



Smithsonian

National Air and Space Museum

John Guy Gilpatric Collection

Elizabeth C. Borja

2019

National Air and Space Museum Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	John Guy Gilpatric Collection
Date:	1910-1950 (bulk 1910-1918)
Identifier:	NASM.XXXX.0220
Creator:	Gilpatric, John Guy, 1896-1950
Extent:	2.17 Cubic feet (10 folders, 3 flatboxes)
Language:	The majority of the materials are in English, though there are some French and German documents.
Summary:	<p>John Guy Gilpatric (1896-1950) was one of America's earliest aviators. Although not officially an Early Bird, he first learned to fly in 1912 at the age of sixteen. That same year he gained notoriety by setting a new American record when he reached an altitude of nearly 5,000 feet with a passenger on board. During his teenage years, Gilpatric gave flying lessons and flew in air exhibitions, eventually becoming employed as a test-pilot. He later worked as an aviation instructor in Toronto, Canada, teaching the Royal Canadian Air Cadets. Following the United States' entry into World War I in 1917, Gilpatric enlisted in the Army Air Service as a First Lieutenant, where he was stationed overseas as Engineering Officer, First Aero Squadron, American Expeditionary Forces (AEF). The collection contains four scrapbooks, photographs, correspondence, licenses and identity cards, newspaper clippings, newsletters, and periodicals, which chronicle his aviation career and military service.</p>

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Unknown, gift, unknown, NASM.XXXX.0220

Processing Information

Arranged, described, and encoded by Elizabeth C. Borja, 2019.

Preferred Citation

John Guy Gilpatric Collection, Acc. NASM.XXXX.0220, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

John Guy Gilpatric (1896-1950) was one of America's earliest aviators. Although not officially an Early Bird, he first learned to fly in 1912 at the age of sixteen. That same year he gained notoriety by setting a new American record when he reached an altitude of nearly 5,000 feet with a passenger on board. During his teenage years, Gilpatric gave flying lessons and flew in air exhibitions, eventually becoming employed as a test-pilot. He later worked as an aviation instructor in Toronto, Canada, teaching the Royal Canadian Air Cadets. Following the United States' entry into World War I in 1917, Gilpatric enlisted in the Army Air Service as a First Lieutenant, where he was stationed overseas as Engineering Officer, First Aero Squadron, American Expeditionary Forces (AEF). Upon returning to the United States in 1919, he left the world of aviation behind and worked in advertising. Gilpatric is probably best known, however, for his subsequent career as a writer, during which time he wrote the *Saturday Evening Post* series, "Colin Glencannon," among numerous other books and articles.

Scope and Contents

The collection contains four scrapbooks, photographs, correspondence, newspaper clippings, newsletters, and periodicals. The collection also includes Gilpatric's Aero Club of America issued pilot license and his American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) identity and pilot identity card. Correspondence includes three letters from Glenn H. Curtiss and Jimmy Doolittle. The scrapbooks contain photographs, clippings and ephemera, including the following subjects: Gilpatric's early aviation career as both an aviator and an instructor with the Moisant Flying School, Sloane Aviation School, the Royal Canadian air cadets; early aircraft such as the Sloane Flying Boat, the Nieuport 27, Curtiss JN-2, as well as Wright, Bleriot, Farman, and Deperdussin aircraft; and early aviators Charles Niles; DeLloyd Thompson; Art Smith; Bert Acosta; Claude Grahame-White; George W. Beatty; William Knox Martin; George M. Dyott; John E. Sloane; and Robert Y. Hoshino, a Japanese aviator. One scrapbook focuses on Gilpatric's service in the AEF in World War I with photographs of zeppelins, soldiers and aviators, aerial reconnaissance photography, destroyed villages, and graves. Photographs found in the videodisc prints are most likely copied from the scrapbooks or smaller images that had been removed from albums.

Note: Where indicated, the digital images in this finding aid were repurposed from scans made by an outside contractor for a commercial product and may show irregular cropping and orientation in addition to color variations resulting from damage to and deterioration of the original objects.

Arrangement

Materials were arranged by physical location.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Aerial reconnaissance
Aeronautics
Aeronautics -- Competitions
Aeronautics, Military
Aeronautics--Canada
Air pilots
Periodicals
Photographic reconnaissance systems
World War, 1914-1918

Types of Materials:

Correspondence
Photographs
Scrapbooks

Names:

Gilpatric, John Guy, 1896-1950
United States. Army. Air Service. 1st Aero Squadron

Container Listing

Series 1: Scrapbooks, 1910-1946 (bulk 1910-1918)

Scope and Contents: Scrapbooks contain photographs, newspaper clippings, and ephemera which chronicle Gilpatric's aviation and military careers.

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| Box 1, Item 1 | <p>Scrapbook [S-8B], 1911-1946 (bulk 1911-1920)</p> <p>Notes: Contains loose and attached newspaper and periodicals clippings and photographs. Subjects include: Gilpatric; Pacific Aero Club; 1912 Los Angeles, Dominguez Field, 3rd Aviation Meet; the Sloane Aviation School; Ruth Law; the Early Birds; the Aero Club of Canada; and the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF).</p> |
| Box 1, Item 2 | <p>Scrapbook [S-8D], circa 1917</p> <p>Notes: Contains photographs and ephemera. Subjects include: Sloane flying boats; Long Branch Aerodrome, outside Toronto, Canada; Royal Flying Corps; Curtiss JN-2 Testing for Spanish Government; first Pan-American Aeronautic Exposition; Charles Niles; DeLloyd Thompson; Art Smith; and Bert Acosta.</p> |
| Box 2, Item 1 | <p>Scrapbook [S-8A], 1917-1918</p> <p>Notes: Contains photographs and ephemera regarding Gilpatric's service with the First Aero Squadron, American Expeditionary Forces (AEF), in World War I. Subjects include: zeppelins, soldiers and aviators, aerial reconnaissance photography, destroyed villages, and death and graves.</p> <p>Note: The digital images in this item were repurposed from scans made by an outside contractor for a commercial product and may show irregular cropping and orientation in addition to color variations resulting from damage to and deterioration of the original objects.</p> |
| Box 3, Item 1 | <p>Loose Photographs, circa 1918</p> |
| Box 3, Item 2 | <p>Scrapbook [S-8C], 1911-1914</p> <p>Notes: Contains photographs and ephemera. Subjects include: Moisant Flying School; 1912 Los Angeles, Dominguez Field, 3rd Aviation Meet; Deperdussin, Bleriot, Wright, Curtiss, Baldwin, Haupt, Farman, and Sloane aircraft; Claude Grahame-White; George W. Beatty; DeLloyd Thompson; William Knox Martin; George M. Dyott; John E. Sloane; and Robert Y. Hoshino, a Japanese aviator.</p> <p>Note: Blank pages have not been digitally reproduced. Any gaps in numbering result from their omission.</p> |

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Series 2: Pilots Licenses and Identity Cards, 1912-1918

Scope and Contents: Series includes Gilpatric's pilot license issued by the Aero Club of America and his identity cards from the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) during World War I.

Box 107 (Shared),
Item 1

[Aero Club of America, Aviator Pilot License no. 171, September 25, 1912](#)

Notes:

Note: The digital images in this item were repurposed from scans made by an outside contractor for a commercial product and may show irregular cropping and orientation in addition to color variations resulting from damage to and deterioration of the original objects.

Box 107 (Shared),
Item 2

[American Expeditionary Forces \(AEF\) Pilot's Identity Card, no. 9, 1918](#)

Box 107 (Shared),
Item 3

[American Expeditionary Forces \(AEF\) Identity Card, no. 1448, 1918](#)

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Series 3: Correspondence, 1915-1942

Box 91 (Shared)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Scope and

Contents:

Correspondence is from Glenn H. Curtiss and James "Jimmy" Doolittle.

Note: The digital images in this series were repurposed from scans made by an outside contractor for a commercial product and may show irregular cropping and orientation in addition to color variations resulting from damage to and deterioration of the original objects.

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Series 4: Biographical Files, 1915-1950

Scope and Contents: The biographical files contain photocopies of correspondence in the correspondence series and other letters, newspaper articles, and periodicals such as *Aerial Age Weekly*, *Aviation and Aeronautical Engineering*, and *CHIRP* (newsletter of the Early Birds).

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Series 5: Videodisc Prints, 1911-1918

Scope and Contents: The videodisc prints are copy photography, mostly from scrapbooks in the collection, and loose small photographs, possibly removed from scrapbooks.

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