



Smithsonian

National Air and Space Museum

Lewis Selwyn Webster Collection

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2020

National Air and Space Museum Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	Lewis Selwyn Webster Collection
Date:	1917-1952
Identifier:	NASM.2010.0041
Creator:	Webster, Lewis Selwyn, 1892-1957
Extent:	0.79 Cubic feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	This collection consists of material relating to the long military career (1918-1948) of aviator Lewis Selwyn Webster, including five of Webster's pilot's log books as well as numerous photographs, letters, news clippings, and other documents. A small section of the collection pertains to Webster's son, Lewis Frazer Webster, who served with the U.S. Air Force and was killed in action in Korea in 1952.
Digital Content:	Image(s): NASM-9A08258

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Eric Webster, Gift, 2010, NASM.2010.0041.

Processing Information

Arranged and described by Jessamyn Lloyd, encoded by Melissa A. N. Keiser, 2020.

Preferred Citation

Lewis Selwyn Webster Collection, Acc. NASM.2010.0041, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

Lewis Selwyn Webster was born in 1892. After graduating from high school, Webster enrolled in the University of Illinois but left college to join the U.S. Army Air Service during World War I. Webster completed

Ground School at the University of Illinois in January 1918 and then went to flight training at Rich Field in Texas which he completed in June of that year. Webster then completed a flying instructor's course at Brooks Field, Texas before being ordered to Call Field, Texas and subsequently to Langley Field, Virginia. In October 1919, Webster participated in the first mass transcontinental air race, dubbed by the Air Service the "Transcontinental Reliability and Endurance Test," which was organized by General William "Billy" Mitchell. Webster finished seventh. Webster served under Mitchell with the 1st Provisional Air Brigade and, in June and July of 1921, participated in the sinking of German battleships in an area off the Chesapeake Bay under a program of aerial bombing tests operated jointly by the U.S. Army and the U.S. Navy. Under this same program, Webster participated in the sinking of the *USS Alabama* (BB-8) in September of that year. From 1922 to 1925, Webster served at France Field in the Panama Canal Zone in the capacity of engineering officer of the 7th Observation Squadron. Webster returned to Langley Field in November 1925 and completed Air Corps Tactical School there in 1939. From 1942 to 1944, Webster was the Commanding Officer of the 36th Fighter Squadron in Australia and New Guinea, and from 1945 to 1948 he commanded the 4832nd Specialized Depot in Topeka, Kansas. In 1948, Webster retired from military service as a Colonel and was active in civic and social service organizations in Lakeland, Florida until his death in 1957.

A small portion of the collection pertains to Lewis Selwyn Webster's son, Lewis Frazer Webster, who served with the U.S. Air Force and was killed in action in Korea in 1952.

Scope and Contents

This collection consists of material relating to the military career of Lewis Selwyn Webster, including five of Webster's pilot's log books, covering the dates 1918-1932, as well as numerous photographs (including two panoramic photographs), letters, and news clippings, and other documents gathered into a scrapbook binder. One of the panoramic photographs is 19 by 7.75 inches and shows the Station Supply Department at Duncan Field, San Antonio Texas, 1929. The second panoramic photograph is 40 by 8 inches and shows the commissioned officers of the 1st Provisional Air Brigade, who were gathered to take part in the Bombing Maneuvers at Langley Field, June 1921. The scrapbook binder contains photographs of Webster during flight training and subsequent military service; Webster's military records; photographs of various U.S. Army facilities; aerial photographs of various locations; a copy of the rules and regulations, Webster's flight log, and Webster's report pertaining to the 1919 Transcontinental Reliability and Endurance Test; news clippings; numerous photographs of the 1921 German battleship bombing trials; photographs and correspondence pertaining to the Panama Canal Zone, a 1924 memo from Mason M. Patrick to Commanding Officers regarding aircraft accidents; a program for the dedication of Randolph Field; and news clippings pertaining to Webster's participation in an aerial search for a gang of kidnappers. Aircraft depicted in the photographs include Dayton Wright DH-4, Curtiss JN-4D Jenny, de Havilland (Aircro) D.H.9, Martin (Glenn L.) MB-2, Curtiss F-5L (PN-5), Curtiss O-1E Falcon, Douglas O-38, Douglas O-2, Boeing P-12, and the Handley Page H.P.42. Other photograph subjects include General William "Billy" Mitchell and aerial views of the 1933 Century of Progress exposition (World's Fair) in Chicago, Illinois. The collection also contains a copy of the publication *A List of Airplane Pilot Officers of the United States Army Air Service Commissioned Prior to November 12, 1918*.

A small portion of the collection pertains to Lewis Selwyn Webster's son, Lewis Frazer Webster, who served with the U.S. Air Force and was killed in action in Korea in 1952. This series contains military records of Lewis Frazer Webster, photographs, and news clippings. Aircraft depicted in the photographs in this series include Republic P-47 (F-47) Thunderbolt, Lockheed (F-80) P-80A Shooting Star, North American F-86 Sabre, and the Gloster Meteor.

Arrangement

The collection is divided into two series.

A small number of items in the collection have been digitized and attached to this finding aid.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Aeronautics
- Aeronautics, Military
- Air pilots
- Boeing P-12 (Model 102)
- Curtiss F-5L (PN-5)
- Curtiss JN-4 Jenny Family
- Curtiss O-1E Falcon
- Dayton Wright DH-4
- Douglas O-2
- Douglas O-38
- Gloster Meteor Family
- Handley Page H.P.42
- Korean War, 1950-1953
- Lockheed (F-80) P-80A Shooting Star
- Martin (Glenn L.) MB-2
- North American F-86 Sabre Family
- Republic P-47 (F-47) Thunderbolt Family
- World War, 1939-1945
- de Havilland (Airco) D.H.9A

Names:

- Mitchell, William, 1879-1936
- Webster, Lewis Frazer, 1920-1952

Container Listing

Series 1: Lewis Selwyn Webster

Box 1, Folder 1	Scrapbook Binder (1 of 3)
Box 1, Folder 2	Scrapbook Binder (2 of 3)
Box 1, Folder 3	Scrapbook Binder (3 of 3)
Box 1, Folder 5	Publication, "A List of Airplane Pilot Officers of the United States Army Air Service Commissioned Prior to 12 November 1918."
Box 2, Folder 1	Pilot's Log Books
Box 2, Folder 1	NASM-9A16547: L. S. Webster Pilot's Book No. 1, 1918-1922 Notes: Pilot's logbook kept by Lieutenant Lewis Selwyn Webster, U. S. Army Air Service, for the period February 5, 1918, through November 14, 1922.
Box 2, Folder 1	L. S. Webster Pilot's Book No. 2, 1923-1925
Box 2, Folder 1	L. S. Webster Pilot's Book No. 3, 1925-1928
Box 2, Folder 1	L. S. Webster Pilot's Book No. 4, 1928-1930
Box 2, Folder 1	L. S. Webster Pilot's Book No. 5, 1930-1932
Box 2, Folder 1	Pilot's Book [Blank], 1918-1928
Box 3, Folder 1	Panoramic Photographs
Box 3, Folder 1	NASM-9A16545: "Station Supply Department, Duncan Field, San Antonio, Texas", 1929 Notes: Panoramic group photo of civilian personnel posed standing in front of a biplane outside an open hangar. Duncan Field, also known as Kelly Number One, was formed as a maintenance and supply division of Kelly Field, and located adjacent to Kelly Field in San Antonio, Texas.
Box 3, Folder 1	NASM-9A16546: "Commissioned Officers 1st Provisional Air Brigade Taking Part in the Bombing Maneuvers on Langley Field, Va.", June 1921 Notes: Panoramic group photo of US Army Air Service personnel posed at Langley Field, Virginia, for the US Army Air Service Ship Bombing Trials; aircraft are seen in left background, hangars in right background. Commanding officer General William L. "Billy" Mitchell is seen standing at center (number 75), pilot Lt. Lewis S. Webster is in back

row, right of center (number 42). Reverse of print contains list of names (key to numbers) of personnel.

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Series 2: Lewis Frazier Webster

Box 1, Folder 4

[Scrapbook Binder, Material Pertaining to Lewis Frazier Webster](#)

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