

Vought Company Beginnings

The success of industrial companies is assured by the creation of exceptional products that provide them with market recognition and the resources needed for growth. In 1917 Chance M. Vought's design of the VE-7 "Bluebird" provided the product success that was the basis for forming the enterprise that became the Chance Vought Corporation in 1922.

Vought designed and built several derivatives from the successful VE-7/VE-9 in the years 1918 to 1921. None of these, powered by inline liquid-cooled engines, found a market. However, a successful follow-on to the VE-7/VE-9 series was developed in 1922 using air-cooled radial engines. These were the UO-1 model and its variants. The biggest world event of 1927 was Charles Lindbergh's crossing of the Atlantic. The biggest Company event in 1926 was the introduction of the O2U "Corsair" series. This aircraft was to use the new Pratt & Whitney "Wasp" air-cooled engine, and versions were built well into the 1930s. Vought's second attempt to enter a fighter competition was in 1929 with the XF2U-1, a one-of-a-kind aircraft that was much too late in achieving its first flight and lost out to the competition.

The first Pratt & Whitney air-cooled, nine-cylinder radial engine named "Wasp" was employed by the UO-1. This engine model led quickly in 1926 to design and production of Vought's next aviation winner, the O2U-1, which was the first Vought "Corsair" to fly for the U.S. Navy.

Design and development work continued on fighter derivatives of the O2U through the remainder of the 1920's without producing an aircraft that would achieve market success.

Near the end of this era of technical and business success the company became a division of United Aircraft and Transport Corporation, where Vought continued to inspire new aviation concepts until his untimely death in 1930 at the age of 42.

Through these fourteen years of Vought Company beginnings, Chance M. Vought's energy and vision as aircraft designer, engineer, builder, and company founder created a tradition of innovation and performance excellence that became the heritage of all who created and employed Vought products.