



Smithsonian
National Air and Space Museum

Cal Rodgers and the Vin Fiz: The
First Transcontinental Flight Collection

Jordan Ferraro

2009



National Air and Space Museum Archives
14390 Air & Space Museum Parkway
Chantilly, VA 20151
NASMRefDesk@si.edu
<https://airandspace.si.edu/archives>

Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
Scope and Content.....	2
Biographical/Historical note.....	2
Arrangement note.....	2
Names and Subjects	2
Container Listing	4

Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	Cal Rodgers and the Vin Fiz: The First Transcontinental Flight Collection
Identifier:	NASM.2007.0004
Date:	1911 - 1976
Extent:	1.09 Cubic feet (3 boxes)
Creator:	Lebow, Eileen F.
Language:	English .
Summary:	This collection consists of one cubic foot of research material gathered by Eileen Lebow to write Cal Rodgers and the Vin Fiz: The First Transcontinental Flight. The following types of material are included, which trace Rodgers' flight: copy photographs; vintage prints and postcards; copies of newspaper articles; and brochures.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Eileen Lebow, Gift, 2006, NASM.2007.0004

Processing Information

Arranged, described, and encoded by Patti Williams, 2020.

Preferred Citation

Cal Rodgers and the Vin Fiz: The First Transcontinental Flight Collection, NASM.2007.0004, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution

Restrictions

No restrictions on access.

Conditions Governing Use

Material is subject to Smithsonian Terms of Use. Should you wish to use NASM material in any medium, please submit an Application for Permission to Reproduce NASM Material, available at [Permissions Requests](#).

Biographical Note

The first crossing of the United States by airplane was achieved by Calbraith Perry Rodgers in 1911 in his Wright EX biplane, named the Vin Fiz. Rodgers decided to attempt the coast-to-coast flight in response to publisher William Randolph Hearst's challenge which offered a prize of \$50,000 for the first transcontinental flight completed in 30 days. To finance the trip, Rodgers secured backing from the Armour Company, a Chicago firm that was introducing a new grape-flavored soft drink called Vin Fiz. Rodgers began his journey from Sheepshead Bay, New York, on September 17, 1911, but due to numerous stops, delays, and accidents, the 30-day time limit had expired before Rodgers reached California on November 5, 1911. Author Eileen F. Lebow wrote a book about Cal Rodgers' famous flight entitled, *Cal Rodgers and the Vin Fiz: The First Transcontinental Flight*. The book was published by the Smithsonian Institution Press in 1989.

Scope and Content

This collection consists of one cubic foot of research material collected by Eileen Lebow for her book *Cal Rodgers and the Vin Fiz: The First Transcontinental Flight*. Included in this collection are the following materials: copy photographs, vintage prints and postcards, copies of newspaper articles, and brochures. Ms. Lebow's original order, which appears to be chronological, was primarily maintained; however, some folders were combined to encompass a broader topic (i.e. folders about individual family members were combined into "Rodgers Family Background" folder.)

Arrangement

The collection is organized based on Ms. Lebow's original order. Box one consists primarily of photocopies of original source material (newspapers, correspondence), Ms. Lebow's correspondence, her notes, and brochures collected. Box two consists primarily of photocopies of news clippings from local papers following the flight of the *Vin Fiz*. Box three holds a variety of items, including photocopies of news clippings, published material on the *Vin Fiz*, photographs (both vintage and copy prints), notes and memorabilia. The material ranges in date from 1910 to 1997.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Aeronautics
- Aeronautics -- Flights
- Airplane racing
- Wright (Co) Model EX "Vin Fiz"

Types of Materials:

- Brochures
- Newspaper clippings
- Photographs

Names:

Rodgers, Calbraith Perry

Container Listing

Box 1, Folder 1	Rodgers Family Background Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 2	The Mercersburg Academy Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 3	Personality of Cal Rodgers and Sopwith Interview Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 4	Wright Field Co. Application and Learning to Fly Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 5	Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI) Licensing Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 6	Aviation Background Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 7	Aviation Background II Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 8	New York Yacht Club Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 9	Chicago Air Meet, 1911 August Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 10	News clippings - Hearst Prize, 1910-1984 Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 11	News clippings - Harry Atwood's Flight Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 12	News clippings - James Ward's Flight Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 13	News clippings - Robert Fowler's Flight Image(s)
Box 2, Folder 1	Armour Drink - <i>Vin Fiz</i> Image(s)
Box 2, Folder 2	Log and Route of Rodgers

- [Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 2, Folder 3 News clippings, 1911 August 12-26
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 2, Folder 4 News clippings - Sheepshead Bay, NY; Hancock, NY , 1911 September 16-21
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 2, Folder 5 News clippings - Elmira, NY; Salamanca, NY, 1911 September 22-27
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 2, Folder 6 News clippings - Salamanca, NY; Kansas City, MO , 1911 September 28-
October 11
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 2, Folder 7 News clippings - Kansas City, MO; Waco, TX , 1911 October 13-19
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 2, Folder 8 News clippings - Waco, TX; Willcox, AZ , 1911 October 20-31
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 2, Folder 9 News clippings - Maricopa, AZ; Pasadena, CA , 1911 November 2 -5
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 2, Folder 10 News clippings - Completion of Flight - Pasadena, CA, 1911 November
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 2, Folder 11 News clippings - Miscellaneous Articles, 1911-1983
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 3, Folder 1 News clippings - Post Flight Activities- Long Beach, CA Finish , 1911 November
6-12
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 3, Folder 2 News clippings - Compton Crash , 1911 November 12
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 3, Folder 3 News clippings - Long Beach, CA, 1911 November 15- 1912 January 2
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 3, Folder 4 News clippings - Rodgers' Fatal Crash and Burial , 1912 April 3
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 3, Folder 5 *First Transcontinental Flight* by Charles S. Wiggins

	Image(s)
Box 3, Folder 6	<i>Chicago History</i> Spring , 1976 Image(s)
Box 3, Folder 6	<i>Historical Society of Long Beach Journal</i> , 1971-1972 Image(s)
Box 3, Folder 7	Publications, 1911-1989 Image(s)
Box 3, Folder 8	Cal Rodgers Vintage Prints Image(s)
Box 3, Folder 9	Copy Prints Image(s)
Box 3, Folder 10	Photocopies of Prints from various repositories Image(s)
Box 3, Folder 11	Smithsonian Press Material Image(s)
Box 3, Folder 12	Commemoratives, 1950-1997 Image(s)
Box 3, Folder 13	Lebow Miscellaneous Notes Image(s)
Box 3, Folder 14	Miscellaneous Image(s)