

3) LIGHTER THAN AIR - AIRSHIPS / ZEPPELINS

An airship or dirigible balloon is a type of aerostat or lighter-than-air aircraft that can navigate through the air under its own power. Aerostats gain their lift from a lifting gas that is less dense than the surrounding air. The envelope of an airship may form the gasbag, or it may contain a number of gas-filled cells.

An airship also has engines, crew, and optionally also payload accommodation, typically housed in one or more gondolas suspended below the envelope.



Rigid airships were first flown by Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin and the vast majority of rigid airships built were manufactured by the firm he founded, Luftschiffbau Zeppelin.

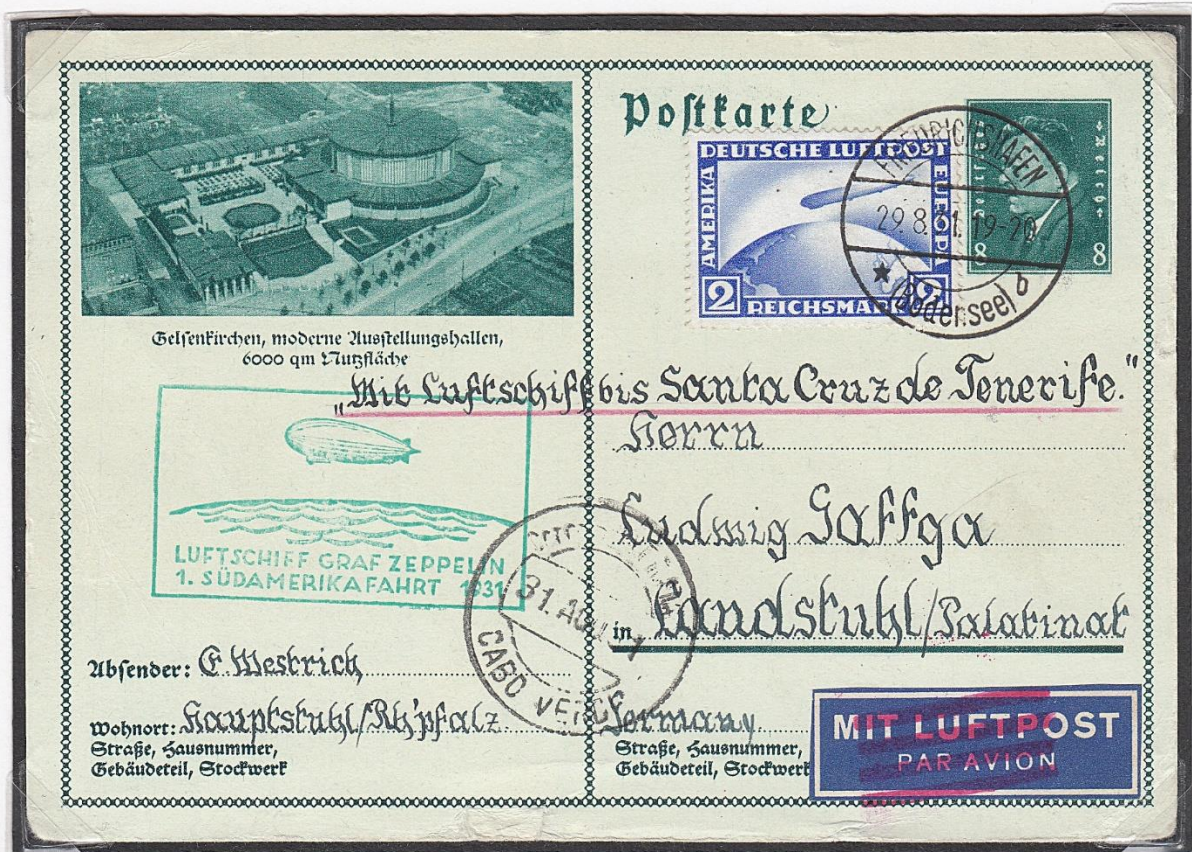
As a result, rigid airships are often called zeppelins.



Mail carried on Zeppelins, the German airships that saw civilian use from 1908 to 1939. Almost every zeppelin flight carried mail, the covers usually received special postmarks, and a number of nations issued postage stamps specifically intended for use on mail carried by the Zeppelins.

Graf Zeppelin LZ. 127 – First South America Flight 1931. Flights 216 / 217. 29th August 1931 - 7th September 1931. This was a two stage flight. On 29th August 1931 at 21.36pm the Graf Zeppelin Flight 216 departed Friedrichshafen on its first South American flight to Recife, landing on 1st September 1931 at 18.45pm, after a flight of 7919 kms flown over 73 hours and 9 minutes at an average speed of 108.3 kms per hour. Return Flight 217 departed from Recife on the 4th September 1931 at 03.23am for Friedrichshafen, landing on 7th September at 15.47pm after a flight of 8173 kms.

The outgoing Flight 216 passed over the Canary Islands where the postcard hereunder was dropped at Santa Cruz de Tenerife on 31st August 1931 whilst the Graf Zeppelin was en-route to South America. *A scarce item.*



German Postcard from Friedrichshafen to Santa Cruz de Tenerife with Germany adhesives tied by a Friedrichshafen cancellation dated 29 August 1931, with green "Luftschiff Graf Zeppelin 1 Sudamerikafahrt 1931" cachet, and blue "Mit Luftpost Par Avion" label. Cabo Verde arrival strike dated 31 August 1931. Scarce dropped item at Cape Verde Islands.