



Smithsonian

National Air and Space Museum

Cyrus Bettis Collection [Shuart]

Patti Williams

2018

National Air and Space Museum Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	Cyrus Bettis Collection [Shuart]
Date:	1893 - 1926 (1925-26)
Identifier:	NASM.2018.0066
Extent:	0.9 Cubic feet (One flat box and one letter document box.)
Language:	English .
Summary:	This collection documents Cyrus Bettis' aviation career.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Stuart and Martha S. Lehman, Gift, 2018, NASM.2018.0066

Processing Information

Arranged, described, and encoded by Patti Williams, 2018.

Preferred Citation

Cyrus Bettis Collection [Shuart], NASM.2018.0066, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

Cyrus Bettis (1893-1926) was one of the leading Army Air Service pursuit pilots in the early to mid-1920s. Born in Carsonville, Michigan, Bettis entered the Army as a flying cadet in February 1918. He attended the school of Military Aeronautics at the University of Illinois and was sent to Camp Dick, Dallas, Texas in April of that year. He finished his flight training and was commissioned second lieutenant, Air Service (Aeronautics) on September 11, 1918. On July 1, 1920, Bettis was commissioned in the Regular Army and promoted to first lieutenant. During the International Air Races in 1924, Lt. Bettis won the John L. Mitchell Trophy Race. Bettis won the October 1925 Pulitzer Trophy competition and established a world record of 249,342 miles per hour, flying the Curtiss R3C-2 Racer in its land plane configuration. Bettis was also the backup pilot for the 1925 Schneider Trophy competition and flew the R3C extensively in its float plane configuration. Bettis, along with Lt. James Doolittle, was awarded the Mackay Trophy for 1925. Bettis died at the Walter Reed General Hospital in Washington, DC on September 1, 1926, as a result of injuries he received in an aircraft accident on August 23, 1926, when in heavy fog he crashed into a mountainside near Bellefonte, Pennsylvania.

Scope and Contents

This collection consist of the following types of material documenting Cyrus Bettis' aviation career: photographs, both portraits and snapshots; 1925 National Air Race program; correspondence; newspapers; a scrapbook containing newspaper articles; transcript of radio address; caricature of Bettis; and 1st day covers.

Arrangement

Arrangement by type.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Aeronautics
- Aeronautics -- Competitions
- Curtiss CR-3 Racer

Types of Materials:

- Photographic prints
- Scrapbooks

Names:

- Bettis, Cyrus
- United States. Army. Air Service