



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

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(858) 551-8500  
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## (Florida Aviation - Early Photographs) [Original photograph album of Carlstrom Field, Florida, early Army Air Service Training Camp]

**Stock#:** 84163  
**Map Maker:** Johnson  
**Date:** 1920 circa  
**Place:** Carlstrom Field, Florida  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG+  
**Size:** 11.5 x 7.5 inches  
**Price:** \$ 4,800.00



### Description:

***Amazing Photograph Album of WWI-era Military Airfield in Florida: Early aircraft, deadly crashes, bird's-eye airfield views, barracks, pilots, cadets, etc.***

A wonderful personal photo album, compiled by Cadet Tracy M. Johnson, containing about 200 original photographs documenting flight training life at Carlstrom Field, near Arcadia, Florida, one of the early training camps established by the Army Air Service shortly after the U.S. entry into World War I. The photographs show early airplanes (described herein as "ships"), disastrous crashes, the airfield itself, hangars, barracks, and the young cadets in and out of their planes, including group portraits and a hunting excursion. Approximately 30 photographs depict or relate directly to crashes. Many of these images, which often resulted in the death of the pilot, are rather bluntly captioned "A bad landing."

Numerous local newspaper clippings are inserted in the album and some of these report on the deaths of young cadets at Carlstrom Field and its various sub-fields (Valentine Field, Kelly Field, Dorr Field, etc.). For example: "First fatalities of the year: Lieut. Gray and Cadet McGrath Crash at Dorr Field" (May 17, 1920); "Cadet Mathew L. Rasimas is killed. Fatal crash occurs every Friday morning"; and "Plane catches fire in fatal accident: Sigmund Szymanski and James A. Turney, flying cadets, were killed at 10:10 o'clock this morning at Kelly Field No. 2, when the De Haviland 4-B machine they were flying crashed about 400 feet to the ground and caught fire."

However, many of the newspaper reports are humorous tongue-in-cheek accounts, fully in line with the style and spirit of this photo album and its compiler. Indeed one of the newspaper captions is used to label a photograph of the bandaged young compiler himself: "Contrary to rumors, Cadet Tracy M. Johnson is not dead but very much alive. You ought to see him eat."



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The construction of Carlstrom Field began in January 1918 and eventually comprised fourteen hangars, a hospital, and six barracks that could house 175 men each. The sudden end of World War I in November 1918 did not immediately cease operations at Carlstrom Field. It continued as a test field for new aeronautical craft and weapons, including an experimental unmanned "aerial torpedo" called the Kettering Bug, a sort of early-day cruise missile.

The present album dates from 1920, when primary pilot instruction resumed at Carlstrom Field, with the opening of the Air Service Pilots' School. The 1923 decision to consolidate the various locations of the Air Service training program to a base in San Antonio resulted in the definitive closure of Carlstrom Field in 1926.

The album contains one page with an overleaf reading "Censored! Attention- Ladies. Gaze not beneath That which lieth hereunder depicteh [sic] one of the most sacred and secret rites of the Army- it is not fit that Ye should look hereon- for the eyes of Ex-service Men only." Below the leaf is a photo of cadets lowering their pants for a venereal disease inspection. These kinds of inspections were standard operating procedure during the World War I-era, when soldiers had to be visually confirmed to be free of communicable sexually-transmitted diseases to leave base.

#### **Sampling of the handwritten captions:**

*One of the searchlights at Carlstrom Field.*

*Col. Duncan ship.*

*Searchlights in action, Carlstrom Field [two night time photographs]*

*A bad landing.*

*Carlstrom Field, Arcadia, Fla. [bird's eye photograph view]*

*My first try at geting [sic] a snap shot of the clouds.*

*A few wrecks at Carlstrom Field.*

*Changing motors.*

*A Spad a very fast French Plane.*



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*Cadets Mabery / Russo*

*No one was hurt.*

*A spad*

*Coker, Alabama, Lt. Sullivan and I tryed [sic] to get out.*

*Lt. Sullivan, Sgt. Pace & myself.*

*Jew Dezen waiting for help. He made a good landing but would not take off.*

*Some of the boys at the A.R.D., Montgomery, Ala.*

*Off for a two day hunt in Fla.*

*Pittman / Chilton / Wise*

*Out for a weekend in Fla.*

*In the orange groves*

*After big game in Fla.*

*A lineup of T.M. Scouts at Carlstrom Field*

**Detailed Condition:**

Oblong 8vo. Contemporary leatherette cloth photograph album, cord tied, with the usual black album leaves. Contains approximately 200 original photographs, ranging in size from 5 x 7 inches to 3 x 5 inches or smaller. Many with handwritten captions on the album leaves. Album with some edge wear to covers. Internally very clean. The photographs all in excellent condition.