

Collection Number: MS- 348

Title: William Mayfield Photograph Collection Egbert Donation

Dates: late 1930s-1959

Creator: William Mayfield

Summary/Abstract: The William Preston Mayfield Photos document the career of an innovative photographer whose career spanned over sixty years of photographs in Dayton and the Miami Valley. Through these photographs the researcher can gain a visual understanding of the early evolution of flight as well as the growth of Dayton and the Miami Valley.

Quantity/Physical Description:

Language(s): English

Repository: (Required)

Special Collections and Archives, Paul Laurence Dunbar Library, Wright State University, Dayton, OH 45435-001, (937) 775-2092

Restrictions on Access: None.

Restrictions on Use: Copyright restriction may apply. Unpublished manuscripts are protected by copyright. Permission to publish, quote or reproduce must be secured from the repository and the copyright holder.

Preferred Citation:

(Box Number), (Folder Number), MS-348, William Mayfield Photograph Collection Egbert Donation, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio

Acquisition: The Mayfield photo collection was given to Wright State Special Collections and Archives in five installments donated by Randle Egbert D.D.S. starting in December of 1997 with the final installment in December 2006. It consists of 10 photo boxes and approximately 1676 photographs, post cards, and first day of issue stamps.

Related Material: MS-269: William Preston Mayfield/Caporale Photograph Collection
MS-271: Peerless Mayfield Photograph Collection

Note: There are many duplicates or images that are very similar in this collection.

Processing Information:

Processed by: Alaina Carrol, March 2007

Arrangement:

The collection is arranged in seven series:

- I. Wright Brothers & Early Flights
 - a. Pilots and Early Flights
 - b. Family Photographs
 - c. Balloon Flight
 - d. Planes and Pilots
- II. Post Cards and First Day of Issue Stamps
 - a. Wright Brothers
 - b. Wright Brothers & Europe
 - c. Wright Brothers Celebrations
 - d. Flight Demonstrations in the U.S.A.
 - e. Wright Flyer
 - f. Other Flights and Pilots
 - g. Celebration
 - h. Advertisements
 - i. Artistic
 - j. Wright Brothers: Museums and Monuments
 - k. First Day of Issue Stamps
 - l. Miscellaneous
- III. Columbus Aerials
 - a. Downtown
 - b. Ohio State University
 - c. Unidentified Columbus School
- IV. Dayton Businesses and Homes
 - a. Dayton Businesses
 - b. NCR
 - c. Dayton Area Homes
- V. Subject Photos
 - a. Buses and Train
 - b. Cars and Dealerships
 - c. Churches and Monuments
 - d. Artistic
- VI. Dayton Aerials
 - a. Dayton: Close-ups of Downtown
 - b. Aerials of Downtown
 - c. Other Areas in the Miami Valley

Biographical/Historical Note:

William Preston Mayfield, the first person to ever create an aerial photograph from a heavier-than-air flying machine, was born in Lexington, Kentucky in 1896. At the age of fourteen he was a photographer for the *Dayton Daily News*. It was at this time that his love for photography first blossomed.

On a cold day in 1910 Mayfield was invited to go up with Orville Wright in the Wright flyer. While in the air Mayfield leaned out over the wing and took a photograph of the ground below.

This photograph would become the first photograph ever to be taken from an aircraft. From this point on Mayfield would make a name for himself photographing early aviation “firsts” including the first historic flight of the helicopter, as well as one of the earliest fatal aircraft crashes.

Over the next sixty years Mayfield’s photography would be in demand from air shows to the creation of photographs for newsreels and films. He photographed the rich and the famous of the time including (but not limited to) President Woodrow Wilson, Babe Ruth, and Henry Ford (these photographs are not part of the collection). In addition to these accomplishments Mayfield continued to be in demand as a commercial photographer, which accounts for the many photographs of Dayton area businesses and homes. Later in life he found a passion for high aerial shots as demonstrated by the wealth of aerials depicting the state capital and the Miami Valley.

He died at the age of 77 on January 17, 1974.

Scope and Content:

The William Preston Mayfield Photos document the career of an innovative photographer whose career spanned over sixty years of photographs in Dayton and the Miami Valley. Through these photographs the researcher can gain a visual understanding of the early evolution of flight as well as the growth of Dayton and the Miami Valley.

Series I: Wright Brothers early flights

These photographs are of flights, aircraft, air shows and the people who surround the first thirty years of flight. Photos of interest: first helicopter flight (subseries A). This series contains many photographs of planes built and flown before 1930 as well as several interesting photos of air shows and pilots. This series also contains several photographs taken by F. Hermes an early photographer of the Wright Brothers. A larger photograph and a drawing of early flyer are cross referenced and can be found in OS73. All of these photographs range in dates from 1914 to 1940s: however, many are unmarked. There is a small set of photographs depicting the *Kitty Hawk* being sent to the Smithsonian.

Series II: Postcards and first day of issue Stamps

This series is the most unique of the collection and consists of postcards and first day postal stamps from all over the world depicting mostly the Wright Brothers with many other early pilots as well. Of particular interest are the postcards from Europe of the Wright Brothers flights in France. Also interesting are the holiday postcards, advertisements, and artistic postcards which incorporate the Wright Flyer. These items range in date from 1910s to the 1960s most of these have dates on the back.

Series III: Columbus aerials

This is the largest series in the collection and consists of several hundred photographs of downtown Columbus and Ohio State University. Many of these photographs are dated on the back under the Mayfield seal they range in date from 1949-1959.

Series IV: Dayton businesses and homes

This series contains photographs of Dayton's businesses and homes ranging in date from the 1910s to the late 1950s. Of particular interest are those photographs in the beginning of the series showing the aftermath of the 1913 flood as well as pictures of city life in the early 1900s. There are a set of photographs of the National Register Company building and lands. There are also many photographs of prestigious homes in the Dayton area. The series ends with a set of images of the old courthouse, the soldier's monument, and the Carillon Bells. Most of these photos are unmarked and undated those that are dated are from 1920s and 1930s.

Series V: Subject photos

This series is a collection of many different types of photographs including photos taken of a race between a street car and airplane. Also in the collection are photos taken for advertising purposes of local car dealerships. At the end of this series are artistic and abstract photographs. There is a set of photographs of some of Dayton's churches and monuments. Most of these photos are unmarked and undated they range in date from 1910s to the 1950s.

Series VI: Dayton aerials

This series is made up of aerial photographs of the downtown Dayton area and its suburbs as well as other areas in the Miami Valley. The 23 communities are grouped into files, which include but are not limited to: Lima, Springfield and Wilmington. Many of these photographs are marked and dated on the back under the Mayfield seal they range in date from the late 1930s to 1959. The areas are identified when possible, and alphabetized.

Subject Terms:**Persons/Families:****Organizations/Corporate Names:****Places:**

Columbus (Ohio)

Dayton (Ohio)

Subjects:**Material Types:**

Photographs

Postcards

Stamped envelopes

Collection Inventory

Series I	Wright Brothers Early Flights	1903-1948
Box	Items	Date
1	Pilots and early flights	
OS73	Large photograph of early flight	
1	Family photos	
1	Balloon flight	
1	Planes and pilots	
OS73	Large drawing of early flyer	
1	F. Hermes photos	
1	Kitty Hawk sent to Smithsonian	
1	Events of the Wright Brothers	
Series II	Postcards & First Day of Issue Stamps	
2	Wright Brothers	
2	Wright Brothers and Europe	
2	Wright Brothers Celebration	
2	Flight demonstrations in the U.S.A.	
2	Wright Flyer	
2	Other flights and pilots	
2	Celebration	
2	Advertisements	
2	Artistic	
3	Wright Brothers: Museums and Monuments	
3	First Day of Issue Stamps	
3	Miscellaneous	

Series III		Columbus Aerials		1949-1959
4		Downtown		
5		Downtown con't		
5		Ohio State University		
5		Other Columbus School		
Series IV		Dayton Businesses and Area Homes		
6		Dayton Businesses		
7		NCR		
7		Area Homes		
Series V		Subject Photos		
7		Buses and Trains		
7		Cars and Dealerships		
8		Churches and Monuments		
8		Artistic		
Series VI		Dayton aerials		Late 1930s-1959
8		Dayton: Close-Ups of Downtown		
9		Dayton: Close-Ups of Downtown con't		
9		Aerials of downtown Dayton		
Box		Items		Dates
9			File 1: Far angles of Dayton	
9			File 2: South Dayton aerials	
9			File 3: Views of the Countryside	
9			File 4: Labeled Buildings	
9			File 5: Unidentified Aerials	
Series VI		Other areas in the Miami Valley: con't		
10			File 1: Covington	
10			File 2: Franklin	
10			File 3: Germantown	
10			File 4: Greeneville	
10			File 5: Hamilton	
10			File 6: Lima	
10			File 7: Miamisburg	
10			File 8: Middletown	
10			File 9: Moraine	
11			File 10: Mt. Vernon	
11			File 11: Piqua	
11			File 12: Springfield	
11			File 13: Trotwood	
11			File 14: Unidentified Community #1	
11			File 15: Unidentified Community #2	
11			File 16: Unidentified Community #3	
11			File 17: Unidentified Community #4	
11			File 18: University of Dayton	
11			File 19: Vandalia	
11			File 20: West Carrolton	

11			File 21: West Milton	
11			File 22: Wilmington	
11			File 23: Xenia	