



PIONEER — Lawrence D. Bell, aviation leader, dies in Buffalo, N.Y., at 62.

Lawrence Bell, Aircraft Firm Founder, Dies

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Bell had been in ill-health since last May. He entered Buffalo General Hospital eight days ago. Death was attributed to a heart ailment. Survivors include two brothers, Clyde of Baltimore and Vaughn of Santa Monica, Cal., and a sister, Mrs. Mary Mills of Santa Monica.

Bell was considered the dean of the nation's aircraft executives. He founded the company here in 1935 and served as president until last September, when Leston P. Faneuf succeeded him.

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The company also produced the first plane to crack the sound barrier, the first jet plane, the first commercial helicopter and the first jet plane to take off and land vertically (VTOL).

First With Martin

Bell was born in Mentone, Ind., April 5, 1894. His first job in aviation was as a mechanic for two exhibition pilots when he was 18. A year later, in 1913, he went to work for Glenn L. Martin, and soon afterward Donald W. Douglas Sr. joined them.

The three, all destined to become leaders in American aviation, worked together until 1917, when Douglas reentered the Army. Bell moved up to the position of vice-president and general manager of Martin's company.

In 1928 Bell moved to Buffalo to join Consolidated Aircraft Corp., where he became vice-president and general manager. When Consolidated moved to San Diego, Bell formed his own company at Buffalo.