JOHN P.V. HEINMULLER SPECIALIZED COLLECTION OF ZEPPELIN MAIL

FINDING GUIDE

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LZ126/ZR3 1924 America Flight - Azores drop (0.222097.1.53.1) Volume 2

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COLLECTION SCOPE & CONTENT

The John P.V. Heinmuller Specialized Collection of Zeppelin Mail consists of 33 volumes of mail from by zeppelin airships in the early twentieth century from the pioneer period through the LZ130 Graf Zeppelin II.

PROVENANCE

John P.V. Heinmuller donated his specialized collection of Zeppelin Mail, Volumes 1 – 33, to the Smithsonian Institution in the 1950s (Accession Numbers 196774, 198541, 199865, 204477, 209048, 211733, 213091, 216097, 222097, 227584, 231790). He donated over 2,000 examples of flown zeppelin mail from his collection of over 5,000 zeppelin covers.

The name ‘John Heinmuller’ is famous among those studying early airmail. Heinmuller was an aero-philatelist and past president of the American Air Mail Society. As a past president of the Longines-Wittnauer Watch Co., Inc., he “organized the Timing Contest Board of the National Aeronautic Association in accordance with the chronometric specifications of the Federation Aeronautique Internationale, and served as their chief timer.” He officiated for the 1927 Lindbergh transatlantic flight and other pioneer flights.

Born in Switzerland in 1892, Heinmuller financed part of his first trip to the United States (1912) by selling Bavarian Jubilee issues to a Danzig stamp dealer. His interest in airpost material began in 1909 when, as a seventeen-year-old student in Geneva, Switzerland, a school friend sent him a zeppelin souvenir that had been mailed at the ILA international aviation exhibition in Frankfort-am-Main. Heinmuller eventually collected over 5,000 zeppelin pieces. Some were acquired by purchase or exchange with other collectors; others were acquired by writing Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin directly, asking him to send a postal souvenir from an advertised flight. Part of his acquisitions derived from the well-known Thompson, Steiner, and Luderman collections.

His obsession ultimately led him to research records for all the zeppelin flights. He compiled a list of dates and routes that serves as a catalog of all existing zeppelin covers. Because of his extensive research, he was befriended by von Zeppelin and zeppelin commanders Dr. Hugo Eckener and Ernst Lehman. He actually attended most arrivals of the airships LZ127 Graf Zeppelin and LZ129 Hindenburg at Lakehurst, New Jersey.

He authored a complete chronology of aviation titled Man’s Fight to Fly (first published in 1944; revised in 1947), which some have considered the foremost handbook on aviation records and aero-philatelic information. He died July 11, 1960, in New York City. He was 68 years old.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The collection is organized chronologically by airship and flight. Zeppelin pioneers are followed by the LZ126/ZR3, later named Los Angeles; LZ127 Graf Zeppelin; LZ129 Hindenburg; and LZ130 Graf Zeppelin II. The flights of each airship are in chronological order, and within each flight mail is in the order of dispatch. Mail dispatched from countries visited during the flight is organized in the order of countries visited. Mail transmitted from countries not visited on the flight are organized alphabetical and by leg. On board mail is organized by date and drop mail is in the order dropped. The collection is on Heinmuller’s original album pages.
CONTAINER INVENTORY

*LZ17 Sachsen 1913 Liegnitz-Dresden Flight (0.222097.144.1) Volume 2*

**Volume 1:**
- Number pages: 37
- Names of Airships: LZ10 Schwaben, LZ11 Viktoria-Luise, LZ17 Sachsen
- Dates of Contents: 1908-1913
- Major Flights: pioneers and Rhein-Main (1912)
- Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Germany, Switzerland
- Notes: includes picture postcards and Count von Zeppelin autograph

**Volume 2:**
- Number pages: 43
- Names of Airships: LZ17 Sachsen, LZ13 Hansa, LZ120 Bodensee, LZ126/ZR3 (later Los Angeles), and LZ127 Graf Zeppelin
- Dates of Contents: 1913-1928
- Major Flights: First North America (1928)
- Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Austria, Azores, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Saar, Sweden, Switzerland, United States
- Notes: Liegnitz card, feldpost, ZR3 Azores drop, menus, drop mail, and crew autographs

**Volume 3:**
- Number pages: 37
- Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
- Dates of Contents: 1929
- Major Flights: Orient, First North America (1929)
- Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Austria, Danzig, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Iraq, Palestine, Spain, Switzerland, and United States
- Notes: drop mail and Cuers crew dispatch
Volume 4:
Number pages: 38
Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
Dates of Contents: 1929
Major Flights: First North America (1929), World
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Azores, Canada, Germany, France, Japan, Latvia, Netherlands, Switzerland, and United States
Notes: crew mail

Volume 5:
Number pages: 38
Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
Dates of Contents: 1929
Major Flights: World
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Austria, Canada, Dutch East Indies, Germany, France, Japan, Spain, Switzerland, and United States
Notes: unusual dispatches and destinations

Volume 6:
Number pages: 37
Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
Dates of Contents: 1929
Major Flights: Swiss, Holland, Balkan
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Germany, Lithuania, Netherlands, Romania, Switzerland, and United States

Volume 7:
Number pages: 32
Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
Dates of Contents: 1929
Major Flights: Balkan, Spain
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Austria, Danzig, Germany, France, Lithuania, Spain, Switzerland, and United States

Volume 8:
Number pages: 32
Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
Dates of Contents: 1929-1930
Major Flights: Swiss, Spain
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Austria, Germany, Lichtenstein, Lithuania, Spain, and Switzerland

Volume 9:
Number pages: 34
Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
Dates of Contents: 1930
Major Flights: Spain, Rhineland, England, Swiss

Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Austria, Danzig, England, Germany, Italy, Saar, Spain, and Switzerland

**Volume 10:**
Number pages: 34
Name of Airship: *Graf Zeppelin*
Dates of Contents: 1930
Major Flights: Pan American
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Argentina, Brazil, Germany, Spain, and United States
Notes: mixed frankings

**Volume 11:**
Number pages: 39
Name of Airship: *Graf Zeppelin*
Dates of Contents: 1930
Major Flights: Pan American
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Germany, Gibraltar, Paraguay, Spain, United States, and Uruguay
Notes: *Graf Zeppelin* piece of outer cover fabric

**Volume 12:**
Number pages: 32
Name of Airship: *Graf Zeppelin*
Dates of Contents: 1930
Major Flights: Pan American
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Brazil, Canary Islands, Colombia, Danzig, England, Germany, Lichtenstein, Netherlands, Paraguay, Saar, Spain, Switzerland, United States
Notes: U.S. stamps and Lichtenstein dispatches

**Volume 13:**
Number pages: 38
Name of Airship: *Graf Zeppelin*
Dates of Contents: 1930
Major Flights: Germany, Scandinavia, Silesia, Russia, Baltic
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Czechoslovakia, England, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lichtenstein, Netherlands, Philippines, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, and United States
Notes: catapult zeppelin combination

**Volume 14:**
Number pages: 36
Name of Airship: *Graf Zeppelin*
Dates of Contents: 1930
Major Flights: Baltic, Germany, Netherlands
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Cuba, Denmark, England, Finland, Germany, Lichtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Philippines, Saar, Sweden, Switzerland, and United States

**Volume 15:**
Number pages: 38
Name of Airship: *Graf Zeppelin*
Dates of Contents: 1931
Major Flights: Germany, Hungary, Egypt, Baltic
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Austria, Czechoslovakia, Danzig, Denmark, Egypt, Germany, Hungary, Lichtenstein, Netherlands, Saar, Switzerland, and United States
Notes: catapult zeppelin combination

Volume 16:
Number pages: 40
Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
Dates of Contents: 1931
Major Flights: Baltic, Germany, Lichtenstein, Iceland, Austria, Switzerland
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Austria, Denmark, England, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Lichtenstein, Luxembourg, Morocco, Netherlands, Saar, Spain, Switzerland, and United States
Notes: catapult zeppelin combination

Volume 17:
Number pages: 37
Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
Dates of Contents: 1931
Major Flights: Arctic
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Austria, Canada, Danzig, Germany, Hungary, Lichtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Saar, Switzerland, and United States

Volume 18:
Number pages: 37
Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
Dates of Contents: 1931
Major Flights: England, South America
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Austria, Brazil, Cape Verde, Danzig, England, Germany, Hungary, Lichtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Switzerland, United States, and Uruguay
Notes: catapult zeppelin combination, Swiss newspaper wrapper, meter franking

Volume 19:
Number pages: 37
Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
Dates of Contents: 1931-1932
Major Flights: South America
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Chile, Danzig, England, France, Germany, Hungary, Lichtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Saar, Switzerland, United States, and Uruguay
Notes: catapult zeppelin combination, Swiss newspaper wrapper, meter franking

Volume 20:
Number pages: 38
Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
Dates of Contents: 1932
Major Flights: South America
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Lichtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Paraguay, Saar, Switzerland, United States, Uruguay, and Vatican
Notes: crew autographs
Volume 21:
Number pages: 38
Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
Dates of Contents: 1932
Major Flights: South America
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, Paraguay, Poland, Romania, Saar, Sweden, Switzerland, Tripolitania, Turkey, United States, Uruguay, Vatican, and Yugoslavia

Volume 22:
Number pages: 37
Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
Dates of Contents: 1932
Major Flights: South America, Lichtenstein, Danzig, small flights
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Albania, Austria, Argentina, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Danzig, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Lichtenstein, Netherlands, Paraguay, Switzerland, and Uruguay
Notes: catapult zeppelin combination

Volume 23:
Number pages: 38
Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
Dates of Contents: 1932
Major Flights: South America
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, England, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Lichtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, United States, and Yugoslavia
Notes: catapult zeppelin combination

Volume 24:
Number pages: 33
Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
Dates of Contents: 1932
Major Flights: South America
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Danzig, England, Estonia, France, Greece, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Luxembourg, Morocco, Norway, Paraguay, Switzerland, United States, and Uruguay
Notes: catapult zeppelin combination

Volume 25:
Number pages: 40
Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
Dates of Contents: 1932
Major Flights: South America
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Argentina, Brazil, Denmark, England, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Morocco, Norway, and Switzerland
Notes: catapult zeppelin combinations
Volume 26:
Number pages: 37
Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
Dates of Contents: 1932-1933
Major Flights: South America
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Argentina, Brazil, Chile, England, Germany, Lichtenstein, Paraguay, Peru, Romania, Russia, Saar, San Marino, Switzerland, Syria, Tripolitania, Tunisia, United States, Vatican, and Yugoslavia
Notes: crew autographs

Volume 27:
Number pages: 37
Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
Dates of Contents: 1933
Major Flights: South America
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Brazil, Cyrenaica, Czechoslovakia, England, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Iraq, Italy, Malta, Paraguay, Netherlands, San Marino, Switzerland, Tunisia, United States, Uruguay, and Vatican
Notes: crew autographs

Volume 28:
Number pages: 37
Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
Dates of Contents: 1933
Major Flights: South America, Chicago
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Brazil, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Paraguay, United States, and Uruguay

Volume 29:
Number pages: 34
Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
Dates of Contents: 1933
Major Flights: Chicago
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Albania, Brazil, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Italy, Paraguay, Switzerland, United States, and Uruguay
Notes: catapult zeppelin combinations, first day covers

Volume 30:
Number pages: 31
Name of Airship: Graf Zeppelin
Dates of Contents: 1934
Major Flights: Germany, South America, Argentina
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Argentina, Brazil, England, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iraq, Italy, Lichtenstein, Luxembourg, Morocco, Netherlands, Paraguay, United States, and Uruguay
Notes: catapult zeppelin combinations

**Volume 31:**
Number pages: 44
Name of Airship: *Graf Zeppelin*
Dates of Contents: 1934-1935
Major Flights: South America, Christmas
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, England, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Paraguay, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United States, and Uruguay
Notes: catapult zeppelin combination

**Volume 32:**
Number pages: 45
Name of Airship: *Graf Zeppelin, LZ129 Hindenburg*
Dates of Contents: 1935-1936
Major Flights: South America, small *Hindenburg* flights
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Austria, Brazil, Chile, Germany, Lichtenstein, Paraguay, Sweden, Switzerland, and United States
Notes: drop leaflets, passenger mail, TIPEX mail

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*LZ129 Hindenburg Disaster Card (1993.2002.70) Volume 33*

**Volume 33:**
Number pages: 44
Name of Airship: *Hindenburg, LZ130 Graf Zeppelin II*
Dates of Contents: 1936-1939
Major Flights: North America, South America, Olympic, Final
Countries Represented (dispatches and destinations): Austria, Brazil, Canada, England, El Salvador, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Paraguay, Switzerland, United States, Uruguay, and Vatican

Notes: Heinmuller family mail, passenger Douglas Fairbanks autograph, crew autographs, drop leaflets

*LZ 130 Graf Zeppelin II* Sudetenland flight on Zeppelin Company stationery (front) Volume 33

*Left row top to bottom:* 1 Albert Sammt, 2 Hans Ladwig, 3 Heinrich Bauer, 4 Herbert Mielke, 5 G.vonMensenkampff, 6 Franz Bartschat, 7 Richard Müller, 8 Martin Christ, 9 Johann Geier, 10 Karl Nagel, 11 Oskar Fink, 12 Philipp Lenz, 13 Josef Hagnauser, 14 Oskar Rösch, 15 Eugen Dangel, 16 Adolf Fischer, 17 Karl Späth, 18 Alfons Schäfer, 19 Josef Ilg, 20 Joseph Braun, 21 Raphael Schäubl, and 22 Karl Rebstein

*Center:* 23 Rudolf Sauter


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Resources found in the Smithsonian National Postal Museum Library include:


Michel Zeppelin- und Flugpost-Spezial-Katalog 2002 (2nd ed.) (München, Germany, 2002).

Sieg Zeppelinpost Spezial-Katalog (22nd ed.) (Lorch: Germany, 2001).


Resources on the NPM website include nearly a hundred zeppelin covers with descriptions; including the Germany section of the Argo online data base:

Arago: People, Postage & the Post – Zeppelin and Airship Mail

Hindenburg Crash Mail

CREDITS & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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