

# DOUBLE MARKINGS ON ROME FLIGHT COVERS

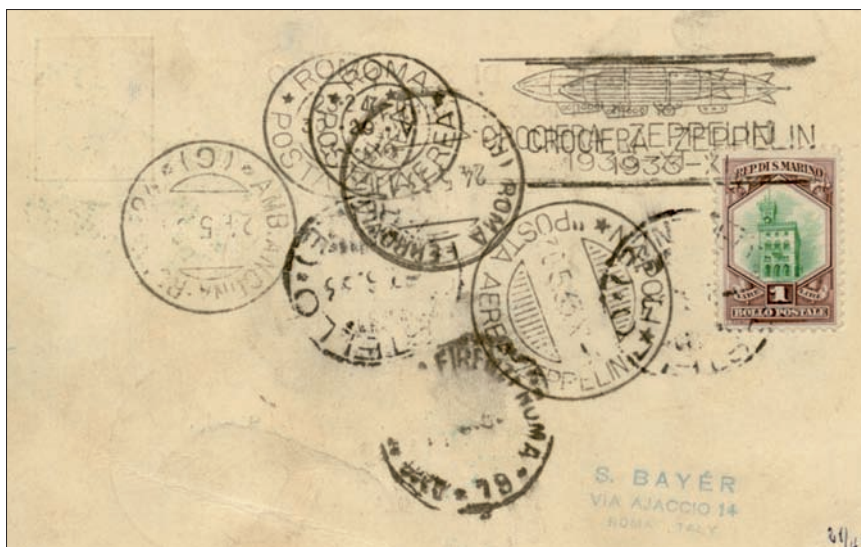
Richard Gibbons

**A** COVER WITH TWO FLIGHT CACHETS raises the question if this is just a double strike or if there is a story behind it. The illustrated San Marino card bears two Italian flight cachets, one in green and one in blue. And there are two Rome zeppelin machine markings on the reverse with different dates, one showing 29.5.33 17-18 and the second one 30.5.33 23-24. So this can not be a simple double strike, there must be a story behind all of these double markings.



**Green and blue flight cachet and also green Friedrichshafen arrival marking.**

And there is one more feature of this card which makes this piece even more interesting: On the front side there is a green Friedrichshafen arrival marking while on the back side the card bears a Napoli/Naples arrival marking indicating that the card was dropped over Nettuno which was the substitute drop for the Naples drop. But isn't that mutually exclusive? Either the card was dropped over Nettuno or the card was flown back to Friedrichshafen as the Nettuno drop happened on the return flight from Rome back to Friedrichshafen. So we expect either one arrival marking, but not both. What is the story behind of all these double markings?



**Rome 29.5.33 and 30.5.33 marking and Napoli arrival marking.**

We have to reconstruct the postal transportation of the card to understand what had happened here: The card was dispatched at San Marino, came to Rome where the 29.5.33 17-18 zepplin transit marking and also the blue zepplin flight cachet was applied: Almost all San Marino dispatches for the Nettuno/Naples drop bear the blue flight cachet. Then the card was flown by LZ-127 GRAF ZEPPELIN on the return flight of the Rome Flight. This return flight departed Rome for Friedrichshafen and shortly after departure, the mail was dropped over Nettuno which was the substitute for the scheduled Naples drop: The airship could not make it to Naples and therefore dropped the mail at Nettuno. After the drop at Nettuno, the dropped mail came by surface to Naples where the Naples zepplin arrival marking was applied and then the mail was sent by surface to the final destination Firenze.

One day after the zepplin flight and on the way from Naples to Firenze, the card transited through Rome for a second time. This time, the card was treated by mistake as it was late mail which missed the zepplin flight. The second Rome 30.5.33 23-24 zepplin marking was applied and also the second strike of the zepplin cachet (the green one). As we have learned from Bob Wilcsek (ZEPPELIN POST JOURNAL, Summer2008, pp. 6-16) this late mail was sent by surface from Rome to Friedrichshafen. At Friedrichshafen the green zepplin arrival marking was applied to the late mail from Rome although the card has not reached Friedrichshafen by airship. Then the card was sent by surface transportation from Friedrichshafen to the addressee at Firenze. ■