

# Wright Brothers' Patent Application, Missing for 36 Years, Turns Up Underground

*National Archives finds document in a storage facility in Kansas.*

*Air & Space Magazine*

*Tony Reichhardt*



***Proof of concept: December 17, 1903, Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. (Library of Congress)***

The Wright brothers' original patent application for a "flying machine," which had been missing for 36 years, has turned up in an underground storage center in Kansas. The find, reported in detail in *The Washington Post* and *The Kansas City Star* over the weekend, came 113 years, almost to the day, after the brothers filed their patent on March 23, 1903.

They were turned down at the time (the first powered flight was still months away), and the patent wasn't granted until 1906. Selected pages from the patent application will go on display at the National Archives in Washington D.C. on May 20.

No. 821,393.

PATENTED MAY 22, 1906.

O. & W. WRIGHT.  
FLYING MACHINE.  
APPLICATION FILED MAR. 23, 1903.

3 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

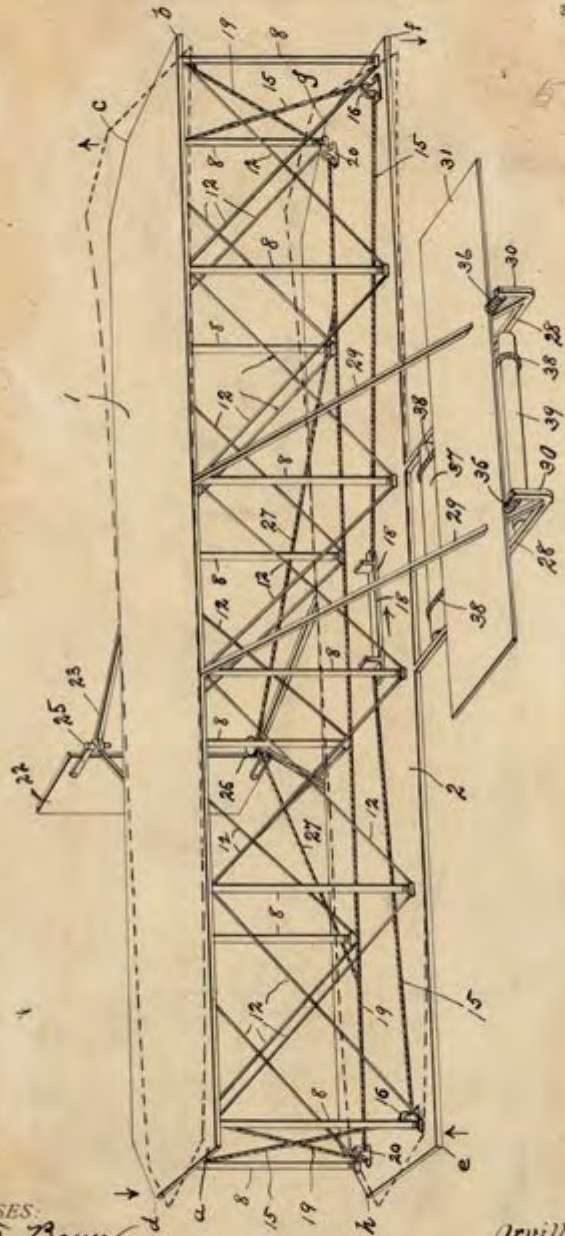


FIG. 1.

Arch 28/03

Orville Wright and Wilbur Wright  
Flying Machine

WITNESSES:  
William F. Bauer.  
Irvine Miller.

INVENTORS:  
Orville Wright  
Wilbur Wright.  
BY  
H. A. Caudwin,  
ATTORNEY.

allowed Apr 17/06

Drawing that accompanied the Wrights' 1903 patent application for a flying machine. (National Archives)