

unpublished correspondence, took testimony of experts, and presented a report which was given to the Press on June 9, 1925. The label as revised to accord therewith now stands as follows:—

LANGLEY AERODROME.

THE ORIGINAL LANGLEY FLYING MACHINE OF 1903, RESTORED.

IN THE OPINION OF MANY COMPETENT TO JUDGE, THIS WAS THE FIRST HEAVIER-THAN-AIR CRAFT IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD CAPABLE OF SUSTAINED FREE FLIGHT UNDER ITS OWN POWER, CARRYING A MAN. THIS AIRCRAFT SLIGHTLY ANTEDATED THE MACHINE DESIGNED AND BUILT BY WILBUR AND ORVILLE WRIGHT, WHICH, ON DECEMBER 17, 1903, WAS THE FIRST IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD TO ACCOMPLISH SUSTAINED FREE FLIGHT UNDER ITS OWN POWER, CARRYING A MAN.

(There follows in small type accounts of the investigations of Langley and of his machines, too long to quote here.)

I believe that label to be just, as do my colleagues, and cannot think anybody would wish us to recant falsely. For the sake of the public, I make the following offer.

If Mr. Wright will openly state in a friendly way that he appreciates that the Smithsonian Institution honestly believes that the Langley machine of 1903 was capable of sustained free flight under its own power, carrying a man, and that it now removes that public statement, not in confession of error, but in a gesture of goodwill for the honour of America; then I am willing to let Langley's fame stand on its merits and to reduce the Langley label to this simple statement: "Langley Aerodrome.—The Original Langley Flying Machine of 1903, Restored."

I will do this, of course, provided Mr. Wright will deposit the Kitty Hawk machine in the National Museum, where it has always been wanted, where it will have the place of honour due to it, where the label will state that it was the first heavier-than-air craft in the history of the world to accomplish sustained free flight under its own power, carrying a man, and where it will be preserved inviolate to the Wrights' perpetual honour.

Mr. Griffith Brewer's Comment

The Secretary,
The Royal Aeronautical Society,
7, Albemarle Street, W.1.

20th March, 1928.

DEAR MR. PRITCHARD,—I have to thank you for giving me the opportunity of commenting on Secretary C. G. Abbot's offer to Mr. Orville Wright, which has already been given wide publicity in the American Press. If similar publicity had been given to the report of Dr. Ames and Admiral Taylor, my report to the Royal Aeronautical Society of the change in the label on the Langley machine would not have been delayed until some months after the statement on the Langley label had been changed from a statement of fact to one of opinion.

The present "offer" contains the first intimation of any inquiry based on testimony having taken place, and as readers of the JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL AERONAUTICAL SOCIETY would naturally suppose that both sides in such an inquiry would have been invited to give evidence, I would say that until now I have never heard of any such inquiry having taken place.

On the merits of the "offer," little need be said. It amounts to an invitation to Mr. Orville Wright to make an insincere statement, in return for which

Dr. Abbot would withdraw the incorrect description on the Langley machine. Certainly Dr. Abbot only inherited this incorrect labelling of a Museum exhibit, and it has already been partly corrected. But why not complete the correction for the sake of truth, without bargaining?

Yours faithfully,
GRIFFITH BREWER.

AIR OR GROUND ENGINEER?

“ Briarley,” Hendford, Yeovil,
19th March, 1928.

The Secretary,
The Royal Aeronautical Society,
7, Albemarle Street, W.1.

DEAR SIR,—In view of the Society being the only body representing those engaged in the profession of aeronautics, I am writing to suggest that consideration might be given by the Society to the terminology used in describing those engaged in the profession.

To illustrate my meaning, take the case of the term “ Ground Engineer,” this is used at the present time to describe one who has a knowledge of aircraft construction, and who is, in fact, an Aircraft Engineer. It is a source of irritation to such men to be termed “ Ground Engineers,” particularly as frequently, nowadays, it is necessary for them to fly as passengers in order to ascertain for themselves whether or not certain portions of the aircraft are functioning satisfactorily. I beg to suggest that the Society might with advantage take up this point with the Air Ministry, while it is still possible to make a change in such designations.

I understand that the B.E.S.A. are considering the revision of their Glossary of Aeronautical Terms, and in this connection I venture to suggest that the Society might consider the following terms, which, if approved, could be submitted to the B.E.S.A. for standardisation.

Aeronautical Engineer.—One who is qualified to design aircraft, and to supervise the construction of aircraft.

Aircraft Designer.—One who is qualified to design aircraft:

Aircraft Engineer.—One who is qualified to supervise the construction of aircraft.

Air Engineer or Aerial Engineer.—One who is carried on an aircraft for the purpose of doing running repairs, and for maintaining the machinery in working order. (This term is analogous to “ Marine Engineer.”)

This list eliminates the obnoxious term “ Ground Engineer.”

I am not sure if it is within the province of the Aeronautical Society to deliberate on this matter, but if it is not, possibly you could have the question raised in the proper quarters?

Yours faithfully,
R. C. TAYLOR,
*Associate Fellow, R.Ae.S.I.,
Licensed Ground Engineer,
Categories A, B and C.*

INFORMAL DISCUSSION AND DINNER

Royal Naval College, Greenwich,
24th February, 1928.

DEAR COLONEL SEMPILL,—Many thanks for your letter of 16th February. I am sorry to have been so long in answering it, owing to rather a heavy week.