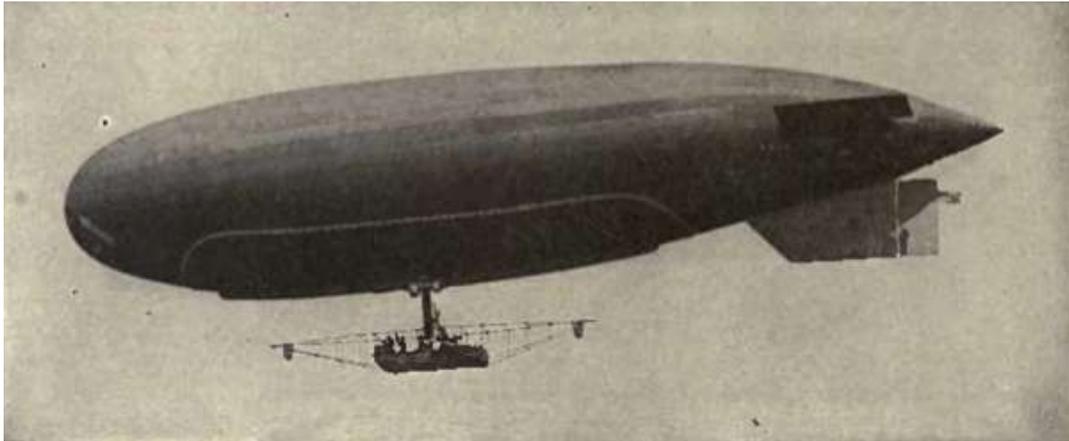


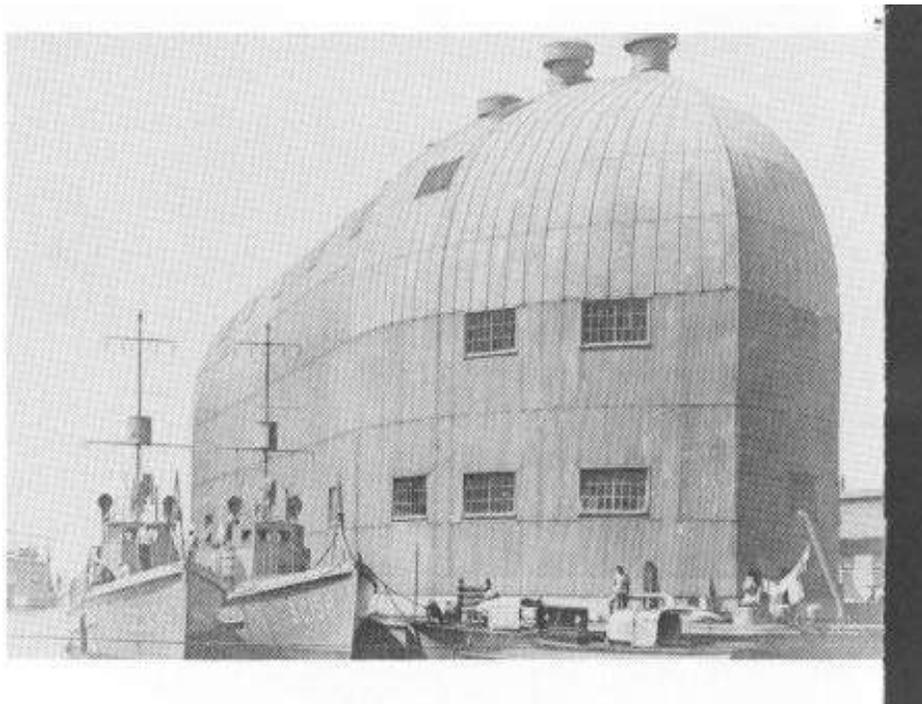
Brief History of the Navy's DN-1 Airship

The Connecticut Aircraft Company received the contract to build the DN-1 on the basis of its lowest bid. The designation stems from D for dirigible, N for non-rigid and "1" as the Navy's first airship. Years later, the DN-1 became known as the A-type blimp even though never officially assigned the A designation. She was the only airship of this type/class ever built.



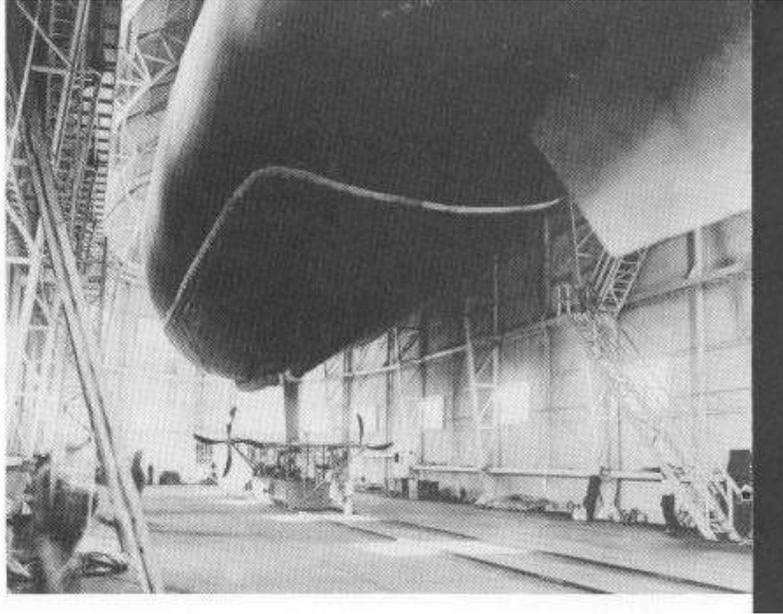
The DN-1 in flight

The DN-1 was to be built in four to five months, with delivery in October 1915. Construction proceeded at a snail's pace with numerous delays, due to material problems and the lack of technical engineering ability of Connecticut Aircraft Company personnel. This was compounded by the lack of qualified LTA engineers in the Navy Department.



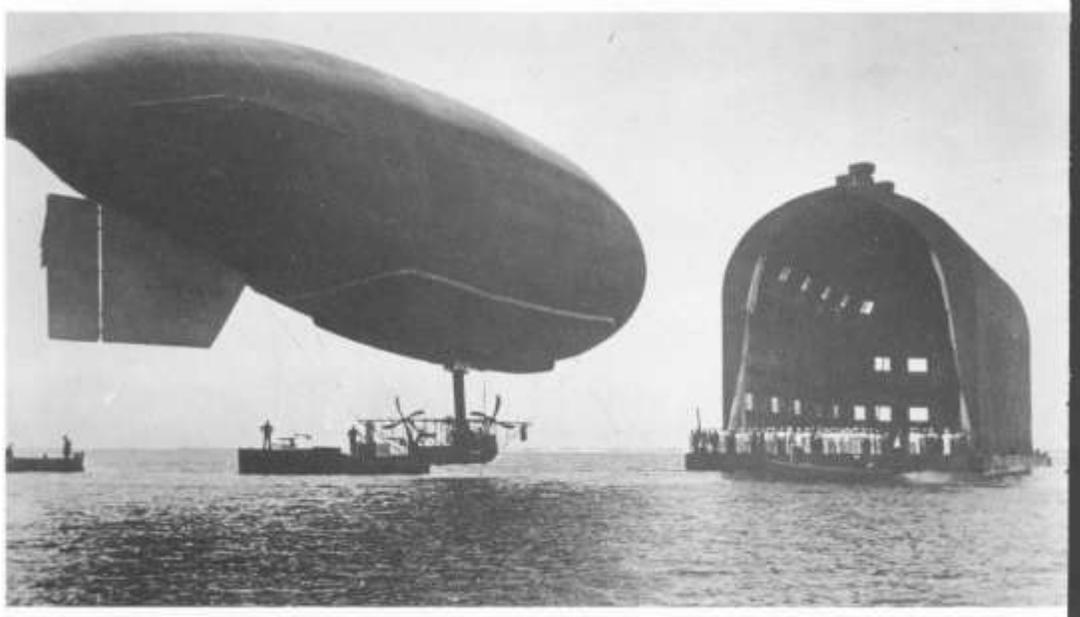
Floating Hangar for the DN-1 at Pensacola

During construction of the DN-1, the Navy authorized the building of a floating hangar to house the new airship. The hangar was completed and delivered to Pensacola in early 1916 long before the DN-1 arrived. The airship was shipped in November 1916 and arrived at Pensacola in December, but was not ready for flight until April 1917, the month the U.S. entered WW I.



A close-up view of the DN-1 inside the floating hangar

Lt. Cdr. Frank R. McCrary, pilot of the DN-1, had been assigned duty with the Connecticut Aircraft Company during her construction. Flight tests were conducted at Pensacola and revealed that the airship was overweight, the envelope leaked and the power plant functioned poorly. One of the two engines had to be removed to make the DN-1 light enough to get off the ground.



the DN-1 during flight tests conducted at NAS Pensacola, Fla., in April 1917.

Her first flight was on April 20, 1917. Two other flights were made and, during an attempt to tow her over water, the airship was severely damaged. Because of her poor performance, she was considered not worth repairing. She was deflated, later removed from the inventory and broken up. The development of the Navy's first airship was an inept experiment in LTA.

However, the DN-1 program did underline the need for technical skills and knowledge to construct airships, as well as qualified personnel to operate them.

Source: *Naval History and Heritage Command*