



Smithsonian

National Air and Space Museum

Charles M. Manly Papers

Allan Janus

2008



National Air and Space Museum Archives
14390 Air & Space Museum Parkway
Chantilly, VA 20151
NASMRefDesk@si.edu
<https://airandspace.si.edu/archives>

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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	Charles M. Manly Papers
Date:	1895-1925 (bulk 1903-1915)
Identifier:	NASM.1999.0004
Creator:	Manly, Charles Matthews, 1876-1927
Extent:	0.9 Cubic feet (2 legal document boxes)
Language:	English .
Summary:	This collection consists of material relating to Manly's aeronautical career, specifically his work with Samuel Langley's Aerodrome. The material consists of programs, publications, newspaper clippings, work notebooks, waste books, (mostly letterpress) and correspondence between Manly and the aviation and Smithsonian communities, circa 1885-1925. Correspondents include the following personalities: Glenn Curtiss, Carl Myers, Charles Walcott, Frank Lahm, Cyrus Adler, Augustus Post, and Samuel Langley.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Brian Bailey, gift, 1998, 1999-0004, deed pending.

Processing Information

Arranged and described by Allan Janus, 2008.

Encoded by Amanda Buel, 2014.

Preferred Citation

Charles M. Manly Papers, Acc. 1999-0004, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access.

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical Note

On May 9, 1898, Smithsonian Secretary Samuel P. Langley wrote to Professor Robert Thurston of Cornell University, looking for a "young man who is morally trustworthy ('a good fellow') with some gumption and a professional training" to serve as Langley's assistant in his aeronautical work. Thurston recommended a senior majoring in electrical and mechanical engineering, Charles Matthews Manly (1876-1927) of Staunton, Virginia. Langley hired Manly and placed him in charge of the construction of his Great Aerodrome, the large manned aircraft being built under the sponsorship of the Army's Board of Ordnance and Fortification. One of Manly's main contributions to the project was his vastly improved redesign of Stephen M. Balzer's five-cylinder water-cooled radial gasoline engine. Manly piloted the Great Aerodrome on its two unsuccessful launch attempts in 1903. He resigned from the Smithsonian in 1905. Manly served as a consulting aviation engineer for different government agencies and corporations, including the British War Office, 1915; the Curtiss Aeroplane and Motor Corporation 1915-1919 (from 1919-1920 as the assistant general manger); and as a member of the US Commission to the International Aircraft Conference, London, 1918. Manly also completed and edited Langley's Memoir on Mechanical Flight which was published by the Smithsonian in 1911. Manly was granted over fifty 50 patents relating to automotive transportation, power generation, and transmission. In 1929, Manly was posthumously awarded the Langley Medal for outstanding aeronautical achievements.

Scope and Contents

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Researchers may also wish to consult the National Air and Space Archives Division's Samuel P. Langley Collection (Accession No. XXXX-0494), and these collections held by the Smithsonian Institution Archives:

Record Unit 31, Office of the Secretary, Correspondence, 1866-1906, with related records to 1927.

Record Unit 34, Office of the Secretary, Correspondence, 1887-1907

Record Unit 7268, J. Elfreth Watkins Collection, 1869, 1881-1903, 1953, 1966 and undated.

Arrangement

The Charles M. Manly Papers are organized in three series:

Series I --Letter Copy Books and Notebooks

Letter copy books were used to make and preserve copies of letters and memoranda --one placed a sheet of oiled paper under a page of the copy book, dampened the tissue copy page, then laid the original letter in the book under pressure for a few seconds. The quality of the copies ranges from quite readable to very faint. Because of the fragility of the paper, Archives Division staff should be consulted before working with the material.

The two notebooks in the series (Folder 4) were carried by Manly in his day to day work on the Aerodrome project and contain his notes on the progress of the work.

Series II --Correspondence

Letters in this series are arranged by year.

Series III --Additional Material

Newspaper clippings, Manly Family records, a photograph of Langley's Aerodrome No.5 in flight, and miscellaneous material.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Aeronautics
- Aeronautics -- 1903-1916
- Airplanes -- Motors
- Langley Aerodrome Family
- Test pilots

Types of Materials:

- Clippings
- Correspondence
- Notebooks
- Programs
- Publications

Names:

- Adler, Cyrus, 1863-1940
- Curtiss Aeroplane and Motor Company
- Curtiss, Glenn Hammond, 1878-1930
- Lahm, Frank Purdy, 1877-1963
- Langley, S. P. (Samuel Pierpont), 1834-1906
- Manly, Charles Matthews, 1876-1927
- Myers, Carl, 1842-1925
- Post, Augustus
- Smithsonian Institution
- Walcott, Charles D. (Charles Doolittle), 1850-1927

Container Listing

Series 1: Letter Copy Books and Notebooks

Box 1, Folder 1	Letter copy book -- copies of correspondence, memos and speeches, 1899-1905
Box 1, Folder 2-3	Letter copy book -- copies of correspondence, 1905-1906
Box 2, Folder 1	Notebooks -- "Smithsonian Institution Memoranda for Work -- Charles M. Manly", 1900-1903
Box 2, Folder 2	Loose notes found in notebooks (folder 4), March 1901 -- May 1903, 1901-1903

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Series 2: Correspondence

Box 2, Folder 3-16	Correspondence, 1887-1925
Box 2, Folder 17	Miscellaneous correspondence, undated

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Series 3: Additional Material

Box 2, Folder 18 Manly family records

Box 2, Folder 19 Newspaper Clippings

Box 2, Folder 20 Photograph -- Langley Aerodrome No.5, May 6 1896 flight

Box 2, Folder 21 Miscellaneous files -- programs, publications, papers, mailing lists

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