

AIR MAIL NEWS

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QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH AIR MAIL SOCIETY

(Incorporating the Bulletin of the BAeF)

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Would Members and correspondents please note that copy date for the next issue of *Air Mail News* (the February 2019 issue) will be 15th December 2018. When sending material to the Editor by snail mail please post early because of the Christmas Festive Season.

Please support our advertisers.

EDITORIAL.

Firstly, it is pleasing to report that the British Air Mail Society is beginning to motor again. After several recent crises engendered by the resignations of certain BAMS Council Members, many of our readers are beginning to 'raise their heads above the parapet' and volunteer their services. Our Membership Secretary, **Tony Nicholson**, has seamlessly slotted into place having taken over from Peter Lister, and membership secretarial duties are now running smoothly. Thankyou Tony. We should never forget to thank the efforts of **Bob Clark** who keeps the BAMS website up to date and arranges access to our journal for our many members who opt to describe for the digital version.

As many will know for many reasons I have decided to relinquish my Editorial duties after our 2019 Annual General Meeting, and **Roger Stanley-Smith** has kindly agreed to take my place. I am sure we send Roger all our best wishes, and I trust members will support him in the same way so many of you have supported me over the years. Currently it is not possible to inform you of Roger's contact addresses (postal and internet) as we understand he is planning to relocate his home this coming year. Perhaps by the time of our next issue we will know more of Roger's plans such that we can publish details, thus facilitating a smoother hand over of responsibilities. Furthermore, a little "dicky bird" whispered in my ear there is one member who is seriously considering offering his services as our Auctioneer. Currently this is highly confidential – let us hope the important post of Auctioneer can be filled. All that remains after that is to "poison our Patron, oust our Chairman, offer a King's ransom as salary to attract the services of a good Secretary, remove the Library (this is already afoot - see this issue)" - I am joking, of course - and we would probably have an entirely new energised slate of officers and a Society fit for the challenges of the 21st-Century.

It has been a remarkable summer here in Britain. After a very late spring with frosts and biting winds most of August we experienced (some would say 'endured') a heat wave, the kind of thing many of us have not experienced since the 1970s. Seemingly this unusual period of soporific debilitating humid heat has apparently had the effect for most members of curtailing their philatelic endeavours. As an Editor, I have never experienced a period like this when nearly all our members seem to have collectively, as it were, 'fallen asleep'. During this quarter I have only received the report of a single meeting, I have received no new queries for our "Questions & Answers" section and only a single explanatory letter relating to an earlier question, and only two "Letters to the Editor", one of which concerning Library matters could well have appeared under the "Society" column. Even our Chairman declined to provide his customary quarterly message saying nothing seemed to be happening. Apart from news of the passing of a number of colleagues there has been little we could publish under the umbrella title "News from the World of Aerophilately".

In light of this unusual period of virtual inactivity you will possibly find this is a most unusual issue of *Air Mail News*. There can be little of the Society "chit chat", so to fill our pages I am having to include more articles than usual. (Do I hear a resounding cheer?). The downside is that I am in grave danger of depleting my meagre 'ice box' of articles, so again an early warning more articles please! Since I compile each issue from the front I have no idea how this will pan out.

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At this juncture I am in the gravest danger of abusing my position as Editor through including a personal plea in this Editorial. We are all aware the effect the internet has had on shopping habits and the apparent decline of the high street shops. The one thing that we as philatelists can be proud of is that we are perfectly free to collect and house our collections in any way we wish to. In the old days most of us would have tucked away our philatelic treasures in stamp albums, but I guess the modern trend among most philatelists, air mail collectors in particular, is to mount and write up our collections using cards or sheets we can house in box files. It makes putting together displays to entertain others that much easier and you certainly cannot use albums if you decide the rarefied area of competitive philately is for you. I don't know how they managed years ago when the use of albums was the norm, unless you chose to use loose-leaf albums.

With the decline in our high street shops there has been a noted loss of local stationers. Recently my local stationers in Penzance disappeared. For years my friendly stationers have been very helpful in sourcing my display pages. I have been using bespoke card, which is 150gsm Regent pulpboard cut to size 11" x 8½" (215 x 279mm, US legal letter size) and I just no longer know where to source the equivalent card. Can our readers please advise me where I might be able to

source such card? My initial searches of the internet have hitherto proven fruitless. Why, oh why, do the British have to use A4 format pages? A4 pages will not fit in the exhibition frames used at national and international exhibitions. We, in Britain, are at a great disadvantage. Do I, in the long run, have to source my pages from the States? How do our British readers resolve this kind of problem? I really do want to know. If I cannot find suitable cut-to-order card in the immediate short term I will be forced to give up! And why is it that purveyors of albums and other collectors' requisites seem to have missed a trick and do not seem to want to sell pages compatible with my, and presumably other collectors' needs. Please give this a thought since for me this is becoming a very serious problem. I really do need help with this. Thank you.

Richard Saundry.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Concerning the Librarian's Report at our Annual General Meeting.

Dear Richard,

Thursday July 12, 2018

I am sorry that you have been misled by the Librarian's report to the AGM as published in *Air Mail News* (August 2018, page 8). What I actually said was, in full, "I am devastated to report that members appear to have almost completely forgotten the use of the library. Since the last AGM there have been only four separate requests, from four members, which have resulted in two books having been sent out on loan and two sets of scans. On the bright side, two old and valued members, John Wilson and Richard Beith, have donated a large quantity of copies of research material, which are now in a new section called 'Archives'. Also on the bright side (I think) copies of exchange publications continue to arrive'.

I don't remember anyone saying that 'our Magazine should/could rectify the situation', although it is perfectly possible that someone did. But if so, it was not I. I never refer to *Air Mail News* as anything other than '*Air Mail News*' or 'AMN', nor would I ever use the clumsy 'should/could'.

Additions to the Library have been reported to our Webmaster, Bob Clark, who has immediately added them to the on-line listing. The full list of additions since the last update, including those received since the AGM, is as follows:

[Editor: the list supplied by Barbara appears in this issue under the Society column]

Barbara [Priddy]

Editor: Following receipt of Barbara's letter I replied as follows:

Hello Barbara,

Saturday July 14, 2018.

Have returned home this evening after having been away in Aberystwyth for a week.

I found my copy of the August issue of *Air Mail News* waiting for me and that allowed me to refresh my memory of what appeared there under 'Minutes of the AGM'. I only added a few words to what Grahame wrote in his report of the meeting re. your Librarian's report, where he made reference to something needed to be put in the journal in order to remind members we have a greatly underused library. Generally, I stand by what I wrote there. It is highly commendable that a full library listing appears on the BAMS website, plus agenda, but I think you would be the first to admit that not all members who read *Air Mail News* use the website. You used to send updates for publication in the journal, but not recently. I now, of course have your letter with recent updates, so publication of that will rectify that situation.

Of recent years the website has become a greatly valued addition to our repertoire, but it in no way replaces *Air Mail News*. They are supposed to complement each other, but it is now abundantly clear there has to be an inevitable overlap of content and thrust, and the Library listings are a signal case in point. May I suggest in future as per your judgement you send Library updates from time to time for publication in this journal? It might serve to increase Library usage – I doubt it, but you never know.

As for the veracity of Grahame's report of the meeting, publication of the minutes of our AGM in *Air Mail News* does not make it authoritative, since that only happens when the minutes of are formerly adopted at the following year's

AGM. I don't agree one hundred percent with all that Grahame wrote there, but as far as I personally am concerned there is nothing so particularly wrong that I would move to amend next year. [Certainly, somebody did suggest something should appear in *Air Mail News* to serve as a reminder that the Library was 'open for business'. With my inserted comments I was making the point it is most pointedly not the responsibility of the Editor to write such a reminder, but the Hon. Librarian, or some other interested member. I have more than enough to do just editing our journal without also having to write everything.] I know Grahame at times does not express things quite as accurately as perhaps one would wish he could, but we do have to thank him for going to the considerable trouble of taking the minutes.

Richard. S.

More Documents pertaining to the Wartime Disruption of the Horseshoe Route.

Dear Richard,

30th August 2018.

Sorry to hear that you are having to give up the Editorship of *Air Mail News*, but I quite understand. We are all ageing, just had my 90th.

Reference the article by D. Collyer on the Horseshoe Route interruptions [see "*Horseshoe Route Disruption – Iraq, May-June 1941*", republished in *Air Mail News*, Vol. 60, No. 239 (November 2017, pp. 30-31)] I enclose two further items from the Post Office files which I have found and thought might be of interest.

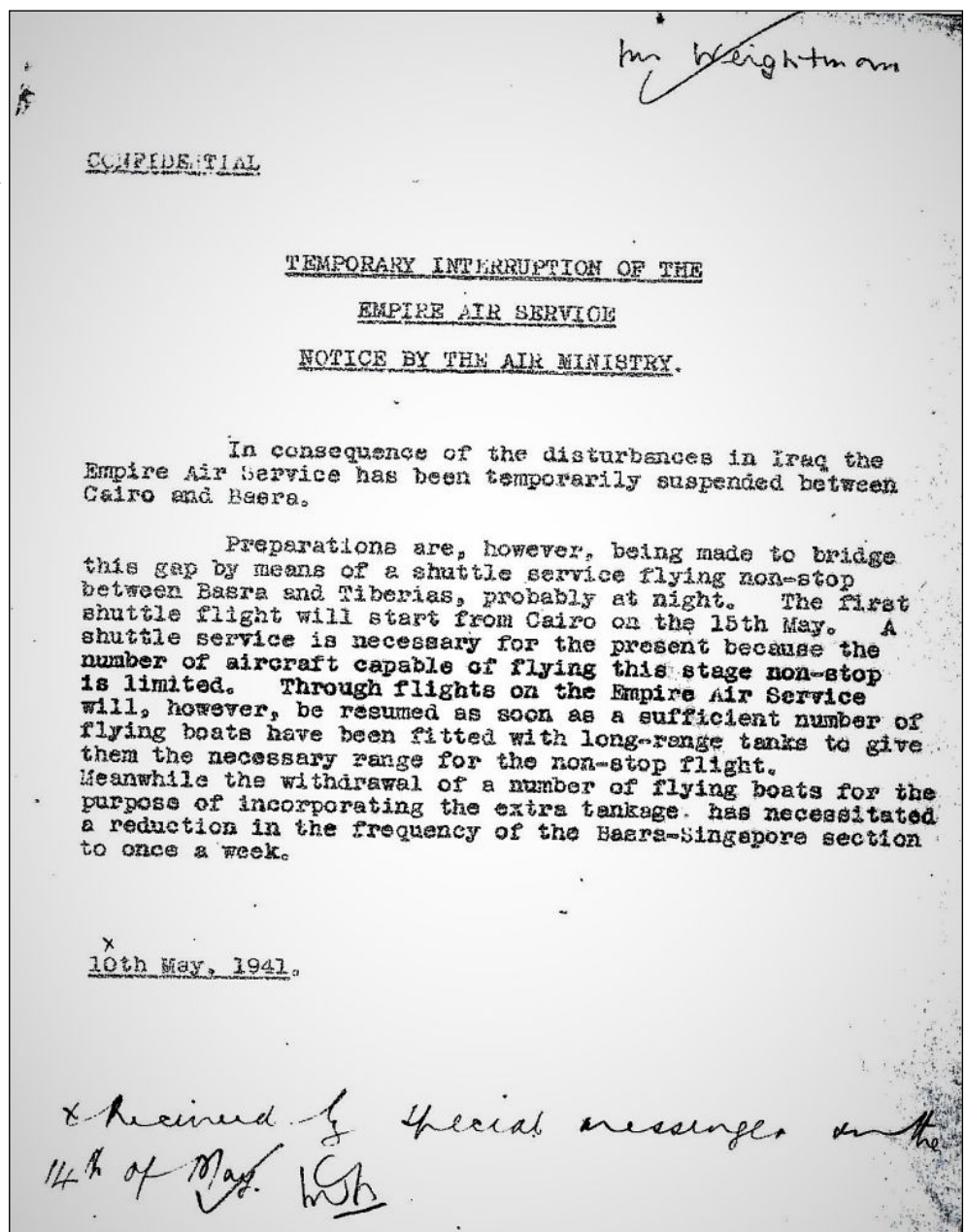
The first, dated 10th May from the Air Ministry gives details of measures to be taken to keep the route open.

The second dated 16th July from the Air Ministry to the Postal Services Department confirms that mail had been sent via the United States during this period. Interesting reference to the KLM service being available to carry mail to Australia.

W. Burkett who signed the letter was a prominent official at the Air Ministry during the war. His name appears on many letters during this period.

All best wishes for the future,

Bill Legg.



Letter from the Air Ministry, 10th May 1941.

R.948271/40/D.O.C.A.

16 July, 1941.

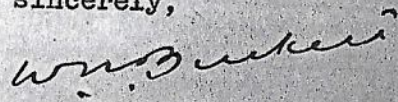
Dear Weightman,

In reply to your letter of 15th instant about the routing of air mails for Australia and New Zealand, we shall, as from tomorrow, the 17th instant, be re-instituting a twice weekly flying boat service between Durban and Sydney throughout, and we expect at any moment now to receive notice that Tiberias is again available for use.

In these circumstances, we agree that the 200 kg. per week of air mails, which you have been good enough to divert via America, can once again be sent by the "Horseshoe" service.

I may add that, as from tomorrow, our capacity on this service will be greater between the Middle East and Singapore than at any time since the closing of the Mediterranean to us, thanks to the restoration of our twice weekly frequency and the second service of K.L.M., the capacity of which is at our disposal.

Yours sincerely,



W.H. Weightman, Esq.,
Postal Services Department,
General Post Office,
London, E.C.1.

Letter from the Air Ministry, 16th July 1941.

SOCIETY NEWS

MANDY KNIGHT.

It is with great sadness we report the passing of long-standing member Mandy Knight of Shoeburyness, Essex. BAMS past President Bill Trower represented the Society at her funeral at Southend Crematorium on Monday 13th August.

Meetings Reports.

The North West Group (Meeting of 29th July 2018).

Present – Duncan Crewe, Nick Rolfe, Mike Buchanan and Susan Crewe (guest)

Apologies – Alan Salter, Andrew Francis, Brian Lythgoe, Laurence Kimpton and Terry Hare Walker. Holidays and other commitments meant a small group of three members and a guest gathered in Liverpool.

Mike Buchanan began the displays with a range of commercial covers flown by BSAA showing a range of directional markings and labels. He also showed a wide range of commercial mail to and from Chile illustrating the different rates and routings in force during the 1930s. He concluded his display with a range of Seahorse values up to 10s. 0d. used on commercial mail.

Susan Crewe displayed post-war Hong Kong crash mail showing covers salvaged from the Comet crash at Calcutta, including the 'Calcutta' error on the cachet and only one of two known covers from the TWA/United Airlines crash over New York.

Nick Rolfe showed further Seahorse covers including a double-weight cover carried on the first Imperial Airways North Atlantic service, a double-weight cover at the wartime surcharge rate to Rhodesia, covers addressed to passengers on ships at Rio de Janeiro, and a cover to Argentina carried on the first service flight of the Dornier 18. He concluded with a censored cover to New York, flown by 'Clare' in 1940.

Duncan Crew brought the meeting to a conclusion with a range of Round the World philatelic covers produced between 1937 and 1939, commercial Seahorse frankings on mail to Australia and Africa. He ended with a study of the South African Post Office publicity cards from the full range of Exhibitions where they were issued between 1935 and 1937, with a particular focus on the ½d. cards used from the Johannesburg Empire Exhibition and JIPEX.

Duncan Crew.

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ADDENDA TO BAMS LIBRARY LISTINGS

The following list has kindly been forwarded by our Hon. Librarian, Barbara Priddy:

Books, etc.

Anon. Art Lines Poster Collection: Flying, Artlines UK Ltd, Bristol, n.d.

Anon. "Imperial Airways Pilot's Handbook and General Instructions 1924", Ducimus Books Ltd. London (1974)

Cobham, Alan J., "My Flight to the Cape and Back", A & C Black Ltd., London (1926)

Cusworth, Martyn. "The Italian South Atlantic Airline (LATI)", Supplement No. 1, (2016)

Duggan, John. "Graf Zeppelin in Austria", Zeppelin Study Group, Ickenham, (2003)

Kennedy, Ludovic (ed), "A Book of Air Journeys", Fontana Paperbacks, Oxford (1983)

Ministry of Information,

"There's Freedom in the Air: the Official Story of the Allied Air Forces from the Occupied Countries", HMSO (1944).

Martin, Jeremy and Anderson, Ian G., "*The Gold Coast 1787-1957*" (display given to the RPSL, 14 January 2016).

Murphy, William J. "*Irish Airmail 1919-1990*" the Irish Airmail Society & Éire Philatelic Association (1996).

Philipp, Rudolf, "*Flughafen Stuttgart-Böblingen*", Rudolf Philipp, Kornwestheim (1987).

Vasseur, Jean-Claude, "*Newfoundland Air Mails*", Part i: Exhibit, Part II: Notes. J-C Vasseur, France (2015).

Catalogues

Haberer, Erich "*Katalog über die Katapultpost*", Teil 2: Südatlantik, (1988 ed.).

Periodicals

Philatelie und Luftpost, (issue 2 of 2016), Philatelisten-Club Swissair.

Picture Postcard Monthly, No. 467, (March 2018), (article 'Flying High with Concorde').

Stamp Review, Vol. 1, No. 8, (December 1937), (article 'Christmas Airmails', N.C. Baldwin).

CDs

Rabat-Sale, National Archive file AIR 29/465, (July-October 1944).

Exhibition Catalogues

Aerophilately 2014, American Philatelic Center, Bellefonte, Pennsylvania.

The Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies 87th Annual Congress, Perth (2016)

Auction Catalogues

Mossgreen 11.9.16: Tom Frommer's Grand Prix Pioneer Australian Air Mails.

Per Ardua ad Astra 8.3.18

Archives

Pan American Airways: Photocopies of trip summaries, Atlantic routes, 1939-1945. (donated by John Wilson).

Various papers, including folders on:

Czechoslovak Air Mails

India and Ceylon

Italian Air Mails and Aviation

Lisbon Connections: Crilly Airways.

Pan Am Clipper Flights

St. Laurence Ship-to-Air and Air-to-Ship

Timetables / Postal Rates

Transatlantic Airmail History (North and South)

VS-44A

WWII – KLM & Shoreham; Whitchurch

WWII – various

(donated by Richard Beith)

Madagascar articles, letters, maps in four ring-binders (donated by Colin Spong).

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The Future of the BAMS Library – a Word from your Librarian.

The Library is one of BAMS' greatest assets. It is a unique collection of information on aerophilately and aviation which offers members help with their research and is also of considerable monetary value. I have been Librarian since June 1995, a position which I have greatly enjoyed. It has brought me into contact with many of our members and given me immediate access to a wealth of information.

Over the years I have added quite a few books to the Library, but by far the greatest contribution to its growth has been made by our members, who have donated books which they have written or items from their personal libraries as they retired from philately.

The Library, however, is now outgrowing the accommodation which I can provide for it. It consists of about 30 shelf-feet of books, about twice that of periodicals, plus a couple of boxes and a large number of files of articles extracted from magazines, plus a bag of CDs and DVDs, plus the research material recently received. There is also a suitcase full of old secretarial papers, which I hope a new Secretary will come forward to take over, and a suitcase of aerophilatelic and aviation memorabilia, plus the old Air Mail Trophies.

I have said more than once at our AGMs that I would like offers to take over the periodicals, but there has been no response. Borrowing requests from members have also diminished dramatically over the past four or five years. So when our President asked me if I would like to relinquish the whole Library, to be housed at the new premises of the Royal, I thought that this seemed the best way forward. The details are yet to be worked out, but I should be grateful for members' thoughts on the subject.

Barbara Priddy.

News from the World of Aerophilately.

In Memoriam

ROSS WOOD

1944 – 2018

The whole world of aerophilately was devastated to learn of the sudden death of Ross Wood who died in May. Ross was a staunch proponent of aerophilately and at the time of his untimely passing was the President of the FIP Aerophilately Commission. He had been a board member of the Federation Internationale des Societes Aérophilateliques (FISA) since 2009, representing Australia, and serving as President of that organisation for many years. Those of us who had the honour of serving on the Board of FISA during his period of tenure as President, will know his soft-spoken mild effacing manner belied his dogged determination to fight in the corner of aerophilately, in particular taking a leading part in the fight against those who wished to incorporate aerophilately within the discipline of postal history at international exhibitions. Your Editor had a special rapport with Ross, spending hours in his company, in Prague, at San Francisco, in Bellefonte, and in London, where we shared many similar views on organised philately and the judging of air mail competitions. BAMS members will most probably better remember Ross as being one of the invited judges of the Pillage Trophy competition which BAMS hosted at the Royal in association with the London 2015 international exhibition. Ross also chaired the FISA Congress meeting at the same venue.

Ross Wood was born in Donnybrook, Western Australia and worked in the philatelic section of the Australian Post Office for many years and more recently in information technology. Ross collected stamps from an early age but did not get involved with organized philately until 1978 when he joined the Philatelic Society of Western Australia, still serving that society as President some 40 years later. He also served the Australian Philatelic Federation as Board Member, Secretary, vice-President and President for a total of 16 years.

Ross was a very accomplished exhibitor and judge, receiving many awards from Large Silver to Gold, and forming diverse collections. One of his specialities was post-war Czechoslovak air mails, not too surprising since his wife Jana came from that country. He received many honours in his home country, becoming a Fellow of the Australian Philatelic Order in 2016, and his contributions to the Western Australian philatelic community was recognised when he was awarded the E.M. Hasluck Medal, the highest philatelic award in Western Australia. Ross was a member of many philatelic societies including BAMS.

At the time of Ross' untimely passing Ross Wood was the Editor of the *Australian Aerophilatelist*, journal of the Australian Airmail Society, in which capacity he was only too willing to help your current Editor with queries, and to graciously grant permission for re-publication of articles from his journal in *Air Mail News*.

Richard Saundry

(with acknowledgment to an obituary by Ian McMahon published in the August issue of the *Air Post Journal*)

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STEPHEN NEULANDER

1933 – 2018

We were saddened to hear of the death of long-standing member of the American Air Mail Society Stephen Neulander. An accomplished balloonist and prolific writer on balloon posts, women aviators, air racing and other aspects of aeronautica, Stephen served for 22 years as Editor of *The Jack Knight Air Log*. As a columnist for that journal your editor had many dealings with Stephen who was always energetically supportive of my many shortcomings. A super bloke to have known.

Richard Saundry.

The Stuart Rossiter Memorial Lecture 2018.

The Stuart Rossiter Trust is pleased to announce that the 2018 memorial lecture will be held at 5:00 pm on Friday 9 November at the Royal Philatelic Society London, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1G 6JY when **Frank Walton** will give a talk entitled

“Should Aerophilately be a subset of Postal History?”

Over recent years there has been a rise in the recognised breadth of Postal History. We now have ‘pure’ Postal History, Postal History 2C (i.e. postal history with some related social documents), Open Philately and Ephemera. These are all to various degrees a combination of postal history and other paper artefacts. So what is Aerophilately and does it fit into this continuum somewhere? There is no FIP class for mail that went by boat or train, so why should there be one for mail that flew?

Frank Walton will be discussing different perspectives on this wide topic—but what will his conclusion be? Come along on the evening and find out!

Free admission is only by non-transferable ticket on application to: Rex Dixon at rexdixon@btinternet.com Early application is advised.

A New Home for the Royal P.S.

Philatelist all over the world, members of BAMS in particular, will be pleased to know that the Royal Philatelic Society (London) has formally taken possession of its new home at **15 Abchurch Lane, London EC4N 7BW**, in the heart of the City of London, just a short walk from Bank Underground Station. Work is progressing well to enable the Society to move in the middle of next year.

Apart from the Ground Floor, on which will be found the Reception, members’ lounge and Museum displays, the building comprises four floors and two basement levels.

The first and second floors will each house large meeting/function rooms for up to 120 people – details about hiring rooms in the building will be provided later.

On the third floor will be found the administrative offices, and the offices of the Society’s Expert Committee.

The fourth floor has a ‘listed’ wood panelled meeting room that will accommodate up to 60 people. This will also be used for meetings of the Society’s Council.

The basement floors will house the Society’s extensive Library and Archives plus secure storage facilities.

BAMS congratulates Patrick Maselis, President of the Society and members’ of the Royal P.S. for securing these new exciting premises.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

It is very disappointing that this quarter we have received only a single comment about an earlier question raised in *Air Mail News* and we have not received any new queries. Perhaps, of course, members do not have any answers or opinions they could offer, but it is your Editor's feeling some would have responded but felt they were incompletely qualified to do so, or that the answers were so obvious that others would be sure to respond, and they need not make any effort themselves. This is a great pity since at one time our "Q & A" column used to generate excitement and interesting copy. I have this issue raised a number of queries of my own. Hopefully some of you might know the answers or be prepared to offer comments. We continue to live in hope eternal!

A. 539. Why the British Air Mail Cover was charged 6¢ Postage Due.

In the February issue [Vol. 60, No. 240, page 23] we published a cover sent us by John Rawlins, that had been sent in May 1939 to the United States. Although this cover was franked using British 1½d. and U.S. 6¢ postage stamps, it attracted a 6¢ postage due charge. This cover was published under our "Q & A" section but was originally intended by John to be published as a small article. John now writes:

"Richard,

When I sent you this I had intended it to be a "My Favourite Cover" rather than a "Q & A", as I thought I had given a full explanation. It certainly threw up some interesting suggestions, if not entirely relevant.

Wearing my Postage Due Mail Study Group hat:

The British Post Office did not accept the US stamp for US internal air mail

The rate for this service was 5d.

Underpaid 3½d. Charged double deficiency, 7d. = 70 gold centimes

The US Post Office ignored 70 centimes and charged double internal air mail, 6¢ x 2 = 12 cents.

Allowed for US 6¢ stamp and collected 6¢ postage due.

This was allowed for in UPU regulations, and is often seen, going back many years.

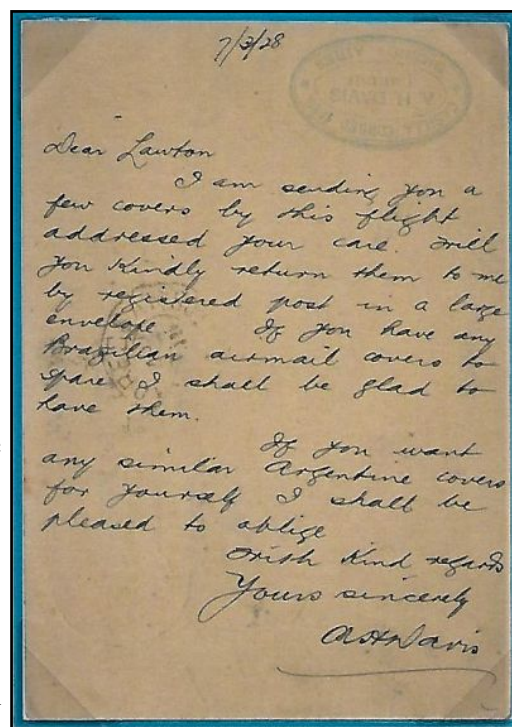
This might be worth publishing and put the whole thing to bed.

John Rawlins.

Q. 545. Who exactly was A H Davis?

Collectors of Latin American air mail covers cannot but be aware that Señor A H Davis of Buenos Aires was a significant air mail cover specialist in the late 1920s and early 1930s period. If it were not for the activities of Davis we would probably not have more than a fraction of the covers we now have in our collections. Furthermore, A H Davis corresponded with a goodly number of overseas philatelic journals of the period informing them of recently introduced air mail services and advising of new stamp issues. I am of the opinion Davis was a dealer and he was not, as one highly respected American correspondent of mine suggested, that he might well have been an employee of one of the airlines of the time. Davis devised first flight and subsequent flight covers that were flown using different airlines, by Aeropostale, Nyrbaline and Panagra to name a few, so I think we should probably discount this ingenious airline employee suggestion.

Many of A H Davis' covers and cards were addressed by himself. South American air mail specialists soon begin to recognise his fairly distinctive spidery but clearly legible handwriting. I show for instance, Fig. 1., the message side of a card sent by Davis from Buenos Aires on 7th March 1928 to another collector/dealer, a Sr. G N F Lawton in Santos, Brazil. The card



was flown Argentina to Brazil by the 2nd. Aeropostale service flight to France. The message shows how collectors and dealers of the late 1920s and early 1930s through a network of personal contacts with other enthusiasts arranged so many covers and cards that today grace our collections.



Fig 2. Registered air mail cover from Asunción, Paraguay April 2, 1929 to (?) Brazil.

Not all Davis' covers and cards were necessarily handwritten – some carried his printed address in Buenos Aires (he seems to have moved several times so there were different home/business addresses within Buenos Aires). The cover I show, Fig. 2., is also a bit of a mystery. Here we have a registered air mail cover from Asuncion, Paraguay April 2, 1929 addressed to himself in Buenos Aires. The one thing I have learned over the years is that whenever I come across Davis covers experience tells me there were probably very good philatelic reasons the covers were sent. Reference to Gerard Collot & Alain Cornu's tome "*Ligne Mermoz*", and we learn that on April 2, 1929 Aeropostale conducted the first air mail flight between Asuncion and Rio de Janeiro, and that the covers that were sent were not backstamped upon arrival. My Davis cover bears only Buenos Aires registry dates-stamps for April 3 and April 4. It is possible the reason Davis sent the cover was that it was intended to go to Brazil and then be returned to his home address in Argentina. Because there never were any Brazilian receiving office postal markings for the first flight covers, and without any endorsements, this cover is mis-leading. If it was dropped off in Buenos Aires on the journey between Paraguay and Brazil it would probably have been date-stamped the date of despatch, April 2. or the next day But you could explain the April 3 date-stamp by the cover overflying Buenos Aires and on to Brazil, then being returned to Argentina. Of course, I may well be wrong in this analysis,. Perhaps students of Aeropostale aviation history could explain this little mystery?

A H Davis also had contacts in Europe. I have in my collection air mail cards sent May 16, 1928 to a Mr. J S Davis, 71 Rodney Street, Liverpool, re-addressed from Liverpool May 30 to Prestatyn, Wales. You will note that A H Davis in Argentina and J S Davis in England had the same family names so might well have been related. Davis is a well known Welsh family name. There was much 19th-century migration of Welsh folk to Argentina and in some locations within Argentina, in Patagonia in particular, the Welsh language is still spoken. I am willing to believe that A H Davis might well have been a 'first or second generation' Welshman living in Argentina. For years I have tried to find something about his biographical details without any kind of success. All my internet searches have drawn a blank. A H Davis was most certainly a very eminent air mail specialist. We really ought to know something more about him. We don't even know what his initials 'A' and 'H' stand for, thereby making searches extremely difficult.

Q. 546. Did this Italian WWII-Period Air Mail Cover to Argentina carry the correct postage?

Of recent years we have had a paucity of articles or queries regarding Italian air mails. I have an Italian World War II-period air mail cover to the United States that I would like to write up and include in my 'Onward Air Transmission through New York' collection, but I find I cannot reconcile the franking with published postal rates. This is a registered air mail cover posted Abbazio, Italy February 17, 1941 addressed to Cincinnati, Ohio arriving March 23. Sent with supplementary "Advice of Receipt" service, the cover transited Fiume and Trieste on February 18, and New York on 22 March, before being re-directed from Cincinnati to Lockland, Ohio (delivered March 25). Using rates information



gleaned from a number of publications I believe at the time this cover was posted in Italy the UPU first class surface letter rate was 1.25 Lire for the first 20 gm., the registration rate was 1.25 Lire and the “A.R.” service fee was a further 1.25 Lire. The air mail surcharge rate to the USA was 2.75 Lire per 5 gm. Assuming this cover weighed more than 10 gm. and did not exceed 15 gm. the postage should have been exactly 12.00 Lire. Totting up the ten stamps on the cover, however, we arrive at a total franking of 12.25 Lire, i.e. an apparent overpayment of 25 centesimi. It is not unusual when correspondents use a large number of different low denominated postage stamps to satisfy postal rates, especially if they find they don’t have the requisite stamps readily at hand, to ‘make do’ with what is available and over-frank their covers so that they could be posted. What is remarkable about the franking of this cover, however, is that it actually included a 25 centesimi stamp. I think it unlikely that an apparent overpayment of 25 centesimi included a stamp of that same value unless it was done for some deliberate reason. Is there is something wrong with the rates information I currently have or was there an extra postal charge for some further service? Could members who specialise in Italian air mails please confirm my interpretation of the postage on this cover to be correct?

Q. 547. Where was Field Post Office 662 in March 1946?

I have a red air mail envelope posted at Field Post Office 662 on March 13, 1946 addressed to São Paulo, Brazil, arriving there April 10. The cover shows a mixed franking of 1s. 0d. using British postage stamps plus 4 Lire in Italian postage stamps. This cover raises several questions: (1) what was the correct rate to Brazil? (at end of the war the British rate to Brazil for sea service to New York, then air to Brazil was 1s.3d. per ½oz.). (2) What existing postal regulations permitted mixed-franking at British Field Post Offices? (3) What was the likely route to Brazil? (4) Where was Field Post Office 662 in March 1946? (Somewhere in Italy?) The sender’s address was in Milan.. I have only a very rudimentary knowledge of the philately of British F.P.O.s, so could somebody tell me where I might find a listing?



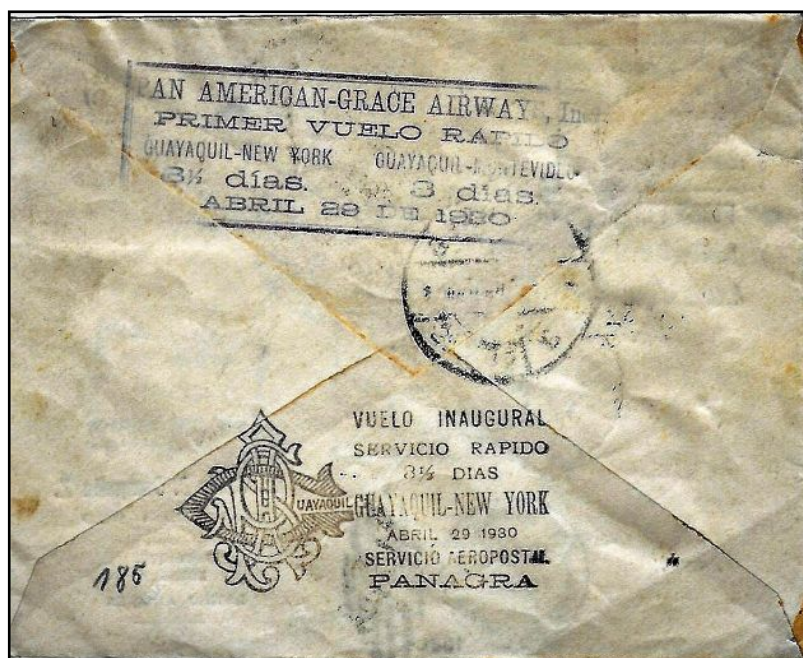
Q. 548. Can Anybody Explain this Ecuador First Flight Cover?

I have developed an interest in the accelerated (7 days) service New York to Buenos Aires and Montevideo that was inaugurated in April 1930. Without going into too much detail, Pan Am was vying with NYRBA to secure the lucrative US FAM-9 contract USA to South America via the Pacific coastal route. To strengthen their case, Pan Am inaugurated a 7-day accelerated service from New York leaving April 25, 1930 that arrived Buenos Aires on May Day. The return (reciprocal) northbound flight left Buenos Aires on April 26 but ran into severe weather conditions causing delayed crossing of the Andes. In order to reach the connection at Cristobal, Canal Zone for the onward flight to Miami of May 1, this could only be accomplished by, as the AAMC puts it, some heroic night time flying and bypassing certain scheduled stops.

Ecuador was on FAM route 9 with a scheduled intermediary stop in Guayaquil. This was one of the stops that had to be bypassed, so all the Ecuadorean first 7-day accelerated mail service covers already posted to be flown northwards out of Guayaquil on April 29, 1930 were despatched the second northbound flight passing through Guayaquil on May 6, arriving New York on May 10. The cover I show here was one of the covers forwarded the northbound flight of May 6 that reached New York on May 10. So far, so good, but things are not as straightforward as it would at first sight appear to be. There was a lot of other aerophilatelic activity taking place in Ecuador in April 1930, including the inauguration of an internal air mail service between Salinas and Esmeraldas and on to Guayaquil that was also inaugurated on April 29. The cover illustrated was certainly flown to New York but was it ever meant to have been sent this service? The cover is endorsed in manuscript

“Salinas – Esmeraldas” and was only franked 10 centavos, which I surmise would have been insufficient for mail sent to the United States. Could our members please confirm this cover was originally only meant to be flown the inaugural internal flight, and not intended to be flown to New York? Possibly the Guayaquil Post Office was confused or overwhelmed with mail despatched two flights the same day and mis-directed this cover? There is a (pleasing?) surfeit of cachets both on the front and back of the cover, including those

pertaining to the inauguration of Pan Am's northbound and southbound accelerated air mail services. A mis-direction by an over-zealous Ecuador postal official would explain everything except that upon arrival in Times Square, New York a US 2¢ postage stamp which had already been affixed to the cover or was affixed after arrival in New York was neatly cancelled to provide proof of arrival. So, why was this US stamp placed there if the cover was only intended to transit the internal postal system? Knowledge of Ecuador air mail covers is most definitely not my strong point, so any help in explaining this most puzzling of covers would be gratefully received.



FAM-22 FIRST FLIGHT COVERS ~ UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

Barbara Priddy

The inaugural service of the Pan American Airways which left the United States early in December 1941 bound for Leopoldville in the Belgian Congo was not the first flight of the '*Capetown Clipper*' over this route. A proving flight had taken place in conditions of great secrecy in early November 1941.

The postal authorities in the Belgian Congo had however apparently not been advised of the secrecy of this flight and had not only prepared a cachet for the first return flight (Figure 1a.) but had publicised the return flight, at least amongst a limited circle. The cover shown in Figures 2a and 2b was prepared by a member of the British Liaison Staff in Leopoldville, clearly endorsed '*Par Clipper Américain*', and posted 5th November 1941 to a Lieutenant in Nigeria.



Figure 1a. Cachet prepared for first return flight.



The proving flight arrived in Leopoldville 15th November 1941. Some time before this the Congolese postal authorities had been informed that this flight would not be carrying mail, and had prepared another cachet, (Figure 1b. see next page), showing December as the date of the first flight.

So, what happened to the cover shown in Figure 2? It is back-stamped at Lagos (where it was also censored) on 8th November, and, after being readdressed from A.P.O. S.102 to Kaduna, it somehow ended up in Enugu on 14th November and was promptly re-despatched to Kaduna; the last back-stamp is of Kaduna Junction on 15th November.

Figures 2a and b. Front (top) and back (right) of cover posted November 5, 1941 for proving flight Leopoldville, Belgian Congo to Lagos, Nigeria.

Clearly it was not carried by the '*Clipper*' proving flight, nor was it held back for the December first (postal) flight. At this time the West Africa – Egypt route was of the utmost importance in ferrying aircraft, personnel, materiel and official mail between the U.K. and the Eastern Mediterranean. Over this route, in November 1941, BOAC were operating two landplane services via Chad, one landplane service via the Belgian Congo (in conjunction with Sabena), and one flying-boat service via the Belgian Congo. This last called at both Leopoldville and Lagos, and the Short



C-class G-AEUC ‘*Corinna*’, operating flight CL19, left Leopoldville on the 6th November 1941 and arrived at Lagos on the 7th November. The cover might have been on this flight.



Figure 1b. Congolese cachet showing December 1941 as date of first flight.

The rate, paid in multiple adhesives, was 7Fr.75, consisting of 2Fr.75 foreign postage and (presumably) 5Fr.00 air mail fee. The Congo Ordonnance 245/PT gives an air fee of 3Fr.25 for “via Pointe Noire” and 6Fr.50 for “via Fort Lamy”, while Ordonnance 484/PT dated 8th November 1941 but applying from 1st January 1942 sets the air fee to Nigeria at 6Fr.00 for both BOAC and PanAm, with the surface fee raised to 3Fr.50. The covers, however, on the first postal flight, postmarked 12th December, are also franked at 7Fr.75, which would appear to mean that this rate applied, *and was known to apply*, during November and December 1941.

Finally, and as a warning not to believe everything you read, a newspaper cutting (newspaper unknown, date of 10/11/40 written in pencil):

Two New Allied Air Links

Two new air links were forged
between the Allies yesterday.
The Capetown Clipper, carry-
ing 40 passengers, took off from
New York on the first flight of a
new 18,290-miles route between the
United States and the Belgian
Congo, and a transdesert service
plane arrived in Teheran from Cairo
after six hours instead of the
previous six days. –
Reuter and B.U.P.

Sources:

Eve Curie, *Journey Among Warriors*, Heinemann, London 1943.

BOAC Aircraft Movement Charts, November 1941.

Report on the Progress of Civil Aviation 1939-1945. Transcribed by John Wilson

(West African Study Circle 2009)

I am indebted to John Wilson for information regarding Belgian Congo air mail postage rates.

THE “POLITICAL” FLIGHTS OF SOUTH AFRICAN AIRWAYS

by Nicholas Arrow.

A referendum of white voters was held in South Africa to decide whether South Africa should become a republic. 52% of voters voted in favour, and as a result, the Prime Minister, Dr. Hendrik Verwoerd, travelled to London to give to the Conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers formal notice that South Africa would change from a monarchy to a republic. He also requested that South Africa should remain within the British Commonwealth, a request which, not surprisingly, was strongly opposed by the various African states, plus India and Canada, because of the unpopularity of the South African Government’s policy of Apartheid. When it became apparent that the request that South Africa should remain within the British Commonwealth would not be granted, Verwoerd withdrew it “in the interests of South Africa’s honour and dignity”.

The upshot of this was that South Africa seceded from the British Commonwealth, and its insistence on pursuing its policy of Apartheid led to an existence in a political wilderness, becoming a political pariah, with sanctions being applied from all directions, trade, economic and sport *etc.* It became necessary for South Africa to dig its way out of

this hole of its own making, find a political solution and, effectively, come in from the cold. The world was not going to come to South Africa to enable this to be done – South Africa had to travel to meetings in order to negotiate a political solution which would result in its being once more accepted politically.

South African air mails in the RSA period can perhaps be considered a subject for collection rather less than truly fascinating⁽¹⁾. The flights, however, undertaken by South African Airways, in ferrying its politicians from South Africa and back again, in order to meet with other politicians for talks make a really fascinating subject, and it is these flights, not all of which were prompted by the subject of Apartheid, that are the subject of this article.

The aerophilatelists who wish to collect this material must pay tribute to various aerophilatelic enthusiasts, whose efforts have ensured that so many of these extraordinary flights were commemorated philatelically. In particular, there are Capt. Dawie Uys, who rose to become senior pilot with South African Airways, SAA, and who was himself an enthusiastic aerophilatelist,⁽²⁾ and Terry Devine, whose efforts involved designing literally hundreds of covers across all areas of RSA philately. Dawie would collect the information as to the flights that he would pass to Terry, who would design the envelopes, get them printed, frank them and ensure that they were postmarked on the right day, before passing them to the various pilots at SAA. The covers would be flown back and put in Dawie's private SAA box, and then handed back to Terry to get the appropriate receiving marks endorsed at the airport.

The first such flight took place on the 19th June 1976, when the President of South Africa, John Vorster, with the Foreign Minister Hildegard Muller and others, flew to Frankfurt to meet the American Secretary of State Henry Kissinger for talks, which took place over two days in Bodenmais and Grafenau. Uys makes no mention of this flight diverting to Ilha do Sal (which was SAA's refuelling mid-way point *en route* to Europe) but I suspect it was probably "round the bulge". Covers were carried, recorded by Uys. Although he does not give any indication as to the number carried, I believe that such covers are probably extremely rare.

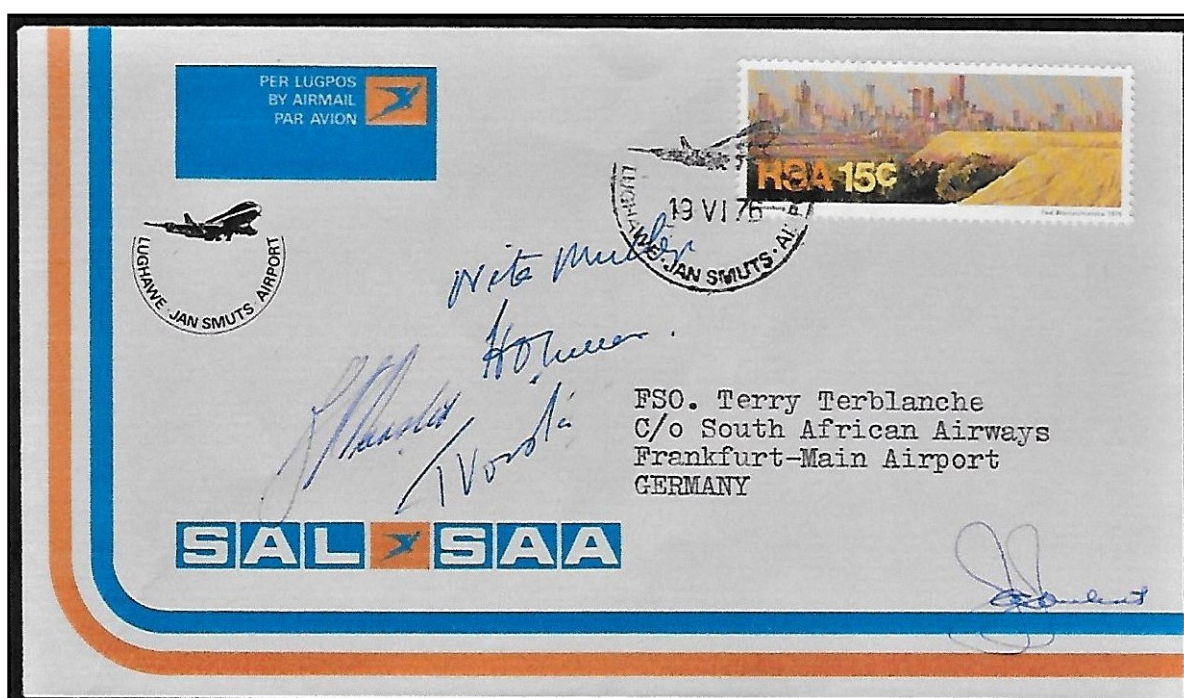


Fig. 1. Carried to Germany for talks with Henry Kissinger—see above.
The signature bottom right is that of the pilot Capt. J. Joubert.

On the 17th May 1977, Vorster flew to Vienna – this was "round the bulge" as Uys specifically records the flight via Ilha do Sal – for talks with Walter Mondale, the American Vice-President. These talks have been reported as being conducted with increasing bad feeling on both sides, and in subsequent press conferences (pointedly not taken together!) the **New York Times** comments that – "[t]heir tone, manner and political vocabulary indicated that they [Vorster and Mondale] not only had differed fundamentally on some key issues but also seemed to be living in different political eras"! ⁽³⁾ Uys does not make any note as to the number of covers carried, but it is generally accepted that only six were created for carriage on this flight.

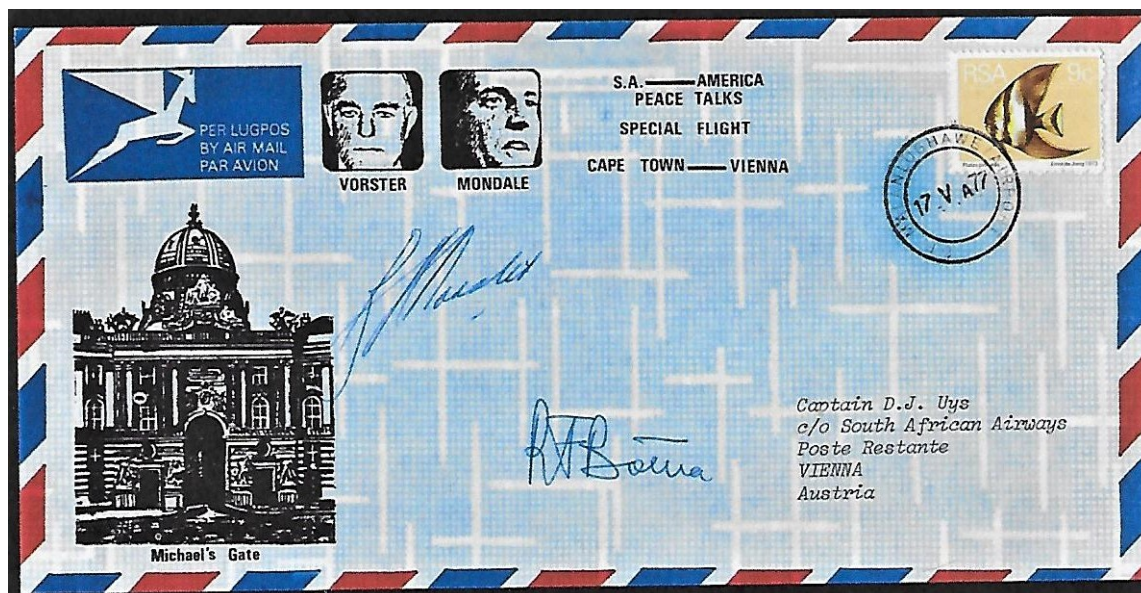


Fig. 2. Carried to Germany for talks with Walter Mondale - see above.

On the 12th October 1980, the then South African Prime Minister, P.W. Botha, undertook a 5-day visit to Taiwan with a 20-member delegation, meeting Taiwan's Premier and other officials in order to discuss substantial cooperation in economic and technical projects. Six letters and six cards were carried. It would seem that this was the precursor to SAA opening a new service to Taiwan, which it did on the 3rd November 1980⁽⁴⁾, when South Africa were hoping to obtain new trade and tourism outlets.



Fig. 3. Card carried to Taipei for trade talks. Note the spelling of "Tiawan" and "Tiapei" which is replicated on all the cards and covers carried on this flight. This item is signed by the President and others on the reverse.

[SAA also introduced a new scheduled service to Houston on the 8th December 1982⁽⁵⁾. There was substantial agitation in America because of South Africa's Apartheid policies, but attempts to interfere with the landing came to nothing. This is mentioned as an indication of the hatred of Apartheid felt in many places in America, although it is not appropriate to comment that America's own record on Human Rights is by no means perfect – see footnote 7.]

On the 28th May 1984, P.W. Botha, still the Prime Minister, flew from Johannesburg to Western Europe for a tour of eight nations, starting in Lisbon, hoping to reduce the political isolation of South Africa. The continued opposition of

Western European governments, however, to South Africa's racial policies ensured that no progress in this objective was the only outcome. The German Chancellor Helmut Kohl went as far as politically possible to show his antagonism towards his guest by, reportedly, ordering workers to remove a sofa on which he was normally photographed shaking hands with visiting statesmen only a few minutes before Botha due to visit! In fact, Kohl did not shake hands with Mr. Botha at all, at any rate in front of the cameras. ⁽⁶⁾ Philatelically, this disastrous tour, which ended on 14th June, was commemorated by ten covers flown on the outward journey.

[Landing rights in Australia ⁽⁷⁾ were denied to SAA in October, and its last flight to and from Australia took place on the 25th and 27th October 1987 respectively. Covers were prepared to record these events.]

On the 22nd June 1988, a "delegation" including Pik Botha (Minister of Foreign Affairs) and Magnus Malan (Minister of Defence) left Johannesburg for Cairo in the Boeing 747SP "*Soutpansberg*", for the purpose of peace talks with Angola, Cuba and America concerning the Angolan War. ⁽⁸⁾ For the first time in twenty five years SAA were allowed to overfly Africa along a "diplomatic corridor" over Zimbabwe, Zambia, Zaire and Sudan. The number of covers carried seems to be rather confusing. Twenty covers seem to have been signed by both politicians and the pilot, with perhaps 48 carried on both the outward and return flights. ⁽⁹⁾



Fig. 4. Carried on outward trip to Europe on 6th October 1988 - see below. The mail for the return flight has a Swiss stamp, cancelled Zurich and a single line "Return Flight" added.

On the 6th October 1988, President Botha visited Berlin for several reasons. There was the State Funeral of the German politician Franz Josef Strauss as well as the annual meeting of the IMF. He also visited Zurich, where he held three days of private talks with Swiss and foreign bankers, as well as having talks in Lisbon. On the return journey he visited the Ivory Coast where he was welcomed by its President, Félix Houphouët-Boigny, one of black Africa's most respected politicians who considered South Africa, despite Apartheid, to be a bastion against communism, which he personally detested. About thirty covers were carried on the outward journey, postmarked on the 6th October 1988 with a Zurich backstamp of the 12th, as well as on the return journey, postmarked in Zurich on the 12th October and backstamped at Jan Smuts Airfield in Johannesburg on the 16th. All the items, flown on both outward and inward journeys were impressed with a large cachet inscribed "Special Presidential Flight / Europe – Ivory Coast" and illustrated by a Boeing Jumbo Jet superimposed on a map of Africa.

Another ministerial flight was arranged on the 12th December 1988, when the Foreign Minister "Pik" Botha and Neil van Heerden, the Director General in the Department of Foreign Affairs, flew to Brazzaville and on the following day South Africa, Angola and Cuba signed an historic agreement (the "Brazzaville Protocol") to lead to the end of the

Angolan War. 53 covers were carried, signed by both politicians as well as the pilot, and bearing the cachet of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

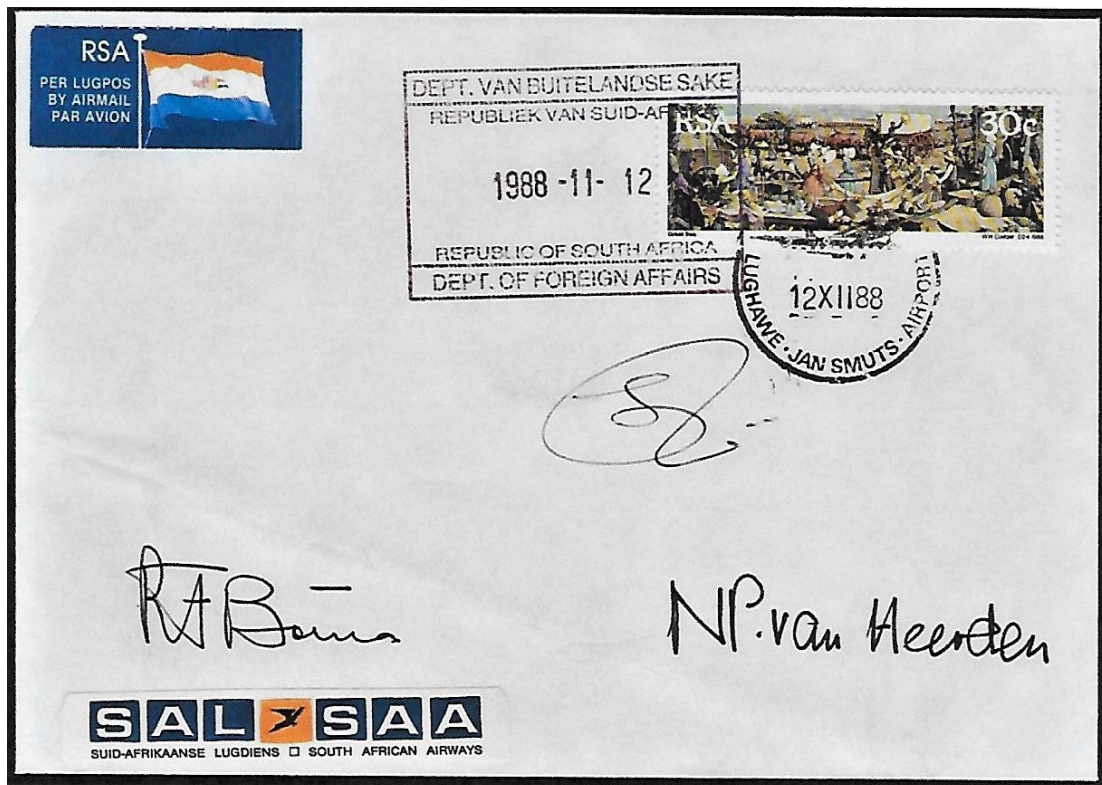


Fig. 5. Carried to Brazzaville for the meeting when the “Brazzaville Protocol”. Which started the process to end the Angolan War, was signed. Covers are found franked with both commemorative stamps (as above) and “Frama” labels.

[On the 2nd June 1989 SAA flew what appears to be a special one-off flight to Cairo. There are somewhat conflicting reports about this flight ⁽¹⁰⁾, which seems to have been exclusively for Muslims undertaking a pilgrimage to Mecca for the first time, as these were the only people who were able to get the necessary Egyptian visas. Mail was carried, “but the problem arose with the fact that post offices in Cairo are independently owned and the owner of the particular post office to backstamp the covers unless he is going to get something out of the deal”. Precisely! The report continues that the South African covers were languishing away in a Cairo post office.]

On becoming President of the RSA in 1989, President de Klerk started to dismantle the policy of Apartheid as quickly as he could, his steps to this end being universally welcomed, although there were the inevitable teething troubles in this transition back to a true democracy. On the 22nd September the President flew to America to engage in political discussions to assist South Africa’s return to the world stage, discussions which effected a dramatic improvement in USA / RSA relations, although the American government maintained its strict adherence to its anti-Apartheid legislation despite pressure for the lifting of sanctions ⁽¹¹⁾. 30 covers, all signed by the pilots Dros and van der Spuy, as well as the President and Minister Pik Botha, were carried with the same large cachet imposed on mail carried on the European trip in 1988 (see Figure 4), but inscribed (*inter alia*) “Europe – America”, although the aircraft never went near Europe.⁽¹²⁾ On the return trip, 20 covers were carried, also signed as before and bearing the large cachet, which had the word “America” excised, with an extra single line cachet “return flight” endorsed.

On the 8th April 1992, President de Klerk flew to Abuja, Nigeria, on the occasion of a visit to President Ibrahim Babingida. Although described as a “simple working visit”, to end decades of Nigerian hostility during the Apartheid period, this was something of a political triumph for President de Klerk, who was greeted on arrival with all the formalities of a state visit, including a 21-gun salute, a military guard of honour and a formal banquet in the evening. Thirty covers were carried on the outbound flight..

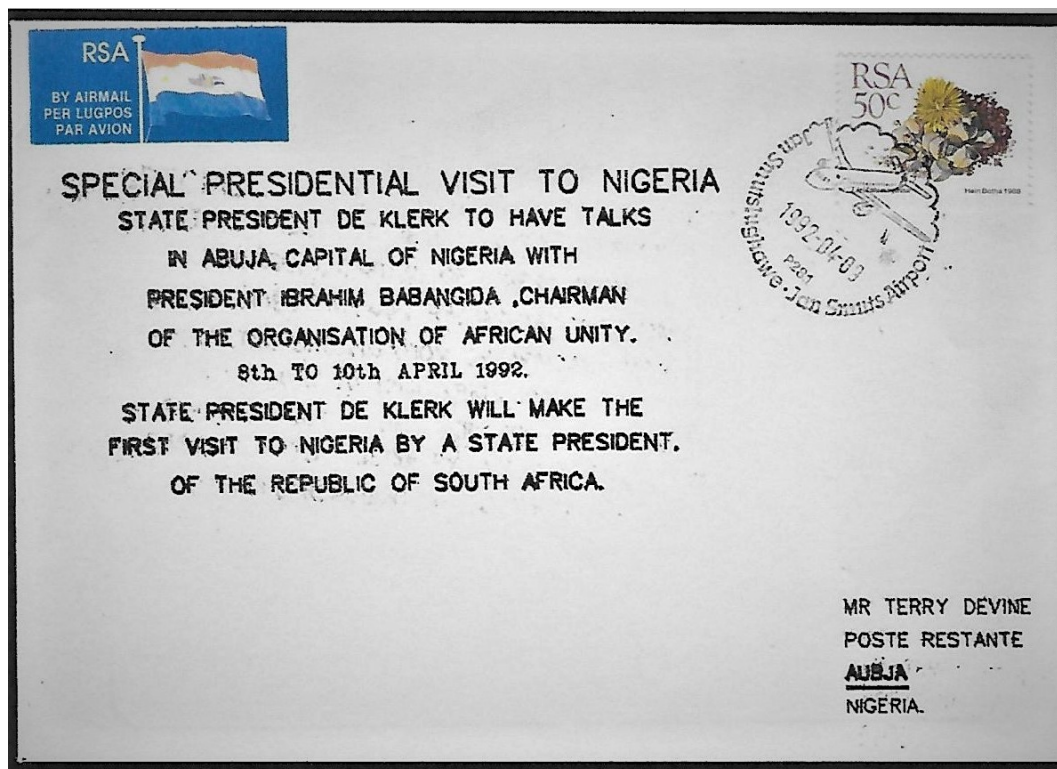


Fig. 6. Carried with President de Klerk on visit to Abuja, Nigeria, 8th April 1992.

[On the 6th May 1992, SAA set up a renewed schedule service to Egypt and for this purpose they were allowed to overfly the continent of Africa. This was a temporary service, as landing rights were withdrawn within a few weeks.]

On the 31st May 1992, the South African President, F.W. de Klerk, flew to Moscow for political discussions with the Russian Government in the hope of ending decades of enmity between Pretoria and the Soviet leadership. It was viewed as an interesting development, as Moscow had openly backed Mandela and the then-outlawed African National Congress, while Pretoria, despite its Apartheid system of strict racial segregation, sought American and Western aid for its fierce stance against Communism. Although it seems that nothing very specific was agreed, the symbolic value of Mr. de Klerk's visit was considerable and after a long private conversation, President Yeltsin of Russia said, "Ideological barriers have tumbled and we must act quickly to meet each other half way."



Fig. 7. - Carried on the trip to Russia and thence to Japan.

Russia was a half-way stage for a long arranged Presidential visit to be made to Japan. The trip to Russia had been arranged to take place shortly before Christmas 1991, but was postponed, to be rearranged to take place just before the trip to Japan, thus saving on the travel. ⁽¹³⁾ Full diplomatic ties had been established between South Africa and Japan in January 1992 and the visit would allow more talks on expanding trade and personnel exchanges. ⁽¹⁴⁾ The visit to Russia was commemorated by special covers being produced, and these come in three categories – (a) carried to and delivered in Russia, (b) carried to Russia and returned to sender, and (c) carried to Russia and forwarded on to Tokyo. ⁽¹⁵⁾

By this time, the end of Apartheid was well and truly in sight and SAA does not appear to have made any further flights, either to or from South Africa, made simply for political purposes. Elections were made between the 26th and 29th April 1994, which resulted in the ANC winning a decisive majority. By this time, Apartheid had been totally dismantled.

[This article does not refer to any other of the various services which result from the end of Apartheid, but landing rights for South African registered aircraft were restored by America (in November 1991) and Australia (in January 1992), as well as numerous services to various African countries. There are also a few sport oriented covers which commemorate various events which celebrate South Africa's emergence from sporting darkness, but these covers were usually carried on normal scheduled flights, but which happened to have the athletes / cricketers on board.]



Fig. 8. Carried on the inaugural flight of the first SAA service to the United States after the ban on landing rights was finally lifted. The cover had been prepared when the ban was first imposed in 1986 in the belief that the ban would be of short duration only - note the use of the 1986 commemorative stamp - but was brought out of storage when the air service to America was finally lifted.

Footnotes.

(1) The influx of special covers, produced in ever increasing numbers by various authorities, both public and private, many of which are of poor design, resulting in a single flight possibly being recorded in as many as four or five different covers, can rapidly lead to the collector running out of album space.

(2) It is a quite unspeakable tragedy that, on his last flight before retirement, from Taiwan, he was in charge of the Boeing 747-244B Combi 'Helderberg' when it crashed in the middle of the Indian Ocean some 60 miles from Mauritius, with the loss of all on board, a total of 159 people.

(3) Mondale's sole argument was that South Africa should abandon Apartheid, a path which Vorster viewed as being akin to committing political suicide. The talks realistically never got further than that.

- (4) SAA flight covers SAA 31 and 32 commemorate this new service.
- (5) SAA flight cover SAA 37 commemorates this event; Kempair covers 2nd Series 32 and 33 and Airphilsa covers 76 and 77 commemorate both outward and return flights.
- (6) This is about as rude a political slight as is possible!
- (7) Landing rights in America were denied to SAA by the fierce American Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986.
- (8) According the **Washington Post** of the 26th June 1988, all that was agreed was that further talks should take place.
- (9) Information supplied by Terry Devine.
- (10) It was also reported as being the resumption of flights Egypt which it clearly was not.
- (11) The final conditions required by this legislation were not met until 1991.
- (12) The Presidential Boeing 747SP refuelled at Isla do Sal in the Cape Verde Islands off the African coast, technically part of Portugal!
- (13) “**The Star**” newspaper, 3rd April 1992.
- (14) “**The Star**” newspaper, 12th May 1992.
- (15) My book on South African Airmails does not differentiate between these three types, simply describing the mail as “RR”. I suspect that several covers were carried to Russia, but that the number of “complete sets” is very limited. My book also refers to a flight made to Russia in May **1983**, but I fear this was included in error, by simply slavishly following the Supplement to the original publication – oops!

BULGARIA: THE STRASBOURG AEROPHILATELY EXHIBITION ISSUE OF 1932.

by Richard Saundry.

Between the 7th and 16th May 1932, a philatelic exhibition was held in Strasbourg, France with the all-encompassing grandiose title “*Exposition Internationale d’Aéro-Philatélie et de Timbres-Poste*” i.e. “The Strasbourg International Exhibition of Aerophilately and Postage Stamps”. Clearly in 1932 in France the collecting and study of air mail postage stamps was a popular pursuit deserving of a philatelic exhibition of its own. I very much doubt that as I write these lines at the latter end of 2018 that an exhibition could be organised anywhere in the world today for which the magnet would be aerophilately in all its various manifestations in the same way that air mail exhibitions could be organised in France in the early 1930s.

Strasbourg was an important intermediary point on the Compagnie Internationale de Navigation Internationale, (the French International Air Navigation Company, **CIDNA**) air mail route Paris-Strasbourg-Prague-Vienna-Bucharest-Istanbul-(Ankara), which had been inaugurated as early as 1922. Beginning 1928 a connecting spur route had been implemented between Belgrade and Sofia, Bulgaria, and the connecting service Sofia to Istanbul (by surface means most of the time) provided an alternative route to Turkey that bypassed Bucharest. It appears a major virtue of travelling via Sofia was that it did not involve flying over the formidable chain of the Carpathians straddling the border between Hungary and Romania. By 1932, therefore, Strasbourg was linked directly by air with Istanbul by two routes: the daily service via Bucharest, and a subsidiary (usually three times per week) route via Sofia. Strasbourg was the point on CIDNA’s route from where mail addressed to the Netherlands and Belgium, Eastern France and much of Switzerland was offloaded.

Organisers of philatelic exhibitions often use ‘gimmicks’ to attract visitors, and early French air mail exhibitions were no exception in providing philatelic opportunities to entice collectors. Indeed, for the Exposition Internationale de la Poste Aérienne à Paris, held in the French capital 6th to 20th November 1930, visitors to that exhibition were invited to buy special French 1Fr.50 air mail stamps showing an aircraft flying over Marseilles (S.G. 483, Yvert 5 (carmine) or S.G. 484, Yvert 6a (ultramarine)), each with a surcharge of 5Fr. at the same time affording admission to the exhibition. The regularly issued air mail stamp (S.G. 6, Yvert 6) was of a dark blue colour and the ultramarine stamp, only made available

at the Paris exhibition, subsequently became a noted collectors' item attracting a considerable premium over the regular issued stamp when offered for sale.

In the following year at the "Journées Nationales de l'Aviation" philatelic exhibition hosted in Vincennes 24th and 25th May 1931, the magnet attraction was the opportunity to post a souvenir pre-printed postcard from the exhibition hall to be flown by CIDNA to Bucharest, Romania, whereupon it would be franked using Romanian stamps and returned by air to the collector at his home address in France. This gimmick accomplished two things: it was devised to attract a high attendance to the exhibition but also it served to act as a commercial means of publicising French air mail services, especially that of CIDNA.

We must assume the 1931 gimmick of organising a special souvenir card flown between Vincennes and Bucharest had proved a great success. From examples of cards in the current writer's collection, and others seen in auction catalogues, the cards posted from Vincennes 24th May 1931, arrived Bucharest the next day, being returned by air to Paris on 27th May. Accordingly, for the Strasbourg air mail exhibition in 1932, a similar 'carrot' was used to attract visitors to that exhibition. The co-operation of CIDNA was again sought. At the Strasbourg Exhibition it was planned to remit pre-printed souvenir postcards by air, this time to Sofia, Bulgaria and to have these cards returned by air to Strasbourg. As we shall see, unlike the smooth-running arrangements of the Vincennes exhibition of 1931, Bulgarian involvement with the Strasbourg Stamp Exhibition of 1932 did not go to plan but led to a series of mysterious philatelic blunders.

The current writer has been singularly unsuccessful in learning very much about the Strasbourg Exhibition. Trawls through the internet have proven fruitless. Perhaps French collectors will be able to teach us more about the format of the exhibition? What I can tell you, however, just as with philatelic items made available at modern philatelic exhibitions, there was a gummed sheetlet printed in red ink of four special air mail etiquettes, (Figure 1). Whether or not there was a fee to obtain said sheetlets, or whether they were distributed free at the exhibition I do not currently know but use of these etiquettes cut from the sheetlets on items posted at the exhibition is not without interest, (see the following text).



Figure 1. Gummed sheetlet of four Strasbourg Exhibition etiquettes.

There was also a special boxed 25mm x 26mm. souvenir cachet with four-line text :

"STRASBOURG / EXPOS INT^{LE} / D'AEROPHILATELIE / ET DE TIMBRES 1932".

This cachet was not only struck onto official cards sent to Bulgaria, but collectors could have the same cachet struck on covers carrying French postage stamps, together with one (or more?) of the red air mail etiquettes cut from the souvenir sheetlets. Possibly there was a charge for this service? My example, (Figure 2), has two strikes of the cachet on an envelope pre-printed with "Exposition Internationale d'Aéro-Philatélie at de Timbres-Poste 7-16 Mai 1932 *

STRASBOURG * 7-16 Mai 1932", bearing one of the four etiquettes excised from the gummed sheetlet together with a 15 centimes stamp. Since the French UPU letter rate in 1932 was 1Fr.50 for a letter weighing not more than 20 gm., you will appreciate the franking value of a 15 centimes stamp was equivalent in 1932 to about a British farthing (0.25d.). The only piece of information I have about the 1932 Exhibition we glean from a letter (Reference 3) by Sebastio Amaral, a Brazilian collector, who writing in the April-June 1958 issue of the *Aero Philatelist Annals* said "I translate an article published at page 5, Vol. 2, No. 10 in "Monthly Air Mail" (March 1932): "International Aerophilatelic Exhibition Strasbourg" The Exposition Internationale d'Aerophilatelie et de Timbres-Poste de Strasbourg" will be opened on May 7, 1932, at 10a.m. for a period of ten days, ending on May 16. Two special cards will be prepared (a printing of 2,500 is mentioned). A special flight will be made in connection with the



Figure 2.

Strasbourg Exhibition
souvenir card franked
15 centimes plus spe-
cial cachet and one of
four etiquettes
cancelled with special
datestamp
8 May 1932.

Exhibition, probably from Strasbourg to Sofia and return. Cards, carried by this flight, marked with a special cachet, will cost 10 francs. This 'special flight' business seems to be an essential part of all aerophilatelic exhibitions, which is (in my opinion at least) very unfortunate, as no purpose is served, apart from supplying the organisers with funds. As regards exhibits. Customs formalities will be reduced to the minimum. Insurance will be effected by the Committee."

In association with the Strasbourg Exhibition, the Bulgarian Post Office issued 50,000 sets of three air mail postage stamps (S.G. 323-325, Scott C12-C14) which many collectors were led to believe were intended only to frank cards and covers flown the return leg of a special flight on 17th May between Sofia and Strasbourg. This set of stamps was made available on 9th May 1932, (note not the opening day of the Strasbourg Exhibition), and we are led to believe their period of validity was supposed to end 17th May, the day after the exhibition was closed. Both the Scott and Gibbons stamp catalogues are vague on these points. The Scott standard postage stamp catalogue that comes to hand of the current writer (the 1981 issue) makes no mention of the number of sets printed or the reason for the issue, and the Gibbons Specialised Catalogue, Pt.3 "Balkans", 5th. Edition (2009, the most recently published specialised stamp catalogue), states most enigmatically *'These stamps were issued for use on mail carried from Sofia to Strasbourg on a flight in connection with a Philatelic Exhibition there.'* An interesting more detailed explanation for this unusual Bulgarian air mail postage stamp issue was given by Rolf Weinbrecht in his German-language catalogue *"Handbuch Bulgarien Postwertzeichen, 1879-1944"* (Reference 4) who said (and I translate the original German text most loosely) "(1) *This (Bulgarian) series was only sold between 11 and 20 May 1932 at the post office counter (at the Head Post Office in Sofia). It was only eligible for use on air mail shipments to Strasbourg. Since at that time, however, no plane was available all shipments were made by rail. (2) During the period of sale only 9000 sets were sold and the remainder (21,000) was used up in the internal postal service. These still remain in the mail archives*" You will note that Weinbrecht declared only 30,000 sets were printed. A further source of information about the Bulgarian air mail issue of 1932 is provided by Ivan Kostov (Reference 5) who stated *"In May 1932 a special advertising flight was prepared by CIDNA between Sofia and Strasbourg for the great Aero-Exhibition. The flight was planned for 17 May but failed. The covers with special postage stamps (Michel 249/251, SG 323/325) were cancelled with a special postmark (later used for the airmail) in red ink. All these covers were delivered to Strasbourg by rail. Genuine airmail covers are available with the special stamps, mainly posted to France. The postmark is black."* The figure of 30,000 sets was probably correct, whereas the British D. Field catalogue (cited by Goodkind, Reference 1) said 50,000 sets were printed. We will discuss all this largely irreconcilable information more fully using examples from my own collection and in the literature.

In 1957 H.M. Goodkind, then editor of *'The Aero-Philatelist Annals'*, a now defunct quarterly aerophilatelic journal, published (Reference 1) what is possibly still the definitive article dealing with the subject of this unusual Bulgarian air mail postage stamp issue. I think most modern collectors recognise that sixty years ago the main interest was the collecting and study of the postage stamps themselves rather than studying in great depth the postal history aspect of our hobby. Many collectors only collected stamps, and if the main interest was to collect used stamps on covers or cards they would find their way into collections, without too close an investigation as to whether or not the stamps had been used for the purpose they were originally intended. That is not to say that expert collectors such as Mr. Goodkind ignored the postal history side of aerophilately, only that if he were writing today he might have approached the subject from a slightly different angle. You see, what set him to write his article in 1957 was the fact that in the years immediately following issue of the 1932 Bulgarian Strasbourg Exhibition air mail issue, examples of the complete set of three stamps on cover commanded staggeringly high prices, but after WWII prices dropped dramatically. Ordinarily, he postulated

with time and with inflationary pressures these highly prized elusive Bulgarian covers should have continued to fetch higher and higher prices. It was at this point that it was realised that gullible collectors were unknowingly buying clever forgeries and recognition of this served in large measure to depress the market. I must stress at this juncture that all the covers I discuss in the following were franked using genuine stamps, though despite the fact they travelled through the postal system were mostly philatelic concoctions. I return very briefly to the forgeries at the end of the current presentation. I have to stress in the strongest possible terms that it is my sincere belief that these 1932 Bulgarian air mail postage stamps are, as I write these lines in 2018, most mistakenly I believe, listed in stamp catalogues at very inflated values. For instance, in the Stanley Gibbons specialised stamp catalogue, Part 3 “The Balkans”, (in the 5th and still current edition published in 2009), the complete mint set of three stamps is listed at £250, and the used set at £140. In reality the stamps themselves are awash in the stamp market and you will see many examples offered on websites such as eBay, even complete panes of 25 stamps either in mint condition or cancelled by favour, commanding staggeringly high prices. It is not my place to advise interested collectors against buying the Bulgarian 1932 issue at such highly inflated prices, but I think it fair to say that in my view these stamps are most certainly plentiful, both mint or used. I believe if your interest is to buy these stamps as an investment you are in danger of getting your fingers burnt. ‘Nuf said!

By 1931 Bulgaria had already issued a set of seven air mail definitive stamps (S.G. 316-322, Scott C5-C11). These large (22.5 x 31 mm.) vertical format stamps denominated 1, 2, 3, 6, 12, 20, 30 and 50 leva, had the allegorical design of a Bulgarian lady in the act of receiving a letter brought to her by a pigeon and the stamps are referred to as the “*Big Pigeons*” by interested collectors. The “*Big Pigeons*” remained in use until replaced by a new pictorial definitive air mail issue in January 1940. In May 1932, however, in conjunction with the Strasbourg Air Mail Exhibition, a set of three vertical format stamps with a common design drawn by N. Biserov showing a stylised type of aircraft flying over Saint Ivan of Rila Monastery was issued. The denominations chosen for the three stamps were 18 Leva (green), 24 Leva (carmine) and 28 Leva (ultramarine). At first sight, especially in view of the denominations of the already available air mail definitive stamps, these new values of 18, 24 and 28 Leva might seem very odd. It must be remembered, however, that in 1932 CIDNA still charged for distance carried and different rates were levied for mail flown to different destinations within the larger countries such as France. Thus 12 Leva per 20 gm. was the Bulgarian air surcharge rate to Strasbourg in Eastern France, 18 Leva was the rate for a letter flown as far as Paris, and 20 Leva for letters flown via Paris to destinations elsewhere within France beyond Paris, to cities such as Marseilles (Ref. 5). Until July 1932 the UPU letter



Figure 3 (left) and arrival postmark (above) for philatelic registered air mail cover franked with complete set of Strasbourg Exhibition stamps, posted 14 May 1932 and flown from Sofia the following day via Vienna to Paris (arrived 22.50hrs. 16 May).

rate was 6 Leva the first 20gm., then 3 Leva each additional 20 gm. or part thereof. Thus the 18 Leva stamp (6 Leva surface + 12 Leva air) was designed specifically for carriage of a single weight (20 gm.) air mail letter to Strasbourg,

24 Leva as far as the French capital city, and 28 Leva as far as Marseille or Lyon. As we shall see, these stamps were rarely correctly used for the purpose originally intended. A small point worth mentioning is that Bulgaria did not impose regulations specifying how postage stamps might be used. Thus, it was permitted to use air mail stamps to frank ordinary surface mail and ordinary postage stamps to frank air mail letters, or to use combinations of ordinary and air mail stamps to satisfy all manner of postal tariffs.

The use of the Strasbourg Exhibition air mail stamps on covers that we believe were properly flown were almost without exception philatelically inspired. Many covers were prepared carrying all three values of the set of stamps, others bearing pairs or blocks of four of any one value. Nearly all covers bore frankings far excessive of the published postal rates. I show for instance, (Figure 3), a registered philatelic air mail cover posted Sofia 18.00 hrs. 14 May 1932, that was flown the following day to Vienna (on back Vienna air mail date stamp for 19.00 hrs. 15 May), then the following day (Vienna 13.00 hrs 16 May date stamp on front) to Paris (arrived Gare du Nord Avion 22.50 hrs. 16 May). In 1932 mail posted during the day would be flown very early in the morning of the following day (leaving 07.00 hrs.) by CIDNA from Sofia by way of Belgrade and Budapest as far as Vienna where an overnight stop would be made. The flight would be resumed the following day taking the route via Prague and Strasbourg, reaching Paris late in the evening. Goodkind, in his article showed a registered air mail cover (Reference 1) that was posted Sofia 9 May (the opening day of the Strasbourg Exhibition), that was back-stamped PARIS GARE DU NORD AVION 12.25 hrs. 10 May, i.e. the next day. The cover that Goodkind illustrated was also a first day of issue cover for the Bulgarian stamps. I don't have such a first day cover in my collection.

You will notice that the stamps were cancelled using a date-stamp incorporating the illustration of a monoplane with the legend 'SOFIA' in Roman alphabet at the top and 'СОФИЯ' in the Cyrillic alphabet at the bottom. The date and time of posting '14V1932-18' appears across the bottom using very small font size for the letters and numbers. We have the impression that many early commentators assumed this was a special date-stamp to be used only to cancel this stamp issue. This most certainly is not the case. The type of cancellation that was used on mail franked using the Strasbourg Exhibition issue saw regular use through to the end of 1936. It first made its appearance, most certainly by design rather than by coincidence, on 9 May 1932. The suitability for use as a dated cancellation, however, was ill-conceived in many respects. When lightly or partially struck onto covers as was often the case, or when the canceller was not properly cleaned, the result was that dates, and particularly times of posting became almost unreadable. Quite frankly I have had to use a certain amount of ingenuity deciding when certain covers in my collection were posted. Transit and arrival date-stamps often prove invaluable in deciding when covers were probably posted. I have constructed a chronological table, (Table 1) using the numbers printed on the registration etiquettes where it has been possible to sort out many date/time of posting uncertainties.

Table 1. Air Mail Covers franked using the 1932 Strasbourg Exhibition Stamps.

Registration Number	Colour of Cancel	Postage	Date + time of posting	Destination	Arrival	Comments
155	Black	Full set	09 May 18.00	via Paris	10 May 23.25	Goodkind article (Ref. 1)
394	Black	Full set	14 May 18.00	Paris	16 May 22.50	
531	Black	Full set	16 May 17.00	Munich	Berlin 17 May	10 g. Goodkind (Ref. 1.)
566	Black	Full set	17 May 17.00	Strasbourg		7 gm. Seen on eBay.
576	Black	114 Leva	17 May 10.00	Brussels	Strasb'g 21 May 21.00	Normal stamps see text.
697	Red	Full set	17 May 17.00	Paris	Strasb'g 21 May 21.00	Behrens cover
723	Red	Full set	17 May 17.00	Strasbourg	21 May 21.00	
757	Red	Full set	17 May 17.00	Strasbourg	21 May 21.25	Kalinkov virtual exhibit
779	Black	2 x 18 Leva	18 May 18.00	Brunswick	Berlin 19 May 20-21.00	
787	Black	4 x 18 Leva	18 May 18.00	Strasbourg	21 May 21.00	5 gm. Seen on eBay
830	Black	Full set	18 May 18.00	Strasbourg	19 May 20.00	Return of special card
854	Black	Full set	18 May 18.00	Strasbourg	23 May 10.00	65 gm.
904	Black	2 x 18 Leva	19 May 17.00	Brunswick	Berlin 20 May 20-21.00	7 gm. Seen on eBay.
.....	Black	24 + 6 Leva	20 May 18.00	Switzerland	Vienna 21 May 14.00	No arrival c.d.s.
Ruse 32		Full set	18-May	Budapest	Budapest 19 May 09.00	Sofia 19 May 07.00

I also show for the record (Figure 4) an airmail cover to England posted in 1933 long after the Strasbourg Exhibition had closed with clear examples of the air mail cancellations. This cover also serves to illustrate for those who may not be familiar with Bulgarian air mail stamps, use of the “*Big Pigeon*” air mail definitive stamps that remained in use, with certain colour changes, until 1940.

I have a registered air mail cover, (Figure 5), franked using the complete set of three stamps that was posted Sofia 18.00 hrs 18 May to Strasbourg, arriving there by 21.00 hrs. 21 May, in this case addressed



Figure 4. 1933: typical Bulgarian airmail cover to England showing use of the “*Big Pigeon*” postage stamps and the ‘illustrated’ air mail cancellations.



Figure 5. Philatelic air mail cover posted from Sofia 18 May 1932 bearing complete of the Strasbourg Exhibition stamps and addressed to the “*Poste Restante*” in Strasbourg. Note manuscript “*Avion special*” written on the registration etiquette.

by the sender to the Poste-Restante office, from where it was returned by surface means to Sofia, reaching the Bulgarian capital city by 30 May. At first sight this would appear to be just another philatelic cover, which of course was exactly what it was intended to be, except that added in manuscript to the registration etiquette in manuscript is the wording “*Avion special*”, plus in pencil the weight of the cover, “65 gm.” Most of the philatelic covers the current writer has seen, when the weights were appended in manuscript show weights in the range 4 – 7 gm. It is just possible this cover was correctly franked 70 Leva for a cover weighing >60 gm., <= 80 gm., calculated as 6 Leva registration + 6 Leva first 20g., then 3 x 3 Leva each additional 20 gm. UPU surface letter rate + 4 x 12 Leva air surcharge rate to Strasbourg + 1 Lev poste restante charge = 70 Leva. We doubt however, this was a deliberately arranged correct franking.

Some air mail covers sent to Strasbourg have the Sofia air mail cancellation struck using red instead of black ink. I show, (Figure 6) a registered cover

with the complete set of three stamps posted 17 May at 17.00 hrs. that reached Strasbourg airport at 21.00 hrs on 21 May, arriving the main post office at 21.25 hrs the same evening. Inspection of covers in my collection and perusing the currently available literature I have found four covers bearing red cancellations all apparently posted the same time 17.00 hrs on the 17 May, and no red cancellations used at any other time. I am inclined to concur with Kostov that the reason for the red ink was to cancel covers originally intended to be flown the putative special flight Sofia to Strasbourg. Other covers, however, posted the same time and date apparently exist with black cancellations, and to add to the confusion covers posted the following day, 18 May, also reached Strasbourg at 21.00 hrs. on 21 May so had to have been flown on the same flight.

I am yet to see covers addressed to France that were posted on 19 or 20 May, though I do have covers addressed to Germany and to Switzerland on those dates. In 1932, as explained above, France was normally reached by air from Bulgaria in two days. The evidence is, therefore, that all the covers posted between 17 to 20 May were flown together.

Any special flight was either cancelled or deliberately held over to enable return by air to the exhibition of cards sent from Strasbourg. For further discussion of the cards, see below. You will note these covers were all posted in Sofia after the exhibition in Strasbourg had ended on 16 May

To add to the confusion, I show (Figure 7), an oversized philatelically contrived cover bearing the “corner card” as our American cousins call it of the French Legation in Sofia, that was posted in Sofia at 10.00hrs. on 17 May addressed to Brussels, Belgium via Strasbourg. Stated to weigh 15 gm., this cover was patently philatelic. Franked a total of 114 Leva postage, bearing little relationship to known postage rates, this



Figure 6. Registered philatelic air mail cover Sofia May 17, 1932 to Paris with stamps cancelled using red ink.



Figure 7. Large air mail cover from Sofia 17 May 1932 to Brussels.
(For full description see text.)

cover had the stamps cancelled using black ink. The stamps used to frank the cover included a 1 Leva air mail stamp overprinted in brown (not red), a 4 Leva stamp overprinted green (not blue) and a 10 Leva stamp overprinted in blue (not green). These overprint varieties of the 1928 air mail set were not regularly issued. To add to the mystery, the sender used 30 and 50 Leva values of the regular “Big Pigeon” air mail stamps. The sender probably arrived at 10am with the stamps already affixed to the cover, not previously having managed to acquire the Strasbourg Exhibition stamps. The cover transited Strasbourg at 21.00 hrs on 21 May, so is part of the story.

I now illustrate two examples of air mail covers using the Strasbourg Exhibition stamps where the stamps were used for near correct postage rates. Firstly (Figure 8) I show a cover prepared by Herr Walter Behrens, the stamp dealer, of Braunschweig (Brunswick), Germany posted 18 May that was franked using a pair of the 18 Leva stamps, transiting Berlin 20-21.00 hrs. 19 May. In 1932 the air surcharge rate to Berlin was 22 Leva per 20 gm. Add to this 12 Leva for UPU surface and registration rates and the cover was only overpaid 2 Leva. As for a non-registered air mail cover posted 13.00 hrs. 20 May to Brissago, Switzerland, (Figure 9), the correct franking of 30 Leva was shown using a 24 Leva value of the Strasbourg Exhibition issue together with a 6 Leva “Big Pigeon” stamp. This cover was properly flown the following day, transiting Vienna airport at 14.00 hrs.



Examples of Bulgarian Strasbourg Exhibition air mail stamps used to frank covers flown to destinations other than in France.
 Fig. 8 (left) Registered air mail cover 18 May 1932 to Germany franked using two of the 18 Leva Strasbourg Exhibition stamps.
 Fig. 9 (right) letter to Switzerland bearing 24 Leva Strasbourg stamp posted Sofia 20 May, after the exhibition had closed.

out the postage stamp set is most definitely genuine and the cover was properly flown. I also have a further registered air mail cover franked using the complete set of genuine Strasbourg Exhibition stamps posted again from Ruse but on 12 May to Blombacherbach, Germany with Sofia air mail transit mark for 13 May (09,00 hrs) and Berlin 23-24.00 hrs the same day. Forged examples of the 1932 Strasbourg Exhibition set flooded the market years ago, leading in turn to depression of prices and many of the forgeries are found on covers purported to have been posted from Ruse. You will have to take it from me, after most careful inspection, I am totally convinced that the two covers I described here were not forged items. The significance of this is that the Strasbourg Exhibition air mail stamps were also most definitely valid for postage from places in Bulgaria in addition to Sofia.



Figure 10. Philatelic air mail cover from Ruse May 18 flown to Budapest, Hungary. The postage stamps are genuine.

The Strasbourg Exhibition Cards.

We now come to a most perplexing aspect of this philatelic saga. An unknown number of official cards were posted from the Strasbourg Exhibition to Bulgaria. The 'picture side' of the cards show a map of CIDNA's route network, (Figure 11a,b). Interestingly the map shows a spur linking Sofia with Salonica and Athens. Jules L. Wacht, (Reference 2), comments:

Field's states: "Air mail bags from both towns (Paris and Strasbourg) had been sent to Salonica and Athens since 1930, but they were never flown further south than Belgrade by the CIDNA line, from where they were dispatched to destination by the Orient Express up to June 1932. These air mail bags are also sometimes flown from Belgrade to Salonica by the Yugoslavian Aeroput Co."

On May 3rd 1932 CIDNA flew its first through flight (flown in one day) from Paris and Strasbourg to Salonica.

I should think that the extension of this service to Salonica must have created a considerable amount of excitement in aerophilatelic circles, especially when associated with the Strasbourg Exhibition and the issuance of the Bulgarian commemorative set. The excitement was apparently sufficiently great to result in the cards not having been mailed in time for the May 3, 1932 through flights.'

Reference to Karamitsos Catalogue (Reference 5) shows that an air mail link Belgrade with Salonica by Aeroput began 2 May 1930, and CIDNA did try to run a service Salonica-Paris starting 5 May, and from 2 August the CIDNA route was



Figures 11a (address side) and 11b (picture side) of Stasbourg Exhibition card posted from Strasbourg May 12, 1932b to Sofia (arrived May 14) but not returned to France until October.

extended to Athens. By 1932, however, CIDNA did implement a route to Greece. The Karamitsos Catalogue, (Cat. No. 233) lists first flight covers using the combination of CIDNA and the Greek airline EEES sent from Sofia to Athens via Salonica, and on 1 May first flight covers (Cat. Nos. 238 A to M) by CIDNA Athens to Paris with covers sent to intermediary points on the route including Stasbourg. Indeed, there may well have been a spur route Sofia to Athens operated by CIDNA from this date. To reinforce this notion I show what is usually described as a May 1932 CIDNA timetable (Fig. 12) but is in fact a booklet produced by CIDNA containing 32 “PAR AVION” adhesive etiquettes. You will note the route network most clearly shows the route Sofia-Salonica-Athens. Whether or not the connection to Athens was fully operational at the date of the Strasbourg Exhibition is a matter of debate. If I were to offer an opinion I would suggest the connection to Athens would have been of the utmost importance since it provided connections with both KLM and IA far eastern routes, plus Africa. I suggest if it was expected to be fully operational by 7 May 1932, the date the Strasbourg Exhibition was scheduled to open, the organisers of the exhibition would have arranged commemorative cards to be sent to Athens, not to Sofia. For the moment we will leave Wacht’s “little red herring” to those who study Greek aerophilatelic matters, inviting them to offer their opinions.



Figure 12. Outer cover of CIDNA ‘Timetable’ issued May 1932. Although described as a ‘Timetable’ it is actually a booklet containing “Par Avion” etiquettes.

Turning to the “address side” of the card we see it was printed at the top with an address in Sofia, then underneath the return address of the Strasbourg Exhibition, 19 Route du Polygone, Strasbourg-Neudorf, (France). We cannot read the Sofia address because this was obscured through Bulgarian stamps used for return of the card to France. My card is numbered ‘419’, that shown by Goodkind was ‘138’, but that on the card reported by Wacht was too faint to be able to be read. I suggest about 500 cards were probably sent.

The cards bearing two of the etiquettes cut from the souvenir labels, were franked 1Fr.05 (correct for card with message not exceeding 5 words flown to Bulgaria), and cancelled Strasbourg 12 May, arriving Sofia 14 May. The cards were definitely flown to Bulgaria. At this point the “wheels most certainly came off the wagon”. Most mysteriously the cards were franked with four of the “large pigeon” air mail stamps amounting to 17 Leva, posted 26 October 1932, arriving back at Strasbourg 16.00 hrs. 28 October, having transited Vienna overnight 27/28 October. Thus, the cards were flown both ways, **but there was a five months delay before being re-posted from Sofia**. Meantime in July 1932 there had been an increase in Bulgarian UPU surface rates such that the rate for a postcard flown Bulgaria to Strasbourg was now 12 Leva per 20 gm. air plus 5 Leva postcard surface rate. The card also shows a single strike of the Exhibition commemorative cachet, partially covered with the Bulgarian air mail etiquette. The reason for the inordinate return of the card from Bulgaria is most mysterious. At the left side of the card we find an extremely faint handstamp (most definitely too faint for you to be able to see in the illustration, so you will have to accept the cachet is there) reading “VOL NON ÉXACUTÉ / PAR NÉGLIGENCE DU / P.T.T. DE STRASBOURG / Le Comité de l'Exposition” which implies the reason for the delay was occasioned through negligence by the Strasbourg Post Office. How this caused the delay at the Bulgarian end we can only guess. Possibly the Strasbourg Post Office had not sent instructions to Sofia to have the cards returned and they languished there until such time (in October?) arrangements were made to have the cards returned, presumably transferring funds for postage costs for the return flight from Bulgaria.

What for me is a glaring problem with these official cards which hitherto nobody seems to have remarked upon, is that the cards were sent by the Strasbourg Exhibition Committee to be returned to themselves, not to individuals. So what then was the purpose for these cards? Did people attending the exhibition buy them in advance expecting on return of the cards to Strasbourg they would be forwarded to subscribing collectors under separate covers? Or did the organisers contrive the cards hoping to subsequently sell them to collectors on subsequent occasion? I just don't know. Perhaps the French collectors will be able to help us?

A second type of Strasbourg Exhibition card has come to hand (Figure 13 a,b). This type of card was not mentioned by earlier writers so may be a much scarcer version. Looking at the “picture” side of the card we have the silhouette of a building (presumably the venue for the exhibition?) surrounded by the legend in an almost unintelligible script. If we did not know what the words would be we would not have been able to read it. Starting from the left vertical edge and

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reading clockwise around the card we see that the words are: “STRASBOURG / EXPOSITION INTERNATIONALE / 7-16 MAI 1932 / D’AERO PHILATELIE ET DE TIMBRES -POSTE”. The card was franked using one of the scarcer ultramarine 1Fr.50 stamps issued for the 1930 philatelic exposition and cancelled “STRASBOURG PRINCIPAL / * / 16 -5 / 32 / BAS-RHIN” with a second strike for good measure at the bottom right corner. Another date-stamp reads “STRASBOURG GARE AVION / 23 * / 16 -6 32” If you look carefully you will see at the top right in manuscript “A la Direction P.T.T. Sofia” to where the card was flown. At the top right we also have a superb strike of the Sofia air mail date-stamp for “17V 1932 -18” indicating the card was flown to the Bulgarian capital arriving there at 18.00 hrs in the evening of the day after posting.



Figure 13a (address side) and 13b (picture side) of another type of Strasbourg Exhibition card posted registered Strasbourg May 16, 1932, re-franked using complete set of Bulgarian Strasbourg Exhibition stamps and returned from Sofia May 17.

Turning now to the “address” side of the card, the complete set of all three Strasbourg Exhibition air mail stamps was affixed, also cancelled at 18.00 hrs. 17 May, together with a Sofia registration etquette number ‘830’. Note the sender, a Monsieur C Ropp, had added a return address which initially I thought had to be his home address, but it reads ‘19 Route du Polygone, Strasbourg Neudorf’, the address in Strasbourg for the aerophilatelic exhibition. You will also note the Strasbourg Exhibition air mail etquette, derived from the souvenir gummed sheetlets, was to the card tied by the Strasbourg International Exhibition hand-stamp.

The card arrived back at the Strasbourg airport by 20.00 hrs on 19 May, arriving at the exhibition hall by 6.30am on 20 May. So, we can safely conclude this card was definitely flown quickly in both directions: posted 16 May and being at the Strasbourg airport by 23.00 hrs the same evening, reached Sofia in time to be posted 18.00 hrs the following day back to Strasbourg, (it would have been flown from Sofia early in the morning of 18 May) arriving 20.00 hrs 19 May in time to be delivered early in the morning of the following day. If the literature is correct in referring to a special flight from Sofia to Strasbourg, then this card must be from that flight.

Forgeries.

The Bulgarian Strasbourg Exhibition air mail stamps of 1932, being perceived as valuable items, have unfortunately attracted the attention of the forgers. I have two bogus air mail covers in my collection, both “cancelled” at Ruse on 9 May bearing the complete set of three stamps all of which are forgeries. One cover supposedly reached Paris Gare du Nord Avion by 20.00 hrs. 10 May (an impossibility), the other being addressed to Tirana, Albania, arriving the following day. Again, an impossibility as in 1932 there was no direct air route linking Bulgaria with Albania. In any event the diameter of the Ruse circular cancellations for these bogus covers is much too big. Here is not the place to describe the forged postage stamps, but if interested there is literature to explain how the forgeries can be differentiated from the genuine stamps (Ref. 7)

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- (6) A. Karamitsos, "*HELLAS/2012*". Vol. 4 (Air mail – First and Special Flights) ISSN 1792-9911
- (7) "*Bulgaria, 1932 Airmail Issue, Scott's Nos. 12-14*", Compex Program Book (Chicago), May 28-29, 1965, pp 83,85.

THE WINTER OF 1939 – 1940

By Peter Wingent.

For those collectors who enjoy studying delays in air services, the winter of 1939-1940 provides rich pickings! **'THE TIMES'** newspaper reported that it was the most severe winter in the U.K. since 1894 [1] and across Europe, as will be seen later, even southern France and Italy were badly hit. The effect of snow and ice upon the Empire services to and from South Africa and Australia caused a series of major delays, which are the subject of this article.

The first African services to be badly affected were DN243 and DS244. The former had departed Alexandria to schedule at 06.05 on 20th December 1939, operated by the Short S.23 flying boat '*Corinna*', but had to return due to the Commander being taken ill [2]. '*Corinna*' departed again nearly four hours later and then had to make an unscheduled overnight stop at Athens due to a swell [3]. After arriving one day late at St. Nazaire, at 11.25 on 23rd December, bad weather forced her to remain there until the 26th, when she was finally able to fly on to Southampton, arriving at 12.58: four days late. A cover flown on DN243 is shown as Figure 1. It is date-stamped Blantyre, 15 Dec. 1939 and was flown to Beira by RANA on the 15th (departed 13.50) to connect with DN243, which departed Beira on the 16th.

The bad weather over northern France, which delayed DN243, also caused the departure from Southampton of service DS244, due on 26 December 1939, to be delayed by three days and from this time onwards until nearly the end of February 1940, many Empire services were badly delayed by the severe weather.

The cover shown in Figure 2., date-stamped Johannesburg, 21 Dec. 1939, was flown from Jo'burg to Lourenço Marques by D.E.T.A. to connect with service DN244 which had departed Durban to schedule at 06.30 on



23rd December 1939. It was delayed one day by a storm at Quelimane and remained running one day late until the Short S.23 flying boat '*Circe*' arrived at Bracciano (Rome) at 16.35 on 29th December. Bad weather forced her to remain there until 31st December, when she departed at 12.09 and finally arrived at Southampton at 15.15 on 1st January 1940: three days late. A note on the Imperial Airways aircraft movement chart next to this service reads, "*Communications with Bracciano interrupted by snow*," [4] This service is also notable for being the last service from South Africa to arrive at Southampton, following which the U.K. terminal was transferred to Poole, Dorset.

Under a heading "*Rome Covered with Snow*," **'THE TIMES'** reported that on 31 December 1939, "*Rome has been covered with snow for the last 48 hours after a snowfall which lasted from about 10 p.m. on Friday until yesterday morning, and which, according to some newspapers, is the deepest and most lasting recorded since 1846.*" [5]

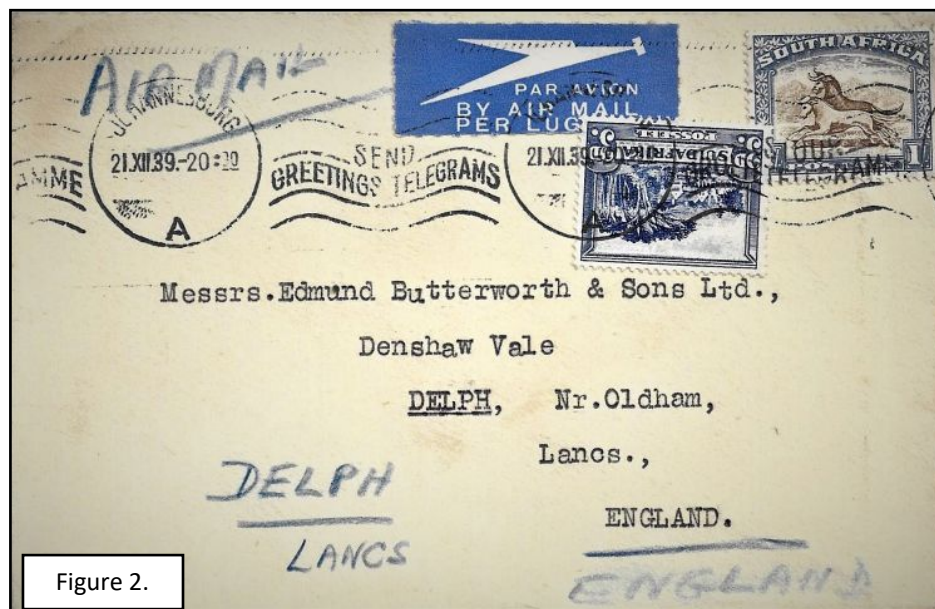


Figure 2.

Delays to services due to snow at Bracciano continued well into January 1940 and a report headed, "Widespread Snow in Italy," dated 19 January published in **'THE TIMES'** confirms the continuation of the extreme weather, "There is no sign of a break in the severe cold which has been experienced in most parts of Italy since Christmas." [6]

Many services continued to arrive and depart from Poole anything between two and six days late until January 1940, for example service KN133 from Kisumu was held up

one day in Alexandria, three days at Marseilles and another one at Biscarosse so that when the S.23 'Camilla' arrived at Poole at 15.40 on 20th January, the service was five days late. The cover shown in Figure 3 was posted at Khartoum on 9th January 1940 and flown from there on 13th January by KN133. It is franked at the Sudan wartime air mail rate to the U.K. of 45 mil. per 10 gm. (introduced 10th November 1939).

By the beginning of February 1940 the delays became far longer. For example, service KN134 departed Kisumu to schedule at 04.15 on 19th January, operated by the Short S.23 'Clio'. A broken airscrew at Juba delayed her one day but the service was still only one day late when 'Coolangatta' arrived Bracciano (she had taken over the service at Alexandria). From here on the weather took its toll: two days delay at Bracciano; three days delay at Ajaccio; two days delay at Biscarosse; one day delay at St. Nazaire, then forced to return to Biscarosse where delayed

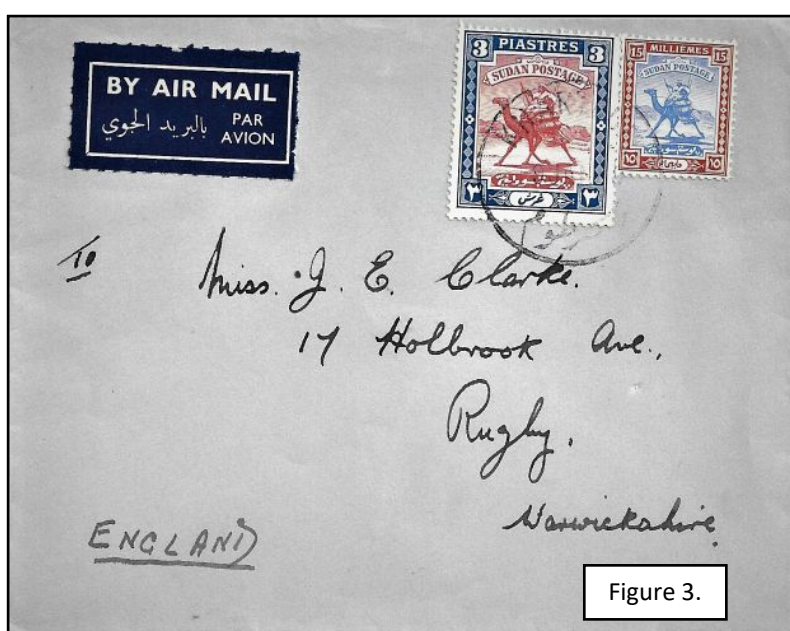


Figure 3.



Figure 4.

another day, and the service finally reached Poole at 16.00 on 2nd February: ten days late.

The cover shown in Figure 4 was flown from Khartoum by service KN134. It is date-stamped Atbara, 15th January 1940 and was sent to Khartoum by train, where an arrival back-stamp of 16th January was applied.

The Overseas Mail Branch Report No. 20, of 27th January 1940, was the first to record problems on the Empire services. An extract from this report is shown in Figure 5. Note that it says that Marseilles was frozen over. [7]

AIR MAIL SERVICES

Empire Air Services. Wintry conditions in the south of France prevented the use of Marseilles airport, which is frozen over, and, as a result, the regular running of the services has been upset. The aircraft due to leave this country on the 20th, 21st, 24th and 25th of January for South Africa, Australia, East Africa and Australia respectively, are not expected to leave until the 28th of January; similar delays due to the same cause have occurred in the inward direction.

Figure 5.

Marseilles was not the only place to be frozen over! The January 1940 Imperial Airways aircraft movement chart has a stencilled note under the date of 21st January which reads, "POOLE ICE-BOUND". Clearly the flying boats could go nowhere and that remained the case until 2nd February, when one Australian service was able to depart and one Kisumu and one Durban service managed to arrive.

The Overseas Mail Branch Report No. 20 also states that four services would be delayed until the "28th of January." As things turned out, this was an optimistic estimate! In fact they left as follows:

Due 20 Jan.	to South Africa	DS248	departed 4 Feb.	15 days late
Due 21 Jan.	to Australia	SE214	departed 2 Feb.	12 days late
Due 24 Jan.	to East Africa	KS135	departed 4 Feb.	11 days late
Due 25 Jan.	to Australia	SE215	departed 4 Feb.	10 days late.

At the same time northbound services DN248 and KN135 were held up at Bracciano, the former arrived Poole seven days late on 2nd February, and the latter arrived five days late on 4th February.

Two examples of mail flown by service DS248 are shown in Figures 6 and 7. It is the service which suffered the longest delay of all during this period. As shown above it departed Poole fifteen days late, but due to minor delays at Biscarosse and Bracciano, it then ran sixteen days late all the way to Durban. The cover in Figure 6 was posted in Bedford on 23rd January 1940 and has an Atbara back-stamp of 10 February, bearing silent witness to the long delay. The S.23 flying boat 'Ceres', operating service DS248, departed Poole at 11.40 on 4th February. The S.23 'Caledonia' took over the service at Alexandria and arrived at Khartoum at 16.45 on 8th February. From there the cover was sent by train to Atbara.



Figure 6.

The cover in Figure 7 is date-stamped Toulon, 22nd January 1940 and has no backstamps. It would have been sent to Marseilles to connect with service DS248 which arrived at Durban at 16.10 on 11th February, from where it would have been sent by train to Pietermaritzburg. The 14Fr.00 postage = 2Fr.50 first 20 gm. ordinary + 2 x 4 Fr.50 per 10 gm. air fee to South Africa + 2Fr.50 registration.

Just over two hours before DS248 departed Poole on 4th February, KS135, operated by S.23 'Cassiopeia' took off at 09.30 running eleven days late. The cover shown in Figure 8, date-stamped Nice 24th January 1940, would have been sent to Marseilles to connect with an I.A.



Figure 7.

southbound service. Both DS248 and KS135 arrived at Marseilles on 4th February, but as KS135 was the first of the two to arrive it is reasonable to assume that mail for East Africa would have been loaded on the Kisumu Terminal Service and not the Durban service. KS135 arrived Kisumu at 16.05 on 8th February, and from there the cover was probably flown to Nairobi by the R.A.F. Shuttle Service. There it was opened and resealed by Censor No. 76. The 6Fr.50 postage = 2Fr.50 first 20 gm. ordinary + 4Fr.00 per 10 gm. air fee to Kenya.

Like the service before it, service DS249 departed eleven days late, leaving Poole at 10.05 on 7th February 1940, operated by

the S.30 'Clyde' as far as Kisumu, then by 'Cassiopeia' to Durban. Service DS250 also departed Poole on the 7th, running four days late. The cover in Figure 9 is date-stamped Lytham St. Annes 5 February 1940 and is back-stamped Khartoum on the 11th. It was flown either by DS249 or DS250 to Khartoum, where both services arrived on the 10th: DS249 at 12.20 and DS250 at 14.05. It is franked 3 x 1s. 3d, per ½oz. the U.K. wartime Empire rate.

The Overseas Mail Branch Report of 3rd February, (No. 21), recorded the modified dates of departure and some newly anticipated ones, as shown in Figure 10.



Figure 8.

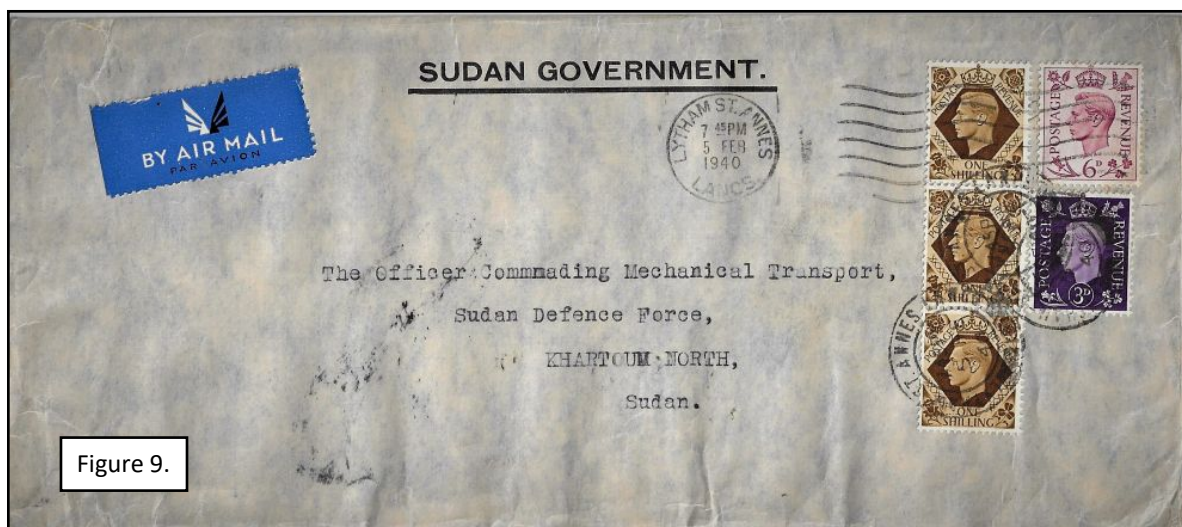


Figure 9.

Services in both directions continued to be delayed. By mid-February northbound departures from Durban were late, no doubt because so few aircraft were arriving on south-bound services

there were too few available to operate northbound ones. An example is service DN250, due to depart Durban on 3rd February, it did not leave until 04.20 on the 12th: nine days late. A one day weather delay at Bracciano and two more at Biscarosse resulted in the service arriving at Poole at 11.40 on the 21st February: twelve days late.

The cover shown in Figure 11 was flown by DN250. It is date-stamped Sinkat, 2nd February 1940 and back-stamped Khartoum on the 3rd. It remained in the Khartoum P.O. for eleven days until DN250 arrived at 14.30 on the 14th and departed at 04.55 on the 15th.

The previous northbound service (DN249) had departed Khartoum on 30th January and service KN136, due to depart Khartoum on 3rd February, was cancelled.

The Overseas Mail Branch Report No. 22 of 10th February 1940, shown in Figure 12, was a little more optimistic. The service from South Africa referred to in the report is in fact DN250.

In early February, however, the services were not yet back to normal. Kisumu service KS137, due to depart Poole on 7th February, was cancelled and Durban service DS251, operated by S.23 'Coorong', departed three days late: at 09.15 on 13th February. According to the Imperial Airways aircraft movement chart, she was

delayed at Poole by bad weather and mechanical problems and there was a further delay at Marseilles due to the "Breakdown of refuelling plant." The service arrived Durban four days late at 14.55 on 20th February.

AIR MAIL SERVICES.		
<u>Empire Air Services.</u> The persistence of bad weather conditions in this country and at Marseilles prevented the departure of the aircraft on the 28th of January as was anticipated in last week's report. It was not found possible to recommence the running of the services until the 2nd of February, and the present position is as follows:-		
<u>Services to</u>	<u>due to leave on</u>	<u>left or now due to leave on</u>
Sydney	21 January	2 February
Durban	20 January	3 February
Kisumu	24 January	3 February
Sydney	25 January	
Durban	27 January	4 February
Sydney	28 January	
Kisumu	31 January	Service cancelled
Sydney	1 February	5 February
Sydney	4 February	
Durban	3 February	6 February

The delayed inward services which were due to arrive on the 23rd (from Kisumu), 24th (from Sydney), 26th (from Durban) 28th (from Sydney) 30th (from Kisumu) of January are expected to arrive almost at once.

With the concurrence of the Air Ministry and the Ministry of Information, a notice was issued to the Press announcing that the outward and homeward services had been subject to some delay owing to weather conditions here and on the Continent.

Figure 10. Overseas Mail Branch report of 3 February 1940.



Figure 11.

The cover in Figure 13 was flown by DS251. It is date-stamped Paris 6th February 1940 and back-stamped Khartoum on the 17th. It was sent to Marseilles to connect with DS251 which departed there at 14.00 on 14th February and arrived Khartoum at 17.25 on the 17th. The 4Fr.50 postage = 2Fr.50 first 20 gm. ordinary + 2Fr.00 per 120 gm. air mail fee to Sudan. It was opened and resealed by both the French military censorship and Censor No. 5 at Khartoum.

Following the major delay of DS251, the next southbound services (KS138 and DS252) both left Poole to schedule and were delayed only by one day at Bracciano. Thereafter southbound services ran mostly to schedule. Similarly, after DN250, only two services

encountered major delays: KN137 was three days late and DN251 was five days late. The Overseas Mail Branch Report No. 23 of the 17th February, Figure 14., was reassuring and anticipated a return to normal running.

AIR MAIL SERVICES

Empire Air Services. The delayed outward services referred to in last week's report have now left this country and the overdue inward services have also arrived. There will, however, for a time still be some consequential delay in the arrival of the inward services. For example, the service from South Africa which should have left there on the 3rd is not expected to leave until the 11th of February, and the service from Australia which should have left there on the 7th will not leave until the 10th of February.

Figure 12.

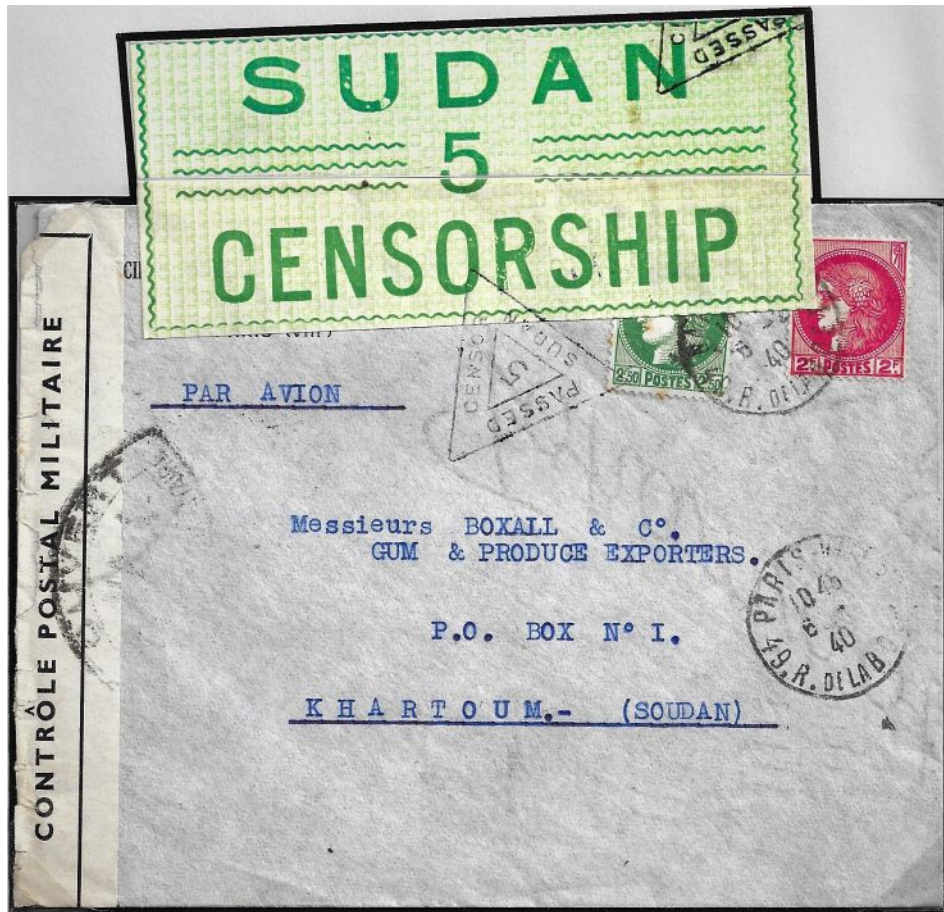


Figure 13.

AIR MAIL SERVICES.

Empire Air Services. Three flying boat services left this country on the 13th of February, two for Australia which were due to leave on the 8th and 11th of February, and one for South Africa which was due to leave on the 10th of February. The East Africa service of the 14th of February, however, left on time, and it is expected that the outward services will now become normal.

Figure 14.

I gathered much of the information relating to the delays through numerous visits many years ago to British Airways Archive at Heathrow Airport, where I was able to study the original aircraft movement charts. For those wishing to consult this data who cannot visit the Archive, it was published by Edward Proud in his book, "*Intercontinental Airmails, Volume Three, Africa.*"

Whilst all the details and examples given in this article relate to African Empire services, because that is the writer's collecting area, a similar number of services to India and Australia suffered major delays. Collectors who wish to access the data relating to these services will find it in Proud's book, *"Intercontinental Airmails, Volume Two."*

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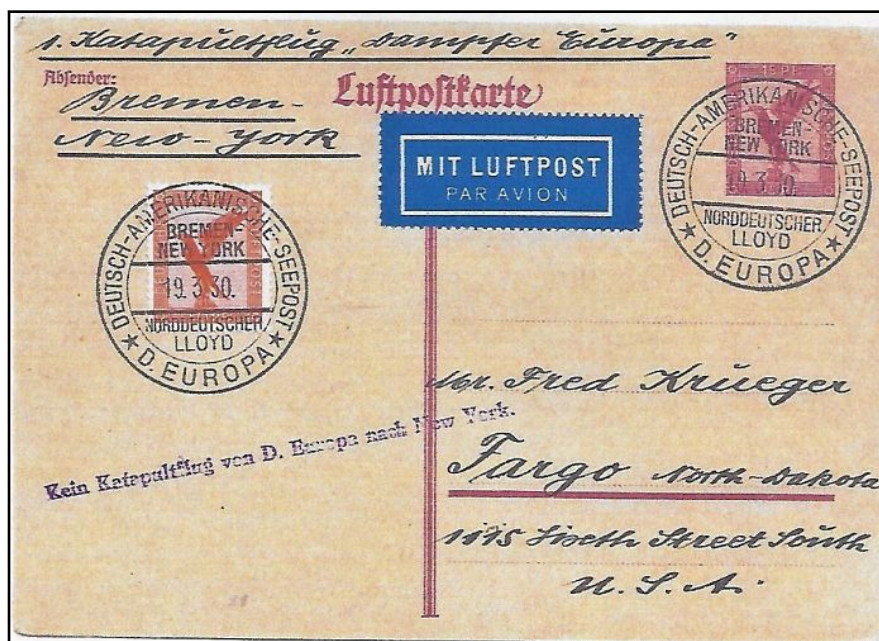
- [1] *"The Times"*. 29 January 1940 edition, page 6.
- [2] Imperial Airways aircraft movement chart, December 1939. British Airways Archive, Heathrow, [3] *Ibid.*
- [4] *Ibid.*
- [5] *"The Times"*, 1 January 1940 edition, page 7.
- [7] *Overseas Mail Branch Weekly Reports: Postal Services*, British Postal Museum & Archive, POST 56/76.

The German Catapult Mail of the North Atlantic. Part 3.

By Eddie Spicer.

Due to a major fire while she was being fitted out the maiden voyage of the S.S. *"Europa"* was delayed by about eight months so the S.S. *"Bremen"* was the first to come into service in 1929. The S.S. *"Europa"*, however, was ready for her maiden voyage timed for the first catapult trip of 1930. Unfortunately, the catapult installation on the S.S. *"Europa"* was further delayed, so there were no catapult flights from the ship for six months. During this period nine transatlantic round trips [lacking the necessary catapult apparatus] were made by the *"Europa"*. Although unavailable, mail was still received requesting the catapult service, this mail received a straight-line cachet which was applied at the on board post office advising of the cancellation of the service.

Figure 1.



This is a postcard which was carried on the maiden voyage of the S.S. *"Europa"* to New York. It was posted on board the ship "a German sea-post cover" on 19th March 1930 and addressed to Fargo, North Dakota. It has the correct postal rate of 15p pfg. (international postcard rate) and 50 pfg. for the catapult service. It has the straight-line cachet "Kein Katapultflug von S. Europa nach New York" cancelling the service.

Figure 2.

This cover was carried on the return leg of the S.S. *"Europa"*'s maiden voyage. It is an "American sea-post cover" which was posted on board ship while still in American waters. Mail posted on board ship whilst still in American waters had to have USA stamps applied. A supply of these were carried by the German on board post office. This

cover, addressed to Bavaria, has a postal rate of 5 cents international letter rate and 15 cents for the catapult service. This cover has a slightly shorter cachet "Kein Katapultflug von D. Europa" cancelling the service.

Figure 3.

The first catapult flight from the S.S. "Bremen" in 1930, however, took place on 29th April. It left the ship at 06.04am and arrived in New York at 09.12am after having been flown a distance of 650 km. This a postcard sent at the international printed matter rate of 5 pfg., plus 50 pfg. for

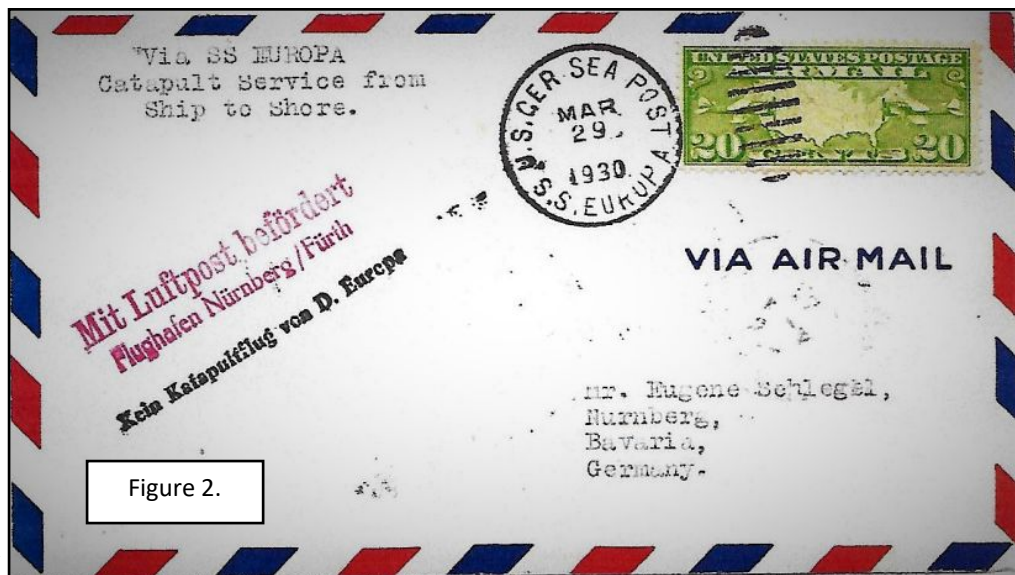


Figure 2.

the catapult service. Note also the two different sea-post cancellations.

Figure 4.

This cover was posted in Philadelphia and addressed to Wurttenburg. It was carried on the return leg of the first trip in 1930 of the S.S. "Bremen". It was flown from the ship at 11.03am on 7th May 1930 stopping first at Southampton where it dropped one bag of mail (117 pieces), refuelled and arrived Amsterdam at 16.50pm. having flown a distance of 925 km. It was then forwarded by night express train to Germany. The cover has an international letter rate of 5 cents and 15 cents for the catapult service.

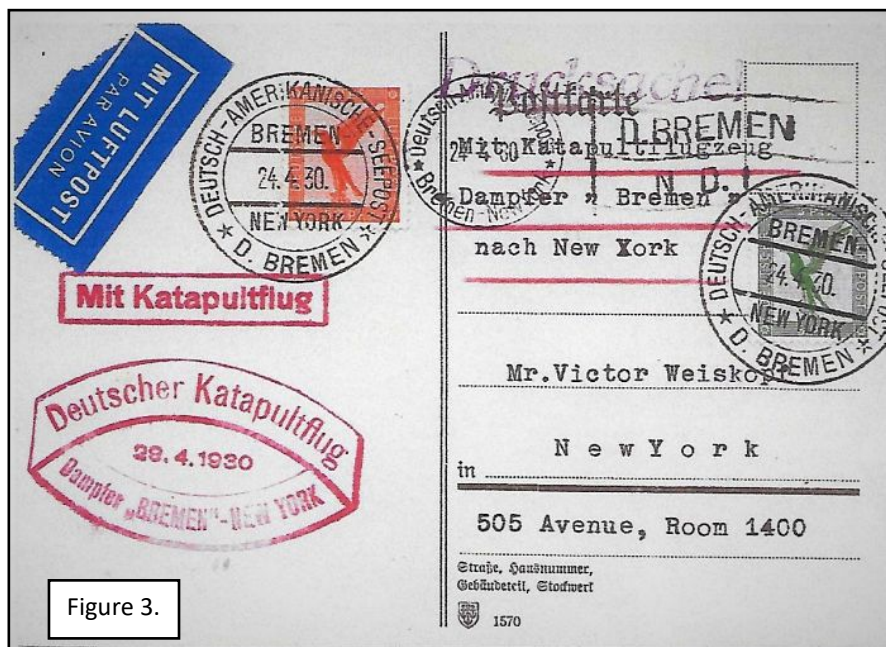


Figure 3.



Figure 4.

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- James W. Graue,
*"German North Atlantic
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 R.G. Stanley-Smith,
*"The North Atlantic
 Catapult"*.

CURRENT MAGAZINE REFERENCES

Many readers have written saying how useful they find this section in which we aim to provide a comprehensive listing of major articles published recently in the aerophilatelic press. If you regularly read magazines or journals which contain philatelic articles (especially those that appear in *Study Circle* magazines) that have not been listed in *Air Mail News*, and which you think might be of interest to other members, please send details such that we may include them for the greater benefit of all.

The Smithsonian's Journal of Air & Space.

Graham Chandler, "Cairo to Baghdad in 1921" (The Royal Air Force pioneered a route over 540 miles of empty desert – to deliver the mail). The June 2018 issue, pp. 34-41. This article can also be accessed on the website:

<https://www.airspacemag.com/history-of-flight/air-mail-to-baghdad-180968982/>

Our thanks to member **Mike King** for bringing this interest piece of interest to members' attention.

Stamp Magazine.

John Winchester, "Blue-Sky Thinking" (USA Air Mail 1918), Vol. 84, No. 6 (June 2018), pp. 40-45.

La Catastrophe [Journal of the Wreck & Crash Mail Society]

John Thiesen, "Mail Plane Crash at East Midlands Airport – 25 January 1988" Vol. 24, No. 89 (March 2018), pp. 3 & 4.

John Thiesen, "Mail from Military Crash in India" Vol. 24, No. 89 (March 2018), pp. 4 & 5.

Tony Dunn, "1929 Ireland to New Zealand Captain Smye Mystery Cover", Vol. 24, No. 89 (March 2018), pp 5 & 6.

(**N.B.** Ronny Vogt, commenting on the crash cover in the is article, said: "My guess is that it has nothing to do with any crash, and that it is a Capt. Smye phantasy, making the best out of a damaged item. I don't like these cards and (so far) I have refused to buy one. Capt. Smye was notorious for "enriching" some of his covers". The current Editor, *Air Mail News*, who has a number of Smy covers in his collection, was totally unaware that Capt. Smye had ever been accused of 'tarting' up his covers and cards. This contention might prove of great interest and be alarming to many readers of our magazine. I invite Ronny, and all readers, to send comments about Capt. Smye and his covers for publication in a future issue of *Air Mail News*).

Bulletin d'Information [the Cercle Aérophilatélique Française]

Jean-Daniel Ayache, "Le Service de poste aérienne Constantinople – Bucarest par l'aviation militaire française en Orient 10 Mai -24 Octobre 1919" No. 74 (March 2018), pp. (cover), 2-23.

Jean Deleuil, "A propos du vol de Mermoz du 18 Novembre 1928", No. 74 (March 2018), pp. 27-28.

Jean-François Labrousse, "Ouverture de la ligne directe Air France Paris-Bône et retour les 6 et 7 Octobre 1947", No. 74 (March 2018), pp. 29-30.

De Aero-Philatelist [de Vliegende Hollander]

Paul Daverschot, "De Eerste Non-Stop Vlucht over de Pacific", issue No. 2, (2018), pp. 35-37.

Jacques Bot, "Noodlanding in Poborelice/Pobrlitz", issue No. 2 (2018), pp. 38-40.

The late J. Boesman, Wim van der Helm (editor), "Een Grand Seigneur van het Luchtruim komt", issue No. 2 (2018), pp. 41-45.

The Canadian Aerophilatelist [quarterly journal of the Canadian Aerophilatelic Society]

[this journal can be accessed via the website: www.aerophilately.ca]

"A Sign of the Postal Times: Britain's Oldest Postcard Publisher Closes" (concerning Salmon's of Sevenoaks, Kent),

Vol. XXXIV, No. 2, (June 2018), page 10.

Chris Hargreaves (Editor) "Commemorating the Centenary of Canada's First Air Mail Flight: Captain Brian Peck's

Montreal to Toronto Flight – June 24th 1918" (article by Dick Malott ex. *The Jack Knight Air Log* of January, April and July 1986),

Vol. XXXIV, No. 2, (June 2018), pp. 13-16.

"Katherine Stinson's Calgary-Edmonton Flight – July 9th 1918", Vol. XXXIV, No. 2 (June 2018), pp. 17-18.

Tom Reyman, "The Roessler Semi-Official Air Mail Covers", Vol. XXXIV, No. 2 (June 2018), pp. 20-22.

Nino Chiovelli,	<i>"Grettir Algrarsson's North Pole Expedition"</i>	Vol. XXXIV, No. 2 (June 2018), pp. 23-24.
Chris Hargreaves,	<i>"1939: Imperial Airways First Trans-Atlantic Service"</i> ,	Vol. XXIV, No. 2 (June 2018), pp. 28-26.
C.A. Stillians,	<i>"1930 – Air Mail from Mexico to Newfoundland and then to the Philippines"</i> ,	Vol. XXIV, No. 2 (June 2018), pp. 29-31.
Gibbons Stamp Monthly		
Derek Connell.	<i>"The First Official Aerial Post of the United Kingdom, 1911"</i>	Vol. 48, No. 9 (February 2018), pp. 34-38.
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Paul M. Holland,	<i>"Postmaster Signed First Flight Favor Covers to India and Palestine"</i> ,	Vol. 89, No. 4 (April 2018), pp. 139-146.
Daniele Fonsato,	<i>"An Overweight Cover on the 1933 Graf Zeppelin Rome Flight"</i> ,	Vol. 89, No. 4 (April 2018), pp. 147-148.
Stephen White,	<i>"Liebenau bei Graz Revisited"</i> ,	Vol. 89, No. 4 (April 2018), pp. 156-159.
Bill Woytowich,	<i>"1936 U.S. to Mexico First International Rocket Flight"</i> ,	Vol. 89, No. 4 (April 2018), pp. 160-163.
William Kriebel,	<i>"Brazil: the War Years Proofs and Errors (Part 3)"</i>	Vol. 89, No. 4 (April 2018), pp. 164-167.
The May 2018 issue (Vol. 89, No. 5) was a special one devoted to articles commemorating the centenary of the inauguration of the United States Air Mail Service, with flights from Washington D.C. to Philadelphia and New York on May 15, 1918.		
Kellen Diamanti and Deborah Fisher,	<i>"Airmail Launched on 'An Exceptional Day'"</i> ,	Vol 89, No. 5 (May 2018), pp. 181-189.
Russell "Rusty" Moore,	<i>"Recalculating . . ."</i>	Vol. 89, No. 5 (May 2018), pp. 190 & 190.
James O'Bannon,	<i>"Money for Airmail: How it Began"</i> ,	Vol. 89, No. 5 (May 2018), pp. 192-196.
Richard Porcelli,	<i>"Special Postmarks Commemorate Centenary"</i> ,	Vol. 89, No. 5 (May 2018), pp. 200-201.
Joe Kirker,	<i>"William Robey, the Jenny Invert and Beyond"</i> ,	Vol. 89, No. 5 (May 2018), pp. 202-209
George Amick,	<i>"Jenny!" (printed inverted) I Wrote the Book."</i> ,	Vol. 89, No. 5 (May 2018), pp. 210-215.
Joe Kirker, The U.S. 1918 'Jenny' Stamp:	<i>"So Many Firsts . . . Continued"</i> ,	Vol. 89, No. 5 (May 2018), pp. 216 & 217.
James Hester,	<i>"TO 1350 – American Export Airlines Challenges Pan Am Supremacy"</i>	Vol 89, No. 6 (June 2018), pp. 228-231.
Dan Gribbin,	<i>"Fascinating Backstamps"</i> ,	Vol. 89, No. 6 (June 2018), pp. 232-234.
Harry Chamberlain,	<i>"Aerophilately Sometimes Just Rolls Down the Runway at You"</i> ,	Vol. 89, No. 6 (June 2018), pp. 235-237
Joe Kirker, (U.S. Governmental Flights 1918)	<i>"The Ever-Dynamic 101s"</i>	Vol. 89, No. 6 (June 2018), pp. 238-241.
Chris Hargreaves (Canadian Air Mail Notes)		
	<i>"Pan American's 1942 Northern Trans-Atlantic Route"</i> ,	Vol. 89, No. 6 (June 2018), pp. 244-254.
Bill Woytowich,	<i>"1935 Rocket Mail from Queensland, Australia"</i> ,	Vol. 89, No. 6 (June 2018), pp. 255-256.
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Joe Kirker,	<i>"The Bechuanaland Beacon"</i> ,	Vol. 89, No. 7 (July 2018), pp. 280-282.
Lee Downer,	<i>"CAM Rate Covers in the Year of Confusion"</i> ,	Vol. 89, No. 7 (July 2018), pp. 283-285.
Richard Saundry,	<i>"Where's the Documentation?"</i> ,	Vol. 89, No. 7 (July 2018), pp. 288-289.
Steve Turechek,	<i>"Collecting C40 Covers"</i> ,	Vol. 89, No. 7 (July 2018), pp. 290-294.
Tom Reyman,	<i>"A Trio of AAMS Convention Covers"</i> ,	Vol. 89, No. 7 (July 2018), pp. 295-297.
Stephen Reinhard,	<i>"Inexpensive Mexican Covers Can Yield Postal History Stories"</i> ,	Vol. 89, No. 7 (July 2018), pp. 298 & 299.
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Joe Kirker, [The U.S. Airmail Early Years 1918-1927],	<i>"Those Who Died in Service"</i> ,	Vol. 89, No. 8 (August 2018), pp. 321-326.
Steve Turechek,	<i>"Collecting C80 Covers"</i> ,	Vol. 89, No. 8 (August 2018), pp. 327-329.
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Editor's Postscript.

Members sometimes ask how I set about editing this journal. Generally I try to organise things in the order Chairman's Report and Editorial, Letters, BAMS News, General Aerophilatelic News, a "A & A" section, original articles, Literature Reviews, ending with a listing of aerophilatelic articles in other journals. We don't necessarily include all these areas every time - for instance in this issue we have no Chairman's report and we are not in receipt of any literature reviews. I usually plan only to include lists of articles published in other journals in alternate issues of *Air Mail News*. As for the articles we publish I try to have some kind of balance depending upon what I have in the 'ice box' so as to, hopefully, include something of interest for most of our readership. Thus you would be unlikely to have any issue comprised only of articles relating to Latin American air mails, or perhaps only of Imperial Airways. Furthermore certain members more regularly provide submissions, and seeking to give everyone a chance to see the fruits of their researches in print I consciously plan not to include more than one article by any given author in any given issue. Currently we have a few articles in reserve: two interesting thought-provoking submissions from Peter Wingent, and the second part of the informative discussion of early Chilean air mails provided by Martyn Cusworth. These should appear in subsequent issues. As members will know the May 2019 issue will be last I plan to edit. I would like to go out on a high. Please consider writing something special for including in the February and May issues. Many thanks.