

Well that's how the saying goes at least. It was 1663 when a German scientist living in England, named Alfred Lederhosen took this saying literally. He had a vision that if one could fly up into the sky, they would be able to reach into the clouds and pull out lumps of silver. This of course would make said person rich beyond belief.

Alfred woke to the sound of his door being thumped loudly.

"WHO IS IT?" he called angrily.

"IT'S JAMES!" replied the person at the door. Alfred opened the door and let inside his friend James Gregory, a renewed mathematician and recent inventor of the reflecting telescope. Alfred pulled up a chair and, took the pot of tea off the stove. "Tea?" asked Alfred, James shook his head,

"No time, this is important, I have been looking over that document you gave me, and I believe your flying machine will work! But it will take three strong men to provide enough power. However did you think it up?"

"That's for me to know and you not to find out." Alfred said with a devilish grin. James walked over to the table and placed the crumpled designs down in front of Alfred.

"Here are the designs back, I don't know why you are building it but, it will work."

"Perfect, I will begin construction at once. I will need you to find the third man to power the machine." Replied Alfred.

5 months later;

"ALFRED!" James called from the door, "ALFRED LET ME IN."

"I'm coming! I'm coming!" Alfred shouted. He opened the door and let James in.

"Alfred, I have finally found the third man for the flying machine. His name is William Gilbert. He is a physicist, from England. He recently discovered something called static electricity, and now he wants to do something a bit more adventurous." James explained, "He's waiting outside, I will go and fetch him." James walked out of the door. A minute later he walked back in with a short but solidly built man, Alfred presumed was William.

"Hello, my name is Alfred Lederhosen, as I'm sure my friend James here has explained." Alfred said. "Since James has said you are the perfect man for the job, I will tell you my plan. You will be the first person to hear it, besides my friend James here who has been with me since the beginning of all this. Do you know of the saying, every cloud has a silver lining?"

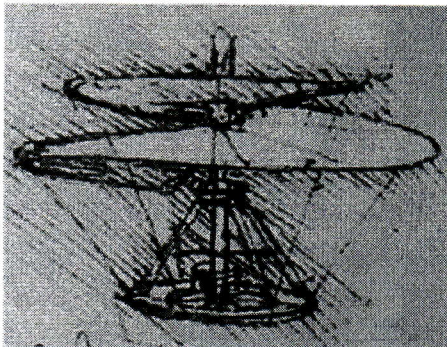
William nodded "Well I believe this is true. I believe that the three of us could use the flying machine I have built, to reach up into the clouds and take out lumps of silver!" William stood in silence for a moment "That might just work!" he laughed, "I would never have thought something like that could be possible, but it would explain why some clouds are silver coloured! We will be the richest people in the known world!"

Alfred smiled and said, "Well if it is the silver in the clouds that give them their colour, the dark clouds must be the ones with the most silver in them!"

William grinned, "But first I must see this flying machine you have constructed."

"Very well," Alfred replied, "follow me, it is hidden under my laboratory." Alfred turned

around and walked out the back door, with James and William in tow. He opened the door and walked into his outdoor laboratory, a small building tucked away behind the main house. He walked straight to the back shelf and slid it away revealing a downward spiralling staircase. He pulled a flaming torch off the wall to light the way. James and William followed Alfred down silently. At the bottom Alfred walked a quick circle of the room, lighting torches as he went. Finally the whole room was illuminated, and there in the centre was a machine about three meters tall. It consisted of a triangular cage at the bottom, with two large padded chests on either side, and a huge spiral shaped piece of material. Right in the centre was a three pronged wheel, of which William could not imagine what purpose it would serve.



“How does it work?” asked William.

“Come here.” Alfred said as he stepped into the triangular cage at the bottom. He grabbed onto one of the prongs of the wheel. James also stepped forward and grabbed a prong. William guessed the other one was for him so he stepped forward and took hold of the remaining prong. Alfred explained as he slowly began walking around the centre point pushing the wheel around clockwise, “As we turn this wheel it will spin the sail at the top.” William looked up and saw the sail was indeed spinning. Alfred continued, “This creates upwards power taking us high into the sky! Once we are there, two people should be able to hover the machine while the other person collects the silver. Then we will have to slow down the spinning, and lower ourselves back to the ground, loaded with enough silver to make us the richest people in the world!”

William smiled, “I’m in.” he allowed himself to daydream about what he would purchase first as he watched the sail spin slowly to a stop.