



## Smithsonian Institution

*Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives*

### Manila Davis Talley Scrapbook

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[[image — postcard with a drawing of an airplane with the text "CURTISS FLYING SERVICE Air Baggage"]]

[[newspaper clipping]]  
Former Co-ed Is Boston's Pioneer Airplane Saleslady  
By JAMES WEST

A former University co-ed has been claimed by the most modern of professions, aviation, and according to all reports received from the base of her activities, the Curtis-Wright Airplane Motors Inc. of Boston, Mass., she is making good. The daughter is Miss Manila Davis, formerly of Flatwoods, who was a student at the University from September 1917, through the summer school of 1920, and who is now listed in the employment of the Curtis-Wright airport of Boston, as a saleslady.

[[image — black & white photograph of a woman wearing a white shirt, striped tie, and aviator's cap and goggles]]

Boston Business men, clubmen, sportsmen, and directors of commercial air transport companies should not be surprised should a charming young woman, with blond hair and blue eyes, come into their offices and earnestly urge them to keep up with the times and become air-minded. Such is Miss Davis, former University co-ed, doing in her first capacity as Boston's first airplane saleslady, and perhaps one of the first in the country.

Miss Davis was born in Braxton county, attended Flatwoods high school for three years, then Sutton high school for a year, from which school she graduated in 1917. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Claude C. Davis of Flatwoods. Mr. Davis is a Braxton county lumberman, while Mrs. Davis was formerly a Miss Berry, a prominent family in Braxton county.

Studied Music Here

In September, 1917, she entered the University as a music student, studying for a diploma as artist in piano. She also did work in the College of Arts and Sciences, since the School of Music was not in separate existence at that date.

From the University Miss Davis went to Boston to enter the New England Conservatory of Music, graduating from that institution in (Continued on Page 2)

FORMER CO-ED IS PIONEER SALESLADY  
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1923. While a student there she met Randolph Riedell, Boston sportsman and clubman, member of a prominent New England family. Miss Davis married Riedell, who is a broker by profession. "In public life I am still Manila Davis, though," the young aviatrix explains.

Has Commercial License



It is not known definitely just when Miss Davis became interested in aviation, though it was probably after she went to Boston. She learned to fly with Boston Skyways Air school, and has quite a bit of flying time to her credit. She has a commercial pilot's license, and no doubt can back her sales talk with ample and expert demonstration in flying.

Friends and relatives here who recall Miss Davis remember her as a jolly, friendly girl, who seemed to impress them as being different, and having different tastes than other girls around her. One person even spoke of her as the "peculiar" type, probably referring to the characteristic which later caused her to enter aviation as a career.

Miss Davis has a sister, Maude, who also attended the University, graduating in 1925. She is now teaching home economics in Weston high school. Her brother, Howard, is a student at Potomac State college and Doris, another sister, is a student in Sutton high school.

#### Follows Example of Others

Miss Davis's example seems to be only a part of the modern movement for women to take to aviation, either as a career or as a hobby. Many women have pilot's licenses, many enter endurance contests for continued flight, and statistics show that as many women as men are using the air as a means of travel.

Just recently, Betty Russell, 17, of San Francisco, received a commercial pilot's license, from the Department of Commerce. The women's debating team at the University of Indiana has become air-minded, and flies to several of its meets by airplane. Here at the University, recently, six students planned to fly to their homes in Bluefield for the vacation period. The trip would have been made, only a satisfactory price could not be arranged. Two of the six planning to make the trip were women students.

During the past summer a cross-continental airplane race for women was held. The committee received hundreds of applications and had to reject many of them. The memorial contest, won by Ruth Nichols, was participated in by more than twenty-five licensed pilots. Further indication that the modern girl will fly, if she is given the opportunity.

#### Relatives Live in Morgantown

The colorful careers of such women pilots as Amelia Earhart, who flew the Atlantic, Elinor Smith, Lady Mary Heath, Mrs. Martin Jensen, Thea Rasche, who hopes to fly "solo" to Europe, and many other women aviators, have inspired the modern girl to become air-minded, and the college co-ed is no exception.

Miss Davis now makes her home in Boston, but is a frequent visitor to New York. She has traveled abroad. She comes home every year to visit her family and friends. She has several friends in Morgantown, and a few of the older members of the University faculty remember her as a student here. She is the niece of R. M. Davis, and a cousin of Mrs. James Trotter, both of Morgantown.

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