

**CODE
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MAY 6, 1937

The *Hindenburg* Disaster



by Aaron Feigenbaum



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EVACUATION IN NORTH SPED

British Warships Protect Craft Taking Women and Children From Bilbao to France

The Spanish Situation

PERPIGNAN—Anarchists were reported to have regained positions in Barcelona and to have demanded the dissolution of the government's shock troops. Withdrawal of 12,000 men from the Aragon front, to deal with the situation, was also reported, leading to an advance by the Rebel armies. Page 1.

BARCELONA—A heavy concentration of British warships, including Italian, to rescue the Italians cut off at Barcelona, was under way to the Bilbao front. Page 10.

BILBAO—Five thousand women and children were taken from the city, and vessels carrying them to France were guarded by British warships. More refugees were preparing to leave. (Follows the above.) Page 15.

LONDON—Foreign Secretary Eden revealed that the British Government had evidence that Germany was destroyed by airplanes. He favored a neutral inquiry. Page 15.

Anarchists Give Ultimatum

PERPIGNAN, France, May 6.—The Anarchists are reported to have regained control in parts of Barcelona this afternoon after the Catalan Generalitat believed it had dominated the situation.

The Anarchists issued an ultimatum to the government demanding the dissolution of the shock troops patrolling the city, the government's chief support, within twenty-four hours and declaring that otherwise they would take matters into their own hands and use every means to their power to suppress the shock troops.

The Anarchists also have obtained the upper hand at Figueras in addition to Figueras, according to news received here, and threaten, it is alleged, to use cyanide gas on those who refuse their ultimatum to be obeyed.

Anarchist broadsheets have been picked up here stating that the casualties in the disorders in Barcelona since the Anarchist rebellion Tuesday amounted to 400 dead and 1,000 wounded. Declaring that "enough blood has flowed," the broadsheet continues to appeal for calm over the situation, and it is believed to be correct that trouble still persists in Barcelona.

French Consulate Hounded

The French Consulate was threatened by Anarchists, who reported that "enough blood has flowed," and

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SHIP FALLS AB

Great Dirigible Into Flames as About to Land

VICTIMS BURN TO

Some Passengers Are From the Blazing Wire Others Crawl to Sa

GROUND CREW AIDS R

Sparks From Engines Believed to Have Ignited Hydrogen Gas

A page of photographs disaster and survivors

By RUSSELL B. FOS

NAVAL AIR STATION HURST, N. J., May 6.—The Hindenburg was destroyed and exploded here, a shock tonight with a three known dead and 200 for out of its twenty-two passengers and crew.

Three hours after the twenty-one bodies had been found, and twelve were still. The sixty-four known to be aboard twenty passengers forty-four of the crew. The survivors were burned, mangled or both, and were hospitalized here and in towns.

The accident happened the great German dirigible about to fly up to its usual four score after the New York City on the last of its first transatlantic voyage. Until today the dirigible had never had a crash throughout the ten years made across the Atlantic passengers in 1930.

Two thousand of

F. W. von Maister, chief of the American Zeppelin Co. gave two possible explanations the crash. One was fire was caused by an electrical "induced by static" as the ship valued gas preparatory to landing either was that sparks set the engine was ignited while the gas was being released a fire of explosion. Captain Ernst Lehmann commanded the Hindenburg most of its flights last year. "I couldn't understand it," he said, "but as he staggered out of the control car, Captain Lehmann, commanding officer of the ship, and Captain Albert Stutz also among the survivors. Captain Lehmann was burned and injured; the officers were also injured, seriously.

Reports in Light-Gas balloons who saw the accident tonight that when the balloons were dropped by the air at 7:30, they were made fast in the mooring the dirigible took about 1000 feet. The crew made the time last.

meeting of the American Law Institute," the President stated. "I have followed with interest your accomplishments within recent years in the establishment of the law and your proposals for improvement in the administration of criminal justice.

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A Day Unlike Any Other

On the evening of May 6, 1937, passengers on the **airship** *Hindenburg* were getting ready to land. The weather was clearing over the **air station** at Lakehurst, New Jersey. Captain Max Pruss had just announced that they would soon be on the ground.



Five hundred feet (152 m) below, a crowd of people waited to greet the passengers. The travelers had flown all the way from Germany. Newspaper reporters scribbled notes. Photographers pointed their cameras to the sky and snapped pictures. The landing of the world's largest airship was big news! People did not know they were about to witness a terrible tragedy.



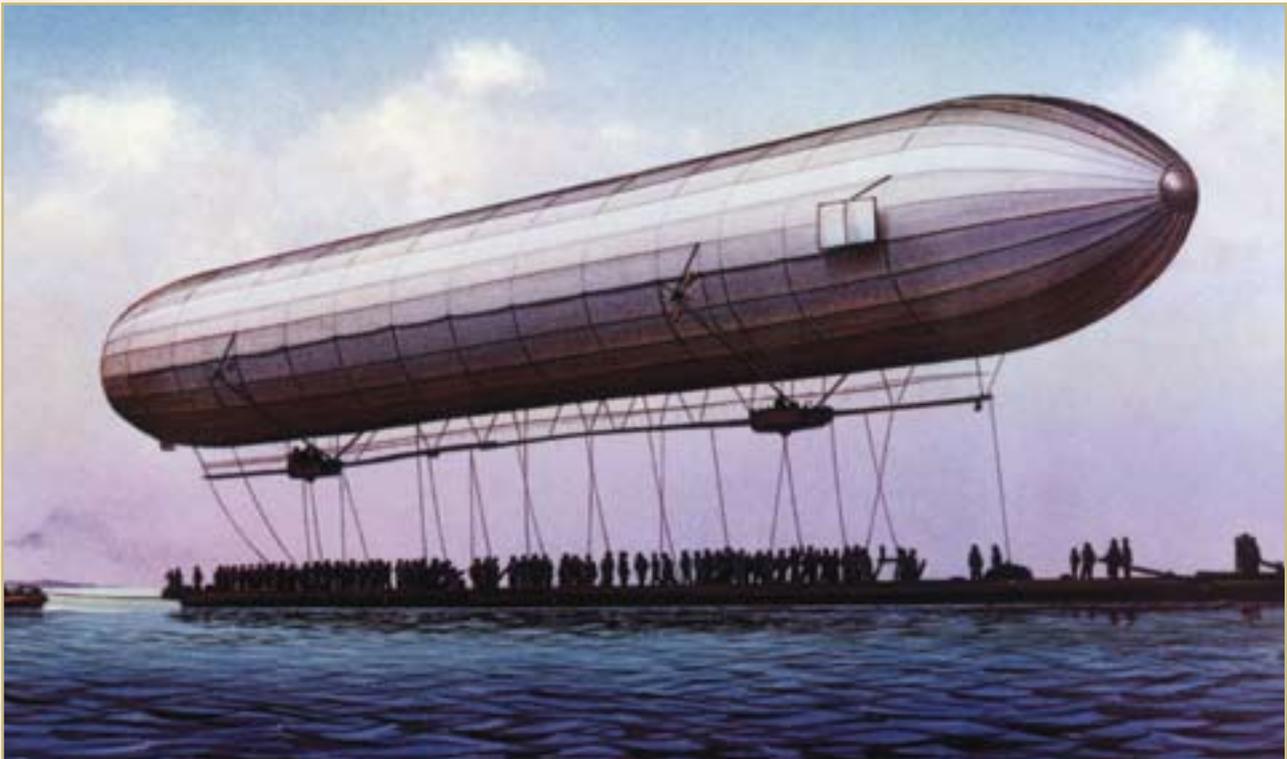
At 804 feet (245 m) long, the *Hindenburg* was one of the two largest airships ever built. Its sister ship, the *Graf-Zeppelin II*, was the same size.

In the 1930s, a one-way ticket on the *Hindenburg* from Frankfurt, Germany, to Lakehurst, New Jersey, cost \$400. In today's dollar, this trip would be more than \$5,200.

Why Airships Can Fly

The *Hindenburg* was not the first airship used for passenger travel. On July 2, 1900, Ferdinand von Zeppelin flew five people on the *LZ-1*.

Zeppelin understood that airships could fly because they are filled with gases that are lighter than air. Most airships use **helium**. The *Hindenburg*, however, was filled with an even lighter gas called **hydrogen**.



The first passenger airship, the *LZ-1*, floats over Lake Constance, Germany.

Airships are sometimes called zeppelins in honor of the man who invented them, Ferdinand von Zeppelin.

The Zeppelin Company began building the *Hindenburg* in 1931. It was so big that it took five years to complete. Finally, on May 6, 1936, the *Hindenburg* lifted off the ground in Germany. It was making its first trip to America.



A hangar is a storage place for aircraft. A special one was built for the *Hindenburg*. This airship was too big to fit in a regular airport hangar.

“If you want to travel in a beautiful way your first choice has to be a zeppelin.”

—Eugen Bentele, *Hindenburg* mechanic

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About the Author

Aaron Feigenbaum is an anthropologist, editor, and children's book author. He currently divides his time between the Connecticut coast and the Hawaiian surf.



The *Hindenburg* Disaster

The *Hindenburg* hovered in the sky over Lakehurst, New Jersey. Five hundred feet (152 m) below, a large group waited to greet the passengers. Newspaper reporters scribbled notes. Photographers snapped pictures.

The crowd of people had gathered to watch the landing of the world's biggest airship. Instead, they saw the *Hindenburg* burst into flames and begin to fall. Passengers jumped out of the ball of fire while burning parts of the ship flew everywhere. The terrible event was captured by the voice of a stunned radio announcer. It would become an unforgettable broadcast—and one of the most famous disasters in the history of air travel.

The *Challenger* Space Shuttle Explosion

Emergency at Three Mile Island

The *Exxon Valdez's* Deadly Oil Spill

The Great Chicago Fire

The *Hindenburg* Disaster

Nightmare on the *Titanic*

The Texas City Disaster

The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire

The 2001 World Trade Center Attack

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