



Philatelic Foundation Analysis Leaflet

The Philatelic Foundation • 270 Madison Avenue • New York, NY 10016 • (212) 889-6483

The United States Graf Zeppelin Issue



The stamp reproduced above is the only counterfeit Graf Zeppelin issue to have been submitted to the Foundation. The high value Zepp, Scott #C15, was sent in to the Foundation in 1952 (at a time when catalogue value was just \$62.50). The stamp was easily recognized as a counterfeit. To date, no good counterfeits of the U.S. Graf Zeppelins have surfaced.

The issue is, however, not without its problems -- no surprise given the significant values involved. Following is a summary of the Expert Committee findings for all U.S. Graf Zeppelins submitted to date.

	<u>C13</u>	<u>C14</u>	<u>C15</u>	<u>Total</u>
Used, Genuine				
With O.G., no faults:				
Singles	121	113	131	365
Blocks of four	2	--	2	4
Plate blocks	2	1	3	6
With O.G., faults:				
Singles	16	10	14	40
Plate blocks	1	1	1	3
Regummed, no faults:				
Singles	14	11	22	47
Plate blocks	1	1	--	2
Regummed, with faults:				
Singles	8	8	10	26
Unused, Counterfeit	--	--	1	1
Decline Opinion	1	--	--	1
Used, Genuine				
Singles	1	3	7	11
Blocks	--	--	1	1
Proofs, Genuine	2	2	2	6
Proofs, Counterfeit	--	--	1	1
TOTALS	<u>169</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>195</u>	<u>514</u>

For the most part, the Zepps are a "clean" issue, with the percentage of faulty stamps being relatively low. This is to be expected given their relatively recent issue date (April 19, 1930). As a modern issue they have not been subjected to the ravages of time or old mounting practices.

Some Zepps have nonetheless been damaged. What is significant in the statistics is the high proportion of regummed stamps that were discovered to also have tears, thins, or other faults. The following percentages highlight this fact:

Unused Singles, percentage of faulty stamps to total submissions:

	<u>C13</u>	<u>C14</u>	<u>C15</u>	<u>Total</u>
O.G. stamps with faults	11.7%	8.1%	9.7%	11.0%
Regummed stamps with faults	36.3%	42.1%	31.3%	35.6%

Although these figures will come as no great surprise, they do serve as an important reminder to experienced philatelists and as a warning to the uninitiated. The significance of regummed stamps is not only in the lack of original gum but in the tampering to which such stamps may have been subjected prior to regumming.

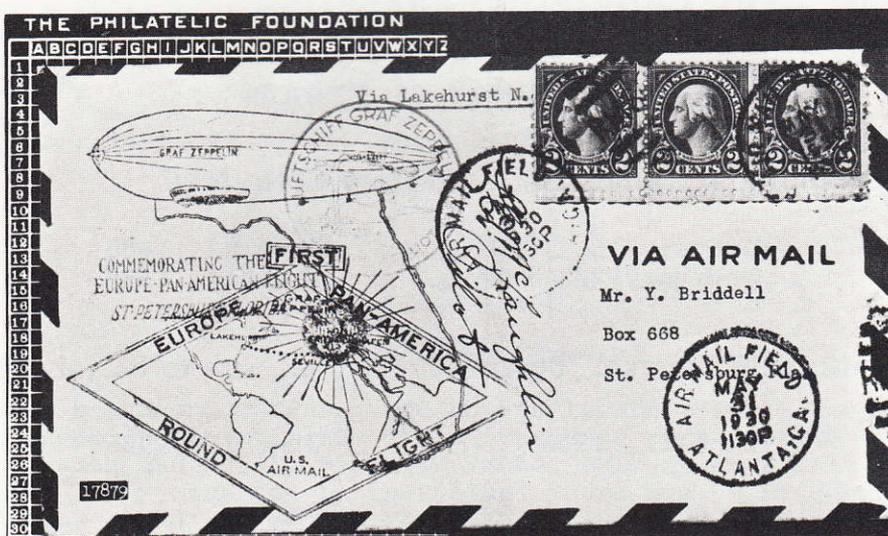
Any stamp that has had back damage is, in particular, a candidate for regumming. A filled-in thin or a repaired tear can be concealed by a new coating of gum and even the collector who is aware of the regumming may not be able to detect the more serious damage that lies below the surface. Not all regummed stamps necessarily have concealed damages, but the figures do indicate a very high ratio of such problems. This situation is valid for all issues, not just for the Zeppelins.



As clean as the off cover submissions may be, the Zepp on-cover submissions can only be described as exceptional. Following are the submissions to date:

	<u>C13</u>	<u>C14</u>	<u>C15</u>	<u>Set</u>	<u>Total</u>
First Day Usages	8	7	10	4	29
Other Usages	4	4	4	3	15
TOTAL	12	11	14	7	44

What is remarkable is that of the forty-four submissions above, only one cover was found to have a damaged stamp, that being a non-First Day C15 with a repaired lower right corner. Again, the relatively recent vintage of the issue would limit the damaged population, but the recent issue date notwithstanding, a 2.3% damage rate on cover is still quite low.



The cover reproduced here is a fascinating oddity for the postal historian. Submitted for expertizing in 1963, the cover was determined by the Expert Committee to be a "genuine postal use that went through the mails by oversight". Franked with just three 2c stamps (already cancelled in Atlanta, Georgia), the cover got a "free ride" on the Lakehurst-Sevilla-Friedrichshafen flight for which the required letter rate was \$1.30.

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Previous Analysis and Counterfeit Leaflets

Free of charge (1 of each). Available only to Contributors.

The United Nations 1 1/2c Precancel
 The Pan American Issue of 1901
 The Canada 1851 Beaver Issue of 1893 and
 Newfoundland 4c Issue of 1857
 The Columbian Issue of 1893
 U.S. Coil Issues, 1908-1922
 The First U.S. General Issue of 1847
 U.S. Air Mail Issues, 1918-1923
 The Vatican Provisional Overprints of 1934
 The Issues of Tibet
 The U.S. 1c Issue of 1851
 The U.S. 1c Green (Scott #544)
 The Confederate States 2c Green Lithograph of 1862
 The First Issues of Hawaii (Scott #1-26)
 The Providence, Rhode Island,
 Postmaster Provisionals of 1846
 The Ile de France Air Mail Provisional of 1928
 The Ninety Cents Issue of 1860
 The Trans-Mississippi Issue of 1898
 The Three Cent Issue of 1869
 The Two Cent Issue of 1917 (Scott #519)
 The Harding Memorial Issue of 1923
 The Canada Jubilees
 The Grounded Plane
 The British Penny Black;
 Detecting Removed Cancellations