

Mail and the Lindbergh Kidnapping

The mails were a key element of most of the early kidnapping cases. Not only did the Lindbergh kidnapper communicate his stipulations, remarks and ransom terms by sending letters (and postcards) through the mails, the focal point of Charles A. Lindbergh's life was centered on the development of the U.S. air mail system.



Two years after the kidnapping in 1932, Lindbergh appeared before the House Committee on U.S. Air Mails in Washington.

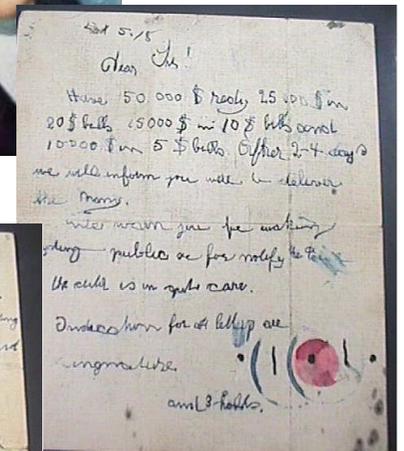
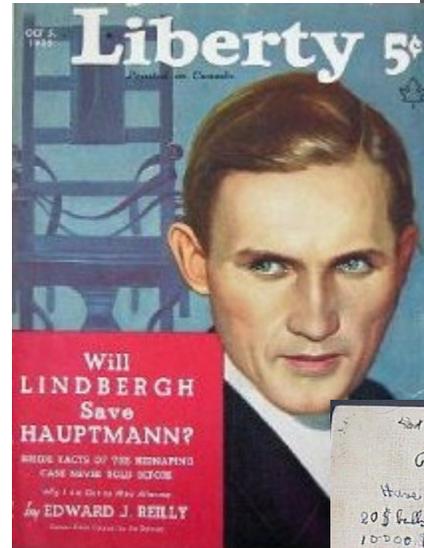
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Whether it's a magazine that went through the mails (the May 2, 1932, issue of *Time* or an issue of *Liberty* magazine featuring the convicted kidnapper), or a package wrapper that is evidence held in the New Jersey State Police archives (used to wrap a package sent from the kidnapper and containing the baby's clothing), the mail surrounding this crime is fascinating.

But there is much more than the postal history items that went through the mails in the period relating to the kidnapping (i.e., from the crime, itself, on March 1, 1932, until the execution of the purported kidnapper, Bruno Richard Hauptmann, on April 3, 1936). The story of the crime is also intertwined with the tale of one of America's great heroes who, in his day job, was a leader in the development of the U.S. air mail system.

This any postal history collection relating to Charles A. Lindbergh can contain numerous pieces of mail, documents and photographs having to do with America's delivery of the mails. Shown here are just a few.

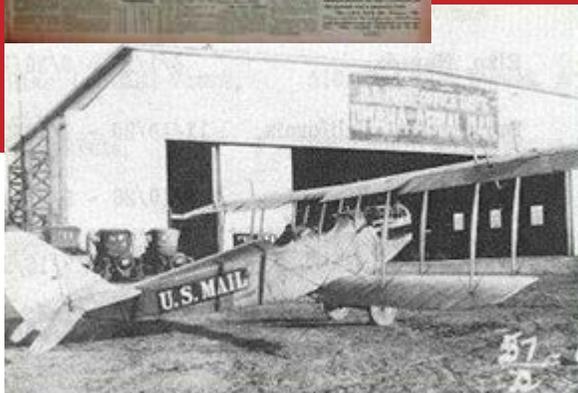
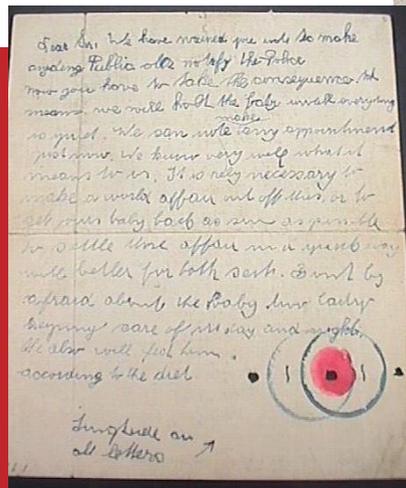
Materials shown here are from the New Jersey State Police Archives and private collectors to whom we are indebted.



Above: The first ransom note from the kidnapper was left in the baby's bedroom. Left: the second ransom note which was sent through the mail. Note the weird symbol used by the kidnapper so that notes from him could be identified.



A newspaper from May 1932 that was sent through the mail to the Lindberghs in Hopewell, New Jersey.



The Curtiss Jenny airplane used to fly the first official United State air mail in May of 1918. Lindbergh used a Curtiss Jenny in some of his flights before his 1927 Trans-Atlantic journey.



After Lindbergh returned from Paris after his May 1927 flight, he again carried the air mails. This picture shows him loading mail into a plane was was soon to take off from Springfield, Illinois.