



Smithsonian

National Air and Space Museum

Cal Rodgers *Vin Fiz* Flight [Wiggin] Collection

Patti Williams

2021

National Air and Space Museum Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	Cal Rodgers <i>Vin Fiz</i> Flight [Wiggin] Collection
Date:	1960s-1970s
Identifier:	NASM.2021.0015
Creator:	Wiggin, Mabel Rodgers
Extent:	0.8 Cubic feet (Three boxes and two folders.)
Language:	English .
Summary:	This collection consists of .8 cubic ft of material gathered by Cal Rodgers' widow, Mabel Rodgers Wiggin, in her efforts to have his 1911 transcontinental flight properly recognized and commemorated. This collection is in English.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Carroll F Gray, Gift, 2021, NASM.2021.0015

Processing Information

Arranged, described, and encoded by Patti Williams, 2021.

Preferred Citation

Cal Rodgers *Vin Fiz* Flight [Wiggin] Collection, NASM.2021.0015, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

The first crossing of the United States by airplane was achieved by Calbraith "Cal" Perry Rodgers (1879-1912) 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 New York American challenge which offered a prize of \$50,000 for the first transcontinental flight to be competed in 30 days. Rodgers began his journey from Sheepshead Bay, New York, on September 17, 1911, and as the flight was punctuated by numerous stops, delays, and accidents, the 30-day time limit Hearst imposed for the prize had expired before Rodgers

reached California on November 5, 1911. To finance the trip, Rodgers had secured backing from the Armour Company, a Chicago firm which was then introducing a new grape-flavored soft drink called *Vin Fiz*.

Scope and Contents

This collection consists of .8 cubic ft of material gathered by Cal Rodgers' widow, Mabel Rodgers Wiggin, in her efforts to have his 1911 transcontinental flight properly recognized and commemorated. The following types of material include: correspondence with the Smithsonian Institution, US Post Office, Federal Aviation Administration, Eddie Rickenbacker, Grover Loening, Lord Brabazon, Harry Byrd, Henry Villard, William Fleming, Ernest Jones, Paul Newman, James Hensley, Aubrey W. Groskopf, Rex Guthrie, and John Boccabella; photographs of when Rodgers Wiggin visited the Smithsonian to see the airplane in 1961 on the 50th anniversary of the flight, as well as photographs from the induction of Cal Rodgers into the National Aviation Hall of Fame; a Pathe News film; a cassette tape regarding the *Vin Fiz*; miscellaneous newspaper articles and information on Cal Rodgers and the *Vin Fiz*; and first day covers from 1961, including some with pieces of a wing strut attached.

Arrangement

Arranged by material type.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Aeronautics
- Covers (Philately) -- United States
- Transcontinental flights -- United States
- Wright (Co) Model EX "Vin Fiz"

Types of Materials:

- Correspondence -- 20th century

Names:

- Rodgers, Calbraith Perry