
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](#)



Smithsonian
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Table of Contents

Collection Scope & Content	3
Provenance.....	3
Narrative Description.....	3
Container Inventory	4
Bibliography.....	12
Credits & Acknowledgments	12

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 \(0.222097.1.44.1\) 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

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

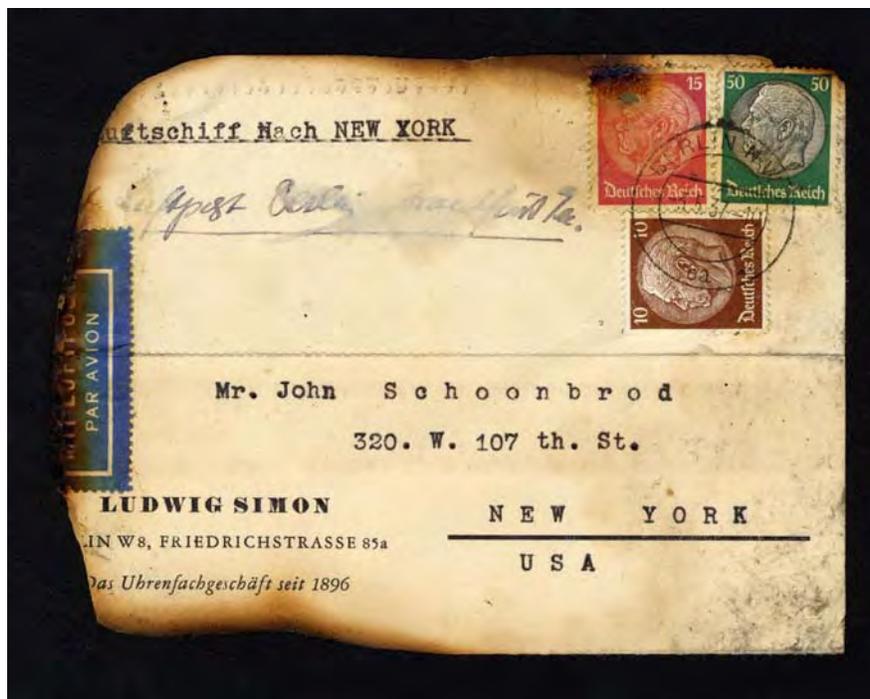
Name of Airship: *Graf Zeppelin, LZ129 Hindenburg*

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



[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



LZ 130 Graf Zeppelin II Sudetenland flight with crew autographs (reverse) 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 Hagnauer, 14 Oskar Rösch, 15 Eugen Dangel, 16 Adolf Fischer, 17 Karl Späth, 18 Alfons Schäfer, 19 Josef Ilg, 20 Joseph Braun, 21 Raphael Schädler, and 22 Karl Rebstein

Center: 23 Rudolf Sauter

Right row top to bottom: 24 Max Zabel, 25 Friedrich von Hassel, 26 Leo Freund, 27 Egon Schweikardt, 28 Gerhard Widuwilt, 29 Albert Thasler, 30 Bernhard Schnopp, 31 Fritz Grötzing, 32 TBD, 33 Hans Freund, 34 Georg Holl, 35 Bruno Weber, 36 Hans Georg Hofele, 37 Eugen Gröber, 38 Alfred Grötzing, 39 Heinrich Kubis, 40 German Zettel, 41 Georg Mössle, 42 Eugen Schäuble, 43 August Deutschle, and 44 Ludwig Haller

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Periodicals: *The Airpost Journal*, *The Zeppelin Collector* in *The Jack Knight Air Log*, and *Zeppelin Post Journal*.

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

[Arago: People, Postage & the Post – Zeppelin and Airship Mail](#)

[Hindenburg Crash Mail](#)

CREDITS & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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