
Descriptive Finding Guide for the John Thad Johnson Personal Papers SDASM.SC.10080

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San Diego Air and Space Museum Library and Archives
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San Diego 92101
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Language of Material: English

Contributing Institution: San Diego Air and Space Museum Library and Archives

Title: John Thad Johnson Personal Papers

Identifier/Call Number: SDASM.SC.10080

Physical Description: 0.36 Cubic Feet One box 10" X 15" X 2.5"

Date (inclusive): 1895-1927

Abstract: J. Thad Johnson was a WWI navy pilot in training for most of WWI. After the war he participated in the first transcontinental flight from New York to San Francisco and other aviation feats.

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open to researchers by appointment.

Conditions Governing Use

Some copyright may be reserved. Consult with the library director for more information.

Preferred Citation

[Item], [Filing Unit], [Series Title], [Subgroups], [Record Group Title and Number], [Repository "San Diego Air & Space Museum Library & Archives"]

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The materials in this Collection were donated to the San Diego Air and Space Museum.

Biographical / Historical

John Thad Johnson was born in 1895. He was educated at Trinity College in Waxahachi, Texas. When World War I broke out, he volunteered. He was initially trained at Leon Springs, Texas. He was commissioned on May 17, 1917, and sent to the aviation division at Rockwell Field (the present Naval Air Station North Island) for pilot training and though he was in France in 1918, he does not appear to have engaged in combat.

After the war, he participated in the first transcontinental flight from New York to San Francisco in 1919. During a flight in 1925 his engine quit and he was forced to parachute 10,000 feet into an orchard. He was not injured, but made the newspapers for this action. On July 2, 1927, he was part of an honor guard escorting Charles Lindbergh in the Spirit of Saint Louis at MacDonald field, Ottawa, Canada. During this flight, his aircraft collided with another as he was coming in to land, and he was killed when his parachute failed to open properly.

There is now a street leading to the industrial section of the Ottawa Macdonald-Cartier International Airport that is named after him.

Scope and Contents

One box 10" X 15" X 2.5" containing letters, photographs, and newspaper clippings and scrapbook pages.

Related Materials

Jackrabbits to Jets, a History of Naval Air Station North Island call no. VG 94.5.S3.S84 1992. History of Rockwell Field Call no. MSS.UG.634.5.R65.A75 1923.

Related Research Institutions:

Secondary Sources: Ottawa Macdonald-Cartier International Airport - Brief History

<http://ottawa-airport.ca/corporate/about-us/history>

 <https://www.flickr.com/photos/sdasmarchives/sets/72157634608043207/>

Subjects and Indexing Terms

World War, 1914-1918

Rockwell Field

Johnson, John Thad

Lindbergh, Charles A. (Charles Augustus)

Naval Air Station North Island (Calif.)

United States. Army. Air Service

General Mitchell Field (Wis.)

Box 01

Folder 01 - Hawaiian letters

Physical Description: 1. Letter to mother from Mitchell field regarding Hawaii posting, dated December 9, 1919. 2. Letter from Luke Field Hawaii to mother dated December 23, 1921.

Folder 02 - Photos of Thad Johnson

Physical Description: 1. In uniform unknown location. 2. Photo dated 1926 location unknown. 3. Photocopy of Marriage certificate. 4. Photo taken at Rockwell Field (present day Naval Air Station North Island.) 5. Captioned group shot date unknown. 6. Formal portrait along with pose with aircraft wreckage. 7. Photo posed with aircraft and automobile. 8. Photo of Johnson with wife Edith and friend. 9. Various other photos unknown persons and locations.

Folder 3 - Allotment Letter

Physical Description: 1. Letter from T. Johnson to his mother regarding allotment pay dated September 14, 1918.

Folder 4 - Military Identification

Physical Description: 1. War Department identification document. 2. Photocopy of document.

Folder 5 - Letter from France

Physical Description: 1. Letter from Johnson to his mother from France dated May 11, 1919.

Folder 6 - Copies

Physical Description: 1. Photocopies of scrapbook pages.

Folder 7 - Original Scrapbook Pages

Physical Description: 1. 27 pages of news articles on Thad Johnson and his death in 1927.