



# Smithsonian Institution Archives

## Samuel P. Langley Papers, 1867-1906

by Smithsonian Institution Archives

Smithsonian Institution Archives  
Washington, D.C.  
Contact us at [osiaref@si.edu](mailto:osiaref@si.edu)  
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## Collection Overview

Repository:	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., <i>osiaref@si.edu</i>
Creator:	Langley, Samuel P, 1834-1906
Title:	Samuel P. Langley Papers
Dates:	1867-1906
Quantity:	12.88 linear meters and oversize.

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## Administrative Information

### Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7003, Langley, Samuel P, 1834-1906, Samuel P. Langley Papers

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## Descriptive Entry

Samuel P. Langley (1834-1906) was the third Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution. Apparently, many of Langley's papers were accidentally burned after his death. Langley papers in the Smithsonian are housed in the Smithsonian Archives and the National Air and Space Museum (NASM). The Allegheny Observatory holds papers from Langley's years there, from which copies of Langley's correspondence, 1867-1887, have been made for this collection.

These papers document important aspects of Langley's scientific and administrative career. Most of the material documents the progress of his aeronautical research from his first flying model of 1891 through the failure of his Aerodrome A of 1903. Also, information files housed in the National Air and Space Museum Library include secondary accounts and photographs relating to Langley's aeronautical studies. Related materials in the NASM Library include the Stephen M. Balzer papers, 1898-1902, which consist of correspondence with Langley and his associate, Charles M. Manly, regarding Balzer's aerodrome engines.

Materials in this collection consist of publications, including a bound collection of writings, and original manuscripts of many of Langley's publications, 1869-1905; diaries and shorthand notebooks, mostly kept by Langley's secretary, 1889-1905; bolograph curve and line spectrum readings; microfilm and photocopies of Langley's outgoing correspondence from the Allegheny Observatory, 1867-1887; astrophysical research correspondence; scrapbooks, 1890-1903; aeronautical research, including correspondence, wastebooks, and notes of Langley and Manly and their assistants, E. C. Huffaker, L. C. Maltby, B. L. Rhinehart, and R. L. Reed; and oversize aerodrome drawings and bolometer readings.

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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  
Astronomy and astrophysics

Types of Materials:

Photographs

Names:

Allegheny Observatory.  
Balzer, Stephen M.  
Huffaker, Edward C.  
Maltby, L. C.  
Manly, Charles Matthews, 1876-1927  
Reed, R. L.  
Rinehart, Bentley L.  
Smithsonian Institution

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## Container Listing

Box 1

Collected Writings of Samuel P. Langley, 1891-1901

Box 2

Collected Writings of Samuel P. Langley, 1897-1905

Box 3

Collected Writings of Samuel P. Langley, 1889-1891

Box 4

Collected Writings of Samuel P. Langley - Reports, 1887-1905

Box 5

Collected Writings of Samuel P. Langley, 1869-1882

1900 Solar Eclipse Expedition of APO [Astrophysical Observatory], 1904

Total Solar Eclipse of July 29, 1878, Observations at Pike's Peak, Colorado, and Experiments in Aerodynamics by Samuel P. Langley, 1891

The Internal Work of the Wind, by Samuel P. Langley, 1893

Samuel P. Langley's Private Copy of Experiments in Aerodynamics, 1891

Box 6

Collected Writings of Samuel P. Langley, 1883-1889, Numbers 69-104

Box 7

Collected Writings of Samuel P. Langley, 1883-1889, Numbers 690-104

Box 8

Photocopies of Letterpress Book from Allegheny Observatory, pages 1-352

Box 9

Photocopies of Letterpress Book from Allegheny Observatory, pages 353-479

Box 10

Miscellaneous correspondence, reports, articles and ephemera. Mostly concerns Langley's appointment as Assistant Secretary of the Smithsonian in 1887, but also includes materials on his aerodynamics research.

Notices and Reviews of Works by Langley

Material relating to Langley as made available to Mr. White for preparation of his "tribute" published in Smithsonian publications

Publications by Langley and List of Books Read by Langley

Lecture on Air by Langley

The Internal Work of the Wind by Langley

Box 11

Publications and Articles (3 folders)

Newspaper Clippings

Publications and Articles (4 folders)

Box 12

Publications and Articles (4 folders)

Newspaper Clippings Concerning Langley

Box 13

Program for Dinner given by the American Railway Guild in Honor of the Permanent Commission of the International Railway Congress, 1905

Constitution and By-Laws of the Metropolitan Club, 1904

Diary of "O & F" Work for Smithsonian, 1899

Diary of "O & F" Work for Smithsonian, 1900

Diary of "O & F" Work for Smithsonian, 1901-1902

Box 14

Notebooks. Includes G.B. Wells, "O & F" Account, 1900; Address Book for Langley (kept by G.B. Wells), 1900; and Notebook of Expenses, 1900; Appointment Book, 1905.

The Strollers Constitution and By-Laws

Diary, 1889-1891

Diary, 1891-1892

Diary, 1893

Diary, 1893-1894

Diary, 1895

Diary, 1900

Box 15

Diary, 1893

Diary, 1897

Diary, 1899

Diary, 1900

Diary, 1898

Box 16

Diary, 1901

Diary, 1902

Diary, 1903

Diary, 1904

Diary, 1905

Box 17

Newspaper Clippings Regarding Langley's Death, 1906

Correspondence, 1906. Some of these letters were written by Samuel P. Langley shortly before his death. Most correspondence is between John W. Langley with the Smithsonian concerning Langley's effects.

Langley Memorial Remarks and Correspondence

Langley Memorial Remarks and Lists of Invited Guests

Box 18

Spectrum Reports, 1898 (4 folders)

Box 19

Personal correspondence, 1889-1897

Personal correspondence, 1890

Personal correspondence, 1882-1898. Much of this concerns Langley's experiments.

Personal correspondence, 1886-1889

Correspondence concerning the Estate of William Thaw, 1891

Personal correspondence, 1895. Copy book of outgoing correspondence.

Account Book 1888-1906

Personal correspondence, 1866-1869

Box 20

Outgoing correspondence, 1904-1906

Outgoing correspondence, 1886-1893

Outgoing correspondence, 1893-1900

Box 21

Card Index of People Langley Knew (3 folders)

Invitations to Langley Memorial

Box 22

Unidentified Correspondence, 1889-1904

Receipts and Experiment Charts. Appear to concern velocity and aerodynamic studies.

Correspondence Regarding Solar Eclipse, January 1, 1889

Private Letters on Samuel P. Langley Matters, 1906

Box 23

Langley Bird Research and Aeronautics Correspondence and Notes

Langley Correspondence in reference to Aerodrome

Langley - Data on his Aerodrome (3 folders)

Box 24

Solar Eclipse Images (3 folders)

Smithsonian Institution Fire (1865). Annotated envelope.

Article on Aeronautics by O. Chanute

1900 Solar Eclipse Expedition of the Astrophysical Observatory, 1904

The Astrophysical Observatory by Samuel Langley, 1897

Box 25

Yearly Time Book - Aerodrome Work, 1902

Yearly Time Book - Aerodrome Work, 1903

Notes and Correspondence Regarding Aerodrome Work

Scrapbook Containing a Summary of Principal Events re: to Langley's Aerodromic Work in the Order of Dates Beginning with 1897

Associations to which Langley Belonged



Receipts for Letters Sent by the Secretary

Box 26

Letters about Langley's Illness

Letters Regarding Cyrus Adler's Biographical Sketch of Langley

Langley's Memoirs (incomplete)

Langley Biography

Newspaper Clippings. Includes photographic portrait of Langley.

Time-Service Matter

Publication of New Astronomy

Letters to Langley

Cyrus Adler Correspondence Regarding Langley

Subscriptions for Langley Portrait

Box 27

Photocopies of Allegheny Observatory Letterpress Book, pages 329-479

Box 28

Photocopies of Allegheny Observatory Letterpress Book, Vol. I, pages 1-328

Box 29

Photocopies of Allegheny Observatory Letterpress Book, Vol. I, c. 1887-1891

Box 30

Photocopies of Allegheny Observatory Letterpress Book, Vol. II, c.  
1884-1898

Box 31

Photocopies of Allegheny Observatory Letterpress Book, Vol. III, pages  
2-417

Box 32

Photocopies of Allegheny Observatory Letterpress Book, Vol. II, c.  
1885-1887

Box 33

Photocopies of Allegheny Observatory Letterpress Book, Vol. III, c.  
1886-1887

Box 34

Drawings and Tables Regarding Pressure Recorder

Box 35

Langley Correspondence, 1895-1897 (Accession 91-008)

Huffaker's Report on Whirling Table, 1895

Experiments on Soaring Speed

Drawing of Langley Aerodrome

Box 36

Langley Aerodrome Photographs

Eclipse Photographs, Wadesboro, North Carolina, May 28, 1900

Allegheny Observatory Photographs

Box 37

"Wastebook" (5-512). Contains photographs (signed by T. W. [Thomas William] Smillie) and technical descriptions of Aerodromes.

Box 38

Wind Tunnel Data from Allegheny Observatory, 1888-1890

Wind Tunnel Data Disks, 1888

Wind Velocity Tests, c. 1890

Oversize

Propeller Hub Technical Drawing

Balloon Experiment Drawing

O&F Account Cyanotype

Aerodrome Exhibition Poster

Placard Describing Langley's Aircraft (possibly used in an exhibit)

Mechanical Drawings (4 on linen, 1 cyanotype, 1 paper)

Chalk Drawing of Sun/Eclipse/Solar Corona (possibly by Langley)

Gouache Drawings of Sunspots (?)

"Official Secretarial Portrait (photographic) of Langley"

Charts Showing Location of Houseboat, Flight Paths

"Lunar Halo and Meteor Observed at Fort Dodge, Iowa," January 20, 1885

"Configuration of the Heavens at the Death of President James A. Garfield," September 19, 1881

"Nativity Chart of James A. Garfield" and "Configuration of the Heavens at the Birth of Howard B. Hess," 1882

"Annual Eclipse of the Sun," June 15, 1885

"Graphs on Linen Draft Paper - Plate II," c. 1880s

"Sifting Train," 1888

Diagram of Screen Used in Spectrometer - "Energy and Vision"