

AIR MAIL NEWS

QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH AIR MAIL SOCIETY

(Incorporating the Bulletin of the BAeF)

Copyright ©2008 the British Air Mail Society. ISSN 0269-5820

Published in February, May, August and November.

(Copy Deadlines: 15th December, 15th March, 15th June, 15th September).

VOLUME 61, No. 242 AUGUST 2018

Editor: Dr. R. H. Saundry, 3 Reawla Lane, Gwinear, HAYLE TR27 5HQ, UK E-mail: 0173richard@gmail.com

CONTENTS

2. Obituary. **Donald Holmes 1927-2018.**
3. Our President's Message: "Your Society Needs You Now!"
3. Editorial: "How Others See Us."
4. **Letters to the Editor:** Chile Air Mails (Robin Jarman),
The Southampton Air Museum (Bill Trower),
Railway Air Services: the Inaugural Flights (Ian M. May).
7. **Society News.** Minutes of the 59th Annual General Meeting of 9 June 2018.
The Midlands Regional Group Meeting (8 April);
The Scottish 'North of the Border' Group Meeting, Perth (21 April);
The Wessex Group Meeting, Harnham (19 May).
14. Dates for your Diary.
News from the World of Aerophilately:
Josh Spoor, Cheryl Ganz,
Announcement of the 49th FIUSA Congress, Berlin, April 2019.
15. **Questions & Answers:**
(A.539) Stephen Reinhard explains the reason for Mixed Franking of Mexican air mail letters sent to the USA.
(A.540) Dates for the last NYRBA flights and first PAA flights in Brazil.
(Q.542) The Exeter Jubilee Balloon Race, 1977.
(Q.543) Data solicited for Stamps of the Great Western Railway Air Service).
(Q.544) Was this Lebanese cover flown the trans-Pacific Route to the USA in 1941?
20. **"Clipper Connections to FAM-14 from the Middle East in 1941"** by Julian van Beveren.
25. **"LAN - Chile's Internal Airline"** by Martyn Cusworth.
30. **"The German Catapult Mail of the North Atlantic"** (Part 2) by Eddie Spicer.
31. **"Luxembourg Air Mail 1927 - 1940: Dual Franking"** by Mike Brindle.
38. **"Documentary Evidence"** (concerning the authenticity of pilot-signed covers).....by Peter Lister.

Will contributors please kindly note that copy date for the November issue will be September 15, 2018.

OBITUARY

DONALD HOLMES 1927 – 2018.

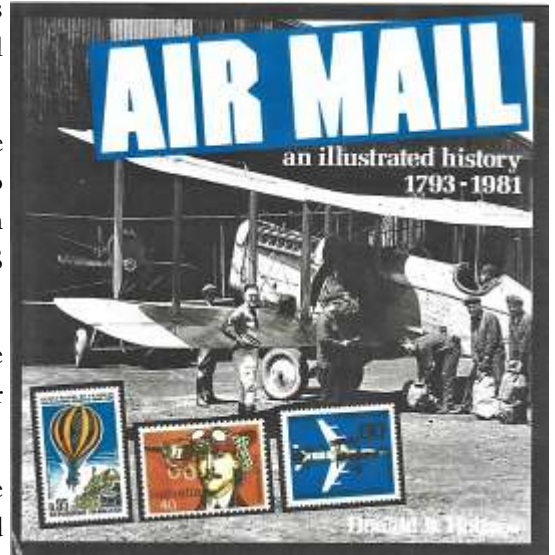
Donald Holmes loved aerophilately, and he loved aviation history.

His passion for both is evident in his book '*Air Mail: An Illustrated History 1793-1981*'. This lavishly illustrated, thoroughly researched book, was an attempt to introduce the general public to the fascination of aeropostal history, by means of a coffee table style book. Although published in 1982, it is still widely regarded as the best one volume history of the early air mail flights and services around the world.

In the years after this book was published, Donald moved from the U.S.A. to Scotland, then to England, to France, and then back to England. While he lived in Scotland and England, Donald was an active member of the British Aerophilatelic Federation, as the BAMS was then called.

Donald was interested in not just the "facts" of history, but the significance of different events in the development of aviation and air mail.

One of his particular interests, was the relative importance of the Wright Brothers' flights at Kitty Hawk on December 17th 1903, and Wilbur Wright's flight at Le Mans in France on August 8th 1908:



the first flights in December 1903 flight are frequently regarded as one of the most significant events of the 20th Century, but received little attention at the time. – There was in fact great scepticism as to whether the Wright Brothers had actually flown. In 1906, for example, the Paris edition of the *Herald Tribune* carried an article on the Wright Brothers with the headline "Flyers or Liars?". In 1908, when there were delays before Wilbur Wright's first demonstration flight in France, the press often referred to them as "Bluffeurs".

the August 8th 1908 flight from Les Hunaudières race track at Le Mans, when Wilbur Wright amazed the crowd with his ability to make controlled turns, turned the Wright Brothers into international celebrities. – The Paris daily newspaper *Figaro* wrote that, "It was not merely a success, but a triumph; a conclusive trial and a decisive victory for aviation, the news of which will revolutionize scientific circles around the world." When they returned to the U.S.A. in 1909 there were two days of festivities in Dayton.

Nowadays, however, the first flights on December 17th 1903 are frequently regarded as one of the most significant events of the 20th Century, but Wilbur's flight on August 8th 1908 receives little attention.

In a "Letter to the Editor" in the May 1999 *Air Post Journal*, Donald wrote that: "It seems to me that this easy to remember date 8.8.08 has been short changed in our awareness. This flight – Wilbur's first flight in France – was the one that awakened the world to the importance of what happened at Kitty Hawk in 1903."

During his years in France, Donald became very involved with the Centenary celebrations for the 1908 flight being organized in Le Mans, and the group Aero-Retro which built a replica of the Wright Flyer III that flew as part of the Centenary celebrations.

As part of the Centenary commemoration, and to try and raise awareness of Wilbur Wright's flight at Le Mans, Donald wrote a second book: '*Wilbur's Story – a Personal View of the Role of France in Wilbur Wright's Life*'. It is profusely illustrated with reproductions of old postcards, etc., and provides a thoroughly researched and highly readable account of the events before and after Wilbur's flight on 8-8-08.

Donald was elected to the Aerophilatelic Hall of Fame in 2005, to honour "his dedication to aerophilately and aeropostal history".

He is survived by his wife Lesley, and his daughter Carolyn.

Chris Hargreaves.

The new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) which came into force on the 25th May 2018 require the British Air Mail Society to establish and implement a Privacy Policy. By being a member of the British Air Mail Society you agree to the Council and Regional Representatives of the British Air Mail Society to hold your Name and contact details on a computer. This information will only be used to contact you by the said Officers of Council or their representatives, and such data will not be sold or passed on to any third persons, organisations or companies.

Our President's Message

YOUR SOCIETY NEEDS YOU NOW!

I am pleased to tell you that one of our members, **Tony Nicholson** from Bridgwater, Somerset, has volunteered to act on our behalf as our Membership Secretary. We are highly grateful to Tony for taking on this important position within our organisation. His contact address will be found on the inside front cover of the issue of *Air Mail News*. Naturally, it will take a little time for Tony to learn the ropes, but under the tutelage of Peter Lister we are confident Tony will soon get on top of the job. Thankyou Tony for volunteering.

BAMS desperately needs a new Secretary and a new Auction Secretary. Following our Annual General Meeting on 9th June, we now realise that within the forthcoming year we will also need a new Editor of '*Air Mail News*', a new Treasurer and a new President.

If these positions are not filled, then I am afraid that the British Air Mail Society will probably cease to exist.

So, the bottom line is how much do you care about your Society! If you think you may be able to help in any way possible, please let us know. The future depends upon you!

Eddie Spicer.

The Editorial.

HOW OTHERS SEE US

It was John Lydgate of Bury St. Edmunds, (1370 – 1451) a Benedictine monk and poet, born at Lidgate, near Haverhill, Suffolk, who is credited with making the oft-repeated statement "You can satisfy some of the people all of the time, you can satisfy all of the people some of the time, but you can never satisfy all of the people all of the time."

It is patently clear that the British Air Mail Society is in deep trouble. We have not been able to find sufficient volunteers to fill vacant positions needed to run our Society. Among the positions we need to fill during the coming year is that of your Editor, since yours truly has reluctantly for a variety of different reasons decided to relinquish his post at the 2019 Annual General Meeting.

BAMS, like many philatelic societies had been losing members and we are close to reaching 'crunch time'. Why are we failing to recruit members and why are we continuing to lose members? There are no simple answers to these questions. The grim reaper has taken his toll, but maybe we need to reform, to rejuvenate, move with the times and cater for the needs of members whose aspirations or whose reasons for joining our Society may not be the same as those of Members of Council and those responsible for running our Society were when they joined years ago.

I would like members to write to our Chairman, Eddie Spicer, explaining what they would like our Society to do for them. We need feed back and we really do need to know why so many of you are apparently so deeply dissatisfied with the way we are running things that you decline to renew your memberships. Hopefully the main reason we are losing members is not necessarily financial. Like John Lydgate, we recognise we cannot satisfy all the members all of the time, but we do try to satisfy most of you as best we can.

To illustrate how members sometimes see us, I am going to reproduce two letters showing conflicting points of view that were received by fellow Council Members in recent months:

Firstly, a pleasing letter received by our President:

“Dear Mr. Spicer,

I just wanted to respond to your President’s Message in the May Journal. Like many members, I enjoy the Journal and the membership very much. The articles are good and I learn a lot from Air Mail News.

I work for Argyll Etkin and so the challenge is that I don’t get along to meetings, partly because, like Peter Lister, I have significant stamp responsibilities elsewhere.

I also want to record that I think Peter has been and no doubt will continue to be an excellent ambassador for the Society and I can well understand that he needs to fall away given the extensive involvements he has in other field of philately. I would be grateful if you could pass on to other Officers and active members my thanks to Peter.

All best wishes and here’s to many years of future success for the British Air Mail Society.

Adam Cooke.

By way of contrast, the following letter was received by our former Membership Secretary, Mike Buchanan, explaining why this former member was not renewing his membership. We will keep the writer’s identity anonymous.

“Dear Mike,

“Sorry to say that I haven’t paid my subs this year and I don’t feel the need to continue my membership.

I cannot see the point in belonging to an organisation that has an absent Chairman, an auction [catalogue] without illustrations, an Editor who goes well beyond his mandate and makes crass comments in the journal, and a management group who are out of touch with modern electronic communication, amongst other things.

And I don’t mind if you forward this message to them so that they know how I feel. (I would do it myself but when I requested details from him, the Editor informed me that their details are on a page in the journal, overlooking the fact that I cannot access these because I haven’t paid my subs! Pompous idiot!

Regards,

“A8”

So, there you have it – two contrasting views of what we are trying to do for you. Yes, some of you might well think we are not doing a good enough job. But there is only one thing I would say to you. If you think you could do better, why not volunteer and take some of the weight off our shoulders,

Your pompous idiot,

Richard Saundry.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

This is the one section within our journal that is normally not edited, providing such letters are not deemed salacious or intended to bring our hobby into disrepute. Letters published in this section are not necessarily the views of the Council of the British Air Mail Society.

Chile Air Mails.

Dear Richard,

Thank you for publishing my original request (Q 538 on page 22 of the February 2018 issue of *Air Mail News*), for information about my March 1928 air mail cover from Chile, and I would also like to thank John Bushell for his lengthy reply (see pp. 14-16 in the May 2018 issue).

As John suggests, I am certain that my cover travelled from Santiago to Buenos Aires by train and then by air to northern Brazil. I am now more certain about the cover going via Porto Praia as Henri L. Nierinck in *‘Recovered Mail’* gives the arrival date for mail in Toulouse following the accident, as this has a back-stamp of Bordeaux of 31st March.

As with John's first illustrated cover to Brazil, I have another explanation of the postal charge. According to Ross Towle (*Postage Rates of Chile 1776-1959*) the air mail surcharge for Brazil from 1st March 1928 was 90 centavos per 5 grams. If the letter weighed between 20 and 25 grams this would give a surcharge of 4 Pesos 50 centavos. The South American equivalent of the UPU had a surface rate of 25 centavos for the first 20 grams and 15 centavos for each additional 20 grams. In the above case this would mean a surface total of 40 centavos and a grand total of 5 Pesos 90 centavos as shown on John's cover.

Yours Sincerely,

Robin Jarman.

.....
The Southampton Air Museum.

Hello Richard,

Tuesday May 12, 2018 2018

Oh what happy memories our magazine sometimes returns to us.

Your item, (see the May issue of *Air Mail News*, page12.), made me search my archives for old photographs. I remembered that I had visited the Museum years ago. I found the attached photo of me sitting in the co-pilots seat of the Sandringham that they had, with our friend's wife in the pilot seat (her husband took the photo! Alas long gone). Luckily enough I had noticed the place and date on the reverse – March 1988, "Southampton Hall of Fame".



I believe the museum is now re-located from where it was then. Somewhere I have the brochure [Ed: see following page] If I find it, I'll check on the location. All I can remember is that it was close by to the then new shopping complex, where the boutique, used in the TV programme "*Howard's Way*", which was on our screens at that time, was located.

Thanks for the memory.

Bill Towle.

Bill subsequently wrote: on 22 May:

Hello again Richard,

I found the brochure (where I expected it to be!) When I was there, it was known as the "Southampton Hall of Aviation". I've checked, and it is still in the same location, however running under a different title.

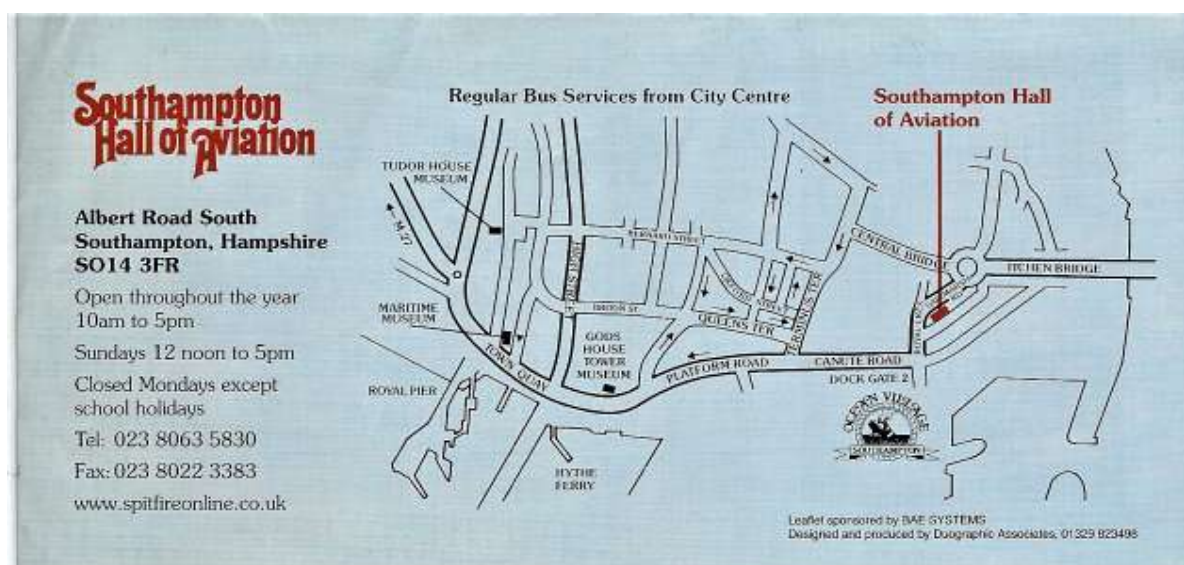
Reading the web pages, I see that the Sandringham's owner was the husband of the film star Maureen O'Hara. Another coincidence for me, I've also sat in Maureen O'Hara's personal Sandringham. That was located in the "Fantasy of Flight" museum in Florida. Alas, I learn that [museum] has now closed.

I tell a story of that Sandringham in my "*Serendipity*" talk.

Railway Air Services – the Inaugural Flights.

Dear Richard,

I read with interest John Symon's, article "*Railway Air Services. The Inaugural Flights.(20th August 1934)*" [1]. I recently obtained a small collection of Railway Air Services covers, to and from Birmingham, and associated ephemera which included a similar letter to those described in John's article but addressed to M. Ford of Fyfe and Gray, who were philatelic dealers based in Birmingham. A transcript of the letter is given on the following page:



As mentioned in John's article some of the flights on the 20th August were either cancelled or terminated before completion due to gales. The letter confirms that mail from Cowes was not flown on the 20th August, due to the gales. The mail intended to be flown had been date stamped on the 20th but was held over and flown on the following day. Therefore, first flight covers from Cowes were flown on 21st August but dated the 20th August. This also applies to covers from Southampton [1, 2, 3.] What is of particular note in the letter is the fact that commercial mail was removed and was "forwarded in the usual course". Many of the covers prepared for the first flight of the various stages were not flown because of the gales and were forwarded by rail and steamer, because the Post Office was under an obligation to forward all mail by the quickest method available. Therefore, the fact that the Postmaster at Cowes was prepared to state that "*letters were already dated stamped the 20th they were all retained for the first air flight*" appears to be against the rules!

I would agree with John Symonds that Redgrove's "*The Air Mails of the British Isles*" is an essential resource but like any secondary source there is a need to check the information and for this reason it is useful if references to where information has been obtained are quoted. I also include Baldwin's article, [Ref. 3.] as an essential reference for the first flights of the Railway Air Services.

Copy of a letter from the Post Office, Cowes, Isle of Wight:

Gentlemen,

I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 22nd inst. which came to hand 4 p.m. yesterday afternoon, and beg to inform you that no flight took place from here on Monday, and although the letters were already date stamped on the 20th they were all retained for the first air flight which took place on Tuesday; only a very few which were known to be of commercial importance which were picked out and forwarded in the usual course, but all yours as requested were sent all the way by air.

With regard to the letters received for you, addressed to this office, it is understood these were returned to you yesterday morning, and if they bear a date stamp 5:1 A.M. you can assume that these were forwarded by air as far as Bristol, where the flight was abandoned on Monday and then forwarded to us by rail and steamer.

Yours faithfully, (signed) W. Batey, (?) Head Postmaster.

To M Ford Esq. Messrs Fyfe and Gray.

References

1. Symonds, J.C., "*Railway Air Services. The Inaugural Flights. (20th August 1934)*". Air Mail News, Vol. 60, No. 241 (May 2018). pp . 20-22.
2. Redgrove, H.S. "*The Air Mails of the British Isles*" pub. the Author, (1940).
3. Baldwin, N.C., "*Railway Air Services, British Inland Air Postes*". Re-printed by House of Antiquity, 1995.

Yours sincerely, *Ian M May.*

SOCIETY NEWS

The Membership Secretary would be grateful if somebody either knows the whereabouts, or better still could provide contact details for any of the following three members. All three members are in good standing since they have paid their annual subscriptions to the British Air Mail Society but are not in receipt of *Air Mail News* because we cannot contact them:

S.M. QUERESHI. C.O. CAMPION. RICHARD LEVY.

Minutes of the 59th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held at the Premises of the Royal Philatelic Society on Saturday 9th June 2018.

1. The Chairman, **Eddie Spicer**, President of the British Air Mail Society, opened the meeting and thanked those who had attended. (This year 14 members were in attendance as against 16 last year). Eddie mentioned that he had found it difficult to get people to do things – particularly to fill vacant posts. Once again there would be no Christmas Meeting at 'The Royal' this year.

For further observations by Eddie please see 'Our President's Report' in the May 2018 issue, (Number 214), of Air Mail News.

2. A copy of the Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st December 2017 and the Balance Sheet as at that date, likewise had appeared in the May 2018 issue. The Treasurer, **Grahame Boutle**, reported that the previous year he had mentioned that he anticipated a loss of around £500 for 3017 and that he was not far adrift, as it was actually £437.

Subscriptions were down by £1670, arising from a decrease in membership coupled with fees being reduced for the 'Disc Category' version of our magazine. Auction profit was down by £460 as there were only two auctions instead of three during the year.

Advertising income was basically the same as the previous year. There was currently, however, no income likely to materialise in the current year unless contributors could be found.

Expenses were down by £710, basically due to not having a Christmas Meeting at 'The Royal' costing £400, coupled with a reduction in Regional Meeting expenses and having one less auction which both accounted for £150 each.

He was informed that the membership currently comprised 96 receiving 'electronic copies' of the magazine, while 78 receive the 'hard copy'. There is currently a need for greater control with regard to the number of respective productions required for the despatch of our quarterly magazine. Many members are frequently late in paying their dues and it could well mean that unnecessary costs are incurred in both production and distribution of the magazines. He suggested that, in 2017, around £300 worth of unnecessary costs were incurred, and it is hoped that this situation can be remedied this year.

With regard to 2018, he anticipates a loss of £400, but it could be more if there isn't a third auction in the year, which could add £250 to the loss figure.

3. The **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 2017** had been published in issue 238 of the *Air Mail News*. These Minutes were accepted.

4. The Acting Membership Secretary, **Peter Lister**, took over from Mike Buchanan following his sudden resignation. He was confronted with many problems in establishing who had paid their dues. Reminders had been sent out and currently there were 60 people who had not paid, of which 41 had not even acknowledged his 'reminders'. There were actually three instances of subscriptions having been paid but it was impossible to identify from where they had been received. This creates a problem when establishing the number of copies required to be produced of our quarterly magazine (electronic or paper). At present 97 copies of the magazine are printed, which include 5 extra copies and also includes complementary exchange copies to specific societies/organisations. Peter stated that he had produced a 'Guide for the Control of Membership' and also a 'spreadsheet' which he would pass to his successor.

Members thanked Peter for 'holding the fort'. [Please note: a volunteer has subsequently offered to succeed Peter as Membership Secretary].

5. The Editor, **Richard Saundry**, said that earlier in the year he had a 'hissy fit' which occasioned him writing to former regular contributors, and to Members of Council, soliciting copy. He was pleased to announce there was a good response and he was currently sitting on many interesting submissions, many of which would appear in this and subsequent issues of our journal. Richard said he had only taken on the role of Editor following the illness of his predecessor, initially agreeing to stay only for four years. Anno domini was rapidly catching up, he was fast losing his ability to do the job adequately, and reluctantly he informed that he would be relinquishing his post at the next AGM. Richard said he was not really very IT literate, and evidently many members were using computer programmes not directly compatible with Microsoft Word format, many still using extremely archaic or outdated versions, and this together with so many contributors still insisting on sending copy with illustrations or diagrams enmeshed within the text despite pleas to send illustrations separate to the text, meant the task of editing was getting more and more arduous. It was time to hand over to someone younger, or who was more IT savvy.



Some of the members at the AGM discussing the competition exhibits.
(Photo courtesy of Bill Trower)

6. The Hon. Librarian, **Barbara Priddy**, mentioned that four requests for two books had been received as well as two requests for 'scans'. No new books had been purchased, but two books had been presented or donated to the Society. Perhaps our Magazine should/could rectify this situation by drawing attention to such facilities being available to members! [Editor: It is not the job of the Editor to write such a thing. If Barbara should care to write something or provide an updated library list – none received by me since I again became Editor two years ago – it would be a pleasure to publish this, plus other Library matters in our journal. Incidentally, I hope I am not a snob, by why do many members persist in describing *Air Mail News* as a 'Magazine' when if we had pride in what we do it should be described as a 'Journal'? Perhaps that is what most of our members really think of *Air Mail News* - just fit to wrap up your 'fish and chips'?]

7. The Auctioneer, **Peter Lister**, stated that ideally an auction should contain around 300 items, but usually this figure is around 250. The profit this current year was £250 for the Spring Auction, and that for the current auction should realise between £350 and £375. Thus, if we don't have an Autumn Auction we will not achieve the desired figure of around £1000 for the year.

As Peter started in *Air Mail News*. He would not be standing for re-election after having carried out the last fourteen auctions since John Hammonds relinquished the post. It needs, therefore, a member to volunteer to take over from him. Peter is willing to advise that volunteer how the auctions are run, and he would willingly call the live auctions if required.

Finally, Peter requested all members find good material to feed into future auctions since lately nothing had been forthcoming and ideally material for the next auction should already have arrived with the Auctioneer.

8. The Web-Master, **Dr. Robert Clark**, was unable to attend the meeting but had sent a message stating that he had nothing specific he wished to report, but added he was of the opinion he had 'no authority' to alter things. He repeated his comments from last year that we have to reach out to our members as we are a worldwide institution.

9. **Regional Group Organisers:** Officers reports from those regions represented were brief as most of their activities had previously been reported in *Air Mail News*. The attendance at these regional meetings (usually twice per annum) were down in numbers and consequently some meetings were now being held at members' homes (or the like), so costs incurred as reflected in the accounts were reduced. Currently only the Midlands and Wessex Regional Groups were continuing to hold meetings at non-residential venues and they, likewise, were down in attendance.

10. **The Election of Officers and Appointment of the Hon. Auditor:** All Officers, whose names were published per the agenda in *Air Mail News* were re-elected. **Peter Wood**, our Auditor, was with his agreement re-appointed.



Presentation by Eddie Spicer (left) of the Wotherspoon Cup to John Sims.
(Photograph courtesy of Bill Trower)

The posts of Secretary, Membership Secretary and Auction Secretary remained unfilled, as also did that of vice-President. Steps, however, should be taken to ensure that volunteers fill these positions as soon as possible. Such appointments would be announced through our magazine and web-site.

11. Any Other Business.

(a) **Aerophilatelic Judges:** As reported last year, we continue to have judges at local and regional levels, but (in essence) no one person who is a National and/or International Qualified Judge. Possibly if this were not the case aerophilately might receive better philatelic recognition.

(b) **Newsletter** – Last year the suggestion was made that our Society should consider a 'chatty email' newsletter for members. This idea seems to have fallen on 'stony ground'. Is there a taker?

(c) **South Coast Group Meeting** at Ardingly, Sussex: This year there will once again be a meeting at the Sussex Fair on

13th October.

(d) **Autumn Stampex**, London: As last year, there will be a meeting of the Crash Mail Society on 13th October, to which members of BAMS are invited.

(e) **F.I.S.A.** Bill Trower stated that the web site operated by FISA was now up and running, but all correspondence was being sent to him instead of towards our delegate, Eddie Spicer. Perhaps this situation might be remedied?

(f) **Society Competitions:** There were no entries this year for the Air Mail Shield. The **Wotherspoon Competition** was won by **John Sims** with his exhibit of 'Australia National Airways' (88pts), with Richard Saundry 'Romanian Air Mail, 1923-1930' (87 pts.) a close second, and Laurence Kimpton third (77 pts.).

(g) The **Josh Spoor Trophy**, judged by our Editor as the most interesting and important article published during the year in *Air Mail News*, was awarded to **Peter Wingent** for his article "Raid Samar" that had appeared in the February issue.

The **date for the next Annual General Meeting** was provisionally fixed for Saturday 1st June 2019.

The meeting was brought to a close at 3.45pm.

These minutes were prepared by Grahame Boutle

(once again acting on our behalf in the absence of a Minutes Secretary).

The BAMS Midlands Group Meeting, Conkers, Moira, Sunday 8th April 2018.

The Autumn meeting attracted an attendance of sixteen. In the morning session, after a bourse, single sheet and nine-sheet competitions were held, together with one session of members' displays. The single sheet competition was won by **John Smith** with a cover flown on the North Atlantic cruise of *Italo Balbo*. There were joint winners in the nine-sheet competition: **Brian Hyner** with "*The flight of the Dornier DoX, 1929-1932*", and **John Smith** with "*The Italian South American Service of LATI*". The competitions were followed by four displays. **Brian Hyner** opened the session by showing Zeppelin mail from a variety of South American countries. He was followed by **Colin Riddell**'s Seychelles air mails from the 1930s and World War II. **Mike Stephenson**'s display "Spies and Espionage" included covers flown in Papua New Guinea by Lord Sempill who passed military secrets to the Japanese. **Nick Rolfe** concluded the morning session by displaying covers flown on the German air mail service to South America in the 1930s.

After lunch, there were two sessions with more members' displays. **Terry Hare-Walker** began by showing covers flown on pioneer RAF flights to India between 1918 and 1920 and on RAF flights within India. **Laurence Kimpton** then showed newspapers and covers flown on the Mercury-Maia transatlantic flight in 1938, together with related photographs and ephemera. **John Smith** followed with his display of Zeppelin mail from Morocco in 1933. **Dave Mountfort** concluded the first afternoon session with Falklands Islands forces mail after 1982. **Robin Jarman** began the second afternoon session with a display of mail from Chile flown by Zeppelins, LATI and Condor. **Lyel Swingler** followed with his display of KLM air mails from the 1920s. The afternoon concluded with **Brian Lythgoe**'s display of BEA and British Airways air letter stamps.

The day's eleven displays included a great variety of material and were much appreciated by those present.

Laurence Kimpton.

News from North of the Border: the BAMS Scottish Regional Group Meeting.

The Spring meeting of the Scottish Group took place at the Dewar Centre in Perth on Saturday 21 April during the two-day annual Scottish Philatelic Congress. The host society was the Scottish Philatelic Society of Edinburgh who were celebrating their 125th anniversary as the oldest philatelic society in Scotland. Their first two years of meetings were conducted in German as their original



Fig. 1a and 1b: 6 December 1934, registered from Bratislava 1 to Peking, China, 5 January 1935. Rate 13,00Kc = 2.50Kc overseas letter + 2.50Kc registration fee + 2x4.00Kc air fee per 5gm. Transit marks from Athens 13 December and Singapore 31 December 1934. Boxed **Letecká Posta** (air mail) of Bratislava. Probably carried Athens-Singapore by KLM, then by sea (Comments welcome)

name was *Briefmarken-Sammler-Verein zu Edinburgh und Leith* founded by German merchants! The ASPS Aerophilatelic Shield was won by **Alan Blakeley** with a single frame exhibit of '*Newfoundland & Labrador: Actual and Attempted Transatlantic Flights*', which was given a Gold award. **Stewart Templeton**'s '*India – the 1929 Air Set stamps, varieties and postal use*' received a Bronze-Silver award. In the postal history class, **Ray Welland**, showed '*Netherlands Indies – WWII Censorship 1940-42*' which included a fine range of flown covers resulting in a Large Silver Gilt award. At the Scottish Congress the class named 'Social Philately' is perpetuated to avoid confusion with the Open Competition in which 16 sheet single-frame exhibits are judged by Congress visitors on a 1-2-3 basis. In this Social Philately class **John Coltman** showed '*APEX: the 1934 International Air Post Exhibition*' which received a Gold award and the class trophy.

A number of aerophilatelic topics could be found in the non-competitive host society displays including '*Internal Air Mails of Scotland*', '*U.S.A. Beacon Airmails*' and '*The Air Mails of Czechoslovakia*'. All these were exhibited anonymously. [the Scottish and Czech displays were not connected to the writer!] The equally-anonymous one-frame Open Competition included '*Lighter than Air*', '*Swiss*

Air Meetings and Pioneer Flights and *Spitfires in Action*. Members of the British Air Mail Society resident in Scotland were again asked to provide a two-frame non-competitive display for the mail exhibition. **Dr. Bob Clark** showed *'New Zealand – United Kingdom air mail routes during WWII'*, while **Richard Beith** contributed *'The changing nature of transatlantic air mail routes during the second world war, 1939 to 1945'*, otherwise his entry for the 2011 Pillage Competition! (In the light of recent developments, all references to FAM 22 should be reduced!)

At the AGM of the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies (ASPS), Richard Cuthbertson of the Scottish Society was succeeded as President by Robert Watt of the Largs Society who will be the hosts in 2019.

.....

Group Convenor **Bob Clark** welcomed members to the 11.00 am BAMS one-hour 'Show and Tell' meeting; six varied displays were provided which stimulate many talking points. **Richard Beith** showed six covers from his Czechoslovak intercontinental mails of the 1930s all carried by the Dutch airlines KLM and KNILM. Illustrated is a 1934 cover from the Slovak capital of Bratislava to

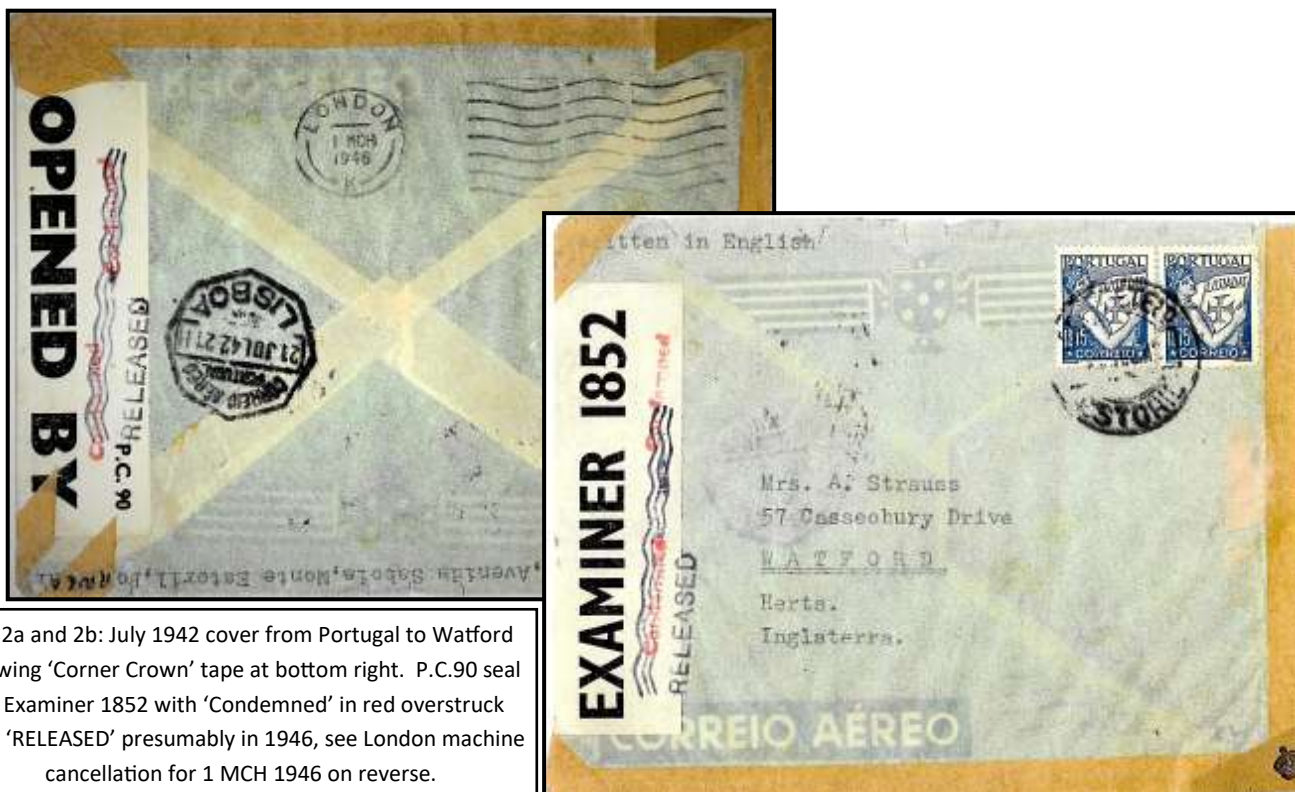


Fig 2a and 2b: July 1942 cover from Portugal to Watford showing 'Corner Crown' tape at bottom right. P.C.90 seal of Examiner 1852 with 'Condemned' in red overstruck with 'RELEASED' presumably in 1946, see London machine cancellation for 1 MCH 1946 on reverse.

Peking probably carried by KLM from Athens to Singapore with onward travel by sea, (see Figures 1a and 1b).

Ian May returned to his interest in air mails posted from the English Midlands starting with a 1928 Warwick – California cover franked at 1s. 4½d. = 1½d. letter + 9d. air mail within the USA + 6d. Express Fee. Four 1929 covers from Leamington Spa to India were investigated and Ian concluded with a 1942 censored air mail at the 5d. rate from Warwick to unoccupied France. **Bob Robertson** showed outward mail from Australia to Sweden via the UK including such mail from the 1934-1940 Empire route as well as from WWII post-1940. Bob reminded us that 'Via England' seen on these covers really meant 'Via Scotland' as from mid-1940 all mail from the UK to Sweden was flown from Scottish airfields, initially from Perth (Scone) and then from RAF Leuchars in Fife. There was no service to Sweden by surface mail. His pre-war air mails included a cover from Australia to Denmark.

Mike Turnbull has many collecting interests; on a recent visit to display at the Stirling Society his topic was 'Music'. For our gathering he showed a fine variety of early French Aviation and Air Show postcards. At the end of the Congress dinner on the Friday evening, Mike had been honoured with the receipt of an ABPS Award of Merit particularly for his devotion to the organisation of the much-enjoyed Dundee residential philatelic weekends.

Charles LaBlonde is quite a regular visitor to Perth from across the Pond and decided to tell us a story of WWII censorship. Charles had co-ordinated a study of *'The Corner Crowns'*, an elusive addition to censored envelopes handled by British censors. The summary of his findings has just been published in the *Bulletin* of the Civil Censorship Study Group (*Bulletin* 198, April 2018); the audience were given copies of his text for their files. Charles found that covers notified to him with these additions were used between 15 June and 23 July 1942. Of the 20 corner crown letters 17 originated in Switzerland and 3 in Portugal. All were carried by air mail; the corner crown was usually found in the bottom right hand position but a couple of covers showed an upper right hand corner location. Charles produced a newly found corner crown cover from Portugal, cover No. 21, for our inspection, (see Figures 2a and 2b).



Fig. 3a and 3b: 1944, Goa, Portuguese India to Geneva, Switzerland, franked at the 2½Tanga air mail rate with Indian P.C.90 seal m/s 'Written in Italian'. Charles LaBlonde noted: 'The letter has all the characteristics of a late 1944 item. It was sent by Sebastiano Leotta who died of typhoid on 23 April 1945. He was the Engineering Officer of the *Anforda*'.



Fig. 4: BAMS member Charles LaBlonde (left) receives the Open Competition award at the ASPS Congress from Richard Cuthbertson (right) of the Scottish P.S., the President of Congress 2018.

Bob Clark closed the meeting with a look at the development of the Baghdad – Cairo air mail in the 1920s. To avoid getting lost, a furrow was ploughed through the desert by following which, the RAF planes could navigate safely. Planes always flew in pairs so that the more fortunate could aid the less fortunate. Illustrations of the tractors were shown. Mail carried by the land vehicles of Nairn Transport was also displayed.

Bob thanked those for attending and for showing such an interesting range of material; he invited us to the same venue on Saturday 21 October 2018 during SCOTEX.

This was not the end of the story, however, for the members of BAMS at Perth. Mention has been made of the one-frame Open Competition judged by visitors. When the winner for 2018 was announced early on Saturday afternoon, he was revealed as

Charles LaBlonde with another of his WWII stories:

'The Postal History of Goa World War Internee Mail'. Figures 3a and 3b show the only flown cover from the display. Figure 4 shows Charles receiving the award. Congratulations.

Richard Beith

The BAMS Wessex Group Meeting, Harnham, Salisbury, Saturday 19th May 2018.

Seven members of the Wessex Group attended a most stimulating meeting at Harnham, near Salisbury, on the 19th May 2018.

The main display was given by **Colin Faers** who showed a remarkable collection of mail flown by the Brazilian airline **VARIG**, (S.A. Empresa de Viação Aérea Rio Grandense). Colin, whose main interests lie within the sphere of German philately, explained that VARIG was the brain-child of Otto Ernst Meyer, a German businessman, and the airline was founded in the southern Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul with the help of German finance and the active participation including technical support of Deutsche Lufthansa and another German-backed Brazilian airline, Condor Syndikat. Using the Dornier Wal 'Atlântico', originally leased from Condor, VARIG officially started service in April 1927 and by 22 June 1927 began regular scheduled service over the route from Porto Alegre to Rio Grande via Pelotas, cruising over the Lagoa dos Patos (Lake of ducks) at an altitude of 20-50 metres. Initially there were no air mail postage stamps and VARIG like its sister airline Condor initially made use of inverted triangular handstamps showing the air postal charges. In November 1927 appeared the first VARIG postage stamps based upon the green 1300 reis untitled issue printed for Condor, but overprinted in red at the top "V A R I G" plus a Peter



VARIG first flight cover Porto Alegre to Uruguaiana 25 July 1932.
(RHS Collection)

Colin showed a simply dazzling array of covers flown by VARIG. Concentrating on the pre-war services when VARIG confined its activities entirely within the southern states of Brazil, many new routes and services into the interior of the country were added. All the air mail routes were chronicled by Colin using covers and cards, all in absolutely pristine condition. Later company-prepared covers bore VARIG's distinctive logo of Icarus that also featured on a number of later issues of 'VARIG' postage stamps. Other company-printed first flight covers showed at the top left the distinctive illustration of a Gaúcho on horseback, doffing his hat as an aircraft flew overhead. A further unusual aspect of Brazilian aerophilately was that many of the covers shown by Colin bore the handstamp "M. P." which we were informed meant that the covers were to be delivered to the addressees by the airline after arrival by 'car or even by bicycle'.

Those of us fortunate to have seen Colin's most informative display were left in no doubt we were seeing a most

comprehensive and important collection. We will, like as not, rarely again have the chance to see such a wonderful and important display of Brazilian aerophilately. Congratulations, Colin!

Peter Richards displayed early Nigerian Air Mail from 1926 until 1938, showing use of the French Dakar-Toulouse and Trans-Sahara services, together with a variety of mail sent to a range of destinations by the Elders Colonial/Imperial service which started in February 1936. Some of these covers showed how, once the Elders service was established, Nigeria was able to send air mail via Khartoum by Imperial's East African and Far East services.

Alan Whittaker's topic was the first scheduled air mails from the Channel Islands. The first mail was carried from Jersey to Southampton on 1st June 1937, shortly after the construction of the airport. Guernsey was the next to build an airport and the first air mail took place on 8th May 1939. Covers were shown of all the routes on these flights. When the Germans occupied from 1940, only German Feldpost left the Islands by air, and many examples were shown. After the liberation of the Islands, the first air mail was flown on 10th September 1945. By the early 1950s many airlines started services, many of these were shown.

Richard Saundry gave a comprehensive display of Argentina air mail flown northwards towards the United States between 1928 and 1947. He explained the ramifications of the 'turf war' between Pan American Airways (and subsidiaries) with NYRBA, vying with each other to secure the lucrative FAM-10 contract. There were also problems implementing PAA's time-shrinking "7 day Express Service" New York to Buenos Aires in April 1930. Most interestingly, unlike Argentine mail flown the South Atlantic route to Europe which has been intensively studied by collectors, mail flown north from Argentina over FAM Routes 9 and 10 has received comparatively little attention. The upshot of this perceived neglect is that the muddy waters of Argentine air postage rates to North America, and to other countries in Latin America cries out for further elucidation.

Barbara Priddy showed French transatlantic mail carried by Pan American Airways, 1939-1942, most of which she had accidentally acquired when buying a large lot containing a couple of West African air mails. The display was well illustrated using route maps prepared by Peter Wingent.

The first scheduled mail service left New York 20th May 1939 and arrived Marseilles by way of the Azores and Lisbon on 22nd May. On the outbreak of war, the route terminated at Lisbon instead of Marseilles: but French mail could still be carried, and so, of course, could French West African mail.

With the fall of France, and the suspension of the *Ligne Mermoz*, PanAm also carried French mail from Lisbon to New York and down to South America. The ‘*Clippers*’, however, could not carry enough fuel for a non-stop transatlantic flight with a decent payload, especially if they met headwinds, so from time to time they had to stop off in Bermuda. Here the British were waiting to pounce on the mail in order to censor correspondence from Axis countries and Vichy France, much to the displeasure of the Americans. Suspect mail could be detained for the duration of the war.

From February to May 1941, the route followed a clockwise course via Portuguese Guinea and the Caribbean, then reverted to the summer route via the Azores and Bermuda. In December 1941 the route was changed back to the clockwise route around the South Atlantic, supplemented from January 1942 by a U-shaped service New York to Lisbon via Brazil and back. This meant that mail was being carried from Vichy France to South America without going near an Allied censor, and the UYSA now entered the war on the Allied side, transatlantic mail began to be censored either in Bermuda, Puerto Rico or Trinidad, even if this meant overflying its destination.

Peter Wingent’s display illustrated the treatment of insufficiently prepaid air mail during the 1930s by the U.K. and countries on Imperial Airways African route. Covers illustrated not only how U.P.U. rules were applied but also how the U.P.U. allowed them to be varied with mutual agreement.

The meeting closed with a surprise mini-display from our guest speaker, **Colin Faers**, who showed mail carried by a Brazilian airline that few, perhaps none of us, had even heard of. From 18th July 1933 **Aerolloyd Iguassú**, founded in Curitiba, operated successful air mail services along the coast of Brazil, to São Paulo and Florianópolis. Aerolloyd Iguassú ceased to exist as an independent entity in October 1939 when it was merged within another Brazilian airline, Viação Aérea São Paulo, S.A., (VASP).

Peter Wingent.

Dates for Your Diary.

Saturday 15th September 2018. The **Wreck & Crash Mail Society** will be holding a meeting between 14.30 hrs. and 16.30 hrs. in Room A at the Autumn Stampex. Members of BAMS are cordially invited to attend and participate. For further information contact Brian Peace (brpeace@ntlworld.com)

Saturday 13th October 2018. There will be a **South Coast Group Meeting**, starting at 10.00am in the Norfolk Pavilion, the South of England Centre, the Ardingly Showground, Ardingly, Sussex. This meeting will take place in conjunction with the Association of Sussex Philatelic Societies’ Fair. For further information contact Josh Spoor (01273 592214, joshspoor@tiscali.co.uk)

Saturday 21st October 2018. There will be a meeting of the BAMS **Scottish ‘North of the Border’ Group** in the Dewar Centre, Perth in association with SCOTEX. For further information contact: Rober Clark (01786 478712; rgc119@hotmail.com)

Saturday 27th October 2018. There will be a meeting of the **Wessex Group**, starting 10.30am in the Scout Hall, Lower Street, Harnham, Salisbury SP2 8HB. During the morning session there will be a display of “*An African Miscellany*” by Peter Wingent. The afternoon will be devoted to members’ displays. Contact: Peter Wingent (01962 851780, pwingent@gmail.com)

Sunday 28th October 2018. BAMS **Midlands Group Meeting** at Conkers, the National Forest Centre, near Measham. **Frank Walton** will give his display “*Chinese International Air Mail to 1949*”. Contact: Laurence Kimpton (01564 771851, l.j.kimpton@macunlimited.net.)

News from the World of Aerophilately.

Josh Spoor.

Our South Coast Group Organiser, **Josh Spoor**, is to be congratulated on ‘spreading the word’. At the annual weekend meeting of the Scandinavian Philatelic Society, held in Redditch, with guests and members travelling from as far afield as Swansea, Warrington and Oslo, following the Society’s Council meeting and AGM, Josh gave the invited ‘key note’

display **“Sweden Blockaded 1939-45 – the Air Mail Routes”**. We are confident all those fortunate to be present were ‘right royally entertained’ by Josh, as they say in polite circles. Perhaps sometime in the not too distant future Josh will be able to put on a repeat performance for members of the British Air Mail Society.

Cheryl Ganz.

Our old friend Cheryl Ganz (USA) is to be especially congratulated on being invited to sign the ‘Roll of Distinguished Philatelists.’ Cheryl, a former President of the American Air Mail Society (1992-93), is a renowned collector, exhibitor and prolific writer of Zeppelin post material, (she was Editor of the *‘Zeppelin Collector’*). Those of us fortunate enough to have met Cheryl will know her warm welcoming smile and unassuming demeanour always putting even the greenest of beginners at ease. We well remember her guiding us through the extensive postal collections of the Smithsonian Postal Museum on a visit arranged for members of the AAMS in conjunction with the US International in Washington in 2006. Cheryl was a former Chief Curator of the philatelic collections. We guess if we dare make comparison, the position that Cheryl held in the world of US philately was something akin to being the British ‘Keeper of the Queen’s Collections’. It is so pleasing that once again an ardent aerophilatelist has been invited to become an ‘RDP’.

Announcing the 49th FISA Congress, Berlin, April 2019

Wolfgang Porges. President of FISA tells that at the 48th FISA Congress on 7 October 2017 in Austria it was decided to organise the next FISA Congress in conjunction with the philatelic exhibition AEROBERLIN 2019 which will be held in the fantastic ambience of the historic city hall of Schöneberg from 26th to 28th April 2019. The Rathaus Schöneberg is famous, among other things, for the speech made from the balcony by President John F. Kennedy *“Ich bin ein Berliner”*.

The philatelic exhibition **AEROBERLIN 2019** will be a German “Rang 2” exhibition with international participation. Aero- and Astrophilately will be the focal point of the exhibition since 2019 is celebrated as the centennial of German civil air mail, the centenary of the Zeppelin LZ 120 “*Bodensee*”, the 70th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift, and the 50th anniversary of the first moon landing. Members of BAMS are invited to participate and are encouraged to attend the FISA Congress on the Saturday morning.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A. 539. Stephen Reinhard explains the Reason for Mixed Franking of Mexican Air Mail Letters sent to the United States.

John Rawlins asked why an air mail cover, illustrated on page 23 of the February issue, showing mixed franking of a British 1½d. postage stamp together with a US 6¢ airmail postage stamp, posted from Barnes, SW. London to the United States in May 1939 was charged 6¢ postage due in New York. On page 13 of the May issue your Editor tried to answer some of John’s query, but that in turn has generated a most interesting reply from Stephen Reinhard. Stephen writes:

“The discussion on page 13 of the May 2018 issue of *Air Mail News* reminds me of “mixed franking issues with early Mexican air mail. In 1927 there was no regular air mail service in Mexico, but mail could be sent to the United States by surface means in Mexico and air in the U.S. The published rate was 50 centavos Mexican. Some people tried to reduce the cost to 28 centavos by placing an 8 centavos surface mail stamp for the Mexican portion of the trip and a 10 cent U.S. air mail stamp (= 20 centavos) for the air mail portion of the trip in the U.S. This was the uniform air mail rate in the United States from February 1, 1927 through July 31, 1928. Theoretically this was an illegal way to send mail from Mexico, but many letters so franked were accepted by the U.S. Post Office, whom I assume cared only about the U.S. air mail postage being paid.



Royal Collection Trust
©Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2018
Photographer: Ian Jones



The Golden Colour Error
3 Skilling Banco Yellow



H.M. King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden
Photographer: Anna-Lena Ahlström, royalcourt.se

WELCOME TO STOCKHOLMIA 2019

The International Celebration of the 150th Anniversary of The Royal Philatelic Society London

- The Royal Philatelic Society London, the oldest philatelic society in the world, was established in 1869 as The Philatelic Society, London. In 1896 HRH The Duke of York, son of King Edward VII, became President of the Society, an office he continued to hold until his accession to the throne as HM King George V in 1910. Permission to use the prefix Royal was granted by His Majesty King Edward VII in 1906. Following his accession King George V acted as its Patron, and in 1924 granted the Society permission to use the Royal Arms on its stationery and publications. The Royal philatelic tradition has been maintained and today the Society is honoured by the Patronage of Her Majesty The Queen. At STOCKHOLMIA 2019, a selection from The Royal Philatelic Collection, will be presented as part of Court of Honour.
- STOCKHOLMIA 2019 is an International Philatelic Exhibition with exhibits and displays from members of the Society from all over the world.
- With capacity of 2,100 frames, the exhibition is the largest Society exhibition ever held. In addition, more than 50 Trade Stand Holders, from 13 different countries are participating.
- His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden has graciously agreed to be Patron of STOCKHOLMIA 2019 when it takes place at Stockholm Waterfront Congress Centre, Nils Ericsons Plan 4, Stockholm.
- One of the world's most famous postage stamps, The Golden Colour Error, 3 Skilling Banco Yellow, will be presented as part of the exhibition's Court of Honour.
- Tickets and all other registrations and bookings, including accommodation offers, are here-with presented in this Destination Offer.
- The exhibition opens for Early Birds with the Vernissage on 28 May at 3.00 pm., followed by five public days from 29 May until 2 June.

Tuesday	28 May 2019	3.00 pm. – 7.00 pm. Vernissage
Wednesday	29 May 2019	10.00 am. – 6.00 pm.
Thursday	30 May 2019	10.00 am. – 6.00 pm.
Friday	31 May 2019	10.00 am. – 6.00 pm.
Saturday	1 June 2019	10.00 am. – 5.00 pm.
Sunday	2 June 2019	10.00 am. – 3.00 pm.

**The exhibition concepts,
programme and progress are
continuously presented online at
www.stockholmia2019.se.**

The first cover, below, had dual franking (the 2-cent postal stationery envelope was a convenience overpayment) and was not accepted for air mail service in the United States. On the other hand, the 50 centavos cover is properly pre-paid in



Mexico and received air mail service in the U.S. To top it off, the mixed franking cover to Fall River, Massachusetts, was incorrectly accepted for air mail service in the U.S. (after travelling by mail packet from Veracruz to New Orleans). The 1½cent postal stationery envelope was again a convenience overpayment.

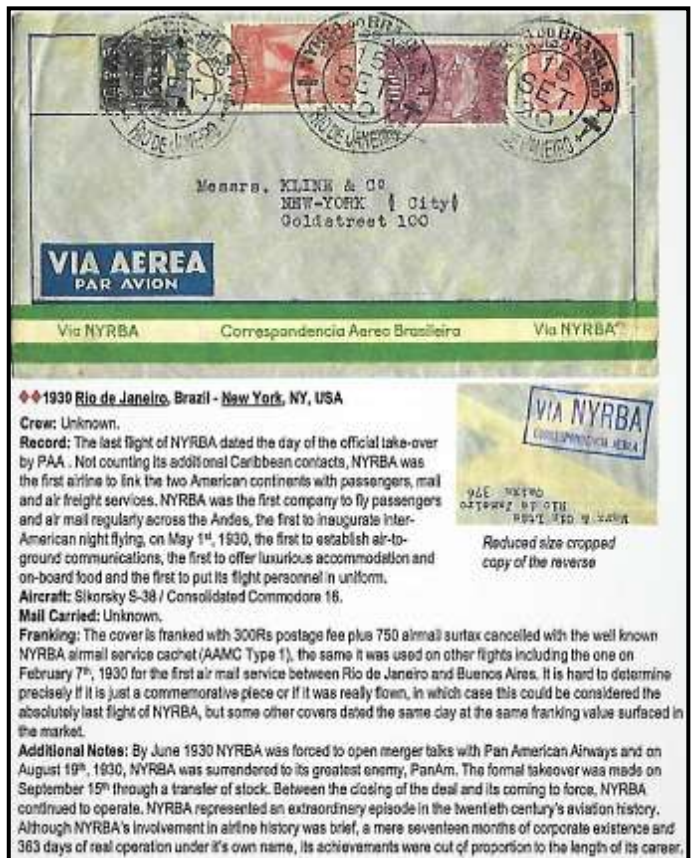
Thank you, Stephen for this interesting bit of information about mixed Mexican-USA franking of early air mail covers to the United States.



A. 540. Dates for the Last Flight by NYRBA and the First Flight by Pan American Airways in Brazil.

Your Editor asked if any of our readers could confirm what the dates were for the last mail flown by NYRBA, and the first mail flown by Pan American Airways in Brazil. Using covers in his collection he surmised that the last sending of mail by NYRBA in Brazil might have been 15 September 1930, and the first despatch by PAA might have been 1 September 1930. Two valued correspondents, **Daniel Timofei** from Romania, and our Norfolk member **Julian van Beveren**, have shed much light on this matter.

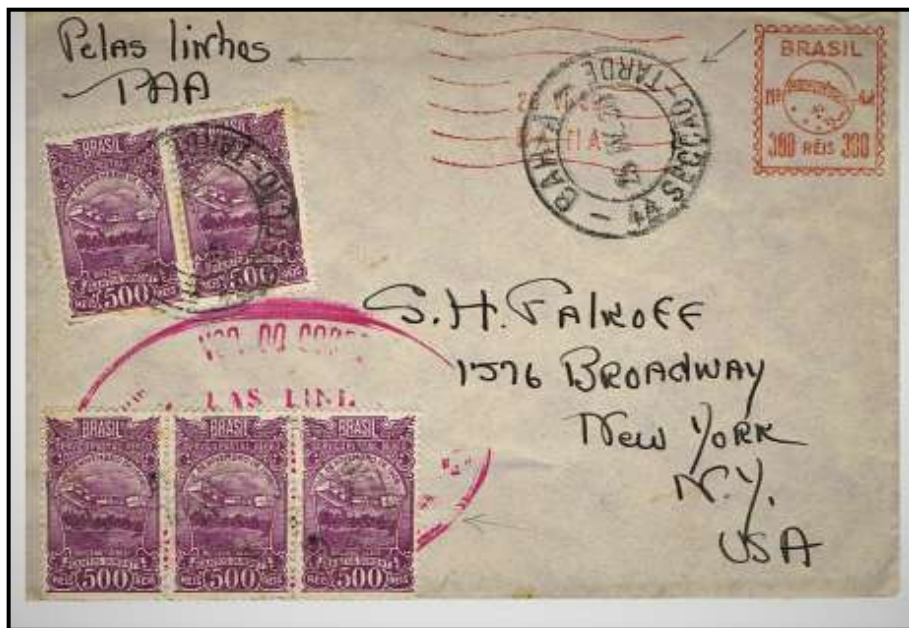
Let's deal first with the date for the last NYRBA flight within or from Brazil. Both Daniel and Julian agree that the date for the last NYRBA flight from Brazil was the 15th September 1930. Daniel Timofei most helpfully sent me scans from his FIP / FEPA Gold Medal exhibit that covers NYRBA / PAA (FAM-10) . We illustrate here Daniel's section showing a 15 September 1930 air mail cover sent to New York. Daniel's most informative 'write-up' tells us that the cover was franked 300 Reis postage fee, plus 750 Reis air surcharge fee, the postage stamps being cancelled with the well-known NYRBA air mail service 'cachet'. Here Daniel is referring to the *'The American Air Mail Catalogue'*.



The British collector has, of course, a different definition of the word ‘cachet’. What is referred to in the AAMC as a ‘Type 1 cachet’, the British collector would more correctly term a ‘c.d.s.’ (cancellation date stamp). The important thing here, however, is that we can definitely set the date for the last Brazilian NYRBA flight taking place on September 15, 1930, only a matter of a few days before NYRBA were forced to enter into merger talks with PanAm.



Now, returning to the second date query – when was PAA’s first flight in Brazil? – we run into an unexpected finding. Once again using pages from Daniel Timofei’s entrancing exhibition, we see that Daniel showed an example of a cover with a large oval Pan American Airways first flight cachet posted from Bahia, Brazil to New York, franked 1,400 Reis, cancelled 26th April 1930. Daniel noted that when official air postage rates to the United States were introduced in Brazil in June 1930 the rate to the USA became 1,700 Reis per 5 gm. Presumably this cover was only franked to be flown internally in Brazil, not the whole way.



Julian van Beveren, however, has a cover in his collection which casts doubt upon the date for which Daniel’s “first flight” cover was actually flown. Julian’s cover, also showing the large red oval first flight cachet, was posted from Bahia, Brazil to New York with five of the 500 Reis air mail stamps, three partially obscuring the large red first flight cachet, but all clearly cancelled “BAHIA 4A SECCAO – TARDE 25.IV.30”. There is, however, a further roller cancellation for Bahia for presumably the following day reading “26 VI 30 / BAHIA / BRAZIL / NO 44 / 300 REIS 300” giving a total franking of 2,800 Reis,

which Julian surmises comprised a surface tariff of 300 Reis and 2,500 Reis air from São Paulo to New York. There seems to be only one logical explanation for the two months difference in dates for the postal markings. The slug “1” has been put on the wrong side of the “V” in the Bahia hand dated cancel and should really have shown the month of June rather than April. Furthermore, the cover is clearly marked up with the superscription “Pelas linhas / PAA” top left and on the reverse the receiving date of JUL 3 1930. Julian adds “Only the Pope is supposed to be infallible and does not err, though we mortals as noted above can, which may have included some South American postal clerks as well”.

In light of Julian’s cover, we conclude that Daniel’s cover has a date stamp error leading to an unfortunate but most understandable mis-interpretation by Daniel of the date. The date of Julian’s cover, together with dates cited in a number of literature references, allows us to conclude that the first flight by Pan American Airways, albeit one of a series of test flights within Brazil, was on 25 or 30 June 1930. [Julian adds, that after consultation of A. Phillips’ ‘Green Lists’ 575-577 in his ‘Air Mail Magazine’ No. 56, Phillips illustrated the new PAA postmarks and cachet on page 1111, indicating the first Pan American Flight was on 30th June 1930].

Thus, the jury is still out regarding the date of the first PAA flights within Brazil, possibly 25 June, but more likely 30 June 1930. We do, however, thank both Daniel and Julian for sharing their knowledge and information with us.

Q. 542. The Exeter Jubilee Balloon Race, 1977.

Howard Wunderlich is hoping our members might have information about the **Daily Mirror** Grand Exeter Jubilee Balloon Race of 6 June 1977. Do any of our members have information about any covers, stamps, *etc.* related to this event?

Q. 543. Stamps of the Great Western Railway Air Service.

Howard Wunderlich knows that 10,000 stamps were issued for the Great Western Railway Air Service, but is trying to compile a listing of all current conditions for each stamp. He would appreciate information, if not on cover, about the condition and whether it is a single or a multiple (with which other numbers), or if on cover then from where and to, when, *etc.* Scans of covers would be appreciated. Howard says that the results of this survey will become the subject of an article for our journal. Howard can be contacted at hjwesq@yahoo.com

Q. 544. Was this Lebanese Cover flown the Pacific Route to the USA in 1941?

Lucien Toutounji recently acquired a cover alleged to have been flown from the Lebanon to the United States via the



Pacific Route. Mailed from Beirut on 21st November 1941, only a matter of sixteen dates before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour, there are neither transit or US arrival postal markings, though the cover was censored by the US censorship authorities, ("EXAMINED BY 1623") which Lucien has been informed was probably San Francisco. Note, the very last flight of the '*China Clipper*' was on 30th November 1941. The Pacific routing would have involved being flown by Misr Air to Cairo, thence by BOAC to Singapore.

On the front of the cover there is a manuscript "AV2" marking (most likely Cairo, Egypt) and there is a very, very faint circular censor hand-stamp between the two Beirut postmarks, which Lucien believes shows a "P" on the lower right side. The franking of 175 piastres is correct (15p. surface, 160p. air). The comparable rate via the Mediterranean route was 50 piastres.

Lucien hopes there are specialists within BAMS who can shed light on the routing of this cover, thus help with his 'write up'.

*

Clipper Connections to FAM 14 from the Middle East in 1941.

By Julian van Beveren.

Air mails sent from the Middle East war zone during 1941 to the North and South American continents was a tricky business at this time and I show a few examples here to demonstrate just how good the air mail system was and still able to give a great service. The Italian dictator had set Italy on her course with the signing of *The Pact of Steel* agreement with Herr Hitler on the 22nd May 1939 and had joined in the conflict on 10th June the following year. Mussolini, having bullied his way in and around the Middle Mediterranean, through Albania, the Dodecanese Islands, Libya and the Horn of Africa, and with his cohort Hitler was now entrenched in North Africa from June 1940. They no doubt thought this Mediterranean theatre was theirs for the taking.



Figs. 1a and 1b.
Air mail cover from Baghdad 25
January 1941 to Detroit, USA

With the British endeavouring to hold the fort in Egypt and further east protecting their interests around the Arabian oil fields and the Mediterranean now being virtually closed to civilian air traffic, many air mail communications of necessity were flown east to North or South America from there. The first example is a letter posted from Baghdad to the Chrysler Corporation in Detroit, dated 25th January 1941 and a machine roller cancel date on the back. It is clearly marked up for the **PAN / AMERICAN / CLIPPER** and has a total air mail tariff of 135 fils. In all likelihood this cover was sent with the I.A., now BOAC, flight NE 54 from Habbaniya to Singapore, arriving there on 31st January and off-loaded for censoring as seen by their framed handstamp of **"PASSED BY / CENSOR 150 / A"** on the plain brown closing tape. From here it seems to have been trans shipped for onward air transmission on to a KLM aircraft as evidenced by the encircled letter **"K"** and numeral **"4"** being transit markings put there by the sorting office ensuring it was put into the correct post sack for Batavia. The likely flight being KLM Flt. LB 28 departing 3.2.1941 and arriving later on the same day in Java. From there it would have been put aboard one of the temporary Special Manila flights flown by the KNILM airline, with flight number 16 on the 4th February in a DC-2 arriving in Manila on the 5th. From here the likely carrier would have been the *American Clipper* departing Manila on the 8th and arriving in San Francisco five days later having successfully crossed the Pacific. Once on the North American continent it would have been delivered the following day in Detroit, and I am constantly amazed at just how efficient the internally flown postal system in the United States was, and continued to be so during the entire period of the Second World War. In this example a total transit time therefore of some 20 days. (See Figures 1a & 1b.)

While the above airmailed example was the most likely course of events for its transit, it is impossible to prove beyond all possible doubt, however with registered letters having dated postal marks *en route* it can be said with some certainty in those cases the actual route that was flown. Even here though with the date stamps being shown there remain several options open to the air transport that was available and taken, particularly in times of war when so many logistical situations come into play, such as build up of mail awaiting transit.

The next example, (Figures 2a & b) is just such a candidate. This registered letter from George Obadiah & Co. of Tehran, was actually posted in the neighbouring country of Basrah, Iraq on 29th June 1941 with the precise superscription given as, **"BY AIR MAIL VIA TRANSPACIFIC / CLIPPER SERVICE"**, to get it to its desired New York destination.



Figures 2a. And 2b.

Registered air mail cover posted from Basrah, Iraq 29 June 1941 to New York (arrived 30 July). The back shows transit mark for Honolulu, Hawaii 27 July 1941.

It has a total air mail fee of 155 fils including 20 fils registration. KLM's terminus at this date had moved further east from Lydda to Amman as they had been requested to do by the R.A.F. to free up the air space around Lydda in Palestine from 12th June to 7th July 1941, due to the developing situation in the North African Campaign, in case Rommel's tanks tried to run through Egypt and capture the Suez Canal. Additionally, the R.A.F. wanted to attack Syrian defences from Palestine. Flight KLM / LB 51 from Amman departed on 30th June and arrived later the same day at Basrah and departed the following day east on 1st July, arriving in Singapore on the 3rd and Batavia on the 4th. The single pertinent known fact is, this registered letter has the c.d.s. of "**HONOLULU, HAWAII. REGISTERED / JUL / 27, 1941**". This being the case, we must now conclude that the aircraft that this aircraft travelled on has to be the only flying boat calling in at Hawaii on that day, namely the *Anzac Clipper*. A look at the Pan American flight schedule will confirm also that she was in Singapore on 21st and 22nd July, and Manila on the 22nd and 23rd, these being her arrival and departure dates.

Airmail Collector

www.airmails.co.uk



- A philatelic auction devoted exclusively to aerophilately.
- Offering c800 world wide aerophilatelic lots every 10-12 weeks.
- No buyers' commission or credit card charges.
- Free colour illustrated Postal Auction Catalogue.
- A modern web site with on line bidding and every lot illustrated.
- Buying aerophilatelic collections for cash, or for 'bidding credit' in future sales.

PO BOX 2538 • CYNCOED • CARDIFF • CF23 6PF
Tel: 44-(0)29 2075 4748 • Email: collector@airmails.co.uk
Web Site: www.airmails.co.uk

Notwithstanding the above, there is still the possibility that the letter could have travelled on any one of the following KLM flights, LB 52 or LB 53 from Amman on the 3rd or 7th July, or from the Lydda flights LB 54, LB 55 or LB 56, to where the KLM terminus had now reverted to, as these flights calling in at Basra would have got in to Singapore on the 6th, 10th, 13th, 17th and 20th respectively and in time to be loaded onto the *Anzac Clipper* departing on the 22nd July. Having already been seen by a British censor in Iraq there was no need for the letter to be inspected again and remained in the postbag for mails that had been examined by the censor until onward air trans-shipment. The *Anzac Clipper* arrived in San Francisco on July 29th from Hawaii and the air mail got into New York, from ‘sea to shining sea’ across the great width of the North American continent by the following day as per the two black inked oval dated hand stamps on the reverse stand testimony, “**NEW YORK, N.Y. REG’Y.DIV. / 7 – 30 / 1941**”. As previously mentioned, impressive. Of course, there may have been the possibility for the air mail letter to have been transported through to Singapore by the British B.O.A.C. service on the Horseshoe Route, but at this time the flights NE 86 up to and until NE 96 did not fly into Basra from Cairo or Aqaba, continuing straight on to Bahrein.

The third example, (Figures 3a & 3b), is a Middle Eastern registered cover from Haifa in Palestine with the circular date stamp showing the “MOUNT CARMEL B / 7 AU / 41” post office to the front on a total of 140 Mils, also back-stamped with the same date and additionally the oval registration being shown as ‘REGISTERED / 7 AU 41 / HAIFA’.



Figures 3a and 3b. Front and back of registered air mail cover from Haifa, Palestine 7 August 1941 addressed to Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA. Transit date-stamps for Honolulu, Hawaii 26 August and Boston 29 August.

(3)’. The air mail rates I have found for this time, from 10th July 1940 to 28th December 1941 were 125 Mils per gm. Registration therefore was charged 15 Mils. This air mail would have covered the first part of its journey by road from Mount Carmel to Haifa, (some 13 miles distant) for censoring shown by the red P.C. 22 closing tape with the smudged Palestine violet polygon hand stamp. From there it was sent on by surface means to Tiberias to be taken onboard either the BOAC flight NE 110 departing 10th August 1941 or the following flying boat NE 111 departing 13th August arriving Singapore on 14th and 18th respectively,

There the cover would have been put onto the much-collected *Anzac Clipper* which had arrived there on the 21st and started her eastbound flight across the mighty Pacific Ocean the following day. The *Anzac Clipper* is much sought-after air mail, as she was only to complete three round trips on FAM 14 and was of course the Clipper recalled on her last aborted outbound flight, taking avoiding action and being diverted to land at Hilo having received the coded radio message that Pearl Harbor was being attacked, before her immediate return to San Francisco. On this flight, however, the all-important date stamp bears witness to her landing on her second to last round trip on FAM 14 being, “**HONOLULU HAWAII. REGISTERED / AUG 26 1941**” and continuing her journey the next day arriving San Francisco on the 28th August. Again, and impressively it gets to its ultimate destination in Boston, Massachusetts the following day as confirmed by the registered date stamps. The *Anzac Clipper* was also employed twice on FAM 19 for that return trip to Auckland, returning to her base in San Francisco on the 17th September and 17th October 1941, but thereafter was mainly used on what became known as the San Francisco – Honolulu – San Francisco shuttle service. I attach here in the appendices some insight in a letter from Hawaii University at Manoa, from Professor L.J. Crampton which explains a little about this latest Clipper and the relative scarcity of flown air mail from this flying boat. Included at the end of this piece is a cover

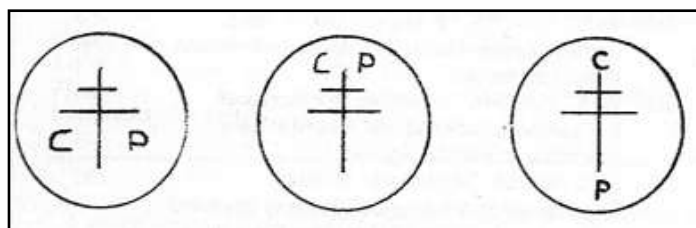
from Semarang in the Dutch East Indies taken with her very last Pacific FAM 14 crossing with the strike on the reverse of “**HONOLULU HAWAII, REGISTERED / NOV 27 1941**”.

A further example of these Clipper connections from the Levant is shown, (Figures 4a & b), which has the postal strike of “**DOUMA LEBAN 17 IX 41**” to be precise which will not reproduce here very well but trust me is correct. There



Figs. 4a and 5. Front and back of registered air mail cover from Douma, Lebanon 17 November 1941 addressed to Cordoba, Argentina via Beirut (censorship), Haifa, Palestine (22 November), Honolulu (4 December) and San Francisco (6 December)

being no connection through to Lagos at this time, this air mail letter was sent east to connect with FAM 14 to the North American continent before being sent onto the South American one, to Cordoba in Argentina, again using the services of the Pan American network via Miami. Its first port of call was to the censor's office in Beirut apropos their closing tape **CONTROLE** and their violet encircled hand stamp with the Cross of Lorraine and letters 'C' and 'P'. There were three specific control hand stamps like these used in Lebanon at the time which are to be seen in Figure 5,



which from left to right refer to the following centres of Beirut, Aleppo and Damascus. The next and second censor closing label is the red **P.C. 22** with a better violet strike of “**PALESTINE / PASSED BY CENSOR / No. H 26**” struck in Haifa where it received a second registered date stamp which I read as “**REGISTERED / 22.NO.41 / HAIFA**” and then sent some 50 miles

overland to Tiberias to be taken aboard the BOAC aircraft flying the Horseshoe route with flight NE 140 arriving the following day on the 23rd November. The British crews had by now to hand over the flying duties to the Qantas pilots at Karachi as there was a severe shortage of UK civilian pilots for obvious reasons. By this time in the autumn of 1941 the flying in the Far East was becoming even more dangerous around Singapore and there were three alternative routes flown from the 29th November 1941 avoiding the possibility of surprise attacks by the Japanese: Route 1 being from Rangoon onwards to the islands of Mergui, Penang, Singapore, Batavia, Java; Route 2 was from Rangoon to Port Blair in the Andaman Islands and Sabang, Penang, Singapore, Batavia; and by the end of December Route 3 came into play of Rangoon, Port Blair, Sabang, Padang and on to Batavia missing out Penang and Singapore, flying down the long west coast of Sumatra to Java. A clearer picture of these diversions can be seen in the appendix. Flight NE 140 arrived in Singapore on the 27th November and thus was able to connect with the Pan American *China Clipper* which had got in on the 28th November and flew out the next day. We can be assured of this from the all important arrival date stamp on the back of the cover clearly showing the date cancellation of “**HONOLULU. HAWAII REGISTERED / DEC 4 1941**” and getting in to San Francisco on 6th December 1941 confirmed by their date stamp “**SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF. REG. SEC. / DEC 6 1941**”.

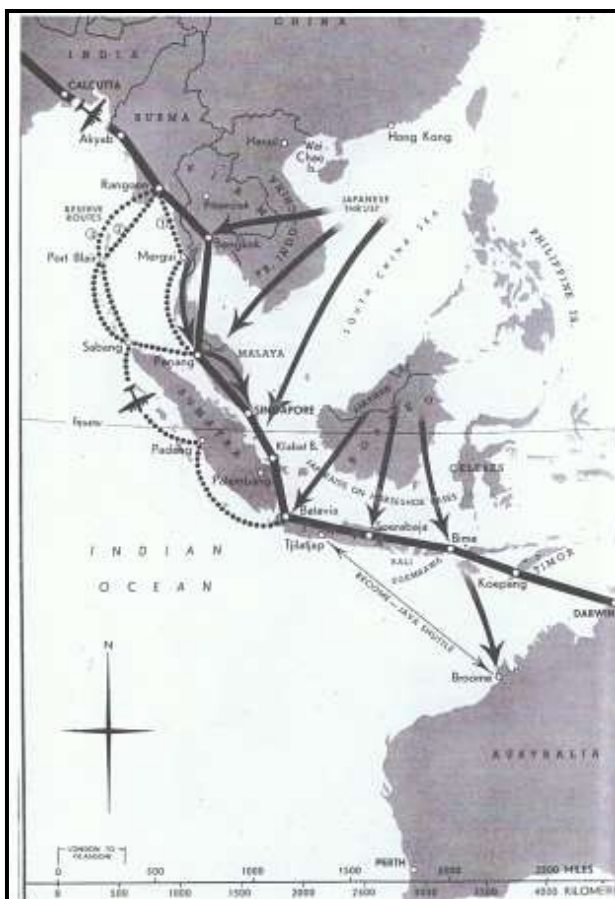
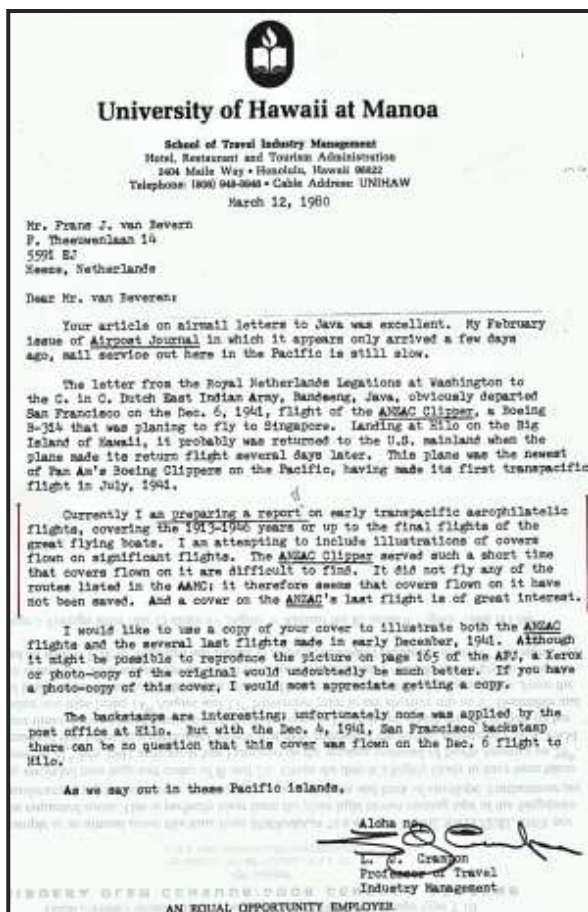
We need not underline the importance of this date to our American readers, but to paraphrase their President what the morning would bring, “... **a date that will live in infamy...**” when the Japanese Navy hammered the American Pacific Fleet anchored in Pearl Harbor and military aircraft base. And so, with the *China Clipper* those pioneering air routes of FAM 14 and FAM 19, providing a service between Asian capitals, the Antipodes and San Francisco, the largest ocean return crossings on the planet came to an abrupt and bitter end. Despite this world shattering event, however, Pan American still had obligations and their service carried on and increased in other sectors around the globe, as here

delivering this air mail letter to the recipient, seen with the next post mark on the reverse side, from their all-important hub of “**MIAMI, FLA. REGISTERED / DEC 8 1941**” carrying the air mail onwards to the South American continent and on to Argentina.

Sources.

I am indebted to the work “*Bridging the Continents in Wartime. Important Airmail Routes 1939-1945*” by Hans E. Aitink and Egbert Hovenkamp, and the flight schedules contained therein.

Addendum.



Registered cover posted from Semarang, Dutch East Indies, 18 November 1941 to Philadelphia, USA, (arrived 18 December) with various distinguishing marks suggesting it was carried on the return leg of the last full trans-Pacific crossing of the 'Anzac Clipper'. It was when this aircraft was on her next scheduled flight from San Francisco on her way to Honolulu that they learned of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour and diverted to Hilo, Hawaii.

LAN – CHILE'S INTERNAL AIRLINE

By Martyn Cusworth

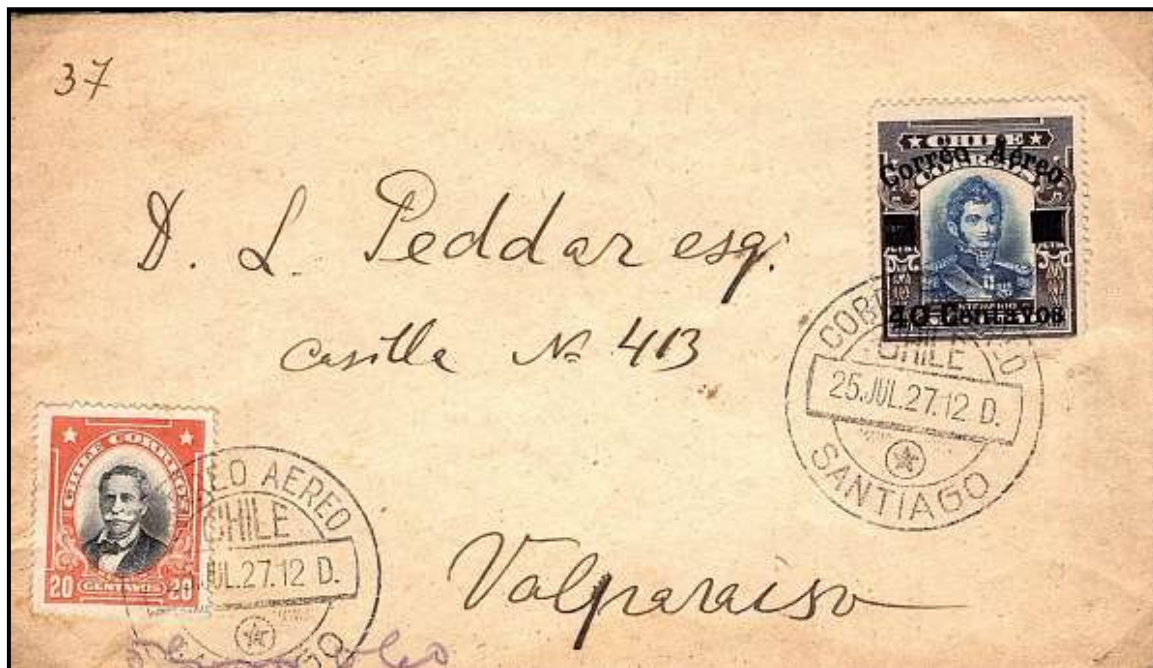
In this article we will consider developments in LAN from 1927 to 1931 when the company issued its own postage stamps for conveying air mail up and down Chile. In a subsequent article we will take a look at developments during the 1930s and the 1940s.

In South America the importance of efficient air transport within and between countries cannot be over-emphasised. During the 1930s South American airlines, generally speaking, were firmly under the control of enterprising pro-Axis men like Otto Ernst Meyer (Varig), Fritz Hammer (Condor), Werner Kaemmerer and Wilhelm Schnurbush (SCADTA) and Guillermo Kyllman and Ingwalter Jastrom (Lloyd Aereo Boliviano).



The initiatives in Chile were more of a home grown affair with the first regular air service between Santiago and Valparaíso being set up and operated in 1927 by Senor Luis Testart with the aid of the Chilean Post Office. This first airline was known as the Commercial Aeronavigation Company and was the precursor of LAN (Linea Aerea Nacional) as we know it today. It ran from May 1927 until March 16th 1928 and had only one aircraft at its disposal, "El Condor".

Normal Chilean postage stamps were used to prepay the air mail in conjunction with specially produced provisional stamps which had been intended to commemorate the Battle of Maipo and which were overprinted "Correo Aereo" and surcharged with different values. The air mail was treated as a special form of "Ultima Hora" mail and the total surcharge was composed of two parts. The first part was the Ultima Hora fee which was equal to the ordinary postage rate. To this was added the ordinary postage and the final part was the fee to Luis Testart which was equal to four times the ordinary postage and was prepaid using the special new air mail stamps. Thus in simple form the following cover illustrates these changes:



Charges = 10 centavos ordinary postage + 10 centavos ultima hora fee + 40 centavos Testart fee.

The new air mail stamps existed in five surcharged values of 40 cts, 80 cts, 1 Peso 20 cts., 1 Peso 60 cts. and 2 Pesos, and all of these can be seen on the large packet front shown overleaf dated 14th November 1927 from Santiago to Valparaíso. The 3 Pesos franking in ordinary stamps (1.50 Pesos ordinary postage plus 1.50 Pesos Ultima Hora fee) is added to the Testart fee of 6 Pesos, equal to four times the ordinary postage to give a total franking of 9 Pesos. There is

a delightful manual insertion at the bottom left which states that the packet was deposited in the Central Post Office in Santiago on Saturday November 12th at 9.15a.m. and received in Valparaiso on November 15th at 8.30a.m. “Viva La Aviacion!”



Charges = 1.50 pesos ordinary postage + 1.50 pesos ultima hora fee + 6 pesos Testart fee.

Use of the Testart adhesives on mail destined for overseas is less easy to find but here is an example of a letter to the United States on 6th May 1927 marked “First airmail Santiago – Valparaiso.”



Charges = 10 centavos ordinary postage + 10 centavos ultima hora fee + 40 centavos Testart fee + 25 centavos UPAA registration + 15 centavos + 15 centavos UPAA letter rate to the USA (the Pan American Postal Union gave rates concessions to member countries).

In Professor John West's collection was a first flight cover dated 4th May 1927 and another cover to the UK dated 6th May 1927. In the case of the cover shown here, PANAM had not begun their service up the west coast of South America, so the letter would have been conveyed by sea from Valparaiso to the USA.

The introduction of the Testart service led to the creation of a brand new circular date-stamp for Santiago and Valparaiso and this can be seen on the covers shown here. "Correo Aereo" is clearly printed around the circumference of the device.

The Testart service was extended to Mendoza in Argentina to link up with Air France (Aeropostale) but the service finished on 16th March 1928 when their only plane crashed on a proving flight to Mendoza in Argentina, killing the pilot. When Aeropostale extended their service into Chile in July 1929 it signalled the end of the venture for Testart.

It rapidly became apparent that Chile badly needed an air mail service more extensive than the Santiago-Valparaiso link, especially to carry mail and passengers to and from the important mining centres and also to serve the southernmost city of Punta Arenas. This came about in March 1929 when the Chilean Air Force set aside twelve of their recently acquired de Havilland Moth aircraft with the "Cirrus" engine to carry mail and passengers from the capital to the Peruvian frontier. The 2-seater Moth was a sturdy little aircraft which had been setting some impressive height records during 1927 and 1928:

The service was initially called the *Linea Aeropostal Santiago – Arica* and was formed by Commandante Arturo Merino Benitez, after whom the airport at Santiago was subsequently named. A proving flight was conducted on 26th February 1929 by A.M. Benitez and most covers the current writer has seen are addressed to C.P. Carlson at Chuquicamata. (We would be bereft of these covers if it were not for Carlson – I think he worked for the Braden Copper Company. One of the proving flight covers is illustrated below:



Charges = 15 centavos interdepartmental surface fee + 1.20 pesos domestic air fee.

It was received in Chuquicamata on 28th February 1929 and is prepaid with overseas provisional air mail stamps since there were no LAN adhesives available at this time.

The inaugural flight for the new service took place on 5th March 1929 under the command of Lieutenant Arturo Meneses and 145 letters are said to have been carried, some of them, as shown here were signed by the pilot. There were stops in Santiago, Iquique and Arica and 762 passengers were carried in the first year and the service was improved by the addition of seven Fairchild FC-2 aircraft.



Charges = 15 centavos interdepartmental surface fee + 1.20 pesos air fee for first 20gm.

A glance at the map will show the reader how the new airline service was such a bonus in a country where the coastline extended for some 2,500 miles from north to south.

The benefits of transport by air were rapidly becoming evident and in 1930 the service was extended to Puerto Montt in the south of the country. First flight covers are struck with a characteristic black boxed cachet and all the covers the writer has seen have been addressed to Boris Sbil in Valparaíso.



Charges = 15 centavos interdepartmental surface fee + 30 centavos registration = 60 centavos air fee.

Early covers often have a reference to the service being a part of the Chilean Air Force, as in the case of the next cover to be illustrated:



Charges = 15 centavos interdepartmental surface fee + 1.20 pesos air fee.

Here is a cover dated 23rd March 1929 from Antofagasta to Valparaíso endorsed “Por correo aereo militar” at the top left. It was received in Valparaíso on 1st April 1929, and the envelope has an early crude form of red “Por avion” hand-cut label.

A special delivery service/charge was made available to air mail with a special handstamp reading “CONDUCCION 10Cts.” This 10 centavos special charge was payable by the addressee and can be seen on the cover dated 16th July 1930 from Arica to Santiago franked 1 Peso:



Charges = 15 centavos interdepartmental fee + 60 centavos air fee for 1st 5 gm. + 25 centavos air fee for 2nd 5 gm. + 10 centavos special delivery (paid by the addressee).

It is interesting to note that more professionally designed air mail etiquettes were now available and Arica had acquired its own “Correo Aereo Arica” date-stamp. The letter was received in Santiago on 19th July 1930.

In 1931 the air service gained its independence from the Chilean Air Force and changed from Linea Aeropostal Santiago-Arica to **Linea Aerea Nacional** and the new airline was granted a monopoly of all routes in Chile (except for PANAM who were allowed to maintain their existing services).

References.

- (1) Towle, Ross, ‘*Postal Rates of Chile 1766-1959*’ published by Chile collector 2003, ISBN 956-291-934-X
- (2) Davies, R.E.G., ‘*Airlines of Latin America since 1919*’, Putnam Aeronautical Books, 1984.
- (3) ‘*Chile News*’, Vol. II, No. 34 (April 1991).

The German Catapult Mail of the North Atlantic. Part 2.

By Eddie Spicer.

The S.S. 'Bremen' left Pier 4, Army Basin at 58th Street, New York on the 29th July 1929 on the return leg of its first voyage. The aircraft, a Heinkel He-12, now named 'New York' after its first arrival in New York, was again launched from the 'Bremen' at 08.35 on the 1st August in rather rough weather conditions just west of Cherbourg. It arrived in Bremerhaven at 12.34pm having flown a distance of 940 km. It was again crewed by Captain Jobst von Studnitz and radio mechanic Karl Kirkhoff.



Figure 1. This is a cover posted in Newark on 26th July 1929 and addressed to Calcutta. The postal rate for this cover is made up of 5 cents per 20 gm. international ordinary letter rate plus 15 cents per 20 gm. for the catapult service, of which 10 cents is on the back of the cover. All mail on this flight was also individually numbered for purposes of accountability.



Figure 2. This cover is designated as "seapost cover" as it was posted on board the 'Bremen' after it had left American waters on its return voyage to Europe. The 'Bremen' had an on-board post office and postmaster. Any mail that was posted on board ship while it was still in American waters had to be franked with USA stamps and a supply of these was available from the on-board post office. The postal rate of this cover consists of 25pfg international letter rate and 50pfg for the catapult service. It is addressed c/o the Postmaster Lancaster, England but was not called for and was forwarded to the return letter office and then returned to sender.



Figure 3. This cover was posted in Hamburg on 4th September 1929. It was transported by rail to Cologne and then flown on the supplementary flight to Cherbourg, (“Mit Luftpost zum D. „Bremen“ befördert” cachet in red). The postal rate is made up of 25pfg. international letter rate, 50pfg for the catapult service and 30pfg for the supplementary flight from Cologne to Cherbourg. Although the sender requested air mail service from New York to San Francisco, an additional 50pfg would have been required for this service so it would have been carried by surface means instead.

The aircraft was flown from the ship on 9th September, but the flight was aborted due to bad weather. Soon after take-off the pilot of the Heinkel, Jobs von Studnitz started to encounter worsening visibility. It was fortunate that Luft Hansa and Lloyd had the foresight to stipulate that provision be made for a radio in their original specifications for the purpose-built mail plane.

Between 4.45pm and 5pm and repeatedly thereafter throughout the flight the trailing aerial was drawn in as the pilot was forced to descend as low as three meters above the surface of the water to see his way ahead. Eventually it was decided to return to the ship and just after 7 pm the pilot managed to land safely beside the ‘Bremen’ after having been guided back to the ship by radio, searchlights and the use of flares as the ship by this time was also surrounded by fog. The Heinkel, its crew and the mail were safely hauled aboard the ‘Bremen’ and the trip completed to New York.

During 1929 a total of five round trips were made using the catapult service from the ‘Bremen’. From August 1929 a supplementary flight service was set up between Cologne and Cherbourg to meet the ship and further advance the mail. There was an additional charge of 30pfg per 20 gm. for this service.

Luxembourg Air Mail 1927 – 1940 : Dual Franking.

By Mike Brindle.

This article originally was published in the Winter 2016 (Whole No. 110) of “*Belgapost*”, the journal of the Belgian Philatelic Study Circle. We are extremely grateful to the current Editor of “*Belgapost*”, Nick Martin, and the author who formerly was the Editor of “*Belgapost*” for kindly giving us permission to reproduce this article in our journal. Thanks are also expressed to Julian van Beveren for bringing to our attention this interesting study and liaising on our behalf with the Belgian Study Circle.

.....

My father-in-law ran away to join the army under-age in the First World War. He wangled a transfer to the newly established Royal Flying Corps and learnt to fly. At the end of the war there were fliers like him in many nations – young, active and looking for a new career. Long distance flights began to develop along with air mail and the possibility of commercial flying. Businessmen sniffed opportunities.

Italy issued commemorative air mail stamps in 1917 and France in 1927. Germany issued air definitives in 1924, Belgium and France followed suite in 1930 and Luxembourg in 1931. The Luxembourg set consisted of five values to which was added a 3F value in 1933.

But in Luxembourg there was a snag. There was no airport in the whole Grand Duchy suitable for international carrying flights.



Figure 1.
LUXEMBOURG to
England via Brussels,
18 June 1928.

What to do? Government circular No. 80 of 7 March 1929 allowed post offices to accept mail prepaid for air mail transmission by one of the airlines used by other administrations. "Provisionally," the government allowed the use of foreign stamps to prepay the tax fixed by the neighbouring country and the Luxembourg Postal Administration sold the appropriate Belgian, French and German current definitive stamps. Some covers bear commemoratives perhaps imported by philatelists.

The result of this system was that for ten years, issues of Belgium, France and Germany can be found properly used alongside the stamps of Luxembourg. This system appears to have been unique, at least in air mail traffic. Mail from Alsace used stamps of France together with German Occupation issues for about a year from March 1870. I would be pleased to hear of other examples more like the Luxembourg situation.

Occasionally covers are found using the system before the official introduction, (Fig. 1.). I have a similar cover also addressed to Wilson and cancelled at the International Stamp Exposition, Luxembourg 4-8 September 1927. Wilson was a stamp dealer but as Jules Pauly stated in "L'Echo de Timbrologie", of November 1993, "It is impossible to find



Figure 2.
LUXEMBOURG VILLE to
Utica, New York, U.S.A.
10 March 1931

commercial covers in perfect condition.”

A cachet was used only on the first day of issue of the original Luxembourg air stamps. It reads, “Poste Aérienne LUXEMBOURG 10 Avril 1931.” The cachet is in green and does not reproduce well, (Fig. 2.). As Pauly points out, this cachet does not refer to the inauguration of air mail traffic but to the introduction of air mail stamps.

Figure 3.
LUXEMBOURG VILLE IV
to Strasbourg via Paris,
4 June 1931.

Many philatelic covers are over-franked. The cover dated 4 June 1931 and addressed to Strasbourg is franked with 4Fr.75 Luxembourg and 50c. of France, (Fig. 3.). It is annotated, “Via Paris”, and back-stamped “PARIS GARE DU NORD AVION” having travelled by train. It was then flown to Strasbourg, arriving the same day.



Figures 4 and 5, however, show a commercial cover sent by an exportation business to Romania. It travelled by train directly to the same city, Strasbourg, was back-stamped with “LUXEMBOURG A STRASBOURG” (T.P.O.) and was thence flown to Bucharest. The correct postage of 1Fr.75 of Luxembourg and 75c. of France was paid. This cover arrived at the destination city the day after being posted.



A postcard sent from Echternach, (**Fig. 6.**), travelling by T.P.O. (KOLN-HERBESTHAL BAHNPOST) shows several oddities. First the Luxembourg rate is paid using the combination of a 1F air mail stamp and a 1F definitive – not illegal



but unusual. Second, the 20pf. Worth of German air mail stamps have not been cancelled. True, they are on the picture side but the sender wrote, “Marken umseitig.” (stamps overleaf). Finally, the card has passed through Belgium to reach Germany but paid the German tax not the Belgian. Why?

The final destination decided which country’s air mail system was used. My collection includes:

Belgium: sent to the Belgian Congo [1], Denmark [1], Sweden [1], Switzerland [1], the United Kingdom [9], the United States [2].

France: sent to Brazil [2], (Chile) [1], Italy [3], (Palestine) [1], Romania [1]

Germany: sent to Austria [1], Hungary [2], Spain [2].

Examples in brackets (...) are additional destinations from Jules Pauly’s collection.

Numbers in square brackets [...] indicate total seen sent to each country. In addition [1] to Belgium, [1] to France and [4] to Germany.

Figure 6.
ECHTERNACHT to Hungary,
12 June 1931.



Figs 7 & 8.
Luxembourg
to Brazil,
10 March 1939

There appear to be very few exceptions in which the specific separate accords Luxembourg signed with Belgium, France and Germany were put aside, circumvented or just missed by postal clerks. Jules Pauly quotes a case in which a letter was sent to New York via Cologne (where German stamps were cancelled) but then sent on a Cologne-Cherbourg catapult flight. He does not say how it was conveyed onward from France.

Mail outside Europe and the United States is uncommon. Figures 7 & 8 show a cover sent on 10 March 1939 from LUXEMBOURG which arrived in BELEM, Brazil six days later. The cost was 3Fr.50 paid with a Luxembourg machine stamp and 18Fr. paid with French high value definitives cancelled with straight line 'METZ a PARIS'. I would welcome evidence of other destinations or routes.

It is difficult to find incoming mail. An example sent from Vienna in 1935 (Fig. 9.), arrived in Clervaux the next day having been flown to Strasbourg. It was correctly franked with 1 Schilling of Austria and 30c. of Luxembourg.



Figure 9.
Cover leaving Vienna on
17 July 1935 and arriving in
Luxembourg the next day.

The 30c. stamp was presumably affixed at the point of arrival and was certainly cancelled there, but who paid the 30c. is unclear.

Esch-sur-Alzette, a town on the French border, has an airport which was designated 'international' and opened with a special flight to Sweden on 27 September 1937. Commemorative cards were issued (Fig. 10), paid with 1Fr. Luxembourg and 1Fr. Belgium. On arrival in Stockholm Swedish stamps were added and cancelled.

Sadly, the attempt to open Esch airport failed and it was closed to passengers on 1 March 1938. Dual franking continued. A pair of philatelic covers with an attractive destination was sent on 5 March 1939 from LUXEMBOURG VILLE via Germany



Figure 10. Card bearing stamps of Luxembourg, Belgium and Sweden.

to the Canary Islands by Lufthansa and were censored by the Spanish authorities in the last weeks of the Spanish Civil War (Figure 11).

Figure 11.

One of two covers with part of the St. Willbrod issue of 5 June 1938 sent to Santa Cruz de Tennerife, the Canary Islands.



Following the European Airport Convention in Brussels of 25 June 1938, the special accords concluded by the government of Luxembourg with the postal administrations of Belgium, France and Germany were brought to an end. Circular 179 of 13 September 1938 confirmed that with effect from 1 May 1939 the stamps of Luxembourg alone would pay for the air surcharge as well as the normal postage (Figure 12). Dual franking therefore came to an end having

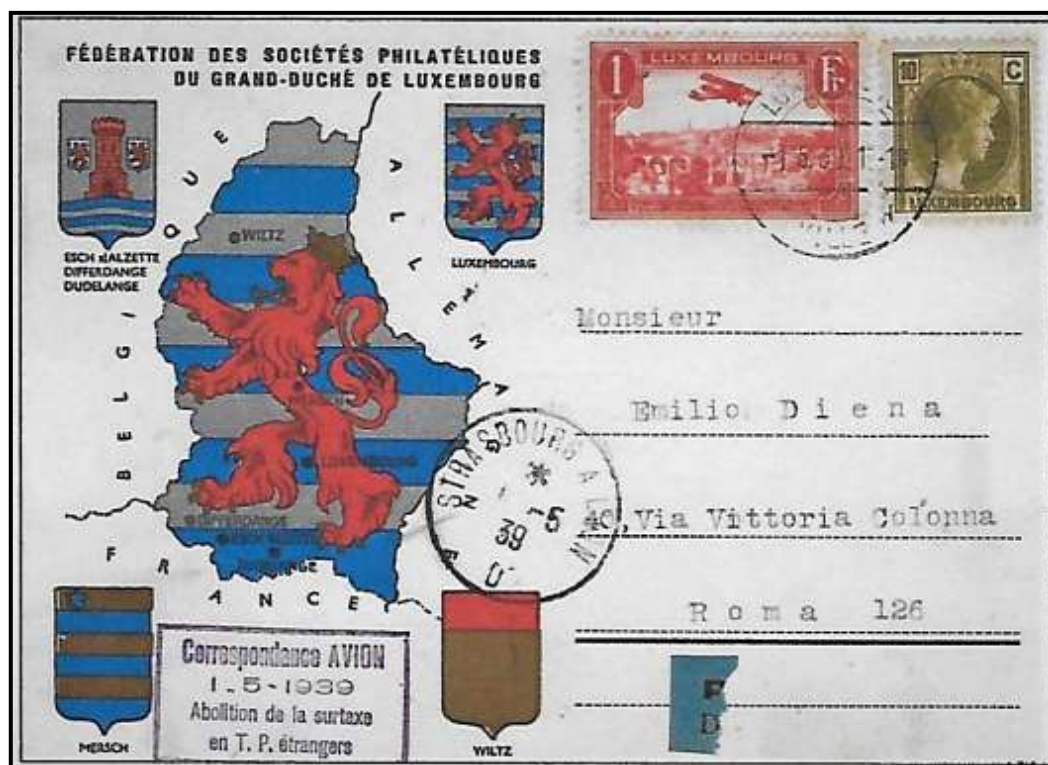


Figure 12.

Postcard sent on the first day celebrating the abolition of tax on foreign air mail.

For a short period the new system operated successfully, (Figure 13), but in any case the conquest of Luxembourg and Belgium in May 1940 and the defeat of France in June effectively required all civilian air traffic to travel through Germany. Peacetime air business resumed in 1945. The first flight for London left Brussels on 23 October 1945 (Figure 14) and this example joined the flight having departed from Luxembourg the previous day additionally franked with 2Fr.50 of Luxembourg.



Figure 13. Single franking sent to Vienna, 23 November 1939.



Figure 14. Dual franking: the last gasp?

DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

By Peter Lister

On reading John Symond's article, "*Railway Air Services: the Inaugural Flights, (20th August 1934)*" in the May issue of *Air Mail News*, Vol. 60, No. 241, pp. 20-22, it reminded me of a small collection I have relating to pilots' signatures. We are all very familiar with signed covers, but how and when did these signatures actually go on the covers: prior, during or after the flights, or even at dates a few years later? A good example of this is some of the 1911 cards and covers that were signed at the 50th Anniversary Dinner, using ball point pens! An obvious give away.

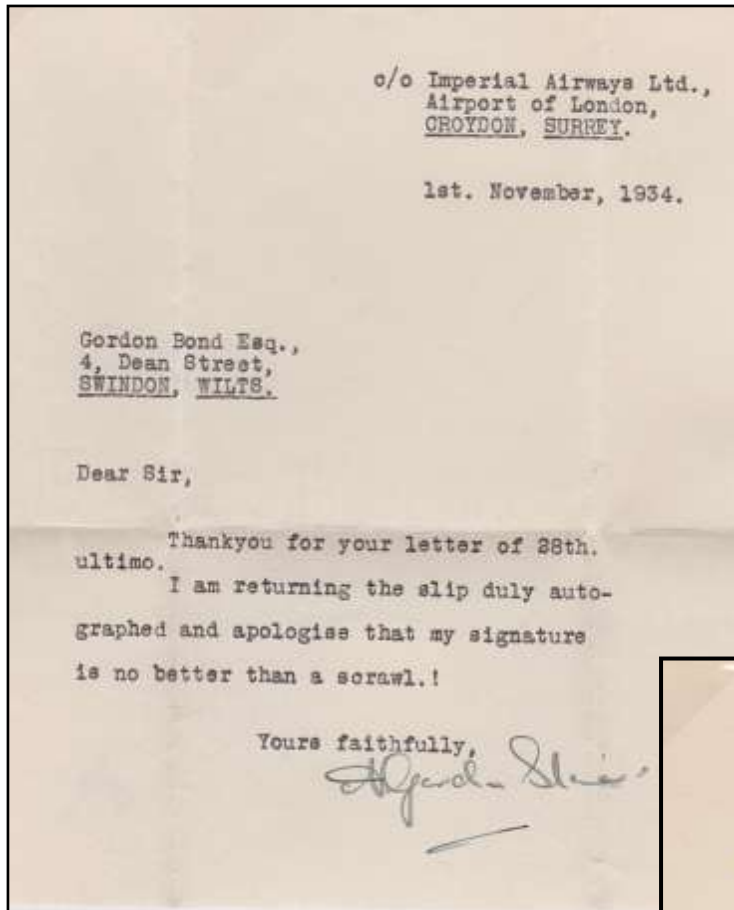


Figure 1.

Letter from Gordon Store
agreeing to sign a slip of paper.

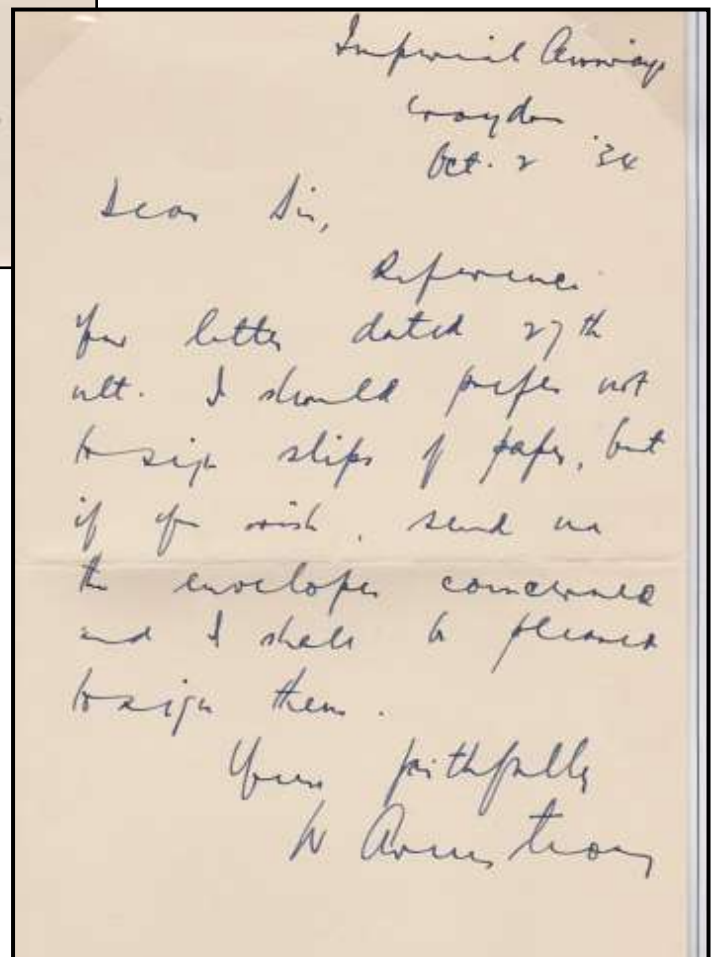


Figure 2.

Letter from pilot W. Armstrong
refraining from signing slips of
paper, but was prepared to sign
covers.

Some stamp dealers, Gordon Bond of Swindon being one of these, wrote to airline companies requesting that their pilots sign slips of paper which could then be attached to covers prior to them being sold to collectors. An example of this request is shown by the reply from Gordon Store, (Figure 1).

A very interesting reply, (Figure 2), to Bond was from a pilot, W. Armstrong, who refrained from signing the slips of paper but offered to sign actual covers. [Was he aware that fraudulent covers were being produced in the 1930s ? and thus was protecting his name ?]. A similar response pointing out an error was from S.W.A. Scott, (Figure 3), whilst working for Provincial Airways indicating that Bond had confused his name with the other pilot C.W.A. Scott (Charles), although he had signed the slips and was returning them [I wonder if a financial incentive was given to sign the slips, but I have no evidence of this taking place].

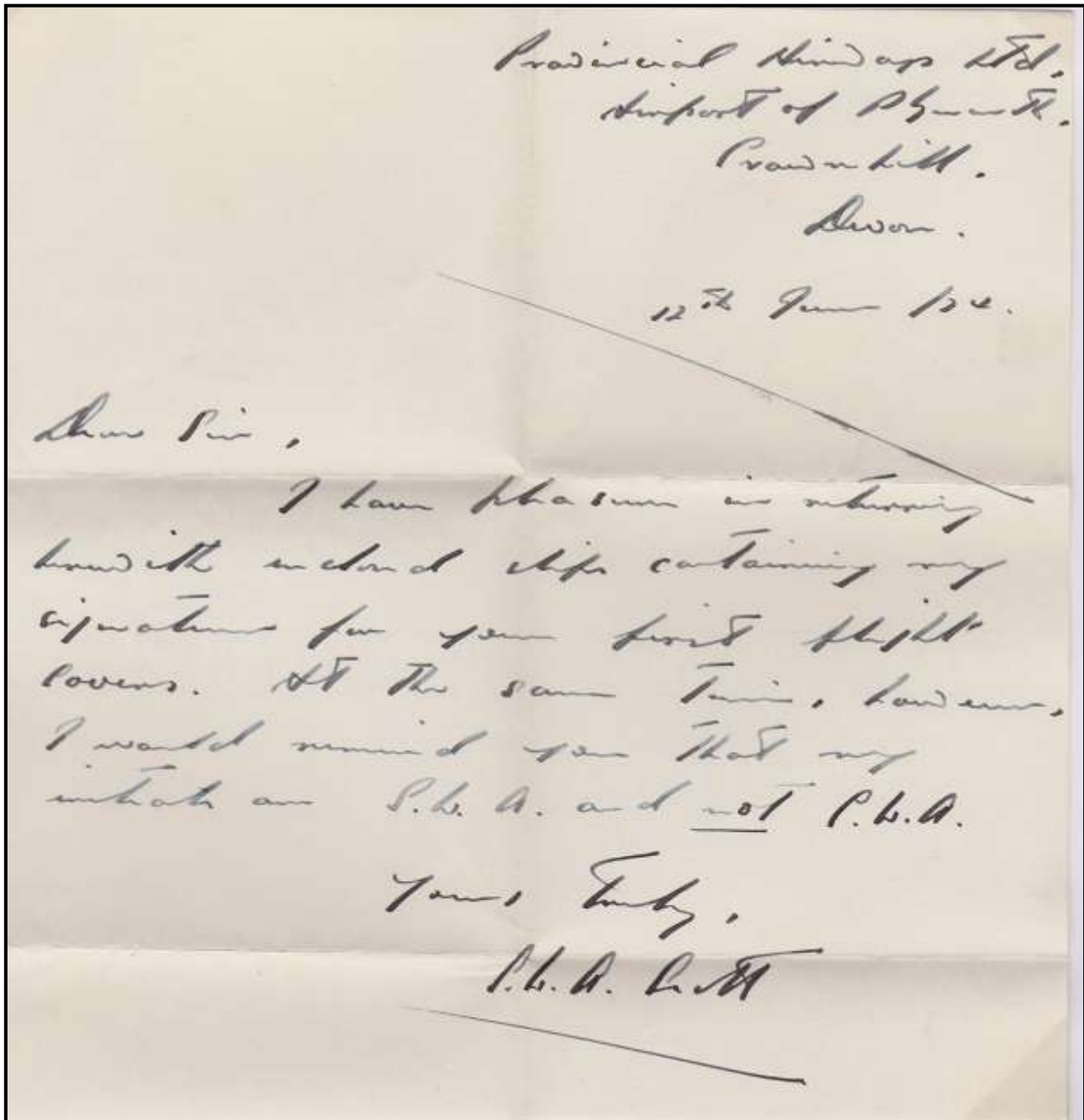
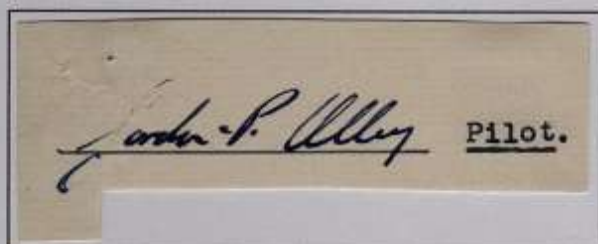


Figure 3. Reply from pilot S.W.A. Scott of Provincial Airways indicating to Gordon Bond that he had confused his name with another pilot, C.W.A. Scott (Charles Scott)

A selection of these signed signature slips is shown in Figure 4, (next page) which are very useful as a comparison with signatures on cover to confirm they are genuine.

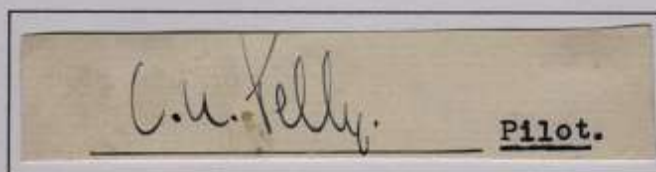
Specimens of Pilots Signatures



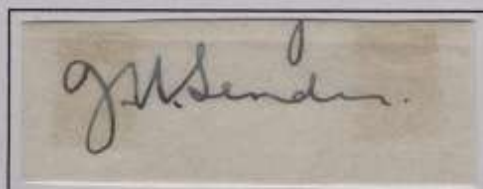
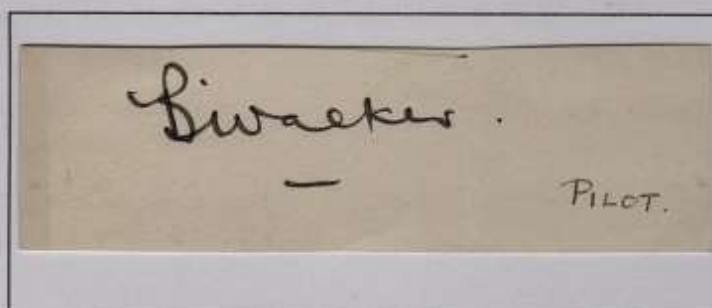
Gordon P Olley

Signatures as supplied
to Gordon Bond on his
slips of paper.

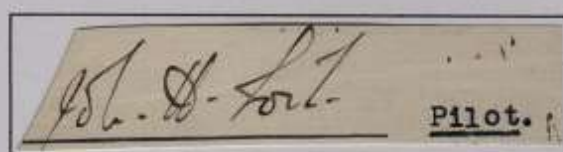
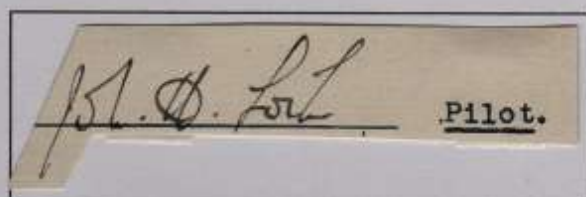
C N Pelly



B Walker



J N Sender



J H Lock

E E Fresson

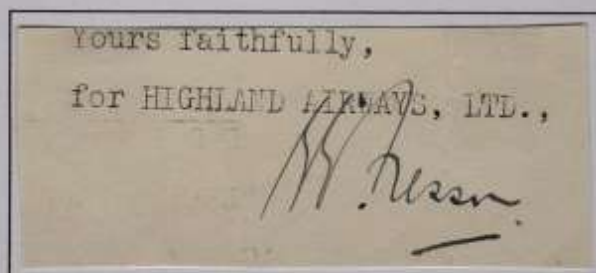


Figure 4. Pilot signed slips of paper returned to Gordon Bond of Swindon.