



Smithsonian

National Air and Space Museum

Kress Flying Machine Patent and Letter

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National Air and Space Museum Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	Kress Flying Machine Patent and Letter
Date:	1880-1883
Identifier:	NASM.XXXX.0862
Creator:	Kress, Wilhelm, 1836-1913
Extent:	0.05 Cubic feet (1 folder)
Language:	English , German .
Summary:	Wilhelm Kress (1836--1913) was an inventor, writer, and lecturer. This collection contains one of Kress' German patents, patent number 8706, for one of his flying machine models; a letter from 1883, in German, signed by Kress; and a description, in English, of the flying machine written by Arnold Samuelson (who lists his title as "Chief Engineer").
Digital Content:	Image(s): Kress Flying Machine Patent and Letter

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Unknown, material found in collection, NASM.XXXX.0862

Processing Information

Arranged and described (2008), updated and encoded (2022) by Jessamyn Lloyd.

Preferred Citation

Kress Flying Machine Patent and Letter, NASM.XXXX.0862, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access

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Biographical / Historical

Wilhelm Kress was born in 1836 in Russia. In 1864, Kress invented a small elastic canvas air propeller kite and eventually began to work on the idea of a motor-powered propeller driven kite, which he successfully flew in 1865 and named the Drachenflieger. By 1877, Kress had built kite models powered by rubber strands that

he called Cocoons or Aeroveloces (Cocoons or Aero-bicycles). This same year, Kress met with Josef Stefan, Director of the Physical Institute at the University of Vienna and Vice-President of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, to discuss his inventions. By approximately 1879, Stefan had enrolled Kress for patents in Germany, France, and Austria-Hungary for his Drachenflieger models. Sometime in 1890, Kress began working on a design for a helicopter that he called a Hubschraube (Lifting Propeller). In 1894, Kress was invited by Octave Chanute to visit the First Aeronautical Congress in Chicago, Illinois where Kress presented several lectures. Kress designed a full-sized tandem-winged monoplane for which he was granted a patent in December 1897. Throughout the early 1900s, Kress worked on building and testing his airplane but, due to financial and mechanical difficulties, he was never able to build a complete, successful aircraft. From 1908 until his death in 1913, Kress restricted his aeronautical activities to writing and delivering lectures.

Scope and Contents

This collection contains one of Wilhelm Kress' German patents, patent number 8706, for one of his flying machine models; a letter from 1883, in German, signed by Kress; and a description, in English, of the flying machine written by Arnold Samuelson (who lists his title as "Chief Engineer").

Arrangement

Collection is arranged by type of material.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Aeronautics

Types of Materials:

Correspondence

Patents