

**MS-271 The Peerless Collection of Aerials and Other Photographic Prints
from the Studios of William Preston Mayfield**

Collection Number: MS-271

Title:

The Peerless Collection of Aerials and other Photographic Prints from the Studios of William Preston Mayfield

Dates: 1908-1979

Creator: Dr. Sidney Peerless

Summary/Abstract:

The Peerless Mayfield Collection consists of more than 500 contact prints by aerial photographer William Preston Mayfield (1896-1974). The collection consists of photographs taken by Dayton photographer William Preston Mayfield of Dayton scenes of the Flood of 1913, advertising images, building interiors and exteriors, street scenes, and people. The collection is close in provenance to MS-269, the Caporale Mayfield Collection. Many of the images in both collections are of similar subjects and clearly come from the same source.

Quantity/Physical Description: 3.5 linear feet

Language(s): English

Repository:

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

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

Restrictions on Use:

Copyright restrictions may apply. Unpublished photographs are protected by copyright.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-271, The Peerless Collection of Aerials and Other Photographic Prints from the Studios of William Preston Mayfield, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio

Acquisition:

The collection was received in late 1996 by gift from Dr. Sidney Peerless, through Mr. Walt Burton.

Accruals: Additions were processed in 2010.

Custodial History:

Photographs were collected by Dr. Sidney Peerless and received through Mr. Walt Burton.

Revisions:

Additions totaling approximately 1.5 linear feet processed and added to finding aid; finding aid converted to EAD format (both in July 2010 by Ximena Chrisagis).

Related Material:

MS-269 William Preston Mayfield / Caporale Photograph Collection

MS-348 William Preston Mayfield Photograph Collection-Egbert

Processed by:

John Sanford, March 1997

Additions processed by Ximena Chrisagis, July 2010

Arrangement: Filed alphabetically; no series created

Biographical/Historical Note:

William Preston Mayfield was born July 20, 1896, in Lexington, Kentucky. He took up photography in 1909 at the age of 12 and a year after, in 1910, began work for the Dayton Journal newspaper. He left later the same year to become a staff photographer for James M. Cox's Dayton Daily News. One of his first assignments for the News was to photograph the activities of the Wright Brothers at Huffman Prairie. This assignment led to what he claimed was the first aerial photograph in America, an oblique shot of the Wright's hanger at Huffman Prairie taken from an altitude of about 300 feet, while flying with Orville Wright as pilot of an "Exhibition B" Wright Flyer. Two years later, in 1912, Mayfield started his own studio to take advantage of a growing commercial photography sideline. In 1913, Mayfield was well placed to record the Dayton Flood, spending three days and nights trapped in Governor Cox's office at the Dayton Newspapers building. Mayfield continued to take staff assignments with the Daily News until about 1930. Meanwhile, his commercial business grew as his interests in aviation and aerial photography led him to establish one of the first aerial photography studios in the country, shortly after World War I. Through the years, Mayfield's contacts in aviation included speed demons Roscoe Turner, Barney Oldfield, and Eddie Rickenbacker, and stunt pilot J.C. "Slim" Gregory. He was also well placed to photograph military pilots and aviation "firsts" at airfields around the Dayton area. Bill Mayfield worked at various times as a newsreel cameraman for international distributors like Pathe, Kinogram, and Universal. He was also employed by Columbus-based Paragon Feature Films.

Mayfield was married to Cornelia Wortman of Dayton. They had one daughter, Marguerite Rogers, of St. Petersburg, Florida. Mayfield continued his Dayton-based business of aerial and commercial photography until the 1960's. Cornelia, his wife died in 1967, and the same year, he decided to sell his studio and substantial (100,000+) negative archive to his assistant, photographer Marvin Christian. William Preston Mayfield died in 1974 at the age of 77.

Scope and Content:

It is believed that Walt Burton purchased most if not all of these prints from the Christian Studio. Some of the prints in this collection bear both “Mayfield vintage estate print” stamps and the Christian Studio stamp, suggesting that they were stamped after the sale of the original Mayfield archive. In fact, the “vintage estate print” stamps were almost certainly added later by Walt Burton. Otherwise, these prints are mostly photographer’s proof prints removed from Christian’s original Mayfield negative file by Mr. Walt Burton. A few contemporary prints bear the imprint of Mayfield Studios.

Copyrights to the Mayfield archive are uncertain. Because of his affiliations, and depending on any contemporary contracts, some of Mayfield’s work might be considered “for hire” with copyrights possibly held by the Daily News or companies such as Paragon Features. Nevertheless, current ownership of the Mayfield copyrights is claimed by Marvin Christian. Model releases for the advertising images are not available. Part of the collection also includes advertising photography for Dayton-based companies such as Frigidaire, and for interurban lines such as the Cincinnati and Lake Erie Rail Road. Users of the collection should beware that copyright to these images may not be claimed by Wright State University. **It is up to any users of the collection to seek out and obtain correct copyright permissions for any use of the images beyond fair use for limited educational purposes.**

William Preston Mayfield’s primary interests were in aerial and aviation related photography, and this collection includes many excellent images of early Dayton and surrounding communities viewed from a variety of angles and all altitudes up to about 20,000 feet. The majority of the aerial images are from a low oblique angle, taken at an altitude of under 1000 feet. They are therefore excellent for close detail of urban industrial and commercial districts. There are also come excellent aerial views of small towns, for instance, Waynesville and Fairborn, Ohio, taken in early 1920’s. Other major subjects include buildings in and around Dayton, Ohio, and a small collection of street scenes. Notable industries represented include Frigidaire; Delco (now Delphi); the Duriron Corporation; Inland; and Standard Register. Domestic views include many homes and streets in the Dayton area.

People photographed include fashion models, members of the public, Santa Claus impersonators, and General John Pershing (while on a personal appearance tour in Dayton about 1919). There is a small collection of advertising-related product photography. Famous pilots photographed include Col. Roscoe Turner, Bill Whelan, Howard Rinehart, and Lt. John Macready (see Aviation. People. Groups).

Subject Terms

Peerless, Sidney
Mayfield, William Preston, 1896-1974
Buildings--Ohio--Dayton

Organizations/Corporate Names

Frigidaire Corporation, Dayton, Ohio
Mayfield Photos, Inc., Dayton, Ohio

Christian Studios, Inc., Dayton, Ohio

Places

Dayton, Ohio
Columbus, Ohio
Cincinnati, Ohio
Miami Valley (Ohio)

Subjects (General)

Dayton (Ohio)--History--20th century
Aeronautics--History--20th century

Material Types

Photographs

Occupations

Air pilots

Collection Inventory

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	1	Advertising Art	
	2	Advertising Art	
	3	Advertising Art. Frigidaire Products.	
	4	Aerial Views. Unidentified.	1920-1929
	5	Aerial Views. Unidentified.	1920-1929
	6	Aerial Views	1930-1959
	7	Aerial Views	1960-1969
	8	Aerial Views. Miscellaneous.	
	9	Aerial Views. Miscellaneous.	
	10	Aerial Views. Miscellaneous.	
	11	Aerial Views. Airfields.	
	12	Aerial Views. Airfields.	
	13	Aerial Views. Airfields. Dayton Flying Field.	circa 1938
	14	Aerial Views. Airfields. Fairfield Air Depot. U.S. Army.	
	15	Aerial Views. Airfields. McCook Field.	1920-1929
	16	Aerial Views. Airfields. Wright Field.	
	17	Aerial Views. Bridges.	
	18	Aerial Views. Dams.	

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
	19	Aerial Views. Farms.	
	20	Aerial Views. Farms.	
	21	Aerial Views. Farms.	
	22	Aerial Views. Housing Development.	1950-1960
	23	Aerial Views. Industries.	
	24	Aerial Views. Industries. Duriron Company .	1920-1929
	25	Aerial Views. Industries. Leland Electric.	circa 1935
	26	Aerial Views. Industries. Ohio Malleable Iron Company.	1930-1939
	27	Aerial Views. Industries. Robbins and Myers Corporation.	
	28	Aerial Views. Industries. Superior Company.	1950
	29	Aerial Views. Sewage Treatment Plants.	
	30	Aerial Views. Shopping Centers. Miracle Mile.	1970
2	1	Aerial Views. Shopping Centers. Miracle Mile.	1970
	2	Aerial Views. Shopping Centers. Town and Country. (Kettering)	1950
	4	Aerial Views. Shopping Centers. Westgate.	1970-1979
	5	Agriculture	
	6	Amusement Park.	
	7	Athletics. Swimming.	
	8	Athletics. Tennis.	1920-1929
	9	Aviation Airplanes. Miscellaneous.	
	10	Aviation. Airplanes. Buhl Air Sedan.	
	11	Aviation. Airplanes. Curtiss Hawk.	circa 1927
	12	Aviation. Airplanes. Dayton-Wright DH-4.	circa 1918
	13	Aviation. Airplanes. Douglas DC-3 Skyliner.	circa 1937
	14	Aviation. Airplanes. Douglas O-38.	1930-1939
	15	Aviation. Airplanes. Honeymoon Special. DH-4 Conversion.	
	16	Aviation. Airplanes. Johnson Twin 60.	1949-1952
	17	Aviation. Airplanes. Landing Camera...	circa 1925
	18	Aviation. Airplanes. Sovia (Amphibian).	circa 1928
	19	Aviation. Airplanes. Early Waco Wire Braced	1931
	20	Aviation. Airplanes. Wright F	circa 1915
	21	Aviation. Airplanes. Columbus. Sullivant Airport.	1954
	22	Aviation. Instruments. Johnson Airspeed Indicator.	
	23	Aviation. People. Anderson, Oriol.	
	24	Aviation. People. Groups.	circa 1925
	25	Aviation. People. Groups.	
	26	Aviation. People. Groups.	
	27	Aviation. People. Harris, Lt. Harold	1924
	28	Aviation. People. Mitchell, Gen. and Mrs. William	1923
	29	Aviation. People. Stevens, Captain Albert. Portrait.	
	30	Aviation. People. Sweet, William.	circa 1940

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
		[Bellbrook. Aerial Views.- empty as of 2008]	
	31	Brookville. Aerial Views.	
	32	Carriages. Horse Drawn.	
	33	Columbus. Aerial Views.	
	34	Columbus. Aerial Views.	
	35	Columbus. Ohio Statehouse.	1913
	36	Cox, Gov. James, Home of	circa 1920s
	37	Dayton. Aerial Views.	1920-1929
	38	Dayton. Aerial Views.	1930-1939
	39	Dayton. Aerial Views. Commercial Districts	1940-1950
	40	Dayton. Aerial Views. Downtown.	1920-1929
	41	Dayton. Aerial Views. Downtown.	1920-1929
	42	Dayton. Aerial Views. Downtown.	1930-1940
	43	Dayton. Aerial Views. Downtown.	1940-1950
	44	Dayton. Aerial Views. Downtown.	1950-1960
	45	Dayton. Aerial Views. Downtown.	1950-1960
	46	Dayton. Aerial Views. Downtown.	
3	1	Dayton. Aerial Views. Industries.	1920-1929
	2	Dayton. Aerial Views. Industries.	1930-1939
	3	Dayton. Aerial Views. Industries.	1930-1939
	4	Dayton. Aerial Views. Industries.	1940-1949
	5	Dayton. Aerial Views. Industries.	1950-1959
	6	Dayton. Aerial Views. Deeds Park.	1915-1970
	7	Dayton. Aerial Views. Montgomery Co. Fairgrounds	1920-1950
	8	Dayton. Aerial Views. National Soldiers Home.	1910-1920
	9	Dayton. Aerial Views. Residential.	1930-1939
	10	Dayton. Aerial Views. Residential.	1940-1949
	11	Dayton. Aerial Views. Rivers.	1940-1949
	12	Dayton. Aerial Views. Rivers.	1940-1949
	13	Dayton. University of Dayton.	
	14	Dayton Art Institute	1929
	15	Dayton Mercantile Corporation	1911
	16	Dayton. Sisters of the Precious Blood Convent	
	17	Dayton. Buildings.	
	18	Dayton. Buildings.	
	19	Dayton. Buildings.	
	20	Dayton. Bridges and Canals.	
	21	Dayton. Churches.	
	22	Dayton. Construction and Demolition.	
	23	Dayton. Department Stores.	
	24	Dayton. Flood.	1913
	25	Dayton. Homes.	
	26	Dayton. Industries.	
	27	Dayton. Monument.	

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
	28	Dayton. Parades	
	29	Dayton. Schools. Notre Dame Academy.	
	30	Dayton. Store Fronts.	1920-1939
	31	Dayton. Store Fronts.	1950-1959
	32	Dayton. Store Fronts.	
	33	Dayton. Street Scenes.	1908-1920
	34	Dayton. Street Scenes.	1920-1929
	35	Dayton. Street Scenes.	1930-1939
	36	Denison University. Aerial Views.	circa 1925
4	1	Fairborn. Aerial Views	1940-1949
	2	Franklin. Aerial Views.	
	3	Greenville. Aerial Views.	
	4	Hamilton. Aerial Views.	
	5	Insurance Policies	
	6	Interiors	
	7	Kettering. Aerial Views.	
	8	Landscapes	
	9	Lockland. Aerial Views.	
	10	Miami Valley Conservancy District Work Camp	circa 1915
	11	Middletown. Aerial Views.	
	12	Miscellaneous. Aerial Views.	
	13	Moraine. Aerial Views. Frigidaire Plant.	1940
	14	Motor Coaches	
	15	Mount Vernon. Aerial Views.	
	16	New Carlisle. Aerial Views.	
	17	Oakwood. Aerial Views.	circa 1915
	18	Oakwood. Homes.	1920-1930
	19	People. Individuals. Groups. Miscellaneous.	
	20	People. Akeley, Carl Ethan	
	21	People. Mayfield, William Preston.	
	22	People. Native Americans.	
	23	People. Oldfield, Barney.	
	24	People. Patrick, Gen. Mason.	
	25	People. Pershing, Gen. John	circa 1919
	26	People. Santa Claus.	
	27	Piqua. Aerial Views.	circa 1928
	28	Railroads. Interurbans.	
	29	Troy, Aerial Views.	
	30	Union, OH. Aerial Views.	
	31	Vandalia. Aerial Views. National Air Show.	Sept. 9. 1954
	32	Waynesville. Aerial Views.	Circa 1925
	33	West Milton. Aerial Views.	1920-1929
	34	Wright Brothers and Early Aviation	
	35	Wright Brothers and Early Aviation	
	36	Wright Brothers and Early Aviation	
	37	Wright Brothers and Early Aviation	

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
4	38	Wright Brothers and Early Aviation	
	39	Wright Brothers and Early Aviation-Postcards	
	40	Wright Brothers and Early Aviation-Postcards	
5	1	Aerial Views. Unidentified.	
	2	Aviation. Unidentified.	
	3	Aviation. Curtiss B-2 Condor. Curtiss Conquerer V1570-7 630 hp (2 EA)	
	4	Aviation. Curtiss "Jenny" JN-4. Curtiss OX-5 90 hp	
	5	Aviation. De Havilland DH-4 "Liberty Plane" Liberty 400 hp	
	6	Aviation. 30F4 Douglas DWC Liberty 12, 400 hp	
	7	Aviation. People. Beachey, Lincoln. Foulois, Gen.	
	8	Aviation. People. McCreedy, J.A. Wright, Orville. Keely, Oakly G.	
	9	Aviation. Pitcairn "Autogiro" PCA-2 Wright R-975, 300 hp	
	10	Aviation. Waco ASO X-640 N	
	11	Aviation. 1929 Waco BSO #8543 Wright J-6, 165 hp	
	12	Columbus. Aerial Views.	1940-1950
	13	Dayton. Aerial Views. Delco. Light Factory. Huffman Dam at Flood Stage.	ca. 1925 1930-1940
	14	Industries.	
	15	Industries. Unidentified. Aerial Views.	
	16	Interiors. Bar. Unidentified.	
	17	Mayfield Photos, Inc. Publicity/Equipment	
	18	Parkersburg, WV. Aerial Views.	