

Brief von James Means an Otto Lilienthal
handschriftlich

Original: National Air and Space Museum Library, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.
Überstezung veröffentlicht in „Otto Lilienthal's Flugtechnische Korrespondenz“
Otto-Lilienthal-Museum Anklam 1993

Boston, den 20. März 1896

Dear Sir:

I wrote to you on the 12th of this month, but I think now it is better to write you more definitely. I enclose herewith a letter of reference to parties well-known in Berlin that you may know about my financial responsibility. I want to make with you a definite contract. My friend Mr. J. B. Millet of this city (the author of two of the articles in the 1896 Annual) will act with me.

We want to make a binding contract with you which shall cover an absence from Berlin of not more than three months and not less than two months.

We want to know how much money it will take to do this. We want you to visit this country and bring some of your machines with you. The number of machines to be decided later.

1.

Object of your Visit

The object of your visit is to introduce to the people of the United States the use of the air-sailing machine as a SPORT.

2.

Expenses

If the contract is made all of your travelling expenses and living expenses from the time of your leaving Berlin to the time of reaching it again, are to be paid by ourselves.

The expenses connected with your flying equipment, that is to say, its construction, repairs and transportation are to be paid by yourself.

The expenses of a starting hill or a revolving slope, (as described in the 1896 Annual, p. 102) are to be paid by us.

3.

Premium

Besides paying the expenses just mentioned in Section 11, we are to pay you for each month of your absence from Berlin a certain number of pounds sterling as a premium.

If we make a contract with you, Mr. Millet and I should ask you during the term of that contract, to agree not to exhibit any part of your apparatus or furnish any information to anyone without our consent.

Inasmuch as we wish to raise a fund to be devoted in the future to the cause of aeronautical science, we must be free to make such business arrangements as may be necessary

In regard to the time of your coming I would ask which would suit you best, if you come, to start from Berlin July 1st or Sept. 1st?

Now I assure you that I have great hopes that this plan can be carried out. It will do more than anything else I know of to encourage aeronautical science.

Therefore I would ask you to make the amount of the monthly premium as moderate as you can, so that nothing may stand in the way of our accomplishing what we wish.

We can provide the necessary starting facilities. Please write me fully in regard to the matter. Please, let me know what you think of the revolving slope described on page 102 of the 1896 Annual. If you approve of that plan, how high shall we have it built? What angle of descent? And how wide should the pathway be? Shall we make it soft with padding of some kind?

If you do not wish to use the revolving slope, please write me fully in regard to the kind of hill which you will need. What was the exact height and cost of your conical hill and was the price of a day's labor? What were the methods of its construction?

I have received your letter of March 4th and I am very glad to know that you are pleased with the Annual No.2. I note what you say concerning the sale of your American patent. I am sorry that I have not yet been able to find you a customer for it, but I am sure that if you come over here and show us the value of it as an instrument of sport, your chances of selling the patent will be much better than if you stay in Berlin.

Please cable to me according to the enclosed code, as soon as you can conveniently.

Yours very truly

James Means

Cable code. Address Jasmeans, Boston

Stone-

I will come to the United States if you will pay my travelling and living expenses and besides that, a premium each month of as many pounds sterling as stated in the next word. Flying-I can come either July 1st or Sept. 1st and can be absent from Berlin either two months or three months. It does not make any difference which.

Swimming- I would rather leave Berlin September 1st.

Walking- I would rather leave Berlin July 1st.

Riding- I cannot be absent from Berlin more than two months Fire. I can be absent from Berlin three months if necessary.

Water- I can be absent from Berlin more than three months if necessary. Window-I cannot come to the United States under any circumstances.

P.S.

Ich ersehe soeben, daß ich den für Berlin bestimmten Ausweisbrief nicht zeitig genug für den heutigen Dampfer erhalten kann. Ich gebe Ihnen darum als Referenz einstweilen die Herren C. J. Hovey & Cie., 7 Rue Scribe, Paris an. Im Zusagefall sende ich Ihnen dann ausreichende Berliner Referenzen.

to me according to the enclosed code, as soon as you can conveniently.

Yours very truly

James Means