



# Smithsonian

## *National Air and Space Museum*

### Carl H. Claudy Photography Collection, 1906-1910

Karen Whitehair, Melissa Keiser, and Allan Janus

1996



National Air and Space Museum Archives  
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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	National Air and Space Museum Archives
<b>Title:</b>	Carl H. Claudy Photography Collection
<b>Date:</b>	1906-1910
<b>Identifier:</b>	NASM.XXXX.0549
<b>Creator:</b>	Claudy, C. H. (Carl Harry), 1879-1957
<b>Extent:</b>	1.95 Cubic feet (1 legal document box; 2 flat boxes; 13 clamshells)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	This collection consists of nearly 250 glass plates, several folders of prints, and two boxes of glass plate envelopes affixed with small prints of the image formerly contained within them. The subject matter of the photography is primarily concerned with Alexander Graham Bell's tetrahedral experiments of 1906, flights of the Thomas Baldwin dirigible and the United States Signal Corps SC-1 free balloon (1908), and the Wright Flyer Army Trials at Fort Meyer, Virginia (1908 and 1909).

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Carl H. Claudy, gift, 1957, XXXX-0549, unknown

### Processing Information

Arranged and described by Karen Whitehair, Melissa Keiser, and Allan Janus, 1996. Revised 2011.

Encoded by Rena Schergen, February 2012.

### Preferred Citation

Carl H. Claudy Photography Collection, Acc. XXXX-0549, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

### Restrictions

No restrictions on access.

### Conditions Governing Use

Material is subject to Smithsonian Terms of Use. Should you wish to use NASM material in any medium, Please submit an Application for Permission to Reproduce NASM Material, available at [Permissions Requests](#) .

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## Biographical Note

Carl Harry Claudy (1879-1957) was a journalist, a talented photographer, and the author of books on photography, aircraft modeling, Freemasonry, science fiction, and children's books. His books and articles include *The First Book of Photography: a Primer of Theory and Practice for the Beginner* (1918), *Beginner's Book of Model Airplanes* (1930), and *Prize Winners' Book of Model Airplanes* (1931). Claudy also wrote a comic strip, *Adventures in the Unknown*.

During the early 1900s, Claudy photographed several important aeronautical events - Alexander Graham Bell's tetrahedral kite experiments; flights of the airship *Signal Corps No. 1*, the U.S. Army's first powered aircraft; and the Wright Military Flyer trials at Fort Meyer, Virginia.

Attending these events were well-known figures of the day, and Claudy photographed many of them: Orville and Wilbur Wright, Glenn Curtiss, Alexander Graham Bell, President William Howard Taft, Thomas Baldwin, and Alice Roosevelt. Claudy's photographs are a valuable record of the early days of aeronautics and of the people who played a part in them.

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## Scope and Content

The Carl H. Claudy Photography Collection, held by the Archives Division of the National Air and Space Museum, consists of 249 glass plate negatives, mainly 4 x 5 inches in size, taken by Claudy from 1907 to 1909 and photographic contact prints made from the negatives. The subject matter of these images are divided into three main categories: Alexander Graham Bell's tetrahedral kite experiments (1907); the U.S. Army's trial flights of the Wright brothers' Military Flyer at Fort Meyer, Virginia (1908-1909); and lighter than air (LTA) flights including Thomas Baldwin's dirigible *Signal Corps No. 1* and free balloon ascents by James C. McCoy's *America* and A. Leo Stevens' *Signal Corps No. 10*. The collection includes several prints from negatives broken or lost over time.

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## Arrangement

Collection material has been arranged in the following series:

Series I: Photographs of Alexander Graham Bell's Tetrahedral Kite Experiments (1907)

Series II: Photographs of Wright Flyer Army Trials at Fort Meyer, Virginia (1908-1909)

Series III: Photographs of LTA activity, including Baldwin *Signal Corps No. 1* airship flights and several free balloon ascensions (1907-1908)

Series IV: Claudy's original glass plate negatives. Due to the fragile condition of the negatives, this series is not available to researchers.

Series V: Additional material, including Claudy's original negative envelopes and contact prints, copy negatives, and copies of scans of the original negatives on compact discs.

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Aeronautics  
Aeronautics, Military

Airships  
Balloons  
Kites  
Research aircraft  
U.S. Signal Corps SC-1 free balloon

Names:

Baldwin, Thomas  
Bell, Alexander Graham, 1847-1922  
Claudy, C. H. (Carl Harry), 1879-1957  
Wright Flyer Army Trials -- Fort Myer, Vir.

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Alexander Graham Bell's Tetrahedral Kite Experiments, 1907

Box 1, Folder 1

[Bell Tetrahedral Kite Experiments](#)

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## Series 2: Wright Military Flyer Army Air Trials, Fort Myer, Virginia, 1908-1909

Box 1, Folder 2      Wright Military Flyer Trials - Photo Captions, 1908-1909

Box 1, Folder 3      [Wright Military Flyer Trials - Photographs, 1908](#)

Box 1, Folder 4      [Wright Military Flyer Trials - Photographs, 1908](#)

Box 1, Folder 5      [Wright Military Flyer Trials - Photographs, 1909](#)

Box 1, Folder 6      [Wright Military Flyer Trials - Photographs, 1909-1909](#)

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## Series 3: Lighter than Air (LTA) Flights, 1907-1908

### 3.1: Free Balloon Flights in Washington D.C. - Caption List, undated

Box 1, Folder 7	Free Balloon Flights in Washington D.C. - Caption List, undated
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### 3.2: James C. McCoy Free Balloon "America" Ascent, 1907

Box 1, Folder 8	McCoy Balloon "America" Ascent - Notes and Caption List
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Box 1, Folder 9	<a href="#">McCoy Balloon "America" Ascent - Photographs</a>
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### 3.3: A. Leo Stevens U.S. Army Signal Corps No. 10 (SC-10) Free Balloon Ascent, 1907

Box 1, Folder 10	<a href="#">A. Leo Stevens - Army Signal Corps No. 10 (SC-10) Ascent - Photographs</a>
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### 3.4: U.S. Army Signal Corps Free Balloons, undated

Box 1, Folder 11	<a href="#">U.S. Army Signal Corps Free Balloons - Photographs</a>
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### 3.5: Thomas Baldwin U.S. Army Signal Corps No. 1 (SC-1) airship trials, 1908

Box 1, Folder 12	Baldwin - Army Signal Corps No. 1 (SC-1) Airship Trials - Notes
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Box 1, Folder 13	<a href="#">Baldwin - Army Signal Corps No. 1 (SC-1) Airship Trials - Photographs</a>
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Box 1, Folder 14	<a href="#">Baldwin - Army Signal Corps No. 1 (SC-1) Airship Trials - First Engine Tests in Hangar - Photographs, 1908 August 4</a>
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Box 1, Folder 15	<a href="#">Baldwin - Army Signal Corps No. 1 (SC-1) Airship Trials - Official Inspection in Hangar - Photographs, 1908 August 4</a>
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Box 1, Folder 16	<a href="#">Baldwin - Army Signal Corps No. 1 (SC-1) Airship Trials - flights, 1908 August</a>
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Box 1, Folder 17	<a href="#">Baldwin - Army Signal Corps No. 1 (SC-1) Airship Trials - Landing in Cornfield, 1908 August 12</a>
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## Series 4: Original Glass Plate Negatives, undated

**Arrangement:** For the 1908-1909 Wright Military Flyer trials at Fort Meyer, Carl Claudy arranged the original glass plate negatives according to subject and assigned a letter designator to each:

A - Details of Machine B - Fatal Accident [LT Thomas Selfridge's crash of September 17, 1908] C - People Watching Trials D - Sunset and on Ground E - In Air

Archives staff assigned the letter S and numbers to the remaining plates: Alexander Graham Bell's kite experiments and lighter than air flights. All images were also assigned Smithsonian Institution (SI) image numbers.

**Access:** Due to the fragile nature of the glass negatives, this series is not physically available to researchers.

Box 2	1 - 13; 1A - 6A Notes: 95-8428 - 95-8441
Box 3	7A - 11A; 1B - 9B Notes: 95-8442 - 95-8455
Box 4	10B - 15B; 1C - 10C Notes: 95-8456 - 95-8469
Box 5	11C - 25C Notes: 95-8470 - 95-8483
Box 6	1D - 17D Notes: 95-8484 - 95-8500
Box 7	18D - 25D; 1E - 6E Notes: 95-8501 - 95-8514
Box 8	7E - 20E Notes: 95-8515 - 95-8528
Box 9	21E - 34E Notes: 95-8529 - 95-8542
Box 10	35E - 47E Notes: 95-8543 - 95-8555
Box 11	48E - 13S Notes: 95-8556 - 95-8571
Box 12	14S - 26S Notes: 95-8572 - 95-8584
Box 13	27S - 39S Notes: 95-8585 - 95-8597
Box 14	40S - 52S

	Notes:	95-8598 - 95-8610
Box 15	53S - 65S Notes:	95-8611 - 95-8623
Box 16	66S - 78S Notes:	95-8624 - 95-8636
Box 17	79S - 91S Notes:	95-8637 - 95-8649
Box 18	92S - 104S Notes:	95-8650 - 95-8662
Box 19	105S - 118S Notes:	95-8663 - 95-8676
Box 20	1S, 6S, 11S Notes:	Plate 1S measures 5 by 7 in inches. Plate 11S is cracked. 95-8559, 95-8564, 95-8569

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## Series 5: Additional Material, undated

Scope and Content: Carl Claudy stored his negatives in paper envelopes; each envelope had a contact print made from its negative pasted to it.

In 1995, Smithsonian Photographic Services (SPS) made copy negatives and scans from the Claudy glass plate negatives.

Box 21; Box 21	Claudy's original negative envelopes with attached contact prints
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Box 22	Modern copy negatives and copies of electronic scans of negatives on compact discs
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