



Smithsonian  
*National Air and Space Museum*

Wright (Brothers) Flight Logs

2014

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

# Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	1
Administrative Information .....	1
Scope and Contents.....	2
Biographical / Historical.....	2
Arrangement.....	2
Names and Subjects .....	3
Container Listing .....	

## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	National Air and Space Museum Archives
<b>Title:</b>	Wright (Brothers) Flight Logs
<b>Identifier:</b>	NASM.XXXX.0641
<b>Date:</b>	(bulk 1910-1917)
<b>Extent:</b>	0.1 cubic feet (2 folders)
<b>Creator:</b>	Coffyn, Frank, 1878-1960
<b>Language:</b>	English Collection is in English
<b>Summary:</b>	This collection consists of a series of 68 "Field Reports" completed by Frank T. Coffyn logging flight activities of Wright (Brothers) aircraft, for the period from May 5, 1910, through February 24, 1911
<b>Digital Content:</b>	<a href="#">Image(s): Wright (Brothers) Flight Logs</a>

---

## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Unknown, Unknown, Unknown, NASM.XXXX.0641

### Processing Information

Arranged, described, and encoded by Patti Williams, 2018.

### Preferred Citation

Wright (Brothers) Flight Logs, NASM.XXXX.0641, 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](#).

---

## Biographical / Historical

Wilbur Wright was born April 16, 1867, his brother Orville Wright on August 19, 1871. They, along with sister Katharine and brothers Reuchlin and Lorin, were raised near Millville, Indiana and in Dayton, Ohio by their mother, Susan Wright, and father, Milton Wright, bishop of the United Brethren Church. As young men, Wilbur and Orville launched a printing business and a bicycle shop. An interest in aeronautics, spurred by the accounts of the experiments of Otto Lilienthal, prompted Wilbur to request information on the subject from the Smithsonian Institution in 1899. In August of 1900, Wilbur built his first glider and that year and the next the brothers tested gliders at Kitty Hawk. The Wrights constructed a wind tunnel to gather accurate aeronautical data and, benefiting from this new information, another glider was built in 1902. In 1903, the brothers were ready to begin construction of a powered craft. With the assistance of mechanic Charles Taylor, they added a 4-cylinder, 12-horsepower engine and propellers to the 1903 Flyer and it was sent to Kitty Hawk for testing. At 10:35 am, December 17, on Kill Devil Hill, Orville achieved a flight of 12 seconds--traveling a distance of 120 feet. By 1908 the Wrights were demonstrating their machines in Europe. The U.S. Army Signal Corps advertised for bids for a two-seat observation aircraft and in 1908 and 1909, the Wrights flew at official Army trials at Fort Myer, Virginia. (It was here that powered flight's first fatality occurred: the tragic death of Lieutenant Thomas Selfridge.) The Army was to purchase the Military Flyer (Signal Corps No. 1) for {dollar}30,000 in 1909. In that same year, The Wright Company was established to manufacture Wright aircraft. Wilbur died in Dayton, Ohio on May 30, 1912. Orville Wright would live until January 30, 1948

---

## Scope and Contents

This collection consists of a series of 68 "Field Reports" completed by Frank T. Coffyn logging flight activities of Wright (Brothers) aircraft, for the period from May 5, 1910, through February 24, 1911. (One report is for March 26, 1917, and appears to list Coffyn's flights for that day.) The reports were completed on preprinted forms with columns for "Machine Number, Operator [pilot]," "Passenger," "Time of Flight," "Wind Direction," "Wind Velocity," "Length of Flight (Time and Distance)," and "Remarks." Spaces were also provided for Date, Gasoline Used, and Oil Used, and a signature. Fifty-six of the reports are signed by Frank Coffyn; the remaining sixteen appear to be in Coffyn's handwriting. Most are carbon copies. The reports cover flights made at Huffman Prairie, Ohio; Indianapolis, Indiana; Montreal, Canada; Atlantic City and Asbury Park, New Jersey; Hartford, Connecticut; and Augusta, Georgia. Besides Orville and Wilbur Wright, most of the pilots and passengers listed were students who became members of the Wright Exhibition Team. Pilots and passengers include: Griffith Brewer, Walter Brookins, William Starling Burgess, Frank Coffyn, Arch Hoxsey, Ralph Johnstone, Duval LaChapelle, Albert B. Lambert (President St. Louis Aero Club), Phillip O. Parmalee, Norman Prince, Frank H. Russell (first manager of the Wright Co.), Charlie Taylor, and Arthur L. "Al" Welsh [spelled by Coffyn throughout as "Welch"], and Lorin Wright. Most notable is the report of May 25, 1910, which lists the only flight Orville and Wilbur Wright made together, and the first and only flight taken by their father, Bishop Milton Wright. Remarks include notes on modifications and damage to the aircraft, reasons for takeoff failures, and (in some cases) altitude attained in flight. Additional notes on the earlier reports record total flight hours to date for several of the pilots.

---

## Arrangement

This collection is arranged at the item level; pages from log are displayed chronologically.

## Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Aeronautics  
Flight training

Types of Materials:

Logbooks

Names:

Brookins, Walter R.  
Burgess, William Starling  
Hoxsey, Arch  
Parmalee, Phillip Orin  
Prince, Norman, Sergeant  
Taylor, Charles Edward, 1868-1956  
Welsh, Arthur L. "Al"  
Wright, Orville, 1871-1948  
Wright, Wilbur, 1867-1912