



Smithsonian

National Air and Space Museum

Octave Chanute Collection [Avery]

2001

National Air and Space Museum Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	Octave Chanute Collection [Avery]
Date:	1886-1926
Identifier:	NASM.XXXX.0489
Creator:	Chanute, Octave, 1832-1910
Extent:	0.45 Cubic feet ((1 legal document box))
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Image(s): Octave Chanute Collection [Avery]

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

H.N. Staats (originally collected by William Avery), gift, unknown, XXXX-0489, unknown

Restrictions

No restrictions on access

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

Octave Chanute, born in Paris in 1832, was one of America's leading civil engineers, specializing in railroads and railroad bridges with the first bridge across the Missouri River to his credit. After developing a reputation as a scientist, writer and speaker, Chanute's interests turned to the possibility of flight. Beginning in 1891 he wrote a series of articles on his research and published them in book form, making him the first aviation historian. In 1896 he designed and constructed four gliders aided by William Avery and Augustus Herring, testing them on the Indiana shores of Lake Michigan. The Chanute team made more than 1,000 manned flights without accident, and with a few modifications his 2-surfaced glider was to become the prototype of all modern biplanes. As he grew older, Chanute turned to writing, speaking and corresponding with inventors to encourage them to continue where he had left off. He died at the age of 78 in 1910, one of the foremost pioneers in aviation.

Scope and Contents

The collection consists of newspaper clippings dating from 1886-1926; correspondence from Sept. 1904-September 1922; glass negatives and lantern slides; publications dating from 1886-1910; and a variety of photographs. Images represented include the Chanute biplane hang glider used in St. Louis in 1904, miscellaneous gliders, Chanute's gliding experiments at the Indiana dunes in 1896, and miscellaneous photos of Chanute and his colleagues.

General

NASMrev

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Aeronautics
- Gliding and soaring
- Periodicals

Types of Materials:

- Correspondence
- Glass negatives
- Lantern slides
- Photographs
- Publications

Names:

- Avery, William
- Chanute, Octave, 1832-1910