



Smithsonian

National Air and Space Museum

George W. Beatty Collection

Kate Igoe

1997



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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	George W. Beatty Collection
Date:	1910-1955 (bulk 1910-1912)
Identifier:	NASM.1989.0013
Creator:	Beatty, George W., -1955
Extent:	0.63 Linear feet 0.68 Cubic feet (1 legal document box; 1 20 x 24 x 3 flatbox; 1 slim legal document box)
Language:	English .
Summary:	George W. Beatty (-1955) was an Early Bird, aviator, and instructor.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The National Air and Space Museum (NASM) received these materials in 1988, a donation from Louise Beatty.

Louise Beatty, gift, 1988, 1991, 1989-0013, 1991-0069, NASM

Processing Information

Arranged and described by Kate Igoe, 1997. Encoded by Rihoko Ueno, 2012.

Preferred Citation

George W. Beatty Collection, Acc. 1989-0013, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access.

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical Note

Born in 1887 or 1888 in Whitehouse, New Jersey, George W. Beatty was employed as a young man as a linotype operator. He was shortly to enter the field that would define much of his life. In June of 1911 he enrolled at the Wright School at Nassau to be taught by Al Welsh. Soloing on July 23 of that year, he set a new two-man American altitude record on the same day. Throughout that summer, Beatty would set several

more records, in altitude, weight-carrying and duration. On August 6, 1911, Beatty obtained license number 41 and subsequently attended meets where he was to break several American and world records. Also in that year, he would become the first to fly a plane in which air to ground communication was maintained throughout the flight.

Early in 1912, Beatty established a school on Long Island. Its proximity to New York allowed Beatty to become the first person to land on Manhattan when he flew over the city and into Central Park. He would soon need to take his skills elsewhere, however. After the unfortunate death of Al Welsh, Beatty took the place of his former instructor at College Park, Maryland, testing aircraft for the government.

The next year, Beatty shipped his Wright plane to England. The aircraft had by now been equipped with a GYRO seven-cylinder rotary motor. He formed a partnership with Handly-Page to establish a flying school at the Hendon Aerodrome, outside of London. This venture was highly successful and was to produce over one thousand fliers for the Royal Air Force. After the war, Beatty worked for a Parisian motorcycle manufacturer and remained in Europe for nineteen years.

In later life, Beatty was to return to the field of his youth, working for the Hughes Printing Company. On February 21, 1955, George W. Beatty, a member of the Early Birds and an outstanding figure in early aviation, passed away at 67.

George W. Beatty (-1955) was an Early Bird, aviator and instructor. After finishing school, Beatty became a mechanic and linotype operator. In 1909 he became interested in a New York gliding club and assisted in the construction of an unsuccessful home-built Santos-Dumont Demoiselle. In 1911 he entered the Wright Flying School and received his license in July of that year. He spent much of the remaining years before World War I carrying passengers, flying exhibitions, and instructing, both in England and the United States. In February 1914 he established a flying school at Hendon, near London, in cooperation with Handley Page and instructed military pilots during the war. Following the war he returned to the US and became superintendent of the Hughes Printing Company, where he remained until his death.

Scope and Contents

The George W. Beatty Collection (accessions 1989-0013 and 1991-0069) contains approximately one cubic foot of material relating to the career of this pioneering aviator. The bulk of the material dates from 1910 to 1912 and includes an Early Birds plaque, several small banners from flying meets, and a 1928 letter from Orville Wright. The collection also includes correspondence, a great deal of photographic material, and scrapbooks.

Arrangement

Original order, when identified, has been maintained.

SERIES Series in the collection are as follows:

Series I: Documentary Material Series II: Photographic Material Series III: Oversized Materials

General

Other materials: Artifacts from this collection were transferred to the NASM Aeronautics Division; books were transferred to the NASM branch Library.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Aeronautics
- Aeronautics -- 1903-1916
- Aeronautics -- Exhibitions
- Aeronautics, Commercial -- United States
- Aeronautics, Military
- Flight training

Types of Materials:

- Correspondence
- Drawings
- Photographs
- Publications

Names:

- Beatty, George W., -1955
- Early Birds of Aviation (Organization).
- Page, Handley
- Wright Flying School
- Wright, Orville, 1871-1948

Container Listing

Series 1: Documentary Material, 1919-1955 and undated

Scope and Contents: George Beatty was a member of the Early Birds, a distinguished group of fliers who soloed prior to December 17, 1916. Their ceremonies and gatherings were regularly attended by Beatty and memorabilia and publications of the organization are to be found here. Beatty also was present at special events held at Greenfield Village and the Edison Institute.

Box 1, Folder 1	Personal Information
Box 1, Folder 2	Correspondence
Box 1, Folder 3	Early Birds
Box 1, Folder 4	Edison Institute
Box 1, Folder 5	Miscellaneous Documents

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Series 2: Photographic Material, 1911-1938 and undated

Scope and Contents: This series represents a fine collection of early aviation photography. The "Flying at Hendon" photographic series, produced as postcards, provides a compelling view of the aviators and aircraft to be seen at that English airfield in the period before the First World War. Caution should be exercised when viewing the scrapbook that concludes this series as its pages are quite brittle.

Box 1, Folder 6	Photographs of George Beatty
Box 1, Folder 7	"Flying at Hendon" Photographic Series
Box 1, Folder 8	Aerial Photography
Box 1, Folder 9	Aircraft Photography
Box 1, Folder 10	Aviation Personalities Photography
Box 1	Scrapbook 1 Boxe (phase box)

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Series 3: Oversized Materials, 1910-1940 and undated

Box 2, Folder OS	Scrapbook Serious conservation problem.
Box 2, Folder OS	Drawing of Wright B wing rib 16" by 74"
Box 2, Folder OS	Copper plate showing pilot and unknown dignitary
Box 2, Folder OS	Early Bird Certificate of Membership of George Beatty
Box 2, Folder OS	Advertisement for Beatty School of Flying from The Aeroplane July 28, 1915

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