United States Women In Aviation Through World War I Collection

Roberto Aponte

1994
# Table of Contents

Collection Overview ........................................................................................................ 1
Administrative Information .............................................................................................. 1
Arrangement ..................................................................................................................... 2
Scope and Contents ........................................................................................................... 2
Biographical / Historical ................................................................................................. 2
Names and Subjects .......................................................................................................... 2
Container Listing .............................................................................................................. 4
  Series 1: Photographs, 1906-1917 ............................................................................. 4
  Series 2: Claudia Oakes' Notes, 1977 ....................................................................... 11
  Series 3: Subject Files, circa 1977 ........................................................................... 12
Collection Overview

Repository: National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title: United States Women in Aviation through World War I
Identifier: NASM.XXXX.0424
Date: circa 1909-1978 (bulk 1904-1920)
Extent: 0.74 Cubic feet (2 boxes)
Creator: Oakes, Claudia M.
Language: English

Summary: This collection consists of research material used by National Air and Space Curator Claudia Oakes to prepare the publication United States Women in Aviation through World War I (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1978).

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information
Claudia M. Oakes, transfer, 1989

Processing Information
Arranged and described by Roberto Aponte, 1994.
Encoded by Amanda Buel, 2015.

Preferred Citation
United States Women In Aviation Through World War I Collection, Acc. XXXX-0424, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions
No restrictions on access.

Conditions Governing Use
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Biographical / Historical

This collection of photographs, written notes, articles, photocopies of news clippings, correspondence, and biographies was used by Claudia M. Oakes to prepare the publication, United States Women in Aviation Through World War I (Smithsonian Institution Press: Washington, D.C., 1978). She donated these materials sometime after the book's completion.

Scope and Contents

The material in this collection consists of photographs, photocopies of news clippings, correspondence, and biographies of the women who participated in the aviation field, not only in the United States but throughout the world, from 1880 through World War I. The women highlighted include: Ada Acosta, Ruth Law, Helene Dutrieu, Julia Clark, Alys McKey Bryant, Tiny Broadwick, Bernetta Miller, Matilde Moisant, Mary "Carlotta" Myers, Bessica Raiche, Harriet Quimby, Blanche Stuart Scott, Neta Snook, and Katherine and Marjorie Stinson.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged accordingly:

Series I: Photographs

Series II: Claudia Oakes' Notes

Series III: Subject Files

The first group of materials contains photographs of the women who participated in the aviation field, not only in the United States but throughout the world, from 1880 through World War I. Most photographs are identified by subject (pilot or aircraft name), date, captions, and, whenever possible, by Smithsonian's negative numbers.

The second group of materials includes the author's written notes and correspondence.

The third group of documents provides valuable biographical information about specific aviatrixes. These files are arranged in alphabetical order by subject.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:
- Aeronautics
- Women in aeronautics

Names:
- Clark, Julia.
Dutrieu, Helene.
Law, Ruth
Moisant, Matilde, 1887-1964
Myers, Mary, "Carlotta Queen of the Air"
Quimby, Harriet, 1875-1912
Raiche, Bessica.
Scott, Blanche Stuart, 1889-1970
Snook, Neta
Stinson, Katherine
Stinson, Marjorie
Container Listing

Series 1: Photographs, 1906-1917

Box 1, Folder 1  Negative No. – A 43064 B; Subject – BERG, MRS. HART O.; WRIGHT, WILBUR
Image(s)
Caption – 2 copies. Mrs. Hart O. Berg, the first American woman to fly as a passenger in an airplane, shown here beside Wilbur Wright shortly before their takeoff at Auvers, France. Note her "hobbled" skirt and the security of her hat.

Box 1, Folder 2  Negative No. – 77-717; Subject – VAN DEMAN, MRS. RALPH
Image(s)
Caption – Mrs. Ralph Van Deman, a good friend of the Wright brothers' sister Katherine and the first woman to fly as an airplane passenger in America.

Box 1, Folder 3  Negative No. – unknown; Subject – HEADLINE COVERAGE OF A WOMAN FLYING AT THE DETROIT AIR MEET, June 20, 1911
Image(s)
Caption – Includes negative. On the front of The Detroit Free Press.

Photo – Courtesy of Detroit Public Library.

Box 1, Folder 4  Negative No. – unknown; Subject – WHITNEY, MRS. L.A.
Image(s)
Caption – Mrs. L.A. Whitney, who, in 1914, was the first woman to fly on a scheduled airline.

Photo – Courtesy of The St. Petersburg Times.

Box 1, Folder 5  Negative No. – A 42804 G; Subject – WRIGHT, KATHERINE
Image(s)
Caption – Katherine Wright, who was a staunch supporter for her brothers' work, posing for reporters with her brother Wilbur before embarking on one of their European trips to demonstrate Wright aircraft.

Box 1, Folder 6  Negative No. – 77-704; Subject – BEACHY, LINCOLN: SPECTATORS CAME TO SEE HIM, August 1, 1914
Image(s)
Caption – Some of the spectators who came to see the famous aerobatic flyer Lincoln Beachy at Dayton, OH; in the foreground (from left), Marjorie Stinson, Mrs. K. Whiting, Orville Wright, Katherine Wright, and Griffith Brewer.

Box 1, Folder 7  Negative No. – 77-720; Subject – WRIGHT, KATHERINE: WATCHING HER BROTHER'S MACHINE
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 8  Negative No. – 77-2698; Subject – MYERS, MARY: HER BALLOON "CARLOTTA"
Image(s)
Caption – Mary Meyers' balloon "Carlotta" shown being inflated outside the Victorian mansion in Frankfort, New York, where the Meyers opened their "Balloon Farm."

Box 1, Folder 9  
Negative No. – 77-2699; Subject – MYERS, MARY H.
Image(s)
Caption – The balloonist Mary H. Meyers (billed as "Carlotta, the Lady Aeronaut"), the first woman in the U.S. to pilot her own aircraft.

Box 1, Folder 10  
Negative No. – 77-7660; Subject – TODD, MISS E. LILLIAN: HER FLYING MACHINE, December 1906
Image(s)
Caption – 3 copies. Todd's flying machine displayed at the exhibition of the Aero Club of America in December 1906, the first heavier-than-air craft designed by a U.S. woman.

Box 1, Folder 11  
Negative No. – unknown; Subject – TODD MISS E. LILLIAN
Image(s)
Caption – Miss. E Lillian Todd (who designed an airplane but never learned to fly), posing in an early aircraft.

Photo – Courtesy of Betman Archives.

Box 1, Folder 12  
Negative No. – 77-718; Subject – SMITH, HILDER: WITH HER HUSBAND FLOYD
Image(s)
Caption – She worked with him in building an aircraft and in parachuting experiments.

Box 1, Folder 13  
Negative No. – 75-5216; Subject – SCOTT, BLANCHE: HER FIRST SOLO FLIGHT
Image(s)
Caption – 2 copies. Blanche Scott's first solo flight, which attained an altitude of about 40 feet despite the throttle block Glenn Curtiss had put on her aircraft.

Box 1, Folder 14  
Negative No. – A 46916; Subject – HANDBILL FROM ONE OF BLANCHE SCOTT'S AIRSHOWS
Image(s)
Caption – Handbill from one of the airshows where, for almost five years, Blanche Scott thrilled spectators throughout the country with her aerial maneuvers.

Box 1, Folder 15  
Negative No. – A 951 A; Subject – RAICHE, BESSICA
Image(s)
Caption – 2 copies. Pursued two careers that were unusual for a woman in her day: being a pilot and (after her retirement from flying) a practicing physician.

Box 1, Folder 16  
Negative No – 73-2247; Subject – THE MOISANT SCHOOL OF AVIATION
Caption – At Hempstead, New York. Unlike some other early aviation schools, welcomed women as students.

Box 1, Folder 17

Negative No. – 77-700; Subject – MILLER, BERNETTA

Caption – A graduate of the Moisant School and the first pilot to demonstrate a monoplane before U.S. government officials (damaged photo).

Box 1, Folder 18

Negative No. – 77-710; Subject – BRYANT, ALYS McKEY, circa 1912

Caption – The first aviatrix of the west coast, Alys McKey Bryant, who first soloed at The Palms, California, in 1912.

Box 1, Folder 19

Negative No. – A 34408 D; Subject – BRYANT, ALYS McKEY: HER EXHIBITION FLIGHT, May 1913

Caption – Making the first of her many exhibition flights at North Yakima, Washington, in May 1913.

Box 1, Folder 20

Negative No. – 77-701; Subject – BRYANT, ALYS McKEY: PREPARES FOR DEEP-SEA DIVING

Caption – Bryant, equipped for deep-sea diving, one of her interests that was perhaps even more unusual for a woman than flying.

Box 1, Folder 21

Negative No. – unknown; Subject – SNOOK, NETA: WITH HER FAMOUS PUPIL AMELIA EARHART

Caption – Neta Snook posing with Amelia Earhart, before one of their flying lesson flights.

Photo – Courtesy of Neta Snook Southern.

Box 1, Folder 22

Negative No. – unknown; Subject – SNOOK, NETA: WITH HER FAMOUS PUPIL AMELIA EARHART

Caption – Not the same photo as the one before.

Photo – Courtesy of Neta Snook Southern.

Box 1, Folder 23

Negative No. – A 43510 B; Subject – QUIMBY, HARRIET

Caption – 2 copies. The first licensed woman pilot in the U.S. and second in the world.

Box 1, Folder 24

Negative No. – 77-711; Subject – QUIMBY, HARRIET: HER BLERIOT MONOPLANE, April 16, 1912

Caption – Harriet Quimby's Bleriot monoplane held down by spectators while she enters the cockpit for her attempt at crossing the English Channel.
Box 1, Folder 24  
Negative No. – A 31991 F; Subject – QUIMBY, HARRIET: PRIOR TO HER ENGLISH CHANNEL FLIGHT, April 16, 1912  
**Image(s)**  
Caption – A confidently smiling Harriet Quimby receiving last minute advice and good wishes just prior to her Channel flight.

Box 1, Folder 25  
Negative No. – A 5532 B; Subject – QUIMBY, HARRIET: THE BOSTON AVIATION MEET, 1912  
**Image(s)**  
Caption – In her characteristic satin flying suit, Harriet Quimby poses prior to the Boston Aviation Meet, 1912; inset, part of the wreckage of her aircraft being examined after her fatal accident.

Box 1, Folder 26  
Negative No. – A 43515; Subject – MOISANT, MATILDE; QUIMBY, HARRIET  
**Image(s)**  
Caption – Moisant and Quimby, close friends and fellow students at the Moisant School of Aviation.

Box 1, Folder 27  
Negative No. – 73-3564; Subject – MOISANT, MATILDE  
**Image(s)**  
Caption – In her heavy tweed flying suit that was credited with saving her life when her airplane caught fire on landing.

Box 1, Folder 28  
Negative No. – 77-703; Subject – MOISANT, MATILDE: PILOT'S LICENSE, circa 1911  
**Image(s)**  
Caption – Matilde Moisant’s pilot license, issued August 17, 1911; the second one granted to a woman in the United States.

Box 1, Folder 29  
Negative No. – 77-699; Subject – MOISANT, MATILDE: FIERY CRASH  
**Image(s)**  
Caption – The fiery crash that concluded her last flight.

Box 1, Folder 30  
Negative No. – 77-702; Subject – DUTRIEU, HELENE  
**Image(s)**  
Caption – France’s leading aviatrix, who flew in several major U.S. air meets in the early 1900’s and received the Legion of Honor from the French government for her achievements in aviation.

Box 1, Folder 31  
Negative No. – 73-4023; Subject – DUTRIEU, HELENE: FRANCE'S LEADING AVIATRIX  
**Image(s)**  
Caption – Helene Dutrieu flew in several major U.S. air meets in the early 1900's and received the Legion of Honor from the French government for her achievements in aviation.

Box 1, Folder 32  
Negative No. – A 43512 F; Subject – STINSON, KATHERINE  
**Image(s)**  
Caption – The oldest of the four Stinsons, who were all famous in aviation.
Box 1, Folder 33  
Negative No. – A 5532 A; Subject – THE STINSON SISTERS: KATHERINE AND MARJORIE, 1913
Image(s)  
Caption – Just after a flight in Katherine's airplane.

Box 1, Folder 34  
Negative No. – A 48410; Subject – STINSON, KATHERINE: THE CURTISS JN-4
Image(s)  
Caption – The Curtiss JN-4 used by Katherine Stinson for her fund-raising tour for the Red Cross during World War I.

Box 1, Folder 35  
Negative No. – unknown; Subject – STINSON, KATHERINE: ROLAND ROLPHS GREET HER
Image(s)  
Caption – Roland Rolphs, chief pilot for the Curtiss Company, greeting Katherine Stinson in California.

Photo – Courtesy of Rare Birds, Inc.

Box 1, Folder 36  
Negative No. – unknown; Subject – STINSON, KATHERINE: AERIAL EXHIBITION ON HER RED CROSS TOUR
Image(s)  
Caption – On her Red Cross tour, Katherine Stinson gave aerial exhibitions at several military bases.

Photo – Courtesy of Rare Birds, Inc.

Box 1, Folder 37  
Negative No. – 77-705; Subject – THE FLYING CLASS OF THE WRIGHT SCHOOL, August 1, 1914
Image(s)  
Caption – The flying class of the Wright School, Dayton, Ohio (left to right): H. Daniels; Howard Rinehart, instructor; Lt. K. Whiting, USN; Marjorie Stinson; Griffith Brewer, England; C. Ando, Japan.

Box 1, Folder 38  
Negative No. – A 32619 J; Subject – STINSON, MARJORIE: ARMISTEAD, GEORGE, May 1915
Image(s)  
Caption – George Armistead, postmaster of San Antonio, swearing in Marjorie Stinson to carry mail between San Antonio and Seguin, Texas; Emma Stinson, Marjorie's mother, second from right.

Box 1, Folder 39  
Negative No. – A 309590; Subject – STINSON, MARJORIE
Image(s)  
Caption – Marjorie Stinson who trained many men as pilots that later flew for the U.S. and Canada in World War I.

Box 1, Folder 40  
Negative No. – 77-709; Subject – STINSON, MARJORIE: HANDBILL ADVERTISES HER PERFORMANCE
Image(s)
Caption – Handbill advertising a performance of Marjorie Stinson at the German-speaking community of Seguin, Texas.

Box 1, Folder 41
Negative No. – A 5251; Subject – LAW, RUTH: WITH HER BROTHER RODMAN
Image(s)
Caption – Ruth Law with her brother, Rodman, a trick parachutist and daredevil performer.

Box 1, Folder 42
Negative No. – A 44433; Subject – LAW, RUTH: WRIGHT PLANE
Image(s)
Caption – Airplanes owned by Ruth Law: top, the Wright plane in which she performed at resorts and air meets throughout the country; bottom, the Curtiss pusher modified with Wright-type controls that she used for her exhibition flights.

Photo – Courtesy of Rare Birds, Inc.

Box 1, Folder 43
Negative No. – 77-706; Subject – LAW, RUTH: SPECTACULAR NIGHT-TIME PERFORMANCE
Image(s)
Caption – One of Ruth Law’s spectacular night-time performances when she looped with flares attached to her aircraft; inset, the aviatrix, Ruth Law.

Box 1, Folder 44
Negative No. – 77-708; Subject – LAW, RUTH: POSES AT THE HOTEL McALPIN, June 30, 1917
Image(s)
Caption – A pose of Ruth Law, the first woman in the U.S. authorized to wear a noncommissioned officer’s uniform, photographed at the Hotel McAlpin in New York, during a recruiting drive for the Army and the Navy.

Box 1, Folder 45
Negative No. – A 5532; Subject – LAW, RUTH
Image(s)
Caption – The uniform and Curtiss plane, trademarks of Ruth Law’s contributions to recruiting and to Red cross and Liberty Loan drives.

Box 1, Folder 46
Negative No. – 77-707; Subject – STINSON, KATHERINE: ARRIVAL AT CAMP KEARNY
Image(s)
Caption – YMCA representative pinning the Association’s triangle on Stinson’s arm on her arrival at Camp Kearny from the North Island Aviation Station, San Diego.

Box 1, Folder 47
Negative No. – A 2065; Subject – UNKNOWN Caption – People meeting (probably in an airplane exhibition.)
Image(s)
Caption – People meeting (probably in an airplane exhibition).

Box 1, Folder 47
Negative No. – unknown; Subject – MRS. DIXON: ABOARD CROMWELLS DIXON’S AIRSHIP
Series 2: Claudia Oakes' Notes, 1977

Box 1, Folder 48  
Subject – U.S. WOMEN IN AVIATION THROUGH WORLD WAR I  
Image(s)  
Remarks – Claudia Oakes' draft.

Box 1, Folder 49  
Subject – THE SMITHSONIAN PRESS' HOUSE STYLE  
Image(s)  
Remarks – Requirements for publications.

Box 1, Folder 50  
Subject – U.S. WOMEN IN AVIATION THROUGH WORLD WAR I  
Image(s)  
Remarks – Claudia Oakes' final draft (includes references).

Box 1, Folder 51  
Subject – AERO CLUB OF AMERICA  
Image(s)  
Remarks – Club's list (632 names, includes references).

Box 1, Folder 52  
Subject – OAKES' WRITTEN NOTES, circa 1977  
Image(s)  
Remarks – Includes references and photograph's negative numbers.

Box 1, Folder 53  
Subject – OAKES' LETTERS AND REFERENCES  
Image(s)  
Remarks – Includes a written latter regarding the Amelia Earhart Collection.

Box 1, Folder 54  
Subject – U.S. WOMEN IN AVIATION THROUGH WORLD WAR I  
Image(s)  
Remarks – Claudia Oakes' written essay.

Box 1, Folder 56  
Subject – PUBLICATION PAPERS, August 2, 1977  
Image(s)  

Box 1, Folder 55  
Subject – GUIDELINES ON THE USE OF THE SI/NASM NAME IN OUTSIDE PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS, July 5, 1977  
Image(s)  
Remarks – Memorandum written by Michael Collins for the Department and Division Heads.

Box 1, Folder 57  
Subject – LETTERS FOR CLAUDIA M. OAKES  
Image(s)  
Remarks – Most of the letters congratulate Claudia Oakes for the publication of her book. One of the letters shows concern with regards to the lack of women information in the libraries.
Series 3: Subject Files, circa 1977

Box 2, Folder 1  Subject – ACOSTA, MISS ADA
Image(s) Materials – Photograph (Negative No. A 33043).

Box 2, Folder 2  Subject – BROADWICK, TINY
Image(s) Materials – An interview by Kenneth Leish, newspaper clippings, articles, and biographies.

Box 2, Folder 3  Subject – BRYANT, ALYS McKEY
Image(s) Materials – The Early Birds' application for membership, biography, newspaper clippings, and articles.

Box 2, Folder 4  Subject – CLARK, JULIA
Image(s) Materials – Articles and biographies.

Box 2, Folder 5  Subject – DUTRIEU, HELENE (French)
Image(s) Materials – Articles, obituary, biography, and letter.

Box 2, Folder 6  Subject – HARRIS, HELENE HODGE
Image(s) Materials – Letter and biographies.

Box 2, Folder 7  Subject – LAW, RUTH
Image(s) Materials – Articles and newspaper clippings.

Box 2, Folder 8  Subject – MILLER, BERNETTA
Image(s) Materials – Article and biography.

Box 2, Folder 9  Subject – MOISANT, MATILDE
Image(s) Materials – Biography and newspaper clippings.

Box 2, Folder 10 Subject – MYERS, MARY "CARLOTTA"
Image(s) Materials – Pamphlet and article

Box 2, Folder 11 Subject – QUIMBY, HARRIET
Image(s) Materials – Biographies, photographs, articles, and newspaper clippings.

Box 2, Folder 12 Subject – RAICHE, BESSICA
Box 2, Folder 13
Subject – BLANCHE, SCOTT
Image(s)
Materials – Accession worksheet, newspaper clippings, and biographies.

Box 2, Folder 14
Subject – SHAFFER, GENEVE A.
Image(s)
Materials – Article, letter, and application for membership.

Box 2, Folder 15
Subject – SMITH, HILDER
Image(s)
Materials – Articles and newspaper clippings.

Box 2, Folder 16
Subject – SNOOK, NETA
Image(s)
Materials – Photograph, articles, letters, and Oakes' written notes.

Box 2, Folder 17
Subject – STINSON, KATHERINE
Image(s)
Materials – Biography, photographs, and newspaper clippings.

Box 2, Folder 18
Subject – STINSON, MARJORIE
Image(s)
Materials – Articles, newspaper clippings, and biographies.

Box 2, Folder 19
Subject – MISCELLANEOUS (PASSENGERS, NON-PILOTS)
Image(s)
Materials – Articles and newspaper clippings.

Box 2, Folder 20
Subject – MISCELLANEOUS PILOTS
Image(s)
Materials – Letters, photographs, and newspaper clippings.

Return to Table of Contents