

## **MS-136, Dayton Air Service Incorporated Committee Records**

**Collection Number:** MS-136

**Title:** Dayton Air Service Incorporated Committee Records

**Dates:** 1919-1943

**Creator:** Dayton Air Service Incorporated Committee (Dayton, Ohio)

### **Summary/Abstract:**

The Dayton Air Service Incorporated Committee was incorporated November 14, 1922 as the legal successor to a previous voluntary committee led by Frederick B. Patterson, son of John H. Patterson. The purpose of the corporation was to further the permanent retention in the Dayton area of the Army Air Service Experiment Station, then McCook Field, and to establish a memorial to Orville and Wilbur Wright. This collection contains administration records, including articles of incorporation and board minutes, correspondence from the secretary of the corporation Ezra Kuhn, and additional correspondence relating to fundraising and subscriptions to the fund.

**Quantity/Physical Description:** 0.5 linear feet

**Language(s):** English

### **Repository:**

Special Collections and Archives, Paul Laurence Dunbar Library, Wright State University, Dayton, OH 45435-0001, (937) 775-2092.

**Restrictions on Access:** There are no restrictions on accessing material in this collection.

### **Restrictions on Use:**

Copyright restrictions 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 Unpublished manuscripts are protected by copyright.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:**

[Description of item, Date, Box #, Folder #], MS-136, Dayton Air Service Incorporated Committee, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio.

### **Acquisition:**

The Dayton Air Service Incorporated Committee collection was donated to Wright State Special Collections & Archives by Phyllis Smith of the Miami Conservancy District in October 1983.

### **Separated Material:**

Oversized materials are stored in a separate location. Location 106, file 7.

**Custodial History:** When the Dayton Air Service Incorporated Committee ceased to exist, their records came into the possession of the Miami Conservancy District, which later donated them to Wright State University Special Collections and Archives.

**Other Finding Aid:**

The finding aid is available on the Special Collections & Archives, Wright State University Libraries web site at [http://www.libraries.wright.edu/special/collection\\_guides/guide\\_files/ms136.pdf](http://www.libraries.wright.edu/special/collection_guides/guide_files/ms136.pdf). It is also available in the OhioLINK Finding Aid Repository at <http://ead.ohiolink.edu/xtf-ead/>.

**Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements:**

The collection contains numerous letters from Ezra Kuhn, all on very acidic and brittle paper.

**Related Material:**

MS-128 Miami Conservancy District Records  
MS-134 Wright Memorial Commission

**Processed by:** The collection was originally processed by Vicki Cooper, Winter 1984. The collection was reprocessed and the finding aid was revised to DAC standards by Craig Finnell, March 2018.

**Arrangement:**

The Dayton Air Service Incorporate Committee collection is arranged into two series.

Series I: Administration, 1922-1943  
Series II: Correspondence, 1919-1938

**Historical Note:**

Following World War I the U.S. Government began to look at abandoning McCook Field in Dayton, Ohio. McCook Field was bounded by the Miami River on one side and residential housing on the other as such it could not be enlarged to handle all of the work involved in the Army aviation research and procurement programs. The city of Dayton was faced with the shuttering of McCook Field and it's relocation to another city, the front runner was Langley Field in Virginia.

John H. Patterson, founder and president of the National Cash Register Company, vowed to keep Army aviation in Dayton and began a local campaign to raise money to purchase land large enough for a new field. The idea was that the land would be subsequently donated to the U. S. Government to house a new air service experiment station. John H. Patterson passed away in May, 1922 before the plan came to fruition.

His son, Frederick B. Patterson, took up the mantle to maintain the air service experiment station in Dayton. In October, 1922, Frederick B. Patterson organized the Dayton Air Service Committee, a coalition of prominent local figures and businessmen including; J. C. Haswell, Valentine Winters, C.F. Kettering, W.R. Craven, Edward Wuichet, E.M. Kuhns, H. E. Talbott, Fred Rike, Geo. W. Shroyer, Harry H. Darst, Geo. B. Smith, H. D. Wehrly, I. G. Kumler,

Ferdinand Ach, John Ohmer, H. W. Karr, C. E. Comer, F.T. Huffman and George B. McCann, dedicated to raising the money necessary to purchase land for the air service experiment station.

Frederick B. Patterson laid plans for a campaign, whose goal was to 5,000 acres of land near Dayton. The land included the existing Wilbur Wright Field that was leased by the Army Air Service and Wright Brothers' flying field on Huffman Prairie.

The campaign lasted two days and resulted in subscriptions totally \$425,000 from some 600 people and businesses. With this money the 4,520.47 acres of land was secured and gifted to the U.S. Government on February 4, 1924 and August 9, 1924. The new facility was named Wright Field in honor of the Wright brothers.

On July 6, 1931, a portion of Wright Field east of Huffman Dam was separated from Wright Field and named Patterson Field in honor of both Lieutenant Frank Stuart Patterson and the contribution of the Patterson family.

Patterson Field and Wright Field were officially merged on January 13, 1948 as a base for the newly created United States Air Force, and was named the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

The final act of the corporation was to provide remaining funds and land to the Miami Conservancy District and the Wright Memorial Commission for the express purpose of erection and maintenance of a memorial to Wilbur and Orville Wright, now the Wright Brothers Memorial Park.

### **Scope and Content**

The collection contains articles of incorporation and board minutes, correspondence mainly to and from the secretary of the corporation Ezra Kuhn, and additional correspondence relating to fundraising and subscriptions to the fund.

Series I: **Administration** contains the original articles of incorporation and the meeting minutes from the original committee meeting on Oct. 25 1922 and the subsequent meeting minutes for the incorporated committees starting Nov. 14, 1922 until their final meeting Dec. 6, 1943. Included in these minutes is the Code of Regulations and all resolutions of the corporation including the resolutions to convey land to the U.S. Government and to the Wright Memorial Commission. This series also contains oversized maps relating to the land donation.

Further this series contains blank subscription cards that the committee used to solicit funds, information about and the leases for Wilbur Wright Field, and assorted deeds, mortgages, and quit claim deeds. Of particular note is the Gift of Land Agreement, officially giving the land now occupied by Wright Patterson Air Force Base to the Federal Government and a study conducted by the Army Air Service in November of 1922 about sites for the Engineering Division.

Series II: **Correspondence** contains letters and telegrams, mainly to and from Ezra Kuhns, regarding the operations of the committee dating from 1923 to the final act of the committee of giving the remaining funds and land to the Wright Memorial Commission in 1938. The series includes correspondence regarding the relationship with the Federal Government, including

lobbying the government to accept the land and the requirements from the government regarding documentation and deeds. Correspondence relating to different land acquisitions and liens. Correspondence about the relationship and agreements with the Miami Conservancy District and the Wright Memorial Foundation. The series also contains other limited correspondence relating to the day to day operations of the committee.

**Subject Terms:**

**Persons/Families**

Patterson, Frederick B., 1871 - 1932  
 Kuhns, Ezra M., 1872 – 1960  
 Wright, Orville, 1871-1948 -- Monuments  
 Wright, Wilbur, 1867-1912 -- Monuments

**Organizations/Corporate Names**

Dayton Air Service Incorporated Committee (Dayton, Ohio) -- Archives  
 National Cash Register  
 Miami Conservancy District (Ohio)

**Places**

Dayton (Ohio)  
 Wright-Patterson Air Force Base (Ohio) -- History

**Subjects (General)**

Military bases, American -- Ohio  
 McCook Field (Ohio) -- History  
 United States Air Force -- History

**Material Types**

Minutes (administrative records)  
 Correspondence  
 Maps (documents)

**Collection Inventory**

| <b>Series I</b> |             | <b>Administration</b>                           | <b>1922-1943</b>              |
|-----------------|-------------|---|-------------------------------|
| <u>Box</u>      | <u>File</u> | <u>Description</u>                              | <u>Date</u>                   |
| 1               | 1           | Articles of Incorporation                       | Nov. 14, 1922                 |
| 1               | 2           | Committee Minutes                               | 1922 – 1943                   |
| 1               | 3           | Gift of Land Agreement                          | Mar. 17 1924,<br>Aug. 14 1924 |
| 1               | 4           | Proposed Gift of Land                           | Undated                       |
| 1               | 5           | Site for Engineering Division Air Service Study | Nov. 28, 1922                 |
| 1               | 6           | Blank Subscription Cards and Paperwork          | 1922                          |

|                       |             |   |                        |
|-----------------------|-------------|---|------------------------|
| 1                     | 7           | Description of Wilbur Wright Field          | Undated                |
| 1                     | 8           | Lease for Wilbur Wright Field               | Undated                |
| 1                     | 9           | Deeds, Mortgages, and Agreements            | 1919,1922,1927         |
| 1                     | 10          | Quit Claim Deeds                            | 1924, 1928             |
| 1                     | 11          | Copy of H.R. 13449                          | 1922                   |
| 1                     | 12          | Newspaper Clippings and Announcements       | 1924                   |
| OS                    |             | Maps (Oversize Location 106, file 7)        | 1922-1924              |
| <b>Series II</b>      |             |   | <b>1919-1938</b>       |
| <b>Correspondence</b> |             |   |                        |
| <u>Box</u>            | <u>File</u> | <u>Description</u>                          | <u>Date</u>            |
| 1                     | 13          | Correspondence – Federal Government         | Jan. 1923 – Mar. 1924  |
| 1                     | 14          | Correspondence – Federal Government         | Mar. 1924 – Feb. 1929  |
| 1                     | 15          | Correspondence – Land Acquisition           | 1922 – 1924            |
| 1                     | 16          | Correspondence – Collections and Pledges    | 1922 – 1927            |
| 1                     | 17          | Correspondence – Miami Conservancy District | 1922 – 1924            |
| 1                     | 18          | Correspondence – Wright Memorial            | 1938                   |
| 1                     | 19          | Correspondence – Roger & Bridge Lawyers     | Sept. 1923 – Feb. 1926 |
| 1                     | 20          | Correspondence – Logan Gas Company          | 1923                   |
| 1                     | 21          | Correspondence – W.M. Brook and Ezra Kuhns  | Dec. 1922 – May 1934   |
| 1                     | 22          | Correspondence – H.W. Karr and Ezra Kuhns   | 1923 – 1924            |
| 1                     | 23          | Correspondence – E.T. Hall, County Recorder | 1922 – 1923            |
| 1                     | 24          | Correspondence – Insurance                  | 1923 – 1924            |
| 1                     | 25          | Correspondence – “May’s Tract”              | 1925 – 1926            |
| 1                     | 26          | Correspondence – Miscellaneous              | 1922 – 1926            |