



Smithsonian

National Air and Space Museum

Dale L. White, Sr., Papers

Elizabeth C. Borja

2016



National Air and Space Museum Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	Dale L. White, Sr., Papers
Date:	1932-2013 (bulk 1932-1939)
Identifier:	NASM.2013.0050
Creator:	White, Dale L., Sr., 1899-1977 (Author)
Extent:	2.26 Linear feet (2 legal-sized boxes; 1 flat box)
Language:	English .
Summary:	The Dale L., White, Sr., Papers consist of material relating to the aviation career of Dale L. White, Sr., including his attendance at the Curtiss Wright Aeronautical University and his piloting of the "Goodwill Flight" from Chicago, Illinois, to Washington, DC, to lobby for African-Americans to be able to join the US Army Air Corps. The bulk of the collection covers his flying years between 1932 and 1941, though personal materials from a later date are also included. Materials included are photographs, negatives, telegrams, a scrapbook, aeronautical textbooks, aeronautical notebook, DVDs, newspaper and magazine articles, pilot log books, pilot licenses, and related information.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated Dale L. White, Jr., gift, 2013.

Processing Note

Arranged and described by Elizabeth Borja, 2015. Encoded by Elizabeth Borja, 2016.

Preferred Citation

Dale L. White, Sr., Papers Collection, Accession 2013-0050, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access.

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical Note

Dale L. White, Sr., (1899-1977) was a prominent African-American pilot, who, along with Chauncey Spencer, flew a 1939 "Goodwill Flight" from Chicago, Illinois, to Washington, DC, to lobby for African-Americans to be able to join the US Army Air Corps.

Born in Minden, Louisiana, White moved to Chicago, Illinois, in 1930. In 1932, he started to attend the Curtiss-Wright Aeronautical University. On August 18, 1933, White began his flight training and he received his license in June 1936. For the next decade, White was very active in Chicago African-American flying circles and was a member of the Challenger Air Pilots Association (CAPA), a group organized by Chicago-area African-American aviation enthusiasts.

In the spring of 1939, the CAPA decided to organize a "Goodwill Flight" to Washington, DC, to lobby for a change in legislation so the African-Americans could join the US Army Air Corps. Dale White was chosen to be the pilot and Chauncey Spencer was selected as the navigator for this flight. With a CAPA-secured rental of a Lincoln (Aircraft) Page LP-3 (New Swallow) biplane, White and Spencer left Chicago on May 8, 1939, for their 3000 mile round-trip. During their time in Washington, DC, White and Spencer had a scheduled meeting with Senators Slattery and Everett Dirksen and chance meeting with then Senator Harry S. Truman, who in 1948 integrated the armed services by presidential order. After returning from their successful trip, White was chosen to drop a wreath on the grave of aviator Bessie Coleman, located in Lincoln Cemetery, Chicago, on a May day designated, "The Spirit of the late Bessie Coleman."

In August of 1939, the CAPA broadened its scope and was incorporated as the National Negro Airman's Association of America (NAAA), and White was elected to be vice president. During the rest of 1939, White made numerous flights in and around Chicago.

In 1940, White became an aircraft mechanic at Wright Patterson Field in Dayton, Ohio. White did not join the Tuskegee Airman as he was too old to apply, but he did continue to fly until June 1941, when he quit flying at the request of his wife. He retired from Wright Patterson in 1971 and died in 1977.

Scope and Contents

This collection consists material relating to the aviation career of Dale L. White, Sr., including his attendance at the Curtiss Wright Aeronautical University and his piloting of a 1939 "Goodwill Flight" from Chicago, Illinois, to Washington, DC, to lobby for African-Americans to be able to join the US Army Air Corps. The collection also contains information on other important African-American aviators, including: Chauncey Spencer, White's navigator for the "Goodwill Flight;" Willa Brown; and John Charles Robinson, "The Brown Condor of Ethiopia."

The following types of material are included: photographs, negatives, telegrams, scrapbook, aeronautical textbooks, aeronautical notebook, newspaper and magazine articles, pilot log books, pilot licenses, DVDs and three mini-DV master video tapes with Chauncey Spencer (stored in the audiovisual collection), and related information.

Arrangement

The collection has been arranged into three series: Series 1, Career and African-Americans in Aviation; Series 2, Personal Materials; and Series 3, Aeronautical Education Materials.

The collection did not have any particular order when received by the NASM Archives. Archivists have organized the documents by topic then by date.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Aeronautics
- Aeronautics -- Flights
- African American air pilots

Container Listing

Series 1: Career and African-Americans in Aviation, 1932 - 1971

Arrangement: Materials are organized in chronological order.

Scope and Contents: This series contains material regarding Dale L. White's aviation career and other prominent African-American aviators and figures. These documents include White's pilot's license and log books; materials from the Challenger Air Pilot's Association (CAPA) and its successor organization, the National Airmen's Association of America (NAAA), a 1939 directory of Negro pilots; business cards from New York City and Chicago; materials from the 1939 "Goodwill Flight" he made with Chauncey Spencer; and photographs and newspaper articles. A large scrapbook features newspaper articles about members of CAPA, especially John Robinson and his activities with the Ethiopian Air Force, which earned him the nickname of the "Brown Condor." Also included are records from White's employment at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

Box 1, Folder 1 Pilot's Log Books (2), 1933 - 1941

Box 1, Folder 1, Item 1 Pilot's Log Book, August 18, 1933 to May 18, 1940

Box 1, Folder 1, Item 2 Pilot's Log Book, May 23, 1940 to June 12, 1941

Box 1, Folder 2 Pilot's License Materials, 1935 - 1940

Box 1, Folder 3 Challenger Air Pilots Association (CAPA) Banquet for John C. Robinson, Invitation and Ticket, May 23, 1936

Box 1, Folder 4 Souvenir Fight Program, James J. Braddock vs. Joe Louis, June 22, 1937

Box 1, Folder 5 Department of Commerce, Negro Aviators Listing, January 1939

Box 1, Folder 6 Goodwill Flight, Flash Magazine (and Chauncey Spencer Letter, 2000), June 1, 1939

Box 1, Folder 7 Christmas Card, Dale White and Chauncey Spencer, 1939

Box 1, Folder 8 National Airmen's Association of America (NAAA), Membership Card and Conference Program, 1939 - 1940

Box 1, Folder 9 Photos, 1932-1939, undated

Box 1, Folder 10 Negatives [from envelope marked July 24, 1936], [1932-1938]

Box 1, Folder 11 Negatives [from envelope marked September 9, 1938], [1932-1938]

Box 1, Folder 12	Newspaper Articles, African-American Topics, 1936-1941
Box 3, Folder 1	Scrapbook - African-Americans in Aviation, 1933-1939 Notes: Scrapbook, 28 pages, unbound, with heavily tooled brown leather cover with gold decoration. Contents include newspaper clippings and photographs (dated 1933-1939) of members of the Challenger Air Pilots Association (CAPA) from Chicago, Illinois, particularly John C. Robinson and his activities with the Imperial Ethiopian Air Force, which earned him the nickname of the "Brown Condor," and Dale L. White and Chauncey Spencer's 1939 "Goodwill Flight" (May 11 to May 16) from Chicago to Washington, DC. Digital images displayed are the only pages which have been digitized at this time.
Box 1, Folder 13	Selective Service Notice of Classification, July 16, 1942
Box 1, Folder 14	Business Cards, New York City, undated
Box 1, Folder 15	Business Cards, Chicago, undated
Box 1, Folder 16	Employment, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, 1940-1971

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Series 2: Personal Materials, 1936 - 2013

Arrangement: Materials are organized in chronological order.

Scope and Contents: This series deals with Dale L. White's personal life. Materials include his birth certificate, articles about his life, condolences upon his 1977 death, and an essay by his granddaughter Amye White. The series also contains a narrative and inventory of documents and artifacts donated to the National Air and Space Museum, with DVDs including a May 2002 "Visit with Chauncey Spencer." (Audiovisual materials are stored in the NASM Archives' Audiovisual Collections.)

Box 1, Folder 17 [Notification of Birth Registration \(original document, 1899\), 1936](#)

Box 1, Folder 18 [Government Death Condolences, 1978-2004](#)

Box 1, Folder 19 [Essay by Granddaughter, Amye White, 1992](#)

Box 1, Folder 20 [Newspaper Articles, Dale L. White, Sr., 1997-1999](#)

Box 1, Folder 21 [Dale L. White, Narrative and Artifacts Inventory, List and DVDs, 2013; A Visit with Chauncey Spencer, May 2002,](#)

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Series 3: Aeronautical Education Materials, 1931 - 1945

Arrangement: Materials are organized in chronological order.

Scope and Contents: This series contains the materials collected by Dale L. White in pursuit of his aeronautical education. Included are the payment books, weather forecast maps, and coursework notes, he took as a student at Curtiss-Wright Aeronautical University in Chicago. He also collected newspaper articles on aviation topics and books and manuals.

Box 1, Folder 22	Curtiss-Wright Aeronautical University, Chicago, Payment Books, 1932-1933
Box 1, Folder 23	Curtiss-Wright Aeronautical University Coursework - Notes, 1932-1935
Box 3, Folder 2	Curtiss-Wright Aeronautical University - Weather Forecast Maps, Chicago, IL, 1933-1934
Box 1, Folder 24	Newspaper Articles, General Aviation Topics, 1933-1945
Box 2, Folder 1	Miller, I.W. The Aircraft Mechanics' Handbook, First Edition, 1931
Box 2, Folder 2	Younger, John E. and Nairn F. Ward. Airplane Construction and Repair: A Textbook for Airplane Mechanics, McGraw-Hill Vocational Texts, 1931
Box 2, Folder 3	Thorpe, Lt. Leslie. The New Cadet System of Ground School Training, Vol. I, Aerodynamics and Theory of Flight, 1935
Box 2, Folder 4	Jordanoff, Assen. Your Wings, 1937
Box 2, Folder 5	U.S. Department of Commerce, Coast and Geodetic Survey. Lyon, Thoburn C. Practical Air Navigation and the Use of Aeronautical Charts of the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, 1939
Box 2, Folder 6	U.S. Civil Aeronautics Authority (CAA), Civil Aeronautics Bulletin No. 5, Flight Instructor's Manual, June 1939
Box 2, Folder 7	Berry Brothers, Specifications for Aircraft Finishing, Eighth Edition, undated
Box 2, Folder 8	Scintilla Aircraft Magneto, Types AG 8-D, AG 9-D, AG 12-D, and V-AG Types, Parts List and Instruction Book, #SC4, undated

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