

Brief von James Means an Otto Lilienthal
handschriftlich

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Boston, den 10. März 1896

Dear Sir:

Your article which you kindly contributed to the Annual for 1896 has attracted very much attention in this country. In order to give it as wide a circulation as possible and so to help the cause of aeronautics I sent notices to all the important daily papers of the United States informing the editors that I would waive my copyright. Consequently these papers have availed themselves of the opportunity to publish extended extracts from your article.

Of course, what now needs to be done is to encourage as many experimentors as possible to learn the art of using your most improved machine.

By this time there ought to be a great many men practising with your machines here in this country. But unfortunately there are none that I know of at present. I want to clearly state what seems to me to be one obstacle in the way of introducing your machine in the United States. It is an obstacle which you have the power to overcome. I find that many men who are interested in the subject seem to have the idea that however excellent your machine may be, nevertheless it is your exceptional skill as an athlete which gives you great success. Now we all know that your machine is the product of many years of thought and experiment, we also know that your long practice in the air gives you an advantage which no one can get without much practice, but what is needed now is that you should come over here to America for two or three months and let people see you in the air and hear from your own lips the statement that other athletes can learn the art which you have acquired. I think that would awaken an immense amount of interest here and hasten the final solution of the problem.

I have been talking lately with some of my aeronautical friends in regard to this matter and we think it is best to ask you whether you would consider the matter of coming over here to the United States in the autumn of this year, say, about the 15th of September.

If so, what sum of money would it be necessary for us to pay you if you were absent from Berlin about two months?

I hope that we may have a favorable answer from you.

Yours very truly

James Means

If you should wish to cable your answer please address Jasmeans, Boston.

If you use any numbers I shall understand them as meaning pouns sterling.