



Smithsonian

National Air and Space Museum

Eastern Air Lines Collection [Foster]

Patti Williams

2020

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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	Eastern Air Lines Collection [Foster]
Date:	1960s - 1990s
Identifier:	NASM.2020.0009
Creator:	Eastern Airlines, Inc. Foster, David L., Jr.
Extent:	3.6 Cubic feet (2 flat boxes, 7 document cases, 1 slim document case, and 4 large map folders.)
Language:	English .
Summary:	This collection consists of material mostly relating to David Foster's career with Eastern Air Lines and the maintenance of their aircraft, 1960s to 1980s.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Lois T Foster, Gift, 2019, NASM.2020.0009

Processing Information

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

Preferred Citation

Eastern Airlines Collection [Foster], NASM.2020.0009, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

Eastern Air Lines was originally formed as Pitcairn Aviation, Inc. in 1927. In July 1929 it was acquired by North American Aviation as the Eastern Air Lines Division and, in January 1930, was renamed Eastern Air Transport. By February 1933, Eastern had acquired Ludington Airlines, giving Eastern routes to most major eastern cities, including New York, Atlanta, Miami, Atlantic City, Philadelphia, and Washington, DC. In 1934 the airline was renamed Eastern Air Lines and introduced Douglas DC-2s on its longer routes. In 1937 Eastern began DC-3 service and acquired Wedell-Williams Air Service Corp, thereby extending its routes

westward to Houston. North American sold its holdings in Eastern to a group headed by Captain Eddie Rickenbacker. By 1960 Eastern had extended its coverage to Puerto Rico, Canada, and Mexico, as well as westward to Detroit and St. Louis. In January 1960 Eastern introduced jet service with DC-8s and, in April 1961, inaugurated "Air Shuttle" service between Boston, New York, and Washington, DC with its propeller-driven aircraft. By 1975 Eastern's network covered 100 cities in 30 states, as well as Mexico, Canada, and the Caribbean. In 1986 Eastern was bought by Texas Air, making Texas Air the largest airline in the United States. Following labor problems, including a strike by Eastern's machinists which was supported by the pilots and flight attendants, Eastern declared Chapter 11 Bankruptcy in 1989.

David L. Foster, Jr., (d. 2010) had a four year apprenticeship with Eastern Air Lines before becoming a 37 year employee and a manager in the Aircraft Service Center. After his retirement from Eastern, Foster worked for 9 years with the Dee Howard Company.

Scope and Contents

This collection consists of 3.6 cubic feet of material mostly relating to David Foster's career with Eastern Air Lines and the maintenance of their aircraft, 1960s to 1980s. The following types of material are included: photo albums, aircraft drawings, newsletters, photographs, newspaper articles, posters, and technical manuals.

Arrangement

Arranged by type of material.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Aeronautics
- Aircraft
- Airlines

Types of Materials:

- Newsletters -- 20th century
- Photograph albums
- Technical manuals -- 20th century