. Kraus, Ph.D.