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*Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives*

### Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Sellers, Matthew B.

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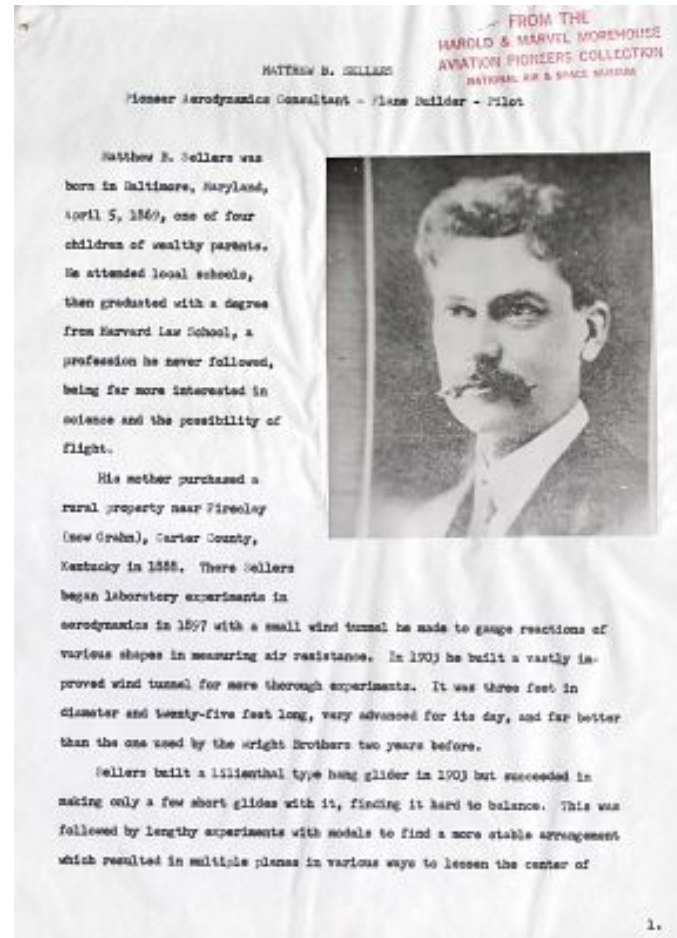
From the  
Harold & Marvel Morehouse  
Aviation Pioneers Collection  
National Air & Space Museum

MATTHEW B. SELLERS  
Pioneer Aerodynamics Consultant - Plane Builder - Pilot

Matthew B. Sellers was born in Baltimore, Maryland, April 5, 1869, one of four children of wealthy parents. He attended local schools, then graduated with a degree from Harvard Law School, a profession he never followed, being far more interested in science and the possibility of flight.

His mother purchased a rural property near Fireclay (now Grahn), Carter County, Kentucky in 1888. There Sellers began laboratory experiments in aerodynamics in 1897 with a small wind tunnel he made to gauge reactions of various shapes in measuring air resistance. In 1903 he built a vastly improved wind tunnel for more thorough experiments. It was three feet in diameter and twenty-five feet long, very advanced for its day, and far better than the one used by the Wright Brothers two years before.

Sellers built a Lilienthal type hang glider in 1903 but succeeded in making only a few short glides with it, finding it hard to balance. This was followed by lengthy experiments with models to find a more stable arrangement which resulted in multiple planes in various ways to lessen the center of



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