

RFC & RAF SPECIAL & EMERGENCY AIR MAIL FLIGHTS, JUNE 1917 – JULY 1921

When Lt. Colonel Tennant arrived in Mesopotamia in July 1916 to take command of the Royal Flying Corps it consisted of No 30 Squadron based near the front line at Sheikh Sqad and an Aircraft Park base at Tanooma near Basra. The British offensive against the Turkish forces began in early 1917 and by March of that year had captured Kut and Baghdad. During August 1917 No 63 Squadron arrived at the Aircraft Park and both squadrons were transferred to Ramadi and other advanced air bases at Samarra and Baghdad.

Historical note: Aerial reconnaissance was essential to the recapture of Basra and Baghdad and with the help of the Australian and New Zealand Governments an air reconnaissance unit named "AIRCRAFT PARK I.E.F. 'D'" was established to assemble and maintain the aircraft after arriving by ship at Basra from the United Kingdom. Half the complement was pilots, mechanics and aircraft supplied by the two Empire governments, with the Royal Flying and Indian Flying Corps making up the rest. Between July 1917 and early November 1918 the campaign was fought north of Baghdad in Upper Mesopotamia with the result of the capitulation of the Turkish VI Army and the occupation of Mosul following the Armistice.



"On Field Service", Aircraft Park I.E.F. "D", Royal Flying Corps, 12 June 1917. Posted from F.P.O. No 56, 14 JU. 17 to Dewsbury, Yorkshire, with double ring "Passed, Censor, D" applied.



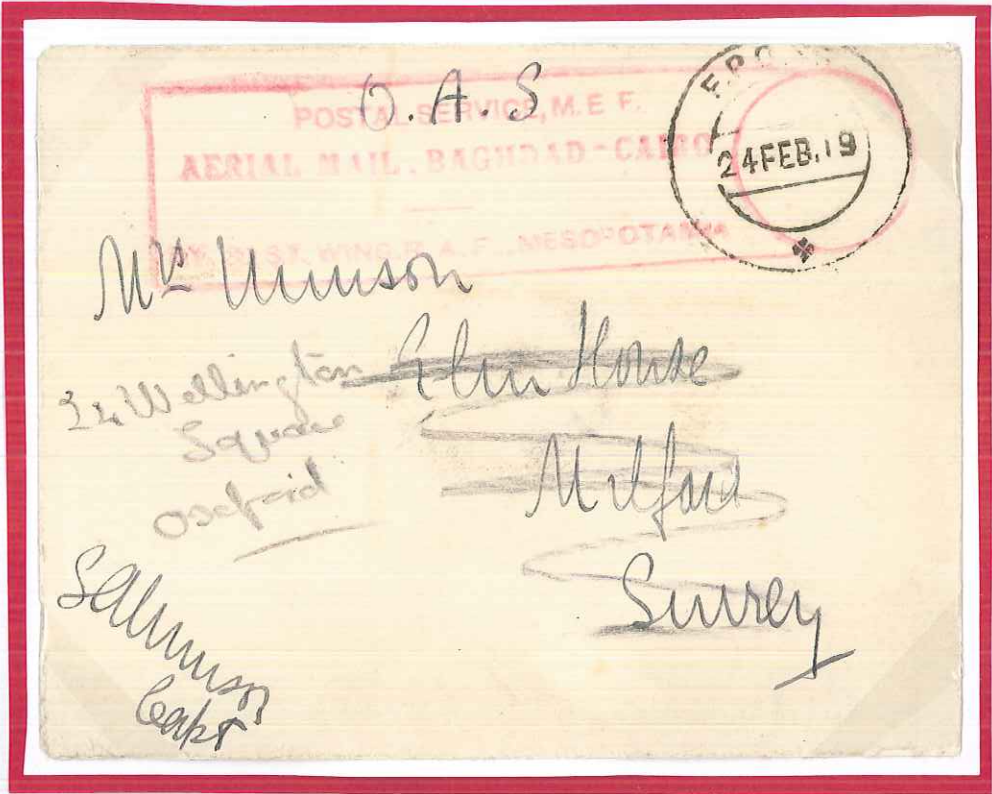
Reduced colour scan of reverse to show F.P.O. No 56
c.d.s. of Stationary Field Post Office, Basra, in use
from 30 November 1916 to 31 May 1919.

Official records state that, "RFC mail and important official letters were flown from Basra via the 'air corridor' to Baghdad" as from mid-1917 for dispatch to recipient destinations.

**One of three covers now recorded as existing sent from
"ROYAL FLYING CORPS, AIRCRAFT PARK I.E.F. D"**

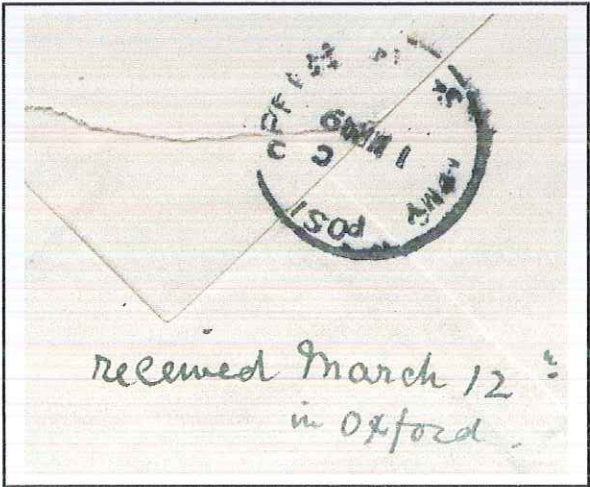
RAF Special Air Mail Flight Between Baghdad and Cairo, February 1919

Early in the morning of 25 February 1919 two DH4 aircraft from No 63 Squadron departed Baghdad for Cairo with two passengers onboard who were on their way to attend the Paris Peace Conference. The lead aircraft was piloted by Major O.Y. Boyd, Commander of the 31st Wing, who carried as a passenger Lt. Col. A. Wilson the Civil Commissioner, with the other aircraft piloted by Captain F. Nuttall carrying Captain D. Lapraik as passenger. The route flown was via the Euphrates valley to Abu Kemal and Palmyra where a fuel pump problem forced Nuttall to land for repairs. Once repairs had been carried out the two aircraft flew on to Damascus arriving there on the same day. Rain delayed the aircraft from leaving until the 28 February with the aircraft setting off for Ramleh but engine trouble forced Nuttall to land again. Further mishaps and damage occurred to both aircraft and on reaching Ramleh the aircraft and the mails were sent on to Kantara by rail.



F.P.O. 55 24 FEB. 19 (Baghdad Stationery Post Office).

Special flight cachet applied in magenta at F.P.O. 55.



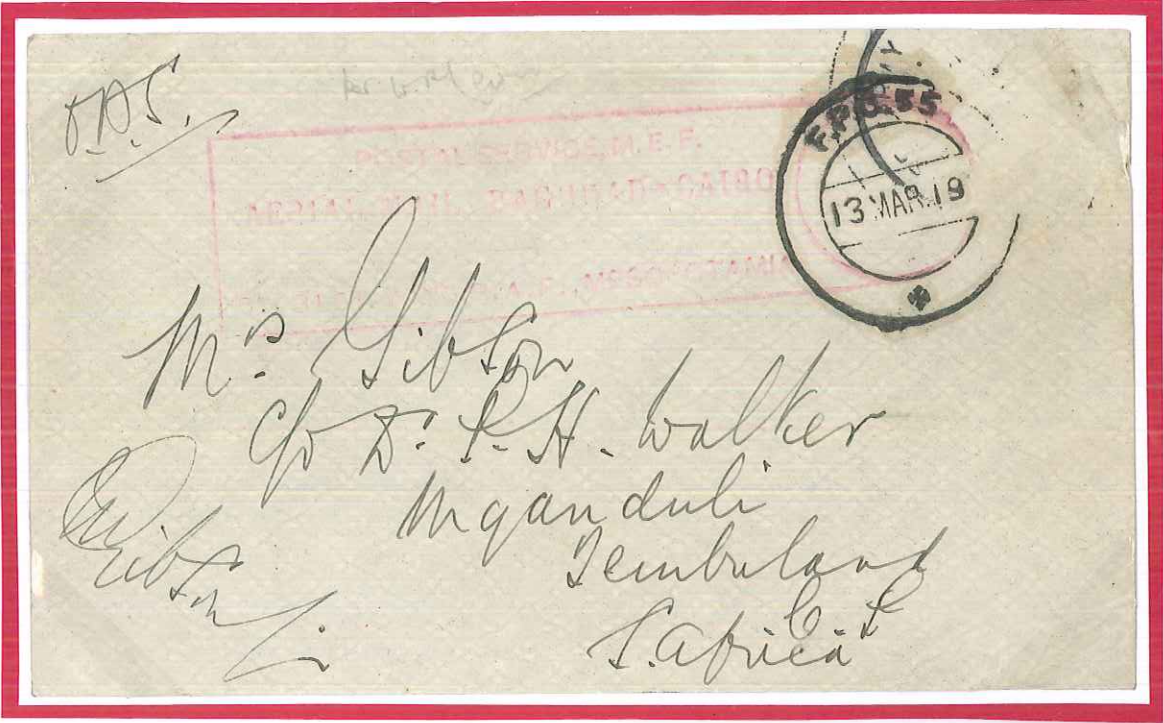
Reduced scan of reverse to show
backstamped c.d.s. of
ARMY POST OFFICE
1 MR 19
SZ 14

Applied at Kantara on arrival and mss notation
"received March 12th in Oxford"

One of twenty-three covers known and
recorded from this 'Special Flight'.

RAF Special Air Mail Flight Between Baghdad and Cairo, March 1919

Early in March 1919 two DH9 aircraft from No 142 Squadron based at Suez and forming part of the 5th Wing, Palestine Brigade, piloted by Captain A.J.C. Styran and Lieutenant J.M.D. Mills flew from Suez to Baghdad, with the exact date being unknown. However on 14 March the two pilots departed Baghdad on the return flight via Ramadi where Captain Styran's aircraft needed a replacement engine exhaust valve spring. Lieutenant Mills flew on to Damascus the same day with Captain Styran following on the 15 March. Both aircraft arriving back at Cairo on the 16 March 1919.



F.P.O. 55 13 MAR. 19 (Baghdad Stationery Post Office).



Special flight cachet applied in magenta at F.P.O. 55.

No Backstamping in evidence.

One of seven recorded covers known and recorded from this special RAF flight.

Emergency Air Mail Services Due to a Civilian General Strike March – May 1919

The British Administration in Egypt was confronted with serious problems in the early months of 1919 with trouble starting on 8 March when four Nationalist leaders were arrested and sent to Malta under detention. This move sparked off riots and general disturbances amongst the Arab students and the general public throughout Egypt, Palestine and parts of Mesopotamia. On 4 April a general strike was called which disrupted all mail services in the area, with the railway staff all joining the strike action on 22 April, further affecting the mails. With mail piling up the Royal Air Force was pressed into carrying official and bank mail between the various centers. By the 23 May the major disturbances had ceased and although there were smaller problems in some areas the general strike was over.



BASE ARMY POST OFFICE 22 MR 19 Z

“OHMS” envelope used twice the first on 31 January 1919 from the “Sanitary Office-Docks, Alexandria” to “Medical Services (Embark) Alexandria Docks”. Second time 22 March 1919 to the “Embarkation Medical Office, Port Said”.

Unframed cachet type 1B “**AERIAL POST, EEF**” applied between 18 March and 3 April 1919 at Alexandria. Flown by RAF No 269 Squadron “Short 184” seaplane from Aboukir, Alexandria to Port Said.



Reduced colour scan of reverse to show backstamping of “Embarkation Medical Office, Port Said” plus initials of receiving officer and receiving c.d.s. dated 23 March 1919.

Official records state that 120 items of mail were carried on these emergency flights, with 45 now believed to exist of the 4 types of cachets applied to official envelopes 15 of which are the ‘unframed’ cachet.

Emergency Air Mail During the Period of Civil Disturbances March – May 1919

This emergency air mail service lasted for 48 days with four hastily manufactured handstamp used to signify that the mail was flown and that no postage was payable.

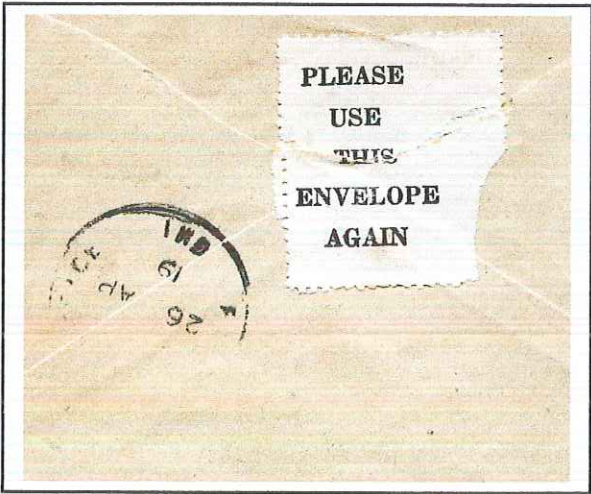


BASE ARMY POST OFFICE L 23 AP 19 Z

This B.A.P.O. was housed in the old Bourse Building near the Egyptian General Post Office in Alexandria and was opened on 5 April 1915, closing in April 1920.

The handstamped cachet above, this type 3 was in use as from 5 April to 4 May 1919 at Cairo.

Flown by No 111 Squadron De Havilland DH-10 aircraft from Alexandria to Ramieh, Palestine, then to destination at Haifa by surface transport.



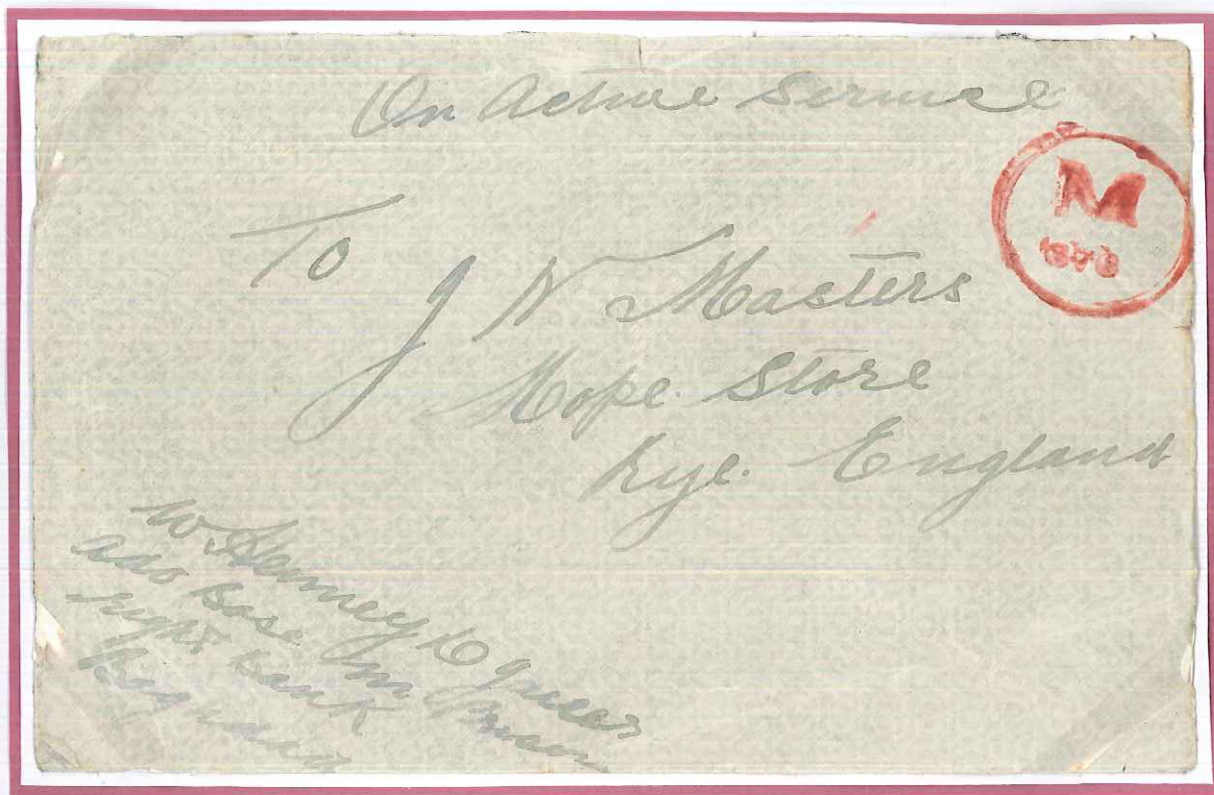
Reduced colour scan of reverse to show partial receiving c.d.s. of Forces Post Office, GMI, dated 26 April 1919, issued to the 1st Echelon, Egyptian Expeditionary Force stationed at Haifa, Palestine.

Official records state that 120 items of mail were carried on these emergency flights, with 5 items recorded to destinations outside Egypt, Palestine and Iraq.

One of the few officially recorded covers with this type 3 boxed handstamp now known.

Emergency Air Mail Services Due to the Arab Revolt May 1920 – July 1921

Serious tribal conflicts and disturbances broke out in May 1920 between the Shi'a and Sunni sects in the holy centers of Najaf and Kerbala. By July this Arab Rebellion was countrywide and caused great disruption to the postal services within Iraq and to all other mail routes and services outside the country. On 29 July 1920 all surface mail routes both in and out of Baghdad were cut off and an air mail service was instituted by the RAF to the outlying centers within Iraq and to Cairo with official mail.



F.P.O. No. 61 28JUL.20

Forces Post Office No 61, Indian Forces stationery Post Office situated on the Right Bank, Baghdad, open between 16 August 1917 and 5 February 1922.

Beside the circular datestamp applied to the rear, a circular “**M 676**” handstamp has been applied signifying official military mail free of all postal charges, in this case “On Active Service” from the “Base Military Prison” situated on the Right Bank in Baghdad.

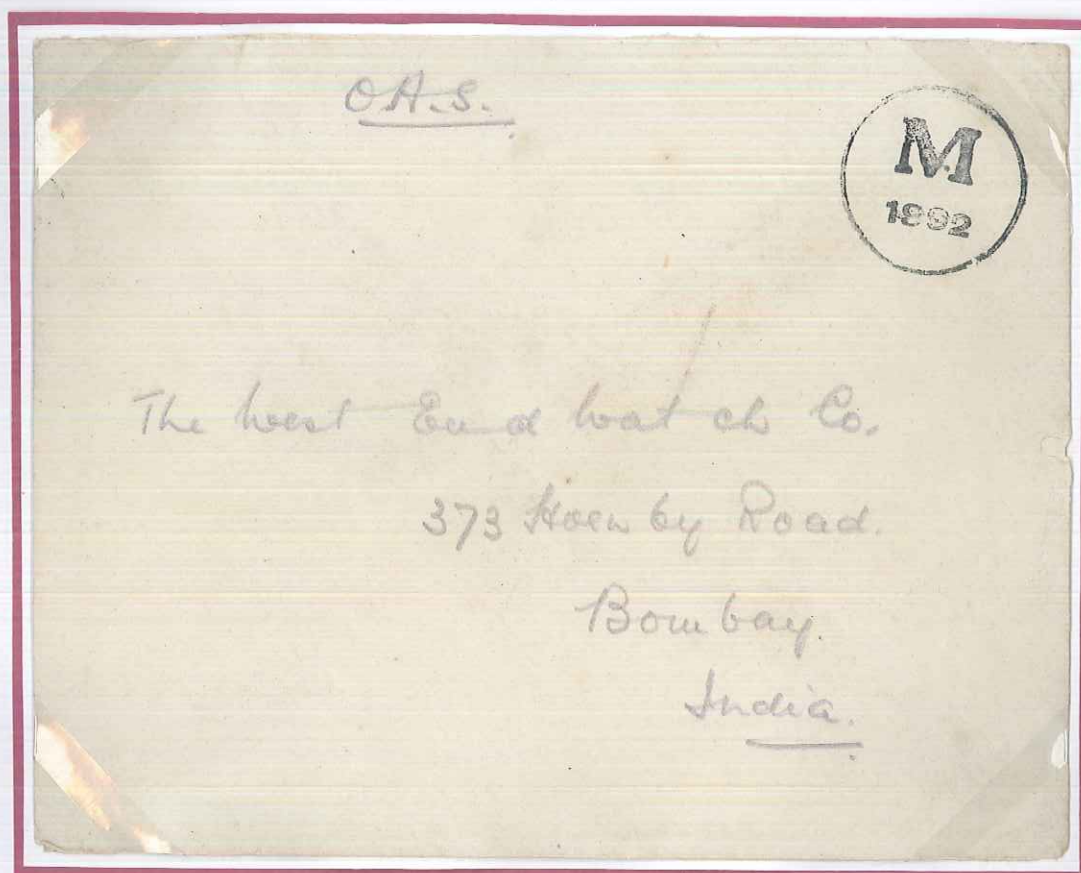


Reduced colour scan of reverse to show the Forces Post Office circular datestamp and censors handstamp "M 676".

Very few recorded items of official "OHMS" and military mail marked "On Active Service" written during this period of civil unrest flown by the Royal Air Force, No 30 Squadron aircraft between Baghdad and Cairo on this emergency air mail service.

Emergency Air Mail Due to Revolts & Civil Unrest May 1920 – July 1921

During this time of civil disruption only 'official' mail was carried, but when space was available mail from the banks in Mesopotamia and Palestine was also carried. After the end of hostilities from World War 1, many of the Squadrons based in Egypt were disbanded and the service personnel returned to the United Kingdom, India, Australia and New Zealand. The result of which caused the few Squadrons still in service in the region to fly missions almost non-stop to deliver the mails and other vital material.



RAMADI (IRAQ) 8OCT.20

Combined post and telegraph office at Ramadi, west of Baghdad opened on 9 January 1919.

Official mail from service personnel to Bombay, India flown on the emergency flight to Cairo, then to Port Said for transporting to India via the contract P&O mail steamer.

Large "M and figure 1892" applied in black. These cachets are known applied in red, violet, blue and black ink and signify that the correspondence is of 'official nature' and is free of postage.



Colour scan of reverse to show
backstamped c.d.s. of
Ramadi dated 8 October 1920.

To date some forty items of correspondence from this period of civil unrest during 1920 – 21 are known and recorded as still being in existence.

Emergency Air Mails Due to Unrest & Riots by the Arab Population May 1920 – July 1921

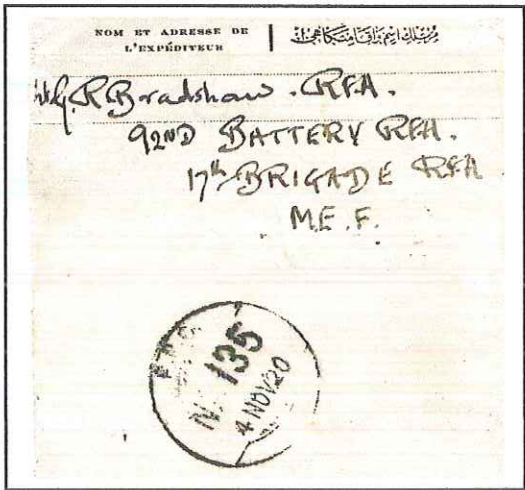
The RAF Squadrons based in Egypt and Mesopotamia were pressed into flying only official "OHMS" and "On Active Service" correspondence due to the conditions prevailing during this revolt. Much of the mail was from servicemen and was carried free of postage as allowed by the Military Concession Regulations. Mail had to be handstamped with the circular "M" cachet and was carried on the air service as a priority and as space permitted.



F.P.O. No. 135 4 NOV.20

Forces Post Office No 135 was a stationary office situated at Khidhr, Iraq and was opened on 6 July 1919 and closed on 4 December 1920.

Letter travelled to Baghdad from Khidhr, Iraq via surface transport and then air service to Heliopolis air station, Egypt and on to Port Said via road and rail to be placed onboard the P&O regular mail steamer for the United Kingdom.



Reduced colour scan of reverse to show sender's address and c.d.s. backstamping of F.P.O. 135, dated 4 November 1920.

As letter writing paper and envelopes were in short supply many of the service personnel resorted to what they could find to use for letters to family and friends. In the case shown an overprinted captured Turkish postal stationery registered envelope has been utilised.

Postage was not required as the letter was 'free' of postal charges under the Military Concession regulations.

Emergency Air Mails Due to a Revolt by the Arabs in the Region May 1920 – July 1921

Many of the major centres such as Maqil, Kirkuk, Ramadi, Kut and Basrah were serviced by these emergency flights carrying essential supplies and mail to and from the outlying centres and Baghdad. Only official "OHMS" and serving military personnel "OAS" mail was carried on the flights.



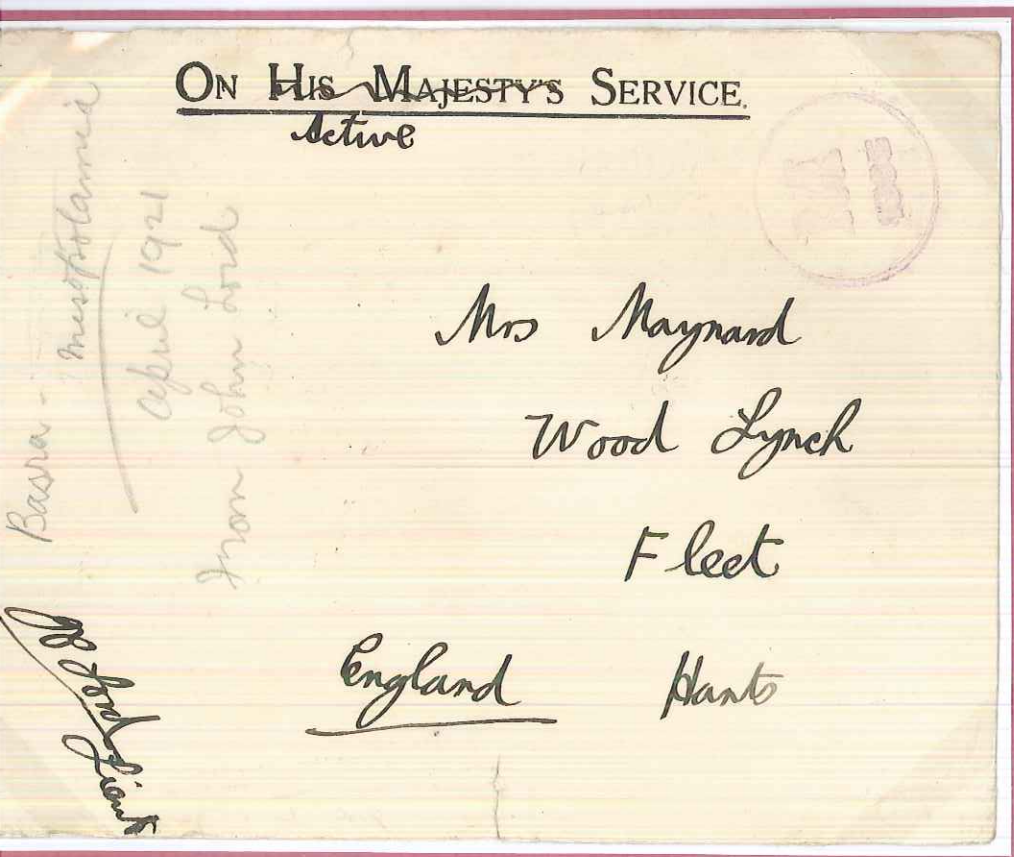
ASHAR BARRACKS 1 JAN 21

Pre-stamped envelope with U.K. 2d orange adhesive to pay the surface letter rate (U.K. to Iraq).

Front has received the 24mm circular handstamp in black ink "M, 922"

Letter posted at the civilian Post Office attached to the Ashar Barracks, Basra during the revolt period and carried by air to Cairo from Baghdad under the military concession rules, free of charge.

Adhesive is perforated with an inverted lettering "COX"



MA'QIL (IRAQ) 11 MAR 21

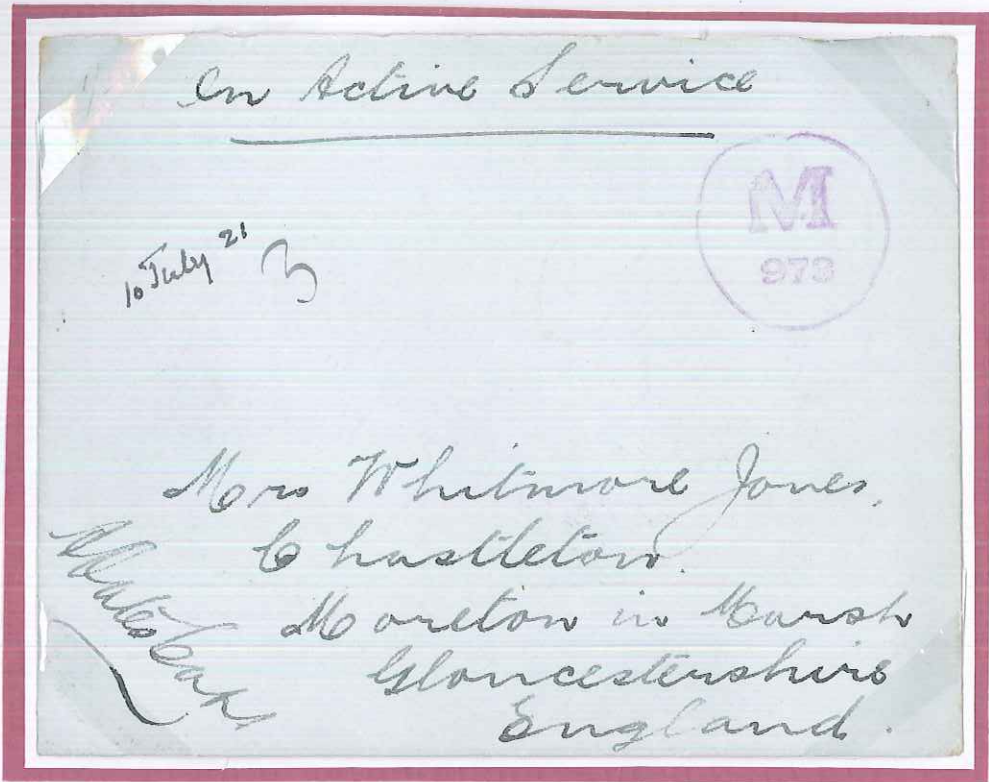
"On Active Service" envelope has received the large "M" with no 1385 beneath, to signify that the letter is of official nature from a member of the serving armed forces and is to be posted free of postal charges and fees under the military concession rules.

Cover travelled from Ma'qil to Baghdad via Kirkuk and then on to Cairo via this emergency air service. Transferring by surface to Port Said to be uplifted by the regular P&O contract mail service to the United Kingdom, arriving at the recipients address in Fleet during April 1921 (see manuscript notation at left front in pencil).

Backstamped on reverse Ma'qil c.d.s. dated 11 MAR 21.

Emergency Air Mail Service Due to Arab Civilian Revolts and Unrest, May 1920 – July 1921

Due to this civilian unrest period the RAF Squadrons were pressed into service transporting the official mails and where space permitted Bank correspondence also. Much of the mails were letters and other items of correspondence from members of the armed services writing to family and friends in the United Kingdom and other British Empire countries and were marked in manuscript "ON ACTIVE SERVICE".



HINAIDI (IRAQ) 12 JL 21

"On Active Service" cover with large circular "M 973" handstamp applied in purple (armed services concession letter rate). Transported via RAF emergency air service to Egypt, then via P&O mail steamer to the U.K.

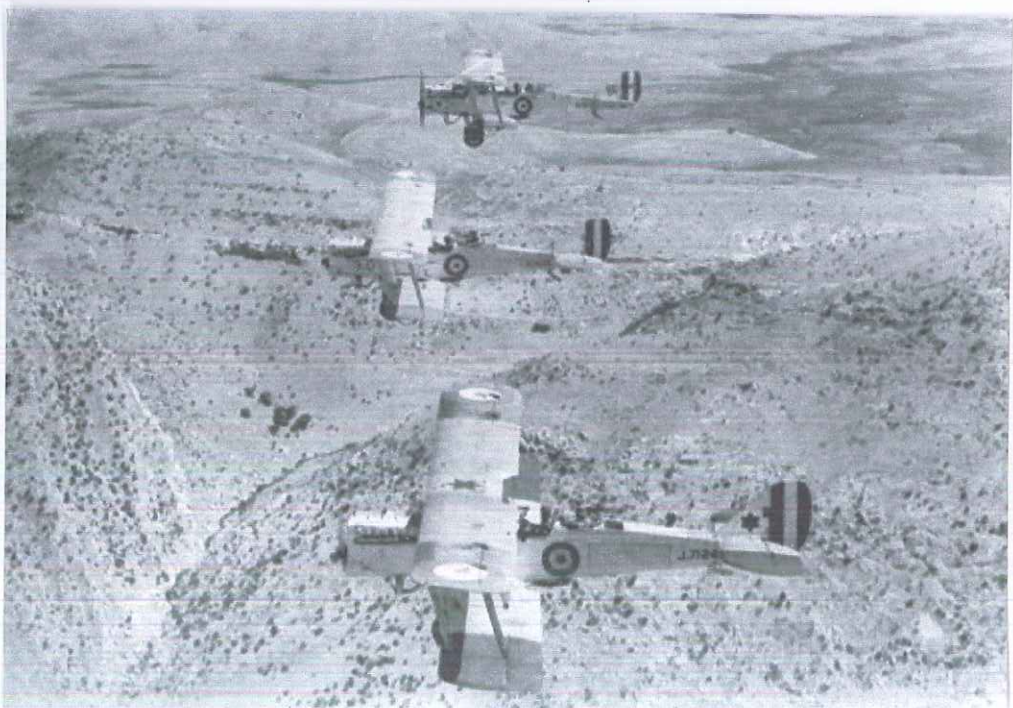


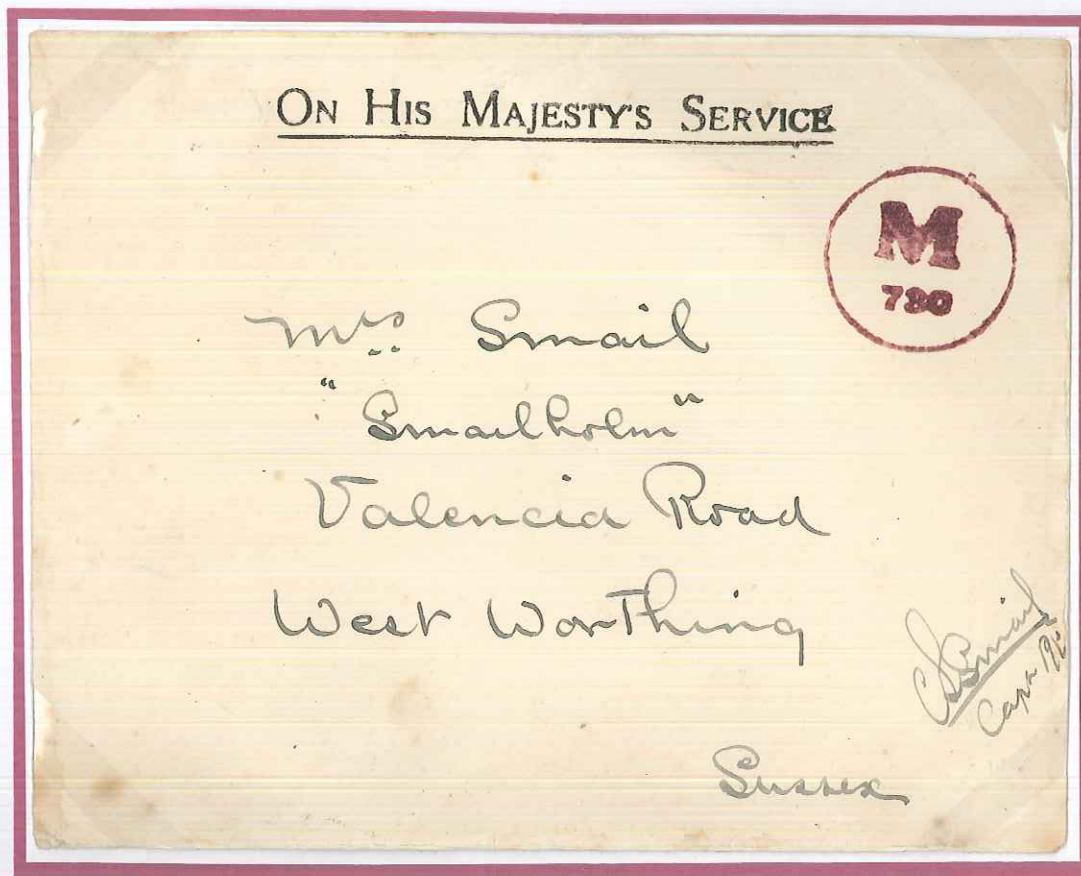
Photo of 3 De Havilland DH9A aircraft of No 30 Squadron on patrol during this period of the Arab uprising and revolts during 1920 -1921.

PROVING TRIAL AIR SERVICES CARRYING OFFICIAL ONLY MAIL, JULY – OCTOBER 1921

First Dispatch of Mail to the UK via the Baghdad – Cairo Proving Trial Air Services

From Inception this air service was considered to be for military purposes for the RAF to maintain law and order and as a supply route for military establishments within Iraq. Its secondary objective was to form part of the air mail route to India and beyond which could be made available to the general public in due course. Before this service could be made public a series of experimental trial flights were undertaken conveying official mail only from Baghdad to Cairo and return between 28 July and 16 October 1921.

Depart Baghdad 28 July 1921	Arrive Cairo 30 July 1921
Depart Port Said 2 August 1921	Arrive London 9 August 1921



BASRAH 25 JUL. 21 6TH. DES.

These experimental flights only carried Official correspondence, in the case above from the officer in charge of the Royal Engineers detachment stationed at Basra, Southern Iraq.

Total transit time of 16 days from date of posting in Basra.



Large "M, 730" in circle denotes official military correspondence from the Royal Engineers detachment serving in Iraq during this period. As the letter is official it is to be carried free of all postal charges.

Of the 3 bags of mail carried on this first experimental trial flight, the letter shown above is one of five known and recorded items that now survive from this RAF air mail service between Iraq and Egypt.

Dispatch no 2 via Baghdad – Cairo Proving Trial Air Services

Depart Baghdad 15 August 1921	Arrive Cairo 16 August 1921
Depart Port Said 23 August 1921	Arrive London 2 September 1921



F.P.O. No 18 17AU.21

F.P.O. 18, stationary Indian Forces Post Office situated at Heliopolis, Egypt from 29 May 1919 to 29 April 1922.

Total transit time of 17 days from posting to receipt in London.

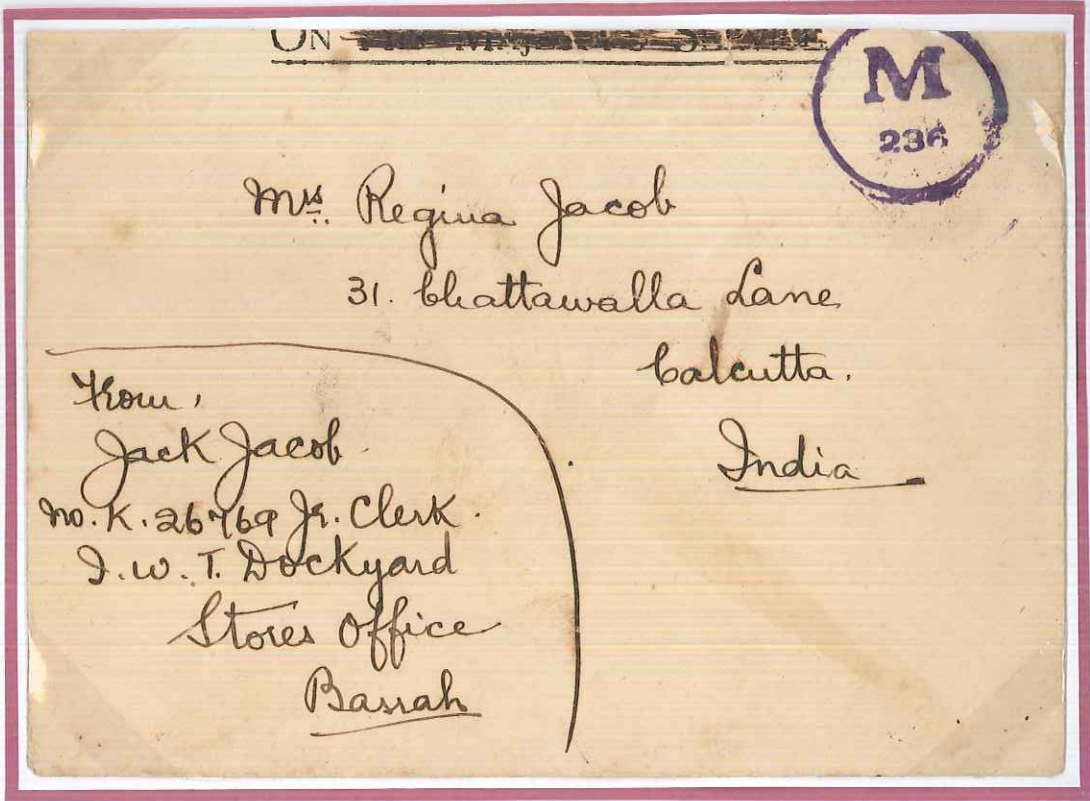
Official mail (O.A.S.) carried on the second of these trial flights by DH 9a aircraft of No 47 Squadron, RAF between Baghdad and Cairo, handed into the Base Post Office for onward transmission on arrival.

Of the 5 bags of official correspondence carried between Baghdad and Cairo on this second of the experimental trial flights undertaken by the RAF, the above letter is one of two items of mail that are now known and recorded as surviving.

All mail from this dispatch from Baghdad to the United Kingdom was delayed in Egypt for 7 days, awaiting onwards carriage to London by contract mail steamer.

Dispatch no 3 via Baghdad – Cairo Proving Trial Air Services

Depart Baghdad 1 September 1921	Arrive Cairo 1 September 1921
Depart Port Said 5 September 1921	Arrive Calcutta 15 September 1921



ASHAR BARRACKS 31 AUG 21

Letter carried from Ashar Barracks to Basra by surface transport then to Baghdad by RAF air service to connect to the air mail service to Cairo. From Cairo the mail was transport by railway to Port Said, then to the P&O regular contract mail steamer to Calcutta.

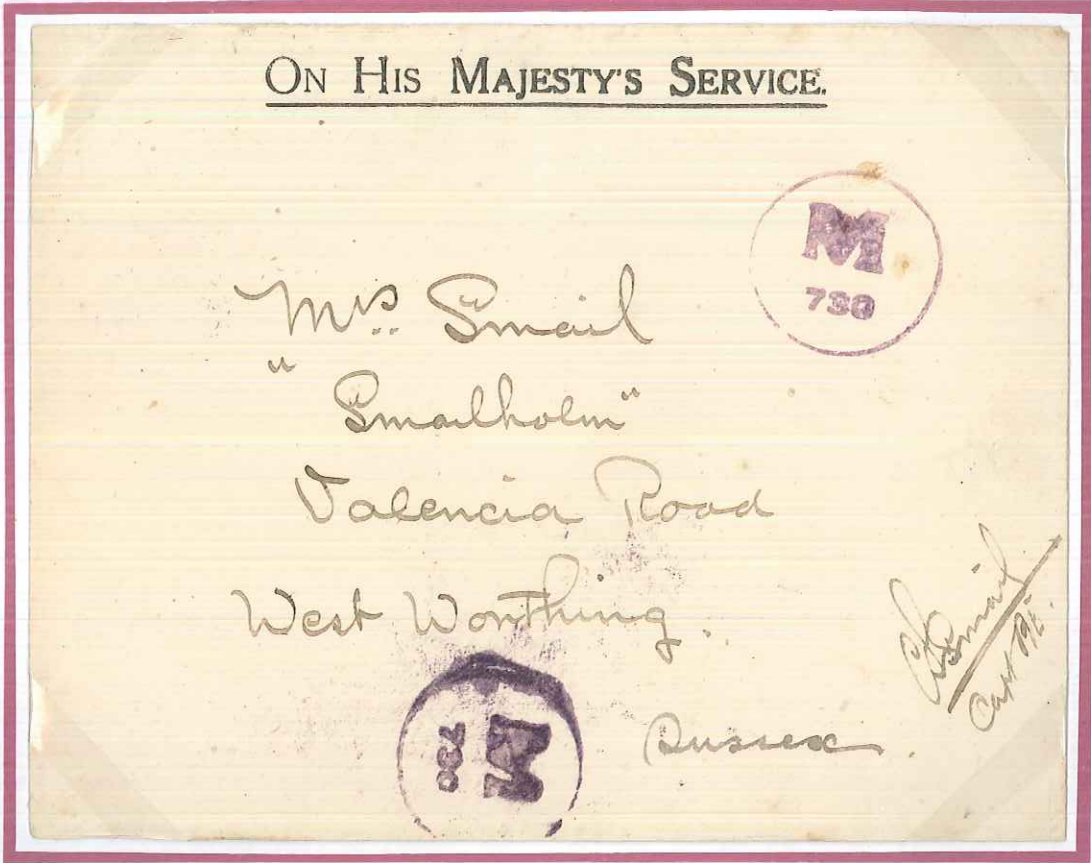
Front has received the large “M & 236 within circle” to signify that the letter is official from a serviceman ‘On Active Service’ and is free of postal charges.



Reduced colour scan of reverse to show receiving backstamping c.d.s. of Calcutta dated 15 September 1921.

Dispatch no 5 via Baghdad – Cairo Proving Trial Air Services

Depart Baghdad 1 October 1921	Arrive Cairo 2 October 1921
Depart Port Said 3 October 1921	Arrive London 10 October 1921



BASRAH 18 SEP 21 7TH. DES.

Only official correspondence was carried on these proving trial flights from Baghdad to Cairo and thence to Port Said for sea mail transport to the United Kingdom via P&O steamer. The cover illustrated above was written by Captain C.S. Smail, commanding officer of the Royal Engineers detachment stationed at Basra, Southern Iraq.

Envelope has received the circular handstamp in red “M, 730” signifying that the mail is official ‘OHMS’ correspondence and no postage is due to be paid.

Total transit time of 28 days from date of posting in Basrah, southern Iraq to arrival in London.



Reduced scan of reverse to show circular datestamp of Basrah.

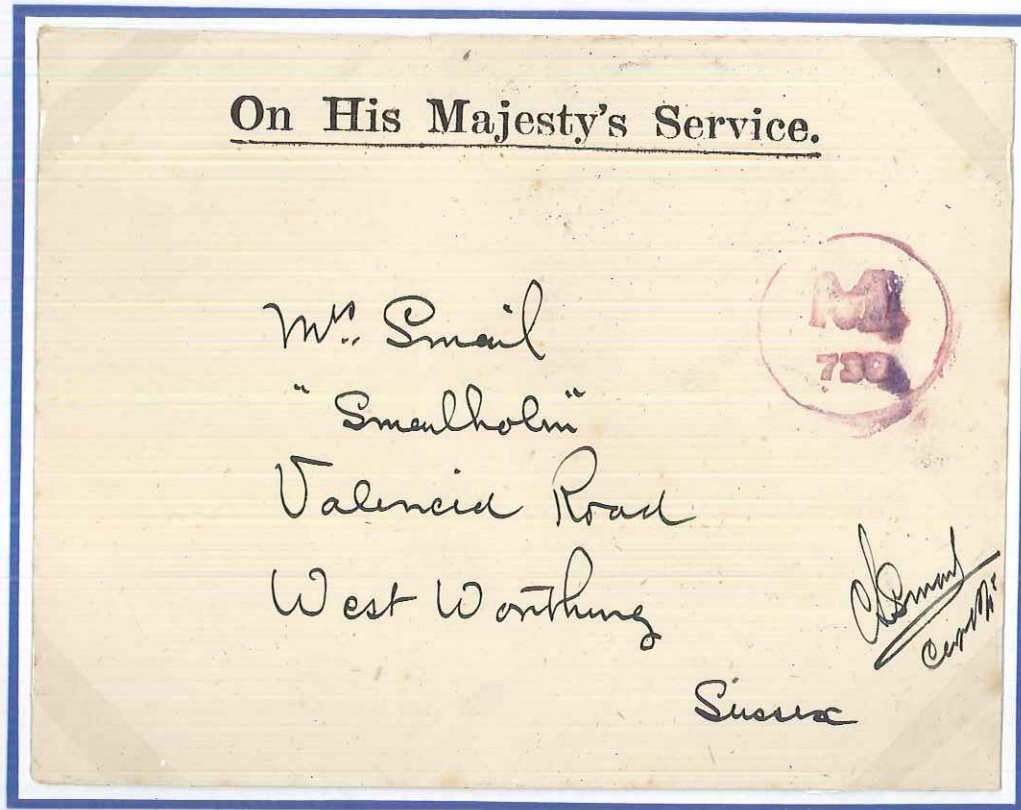
The above letter is one of three known and recorded items of mail which now survive of the 6 small bags (approximately 70 items of mail per bag).

A total of 7 proving trial flights transporting mail were undertaken during this period between Baghdad and Cairo. (Ref: Report on Cairo-Baghdad Air Mail Service, February 1922, prepared by the Air Ministry and checked by the GPO, Post 33/772A)

REGULAR AIR MAIL SERVICES TO AND FROM IRAQ, OCTOBER 1921 – DECEMBER 1926

First Dispatch of Mail from Iraq to UK via the Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 12 November 1921	Arrive Cairo 14 November 1921
Depart Port Said 15 November 1921	Arrive London 22 November 1921



BASRAH 31 OCT. 21 12TH DES.

"OHMS" headed letter posted from Basrah to the United Kingdom from Captain C.S. Smail, commanding officer of the Royal Engineer's detachment stationed in Basrah during this period.

Letter has received the circular handstamp of "M, 730" applied in red to signify that the correspondence is free of postal charges under "OHMS" privileges.



Reduced scan of reverse to show
c.d.s. of Basrah dated
31 OCT 21.

1,663 letters and other items of correspondence from both the military and civilian population carried on this first of the regular air mail flights between Baghdad and Cairo.

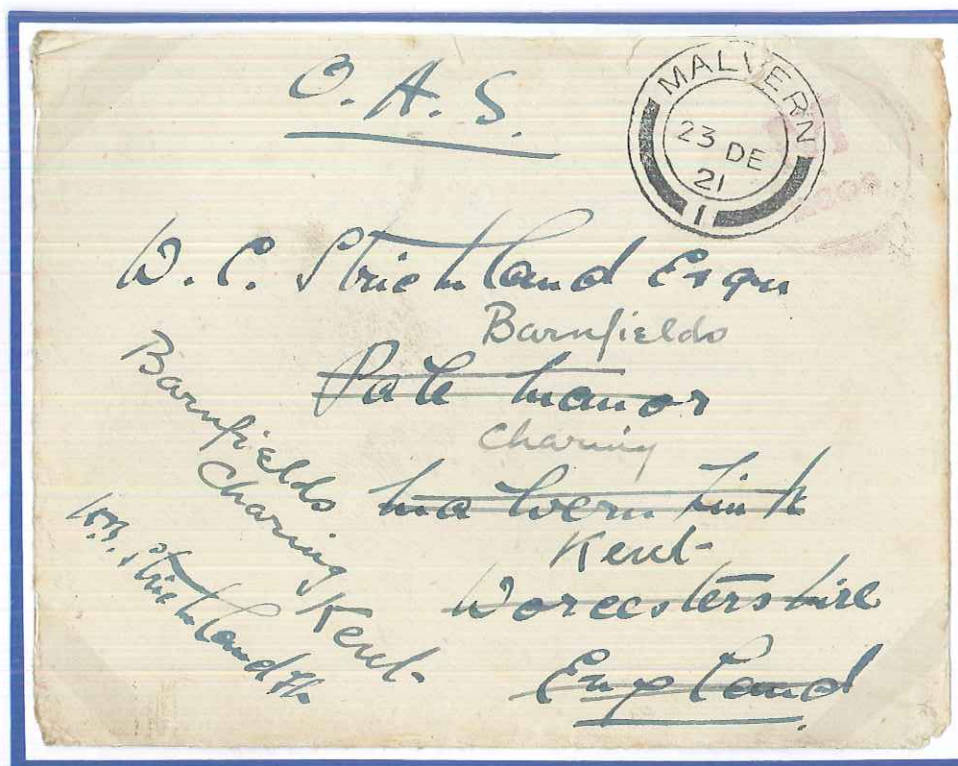
This first dispatch of air mail from Iraq was delayed by bad weather for several days.

Total of 22 days in transit from date of posting to receipt in the UK.

Dispatch no 2 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 28 November 1921
Depart Port Said 30 November 1921

Arrive Cairo 29 November 1921
Arrive London 7 December 1921



MOSEL 12 NOV. 21 10 – A.M.

Letter departed Mosel, Northern Iraq on 12 November, arriving at Baghdad West on the same day via RAF aircraft of No 30 Squadron flying De Havilland 9a aircraft.

Total transit time of 26 days from date of posting to receipt in London.

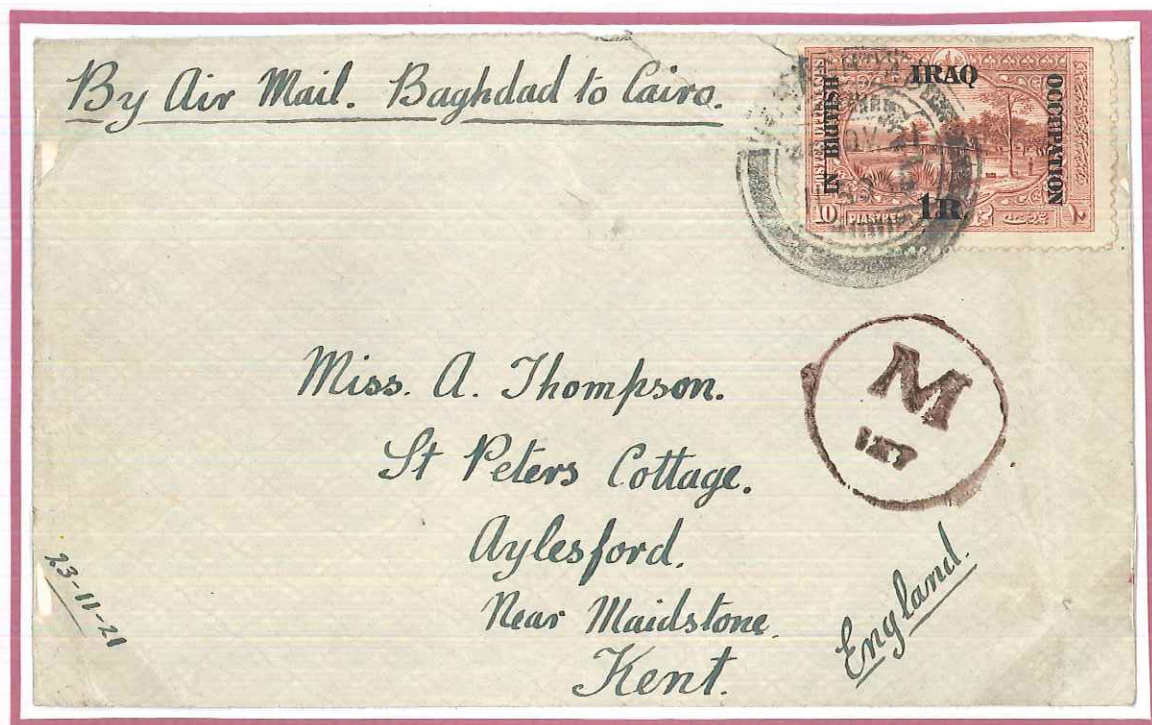


Reduced scan of reverse to show circular datestamp and place of posting.

Letter has received the circular handstamp of "M, 2609" (Military Concession) applied in red to signify that the correspondence is official "O.A.S." and free of all postal charges under the concession for active servicemen.

1971 items of mail carried on this flight to Cairo from Baghdad.

Departure of the aircraft from Baghdad was delayed for 2 days due to the airfield being out of service.



BAGHDAD 23 NOV 21 11.50 AM

Correct postage of 1 rupee (16 annas) equivalent to 1 shilling applied to pay the special air mail letter fee per ounce, (11 November to 20 December 1921). Normal postage of 3 annas surface letter rate paid by "M" cachet, signifying military postage concession rate.

Total transit of 15 days from posting to delivery.

Letter has additionally been hand stamped with circular cachet "M 127" (this no '127' in use at RAF HQ, Baghdad) signifying that the letter is official Military mail from serving personnel, in this case a Corporal serving with the RAF in Baghdad Head Quarters.

1971 items of mail carried on this air service from Baghdad to Cairo.

The Deputy Director of Postal Service, (Civil), Iraq issued the following official notice on 8 November 1921, "**The 'M' stamp will be used for both official and private letters until the end of November to cover foreign postage (3 annas) after which the use of the 'M' stamp will be discontinued**".

First air mail service to carry the mail at the 1 rupee air fee.

One of five known and recorded items of mail with both the "M" handstamp and overprinted adhesive postage stamps applied.

Dispatch no 3 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 11 December 1921

Depart Port Said 14 December 1921

Arrive Cairo 13 December 1921

Arrive London 23 December 1921

ZELOUF, ABOUDY & Co. - BAGHDAD

By Air-mail Baghdad-Cairo

Mr. A. Dunous

66 Clyde Road

W. Didsbury

Manchester

(England)

BAGHDAD 25 NOV. 21 11. 30A.M.

Postage of 1 rupee, 3 annas applied to rear, making up the postage charges of 1 rupee (1 shilling equivalent) per letter for the air mail fee (13 October until 12 December 1921), plus surface postage of 1½ annas (1½d equivalent) per 10 grammes or part of that weight.



Colour scan of reverse to show postage and datestamp applied.

Second and final air service to carry the mail at the 1 rupee per ounce air fee rate.

Total transit of 29 days from date of posting at Baghdad to receipt in the UK, which included the flight departure being delayed by bad weather at Baghdad.



BAGHDAD 8 DEC 21 11- AM

Correct postage of 1 rupee, 3 annas applied, made up of 3 annas per ounce surface postage, plus 16 annas special air fee per ounce (11 November to 21 December 1921).

Total transit time of 15 days from date of posting to delivery in the United Kingdom and includes the departure from Baghdad being delayed due to inclement weather.

Letter endorsed in manuscript as required "**By Air Mail. Baghdad to Cairo**", additionally the front has received the type 3 boxed handstamp "**BY AIR SERVICE**" applied Baghdad Post Office.

Earliest recorded date of usage of this boxed type 3 single line handstamp.

Three bags of mail containing 354 letters carried between Baghdad and Cairo on this third regular fortnightly RAF air service.

Dispatch no 6 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 22 January 1922	Arrive Cairo 24 January 1922
Depart Port Said 30 January 1922	Arrive London 6 February 1922



BAGHDAD 20 JAN 22 11.20 AM

Correct postage applied of 9 annas made up of 3 annas per ounce surface postage plus 6 annas special air fee per ounce from Baghdad to Cairo and beyond, 21 December 1921 to 13 December 1923.

Cover is additionally endorsed in manuscript "**By Air Mail Baghdad to Cairo**", plus date of letter written and posting, **20.1.22** at lower left front.

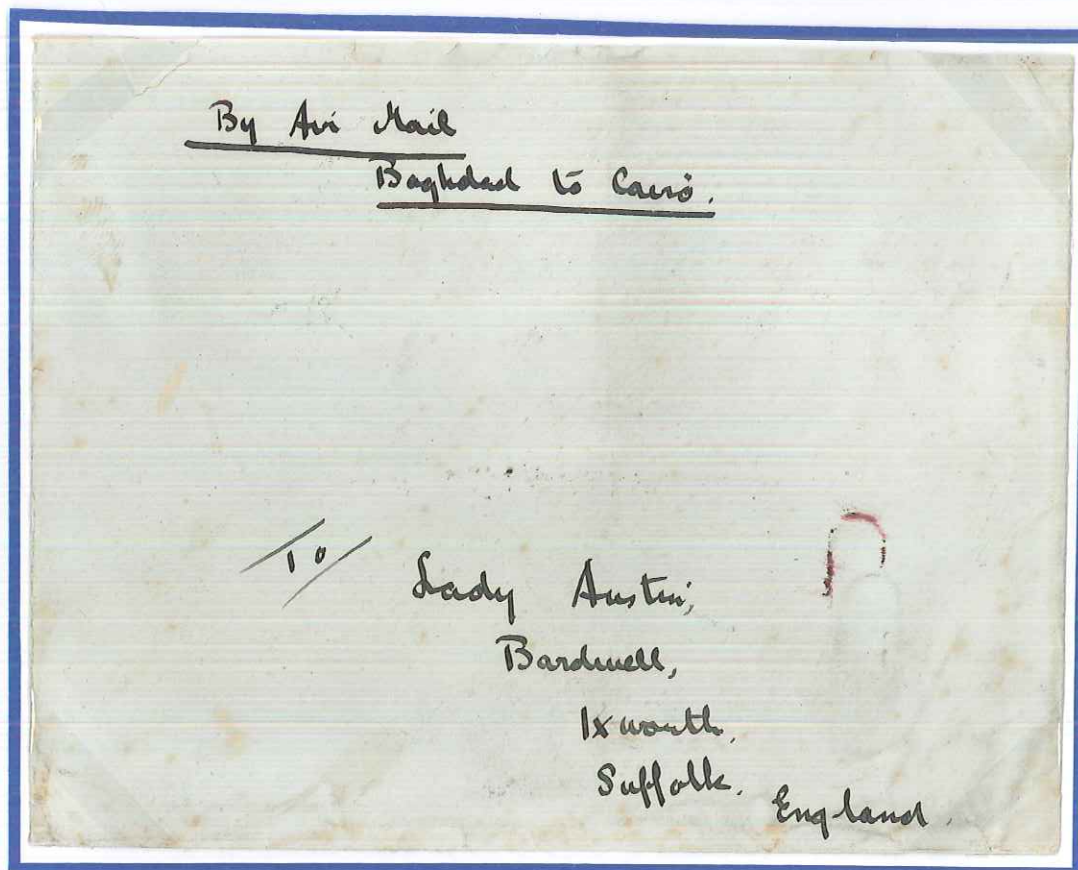
Total transit of 21 days from posting to delivery in Kent.

Mail delayed by bad weather in Iraq on route to Cairo, also missed the P&O mail steamer sailing by one week causing further delays to the mails.

Dispatch no 7 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 4 February 1922
Depart Port Said 8 February 1922

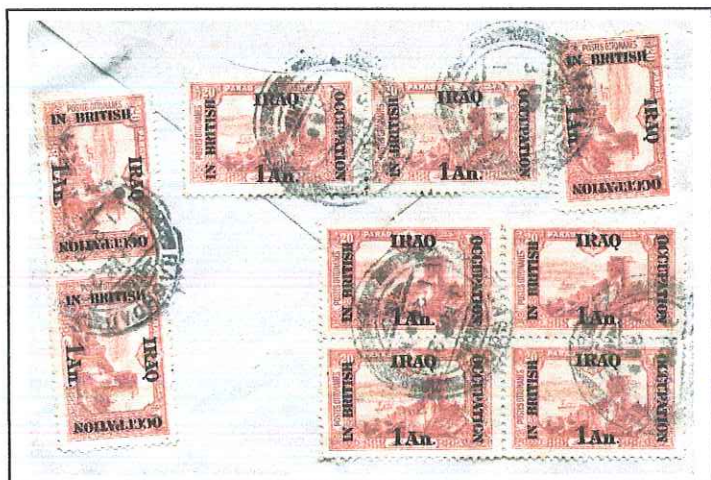
Arrive Cairo 7 February 1922
Arrive London 17 February 1922



BAGHDAD 3 FEB. 22 1.30 P.M.

Postage charges of 9 annas applied to rear, 6 annas for the special air fee per ounce (21 December 1921 to 28 November 1923) and 3 annas letter rate per ounce (21 December 1921 to 28 November 1923).

Total transit of 15 days from posting to receipt.



Reduced colour scan of the reverse to show the circular datestamp of Baghdad, plus the adhesive stamps attached.

RAF Sqandons utilised two different types of De Havilland DH 9a and DH 10 aircraft on this seventh air service between Baghdad and Cairo with 5 bags of mail containing 357 letters.

Dispatch no 9 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 5 March 1922	Arrive Cairo 10 March 1922
Depart Port Said 11 March 1922	Arrive London 20 March 1922



SULEIMANIYAH (IRAQ) 21 FEB. 22

Correct postage of 9 annas paid, special air fee of 6 annas plus letter rate to the United Kingdom 3 annas.

Front of cover endorsed in manuscript **"Baghdad to Cairo Air Mail"**.

Letter travelled from Suleimaniyah, northern Iraq to Baghdad by surface transport.

Total transit time of 28 days from date of posting in Iraq to receipt in the United Kingdom.

Aircraft delayed by mechanical breakdown due to desert dust storm at Amman whilst in transit to Cairo by 4 days.

Aircraft carried 17 small mail bags containing some 1,150 items of mail.

By late March 1922 the amount of mail items carried from Baghdad had grown considerably to quantities above double of that dispatched from London.

Dispatch no 12 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 16 April 1922	Arrive Cairo 17 April 1922
Depart Port Said 18 April 1922	Arrive London 25 April 1922



SAMARRAH (IRAQ) 14 APR. 22 2. 30 P.M.

Correct postage prepaid with captured Turkish adhesives overprinted with “**IRAQ IN BRITISH OCCUPATION 3An.**” issue stamps.

Letter travelled from Samarra a branch post office of Baghdad by road carriage prior to the air mail service.

Cover endorsed in manuscript “**By Air Mail**”.

6 annas special air fee plus 3 annas surface letter rate to the United Kingdom from Iraq.

Transit time of 11 days from posting to receipt in London.

37 small mail bags containing 2,585 items of mail carried on this air service.

Dispatch no 15 (first Thursday) via Cairo – Baghdad Air Service

Depart London 27 April 1922
Depart Cairo 12 May 1922

Arrive Port Said 11 May 1922
Arrive Baghdad 13 May 1922



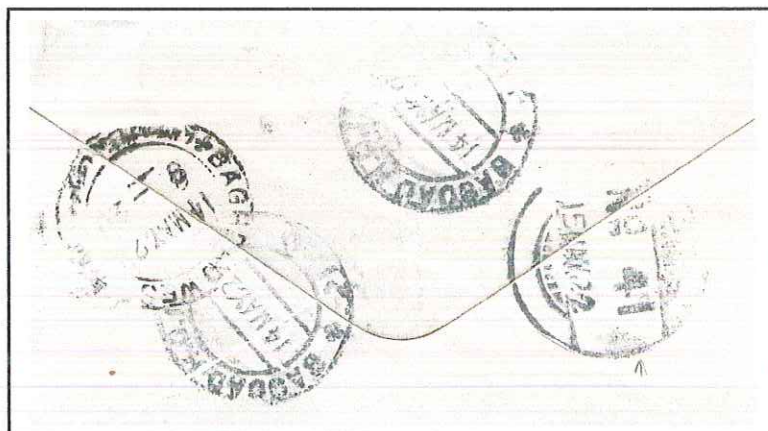
YEOVIL 24 AP 22

Correct postage of 9d (15 December 1921 to 14 May 1923), postage of 3d per ounce,
plus air mail fee of 6d per ounce.

Mail for Iraq was dispatched every Thursday from London via the P&O contract mail steamer to Port Said. However the air service from Cairo to Baghdad was a two weekly service only, therefore the first dispatch from London was held in Cairo awaiting the arrival of the second dispatch before sending it on to Baghdad.

Total transit of 17 days from posting to receipt in Baghdad.

Total of 1,645 items of mail from two dispatches from London carried on this air service.



Reduced colour scan of reverse to show backstamping of Baghdad, FPO No 41 and Baghdad West.

Dispatch no 15 (second Thursday) via Cairo – Baghdad Air Service (cont.)

Depart London 4 May 1922	Arrive Port Said 11 May 1922
Depart Cairo 12 May 1922	Arrive Baghdad 13 May 1922

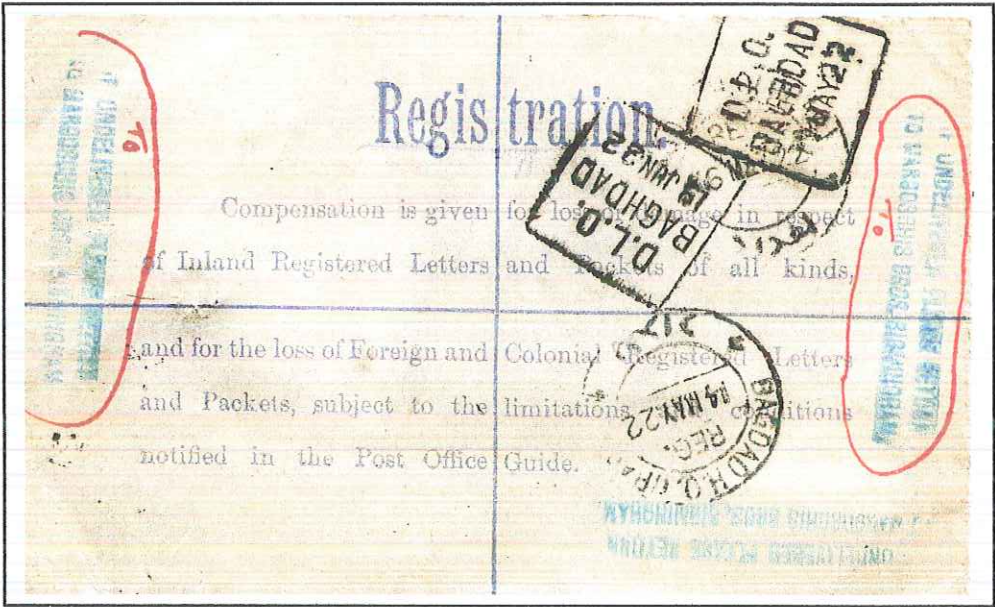


REGISTERED BIRMINGHAM 1 MY 22

Underpaid registered postal stationery envelope, Huggins type RP28, flap type 6, correct rate for this item of mail should have been 3d registration fee, 3d surface postage to Iraq, plus 6d per ounce air mail fee, total 1 shilling, letter underpaid by 2d.

Air mail label Mair type GBR-A-1a plus additional manuscript notation **“By Aeroplane”**.

Transit time of 10 days from Birmingham to receipt in Baghdad. Addressee **“NOT KNOWN”** (see boxed cachet) and sent to the Dead Letter Office for returning to sender in United Kingdom.



Reduced colour scan of the reverse to show the backstamping applied of **“D.L.O. BAGHDAD, 16MAY22 and 19JUN22”**
Proud type D2.

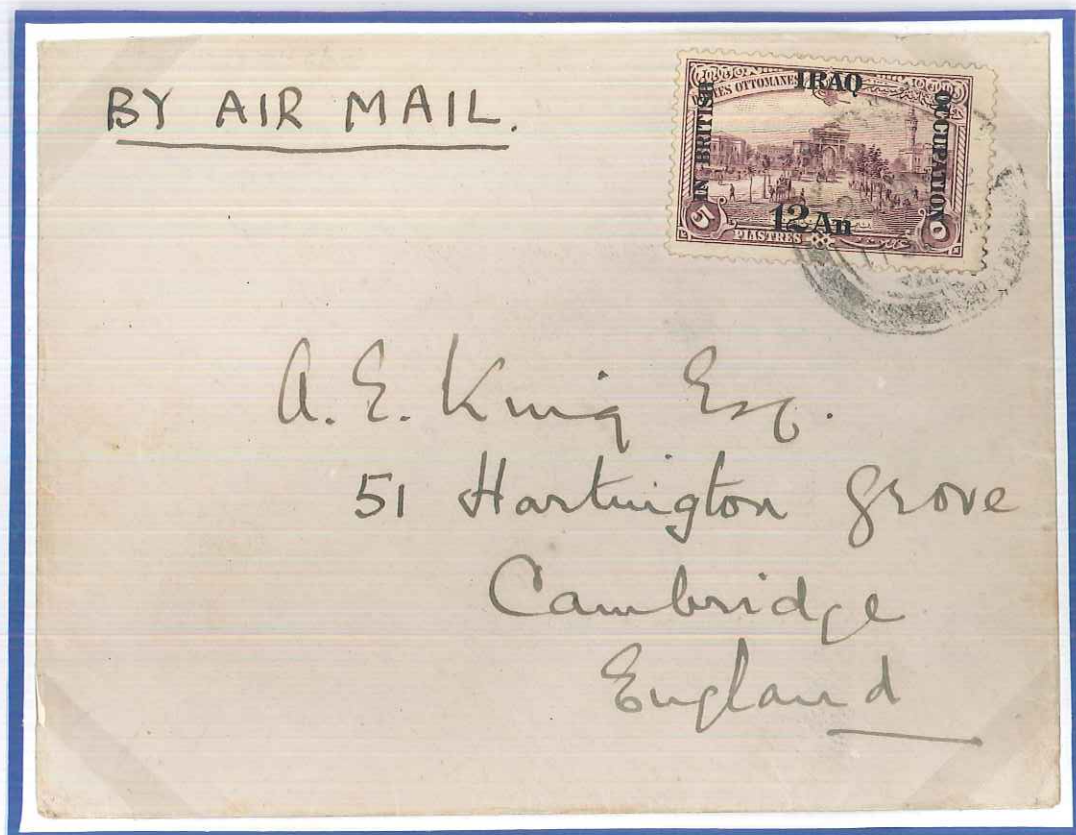
Dispatch no 15 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 27 May 1922

Depart Port Said 30 May 1922

Arrive Cairo 29 May 1922

Arrive London 5 June 1922



BAGHDAD (IRAQ) 25.MAY.22

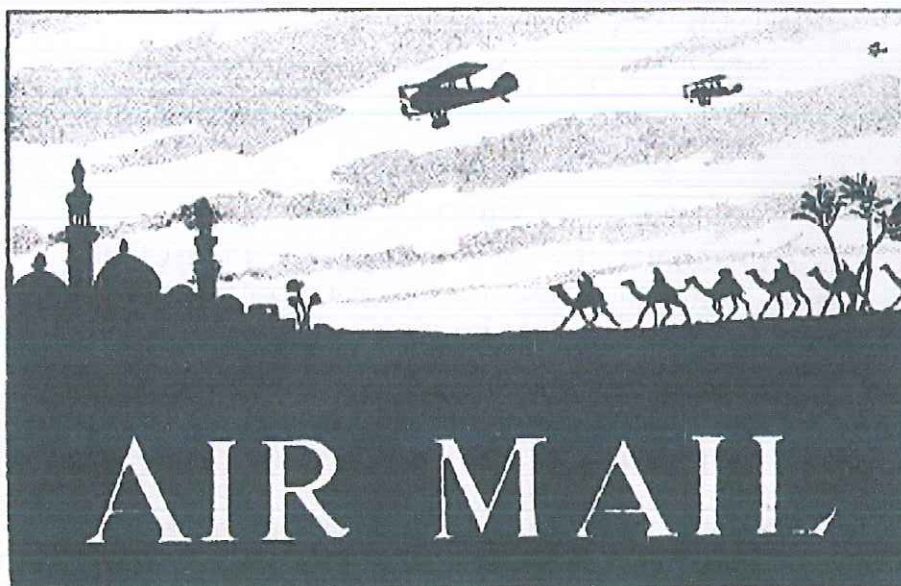
Correct postage rate applied of 12 annas, made up of 6 annas special air fee, plus 6 annas double surface letter rate, 3 annas per ounce or part thereof.

Cover endorsed in manuscript "**BY AIR MAIL**".

Time in transit 10 days from posting to receipt in London.

Note; after the initial six months of operations these fortnightly air mail flights were operating successfully with a regular routine being established with two aircraft used for each flight to guard against accidents. The aircraft stationed in Iraq departed with the outgoing mail for Heliopolis, Egypt on Alternate Thursdays, returning the following week with the incoming mail. The only exception to this routine was every fourth flight the aircraft from Iraq did not return for three weeks so that maintenance, repairs and major overhauls were undertaken. During this time one of the squadrons (usually No 70 or 216 Squadron) stationed at Heliopolis flew the incoming mail to Baghdad and returned the following Thursday with the outgoing mail.

With the Postmaster-General's Compliments.



SUMMER SEASON, 1922.

TO THE LONDON BUSINESS MAN.

THE AIR MAILS to PARIS,

} *Special Air fee*
2d. per oz.

ROTTERDAM & } *Special Air fee*
AMSTERDAM, } 3d. per oz.

offer the following advantages:—

FOR letters posted in the evening too late for the ordinary Night Mail, DELIVERY in each of these CITIES next afternoon. If an express fee of 6d. is prepaid, delivery may be obtained in PARIS soon after mid-day. Late letters for certain PLACES NEAR PARIS and for MOST PARTS OF HOLLAND should be delivered next evening.

FOR letters posted in the morning after the opening of business, DELIVERY in PARIS, ROTTERDAM and AMSTERDAM the same evening, and a GAIN of up to 24 hours in delivery of letters for SPAIN, AUSTRIA, JUGO-SLAVIA, BULGARIA, GREECE,

(171) WELSHMAN 50,000 7-21 B-P.L.G. 629

[P.T.O.]

The Postmaster-General's office issued the above notice to the London Business Man during June 1922, outlining the air mail services available to European centers together with details of the "Cairo-Baghdad" service.

Reverse of this publicity leaflet states that the Cairo – Baghdad air mail service will make "*savings of up to 20 days in the transmission of letters for Iraq and Persia*" than if they are sent via the ordinary surface route.



BAGHDAD 7 JUL. 22 11.00A.M.

Correct postal rate applied to reverse, made up of surface letter rate 3 annas plus, special air mail fee 6 annas, total 9 annas.



Type 3, framed cachet in purple applied in Baghdad. In use between 8 December 1921 and 23 August 1923.



Reduced colour scan to show postage applied to the reverse and Baghdad circular datestamp.

Total of 11 days to arrival in London, letter transferred to trans-Atlantic mail steamer for delivery in the USA.

No backstamping in evidence to allow total transit time to be stated.

Dispatch no 18 via Cairo – Baghdad Air Service

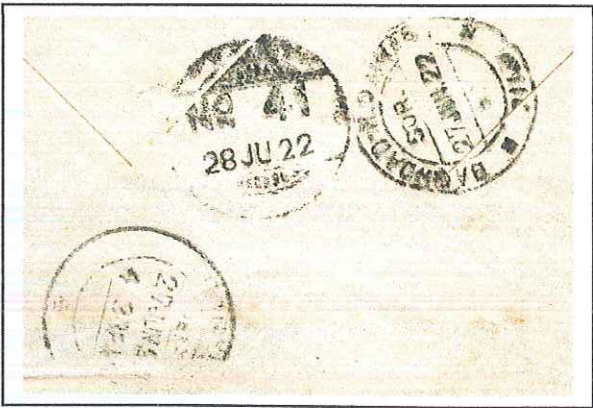
Depart London 15 June 1922	Arrive Port Said 23 June 1922
Depart Cairo 24 June 1922	Arrive Baghdad 27 June 1922



TOMATIN 3. 30 P.M. 9 JU.22

Postage of 8d applied, made up of 6d special air fee (15 December 1921 to 14 May 1923), plus 2d letter rate per 1 ounce (13 October 1921 to 14 May 1923).

Total transit time of 18 days from date of posting to receipt in Baghdad.



Reduced colour scan of reverse to show c.d.s. backstamps of Baghdad, 27 June 1922 and F.P.O. No 41, 28 June 1922. This F.P.O. stationed at Hinaidi, Iraq.

Note; the P&O contract mail steamer arrived at Port Said from London via Marseilles every Wednesday with the incoming mails for Iraq. The mail bags were offloaded and transported to Cairo by rail then to by road transport to Heliopolis air station for the air service to Baghdad.

Dispatch no 18 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 8 July 1922	Arrive Cairo 10 July 1922
Depart Port Said 10 July 1922	Arrive London 17 July 1922



TANNUMAH (IRAQ) 28 JUN. 22 8. 30 P.M.

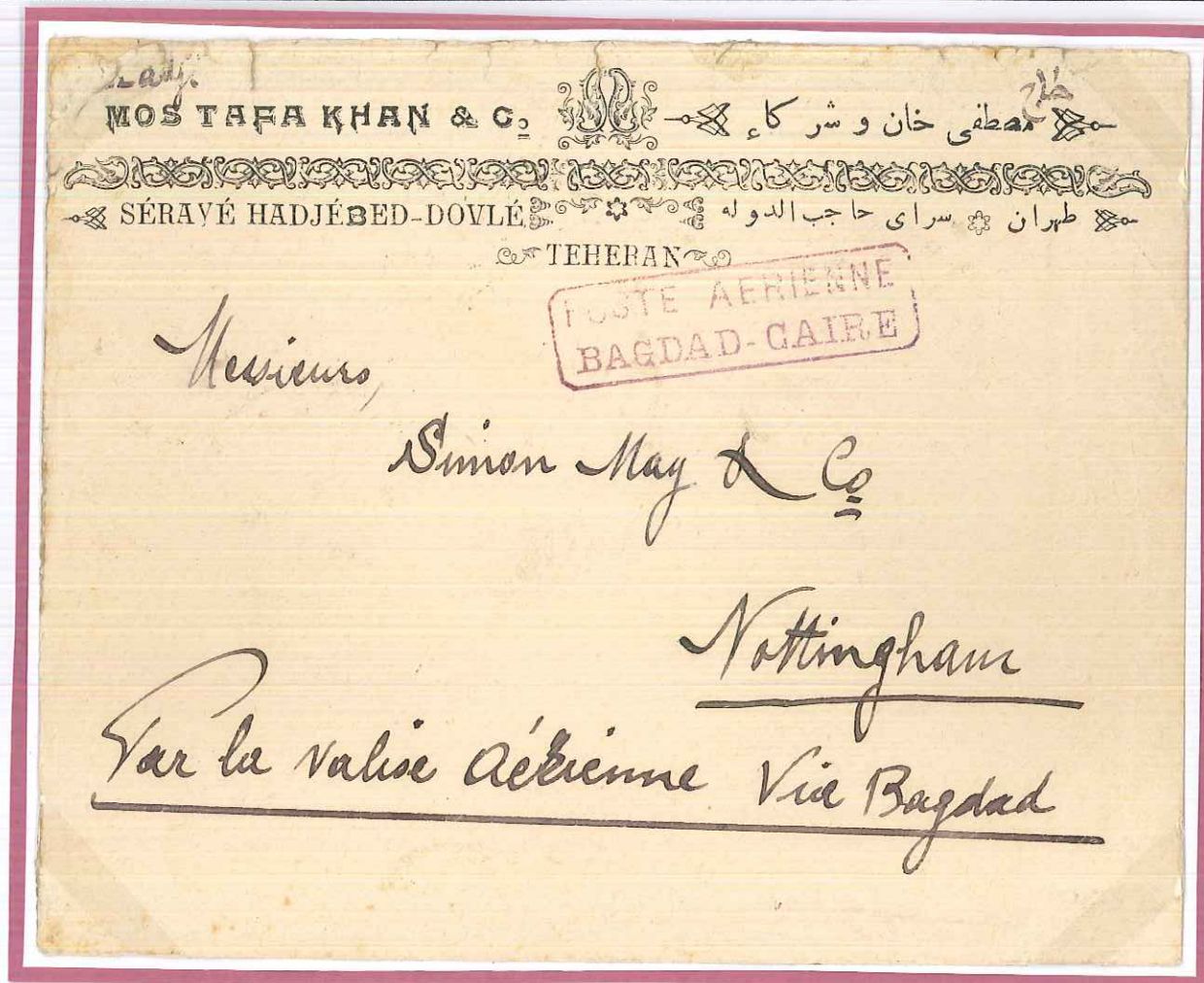


BAGHDAD (IRAQ) -6.JUL.22 7. 30 P.M.

. Transit time for the top cover, 20 days, bottom cover 12 days.

Captured Turkish postal stationery envelopes (Higgins & Gage type B.1) overprinted with "1 AN.", uprated with overprinted Turkish adhesive postage stamps to prepay the special air fee of 6 annas plus 3 annas letter rate to the United Kingdom.

Depart Teheran 10 July 1922	Arrive Baghdad 20 July 1922
Depart Baghdad 22 July 1922	Arrive Cairo 24 July 1922
Depart Port Said 25 July 1922	Arrive London 31 July 1922



TEHERAN 10.VII.22 No. 3

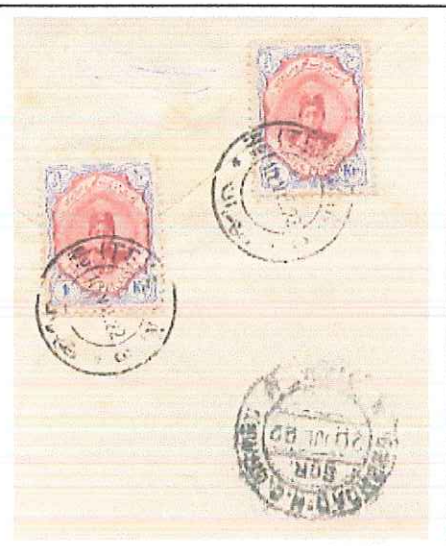
Correct postage of 2 kran (1 kran equivalent to 5 annas) applied to the rear of the envelope (see reduced colour scan), equivalent of 6 annas special air fee, plus 4 annas surface letter rate to the United Kingdom.

Backstamped with Baghdad. H.O. (Iraq) c.d.s. dated 20 JUL 22 (see reduced colour scan at left).

Boxed double line cachet, "POSTE AERIEENNE, BAGDAD - CAIRE" McQueen type in use 1922-1923, applied in violet, usually struck in black at Teheran Central Post Office.

Manuscript notation "*Par la Valise Aérienne Via Baghdad*", "for the air mail bag via Baghdad".

Total transit time of 21 days.



On 31 July 1922 the Egyptian Postmaster-General notified officially that mail for Persia would be accepted for carriage by the Cairo-Baghdad and return air service. Persia was at this time governed by civil administrators from the British Government after the defeat of the Turkish forces in 1918, with British forces stationed there to maintain law and order.

Very few known covers with this boxed jusqu'a cachet applied in purple ink.

Dispatch no 20 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 4 August 1922
Depart Port Said 9 August 1922

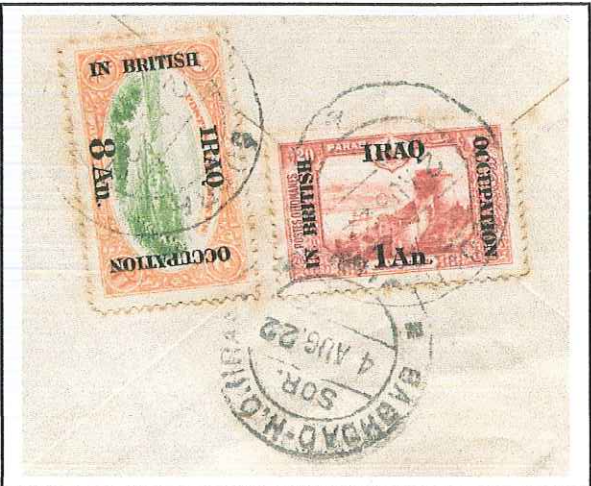
Arrive Cairo 8 August 1922
Arrive London 15 August 1922



BAGHDAD H.Q. (IRAQ)
SOR.
4 AUG 22

Correct postage of 9 annas pre-paid with adhesives applied to rear of cover.

Total transit of 10 days from date of posting to receipt in the United Kingdom.



Reduced colour scan of reverse to show adhesives and backstamping.

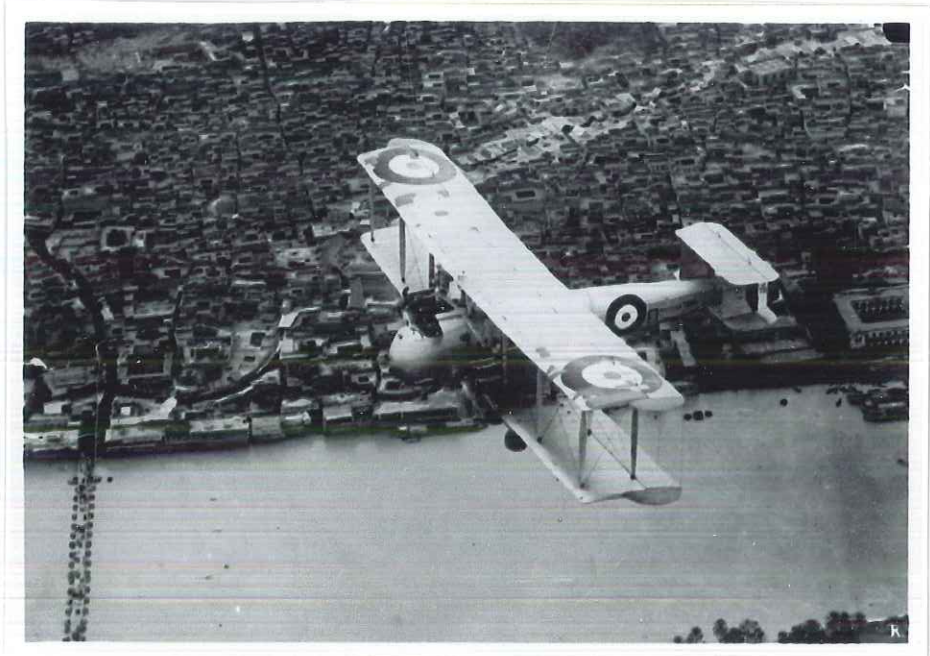


Photo of RAF Vickers "Vernon" aircraft flying over Cairo during 1922. These aircraft were introduced to the air mail service and operational with the RAF squadrons as from April 1922. Capable of carrying eleven passengers as well as the mail and other items requiring to be air freighted, plus the operation role as bombers.

Dispatch no 21 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 19 August 1922	Arrive Cairo 22 August 1922
Depart Port Said 23 August 1922	Arrive London 30 August 1922



BAGHDAD (IRAQ) -8. AUG. 22 7. 30 A.M.

Correct postage of 9 annas (8 annas in adhesives) on uprated 1 anna overprinted captured Turkish postal stationery.

Letter is additionally endorsed in manuscript **“BY AIR MAIL, BAGHDAD TO CAIRO”**.

Total transit time from date of posting to delivery in the UK, 23 days.

The civilian administrator of Mesopotamia, Sir Percy Cox had all captured Turkish adhesive postage stamps and postal stationery envelopes overprinted with **“IRAQ IN BRITISH OCCUPATION”** plus Anna currency values.

A total of 127 of the 20 paras value stationery envelopes were captured by the British forces from the Turkish army, all were overprinted with the 1 anna value.

Mixed franking with both types of overprinted postage stamps “ON STATE SERVICE” and normal are very uncommon, with less than ten covers recorded.



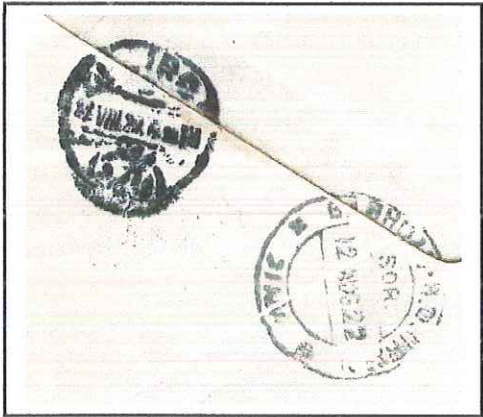
BASRA 10 AUG. 22

Correct postage of 9 annas applied with 8 anna adhesive upgrading the overprinted 1 anna value stationery envelope.

Letter additionally endorsed in manuscript with **“BY AIR SERVICE, BAGHDAD – CAIRO”**.

Letter would have travelled from Basra to Baghdad via surface transport as the air mail did not depart until 9 days after initial posting.

Transit time of 21 days to receipt in London (normally 12 to 14 days) however the previous fight had taken place on the 4 August, some 6 days prior to the posting of this letter. Total transit time from posting to receipt in the USA is unknown due to the absence of backstamping on arrival.



Reduced colour scan of reverse to show backstamping of Baghdad H.O. Iraq 12 August 1922 and Cairo 22 VIII 1922.

Dispatch no 22 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 3 September 1922	Arrive Cairo 3 September 1922
Depart Port Said 4 September 1922	Arrive London 12 September 1922



MOSUL 25AUG.22 5 – P.M.

Correct postage of 9 annas applied in overprinted “IN OCCUPATION” issue adhesive stamps. Special air fee 6 annas plus 3 annas surface letter rate per 1 ounce.

Letter travelled from Mosul, northern Iraq to Baghdad by surface transport taking 3 days.

Cover is additionally endorsed in manuscript with “Air Mail Baghdad – Cairo”.

Letter redirected on arrival in the United Kingdom from Ixworth to Falmouth.

Front has received the circular datestamp of Baghdad (Iraq) dated 28AUG.22 and Ixworth 12 SE 22.

Transit time from date of posting in Iraq to Ixworth, 19 days.

Dispatch no 23 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 15 September 1922
Depart Port Said 18 September 1922

Arrive Cairo 17 September 1922
Arrive London 26 September 1922



UPPER MA'QIL (IRAQ) 13SEP.22 4.20P.M.

Correct postage of 9 annas applied to prepay the 6 anna special air fee plus surface letter rate charges of 3 annas from Baghdad to Cairo and beyond.

Letter travelled from Upper Ma'qil, southern Iraq to Baghdad via surface carriage (rail) and is additionally endorsed in manuscript **"BY AIR MAIL"**, for the Baghdad to Cairo sector.

Received at Ixworth on 27 September 1922 (circular datestamp to front), redirected to Falmouth on arrival at Ixworth.

Total transit time to receipt at Ixworth, Suffolk of 14 days from posting in Iraq.

Dispatch no 24 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 29 September 1922
Depart Port Said 2 October 1922

Arrive Cairo 1 October 1922
Arrive London 9 October 1922



BAGHDAD 28 SEP 22

Correct postage of 9 annas applied, 5 annas to front and 4 annas to rear of cover.

Total transit of 13 days from date of posting to receipt in the U.K.



Reduced colour scan of reverse to show adhesive stamps and backstamping.

Dispatch no 25 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 13 October 1922	Arrive Cairo 15 October 1922
Depart Port Said 16 October 1922	Arrive London 23 October 1922



BAGHDAD REG. 13 OCT 22

Correct postage applied to rear of cover 12 annas, 6 annas special air fee, 3 annas surface postage plus 3 annas registration fee.

Total transit of 11 days from date of initial posting.



Reduced colour scan of reverse to show adhesive stamps and backstamping.



BAGHDAD (IRAQ)
12 OC 22
10.30 A.M.

Correct postage of 9 annas applied, made up of 6 annas special air fee plus 3 annas surface letter rate.

Total Transit time of 11 days.



Reduced colour scan of reverse to show adhesive and backstamping.



LOWER BAGHDAD (IRAQ)
13 OC. 22
1.30P.M.

Correct postal rate of 13 annas, made-up of 6 annas air mail fee, 3 annas registration fee, plus 4 annas surface letter rate.

BY AIR SERVICE

Boxed cachet type 3 applied in either purple or black and in use at Baghdad between 31 March 1922 and 23 August 1923.

Transit time for this letter to reach its destination, 10 days.

Dispatch no 27 via Cairo – Baghdad Air Service

Depart London 19 October 1922

Arrive Port Said 26 October 1922

Depart Cairo 27 October 1922

Arrive Baghdad 28 October 1922

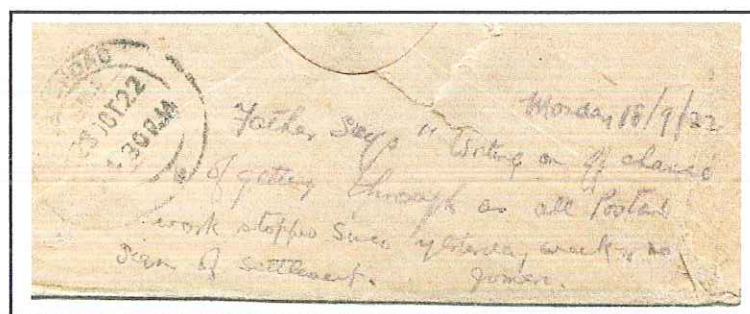
During the period of the "Irish Civil War", 1921 – 1924, there were also other disruptions such as the 'Postal Strike' between 10-29 September 1922 which affected all mail collections and deliveries in the country.



DUBLIN 18 SEPT 22

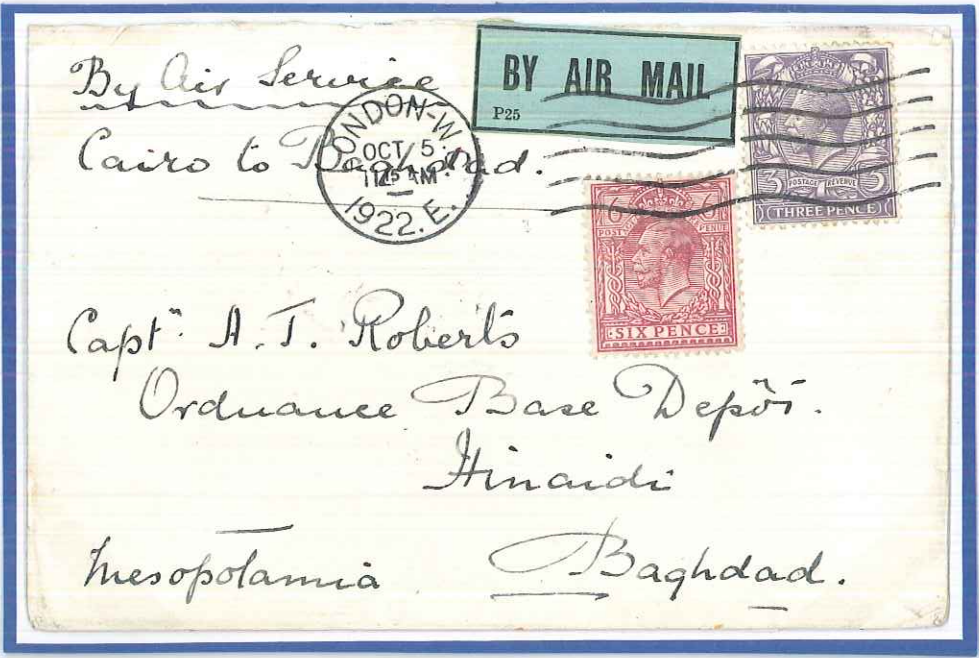
Correct postage of 9d per ounce (3d surface postage plus 6d air mail fee).

Total transit from date of posting to receipt in Iraq, 41 days,. Missed two dispatches of mail for Iraq (21 September and 5 October 1922) due to the Postal Strike.



Recipient's manuscript notation on reverse states "Monday 18/9/22, Father says writing on of chance of getting through as all postal work stopped since yesterday week & no sign of settlement".

The one recorded item of mail to Iraq during the Irish Postal Workers strike of September 1922.



LONDON - W.C.
5 OCT
1922. E.

Correct postage of 9d per ounce, made up of 3d postage (UK to Iraq and beyond, 15 December 1921 to 13 May 1923), plus 6d air mail fee.

Airmail label Mair type, GBR-A-3a.

Total transit from posting to receipt 25 days. Posted on the day that the previous dispatch was send, letter held in Cairo 14 days until next dispatch.



BIRCHINGTON 11 OCT 22

As above the correct postage of 9d per ounce has been paid. Airmail label Mair type, GBR-A-3b.

Total days in transit, 17 days from posting to receipt.

On His Britannic Majesty's Service.

H.B.M. Consul General,
British Consulate General,

BUSHIRE

Persia

Department of Overseas Trade,
(Development and Intelligence),
LONDON.



Air Mail

LONDON E.C. OFFICIAL PAID

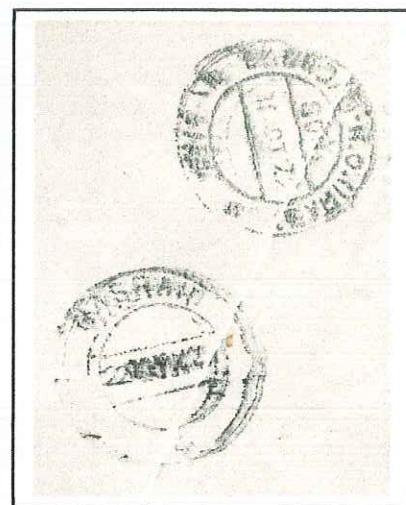
6.45PM

16 OCT

22

8

Official Department of Trade envelope
complete with the signature of
Lord Curzon over crown within
oval official
D.O.T. handstruck cachet.



Reduced scan of backstamping to
show receiving c.d.s. of
Baghdad, 31 OCT 22 and
Basrah 2 NOV 22.

No receiving stamp or date of receipt
from Bushire, Persia in evidence.

The one recorded item of Diplomatic
mail which used this RAF air mail
service.

Dispatch no 26 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 27 October 1922
Depart Port Said 31 October 1922

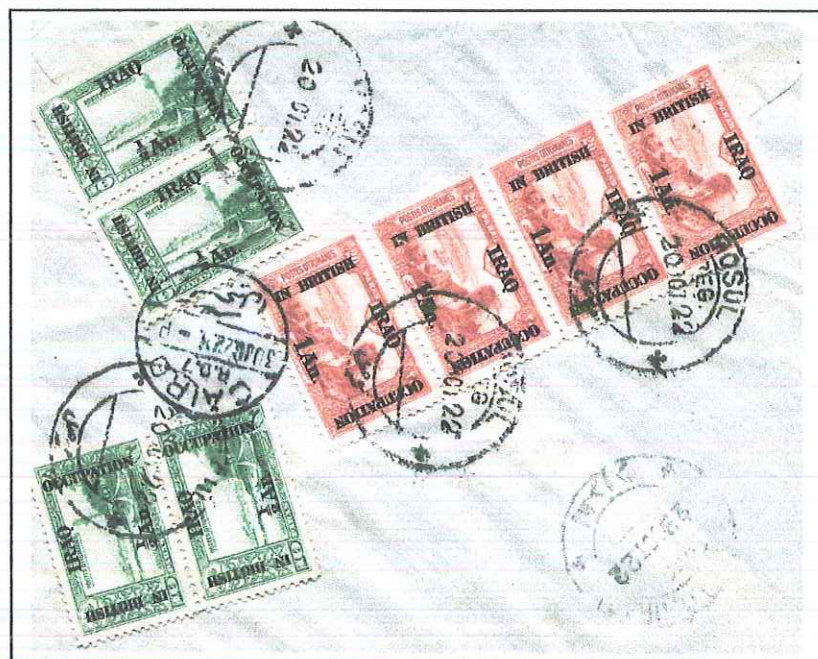
Arrive Cairo 30 October 1922
Arrive London 6 November 1922



**MOSUL
REG.
20 OCT 22**

Correct postage of 12 annas, made up of 6 annas special air fee, 3 annas surface letter rate plus 3 annas registration fee.

Letter posted at Mosel, Northern Iraq on 20 October arriving in Baghdad on 23 October 1922 (see backstamping).



Reduced colour scan of reverse to show adhesives (6 annas) and circular datestamps.

Dispatch no 27 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 10 November 1922	Arrive Cairo 11 November 1922
Depart Cairo 12 November 1922	Arrive Alexandria 13 November 1922

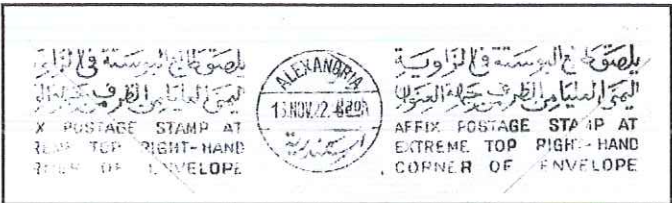


LOWER BAGHDAD (IRAQ) 10. NOV. 22.

Correct postal rate of 9 annas, made up of 6 annas special air fee, plus 3 annas surface letter rate.

Letter is additionally endorsed in manuscript **“aerial mail. Baghdad to Cairo”**.

Total transit time of 4 days from date of posting in Baghdad to receipt at Alexandria.



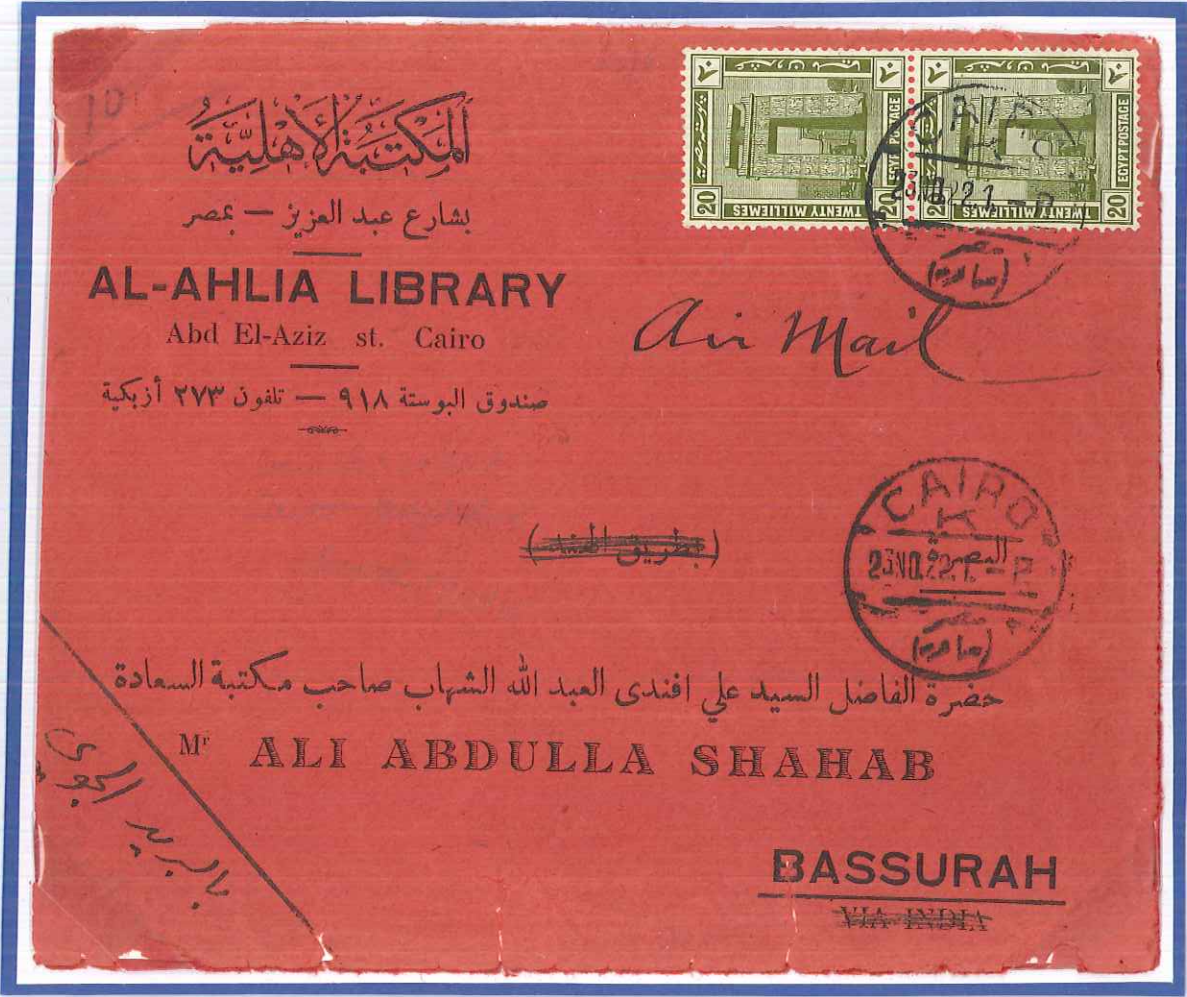
Reduced colour scan of reverse to show the backstamping of Alexandria, 13.NOV.22.

Official **“SPECIAL MAIL LIST”** states that the Iraq RAF Headquarters Communications office dispatched 9 bags for London, 4 bags for Cairo, 1 bag for Amman and 1 bag for Jerusalem.

Total of 15 bag of mail carried on this air service.

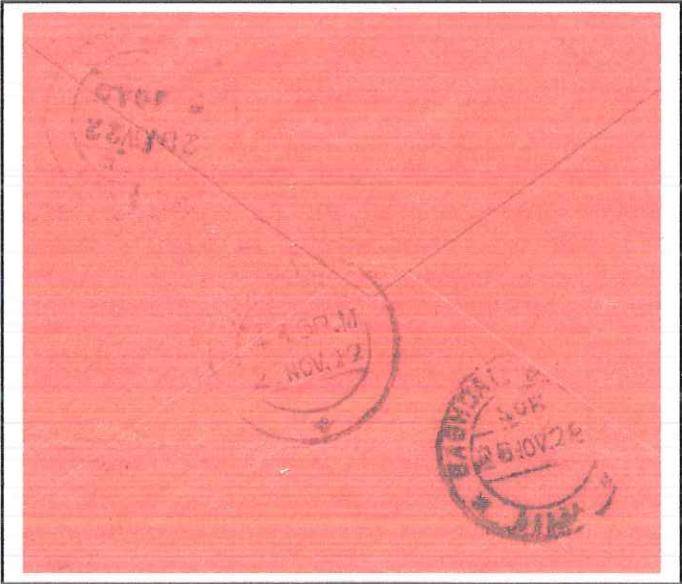
Depart Cairo 25 November 1922

Arrive Baghdad 26 November 1922



CAIRO 23 NO. 22

Correct postage of 40 Milliemes pre-paid, made up of 15 Milliemes surface rate postage per 20 grams, plus 25 Milliemes air mail fee per 20 grams (6 January 1922 to 21 December 1923).

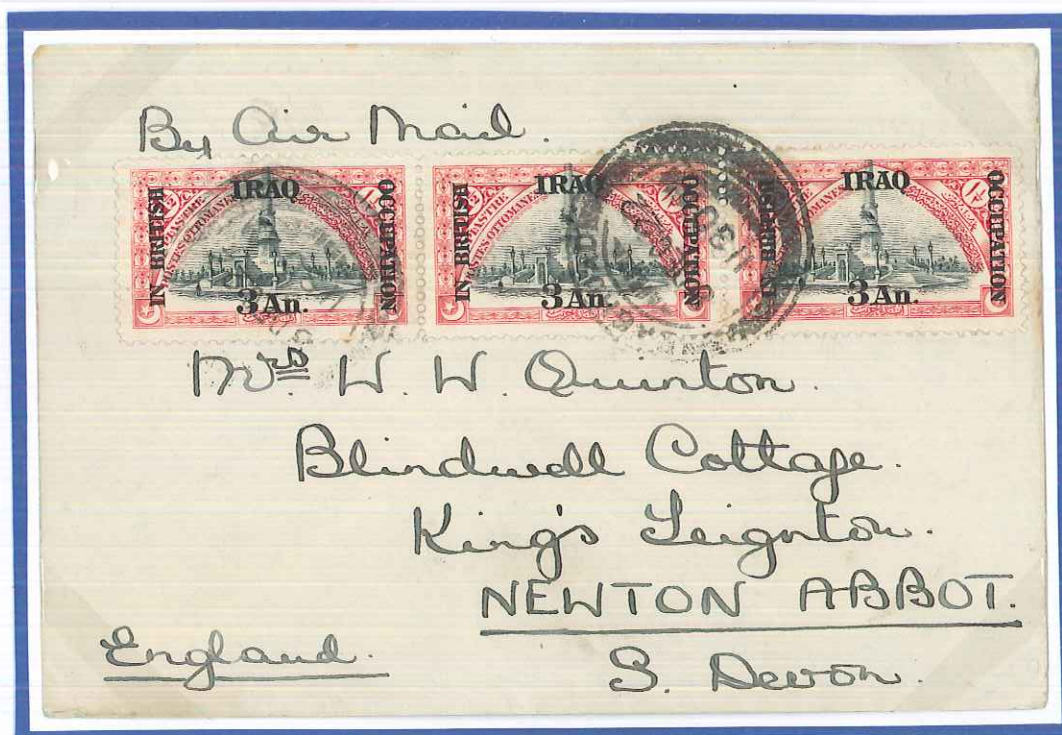


Reduced colour scan of reverse
to show backstamping of,
Baghdad 26 November 1922
and
Basrah 28 November 1922.

Dispatch no 29 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 8 December 1922
Depart Port Said 12 December 1922

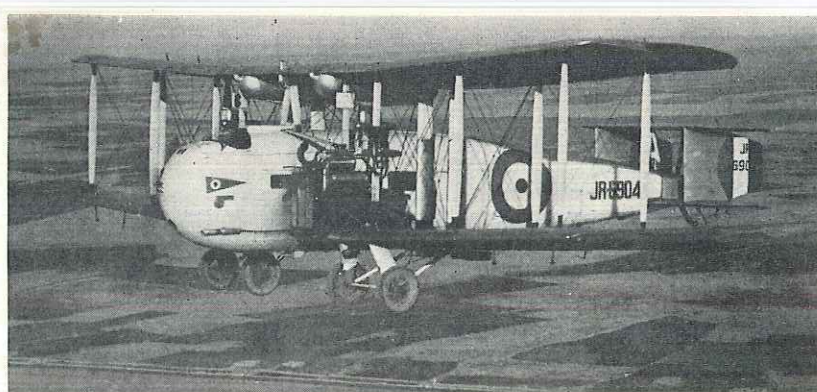
Arrive Cairo 11 December 1922
Arrive London 18 December 1922



BAGHDAD (IRAQ) 8 DEC 22

Correct postage of 9 annas pre-paid per ounce.

Total transit of 11 days from date of posting in Iraq to delivery in the United Kingdom.



In June 1921 the Royal Air Force began operation of the Desert Air Mail Route between Baghdad and Cairo, flown at first by D.H.9As and D.H.10s but from 1922 by Vickers Vernons of Nos. 45 and 70 Squadrons. JR6904 seen here near Baghdad was one of No. 45 Squadron's aircraft.

Photo shows a Vickers "Vernon" aircraft of No 45 Squadron (JR6904) on the air mail route near Baghdad during 1922.

Two RAF Squadrons No's 45 and 70 were equipped with these larger aircraft as from February 1922 (No 45) and November 1922 (No 70).



BAGHDAD (IRAQ) 20 DEC. 22 10.30 A.M.

Correct postage of 9 annas per ounce applied (special air fee 6 annas, surface letter rate 3 annas).

Letter endorsed in manuscript **"By Air Mail"**.

As from 3 December 1922 all future air mail flights tookoff from Hinaidi air station situated to the east of the Tigris River and Baghdad itself. The move was prompted by the need to utilize larger transport aircraft that the RAF operated requiring a larger and longer air strip for landing and takeoffs than was available at the smaller airfield in use for the initial flights to the west of the city.

Note; the general public had begun to realise the value of this speedier mail service and as such the volume and weight of the mails carried had increased dramatically with official figures released by the G.P.O. London during April 1923 stating that, "132,000 items of mail had utilised this air mail service in both directions representing 19% of outgoing mail and 28% of incoming mail".

Transit time from date of posting to delivery, 9 days.

Dispatch no 32 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 19 January 1923	Arrive Cairo 21 January 1923
Depart Port Said 22 January 1923	Arrive London 29 January 1923



MAKINA CAMP 9. 25 A.M. 17 JAN.23

Correctly posted with 9 annas to cover both the special air fee and surface rate letter to the U.K.

Framed label **“BY AIR MAIL”** (type 4) in black on dark blue background, sans serif lettering, perforated 10 gauge, printed by W.P. Griffith & Sons Ltd., London, available as from March 1921.

Circular datestamp of Makina Camp, a sub Post Office stationed at Basra, Southern Iraq in use from 23 May 1920 until 17 January 1923. Proud type KD2, last day of usage.

Depart Baghdad 20 December 1922	Arrive Cairo 21 December 1922
Depart Port Said 22 December 1922	Arrive London 28 December 1922



**Official OHMS letter from
GHQ, Iraq to Air Ministry,
London.**

Correct rate of 9 annas
adhesive postage applied to
rear of cover cancelled with
an oval mesh of dots.

Letter departed Baghdad on
19 December, arriving at
Cairo on 21 December and
the Air Ministry in London on
28 December 1922.

Total transit time of 10 days.



Reduced colour scan of
Andrews type 5 G.H.Q.
Undated cachet applied in
purple.

Known period of use
25 June 1922 to
20 December 1922.

In use at the stationery
Forces Post Office attached
to the Headquarters of the
British Forces in Baghdad.

One of the few letters recorded with the large double circular undated official type 5 cachet.

Dispatch no 31 via Cairo – Baghdad Air Service

Depart London 14 December 1922	Arrive Port Said 20 December 1922
Depart Cairo 21 December 1922	Arrive Baghdad 22 December 1922



NORTHAMPEST
8 DE
22

Correct postage of 9d applied.

Rear of envelope has a receiving
c.d.s. of Baghdad dated
22 DEC 22.

Total of 15 days in transit.

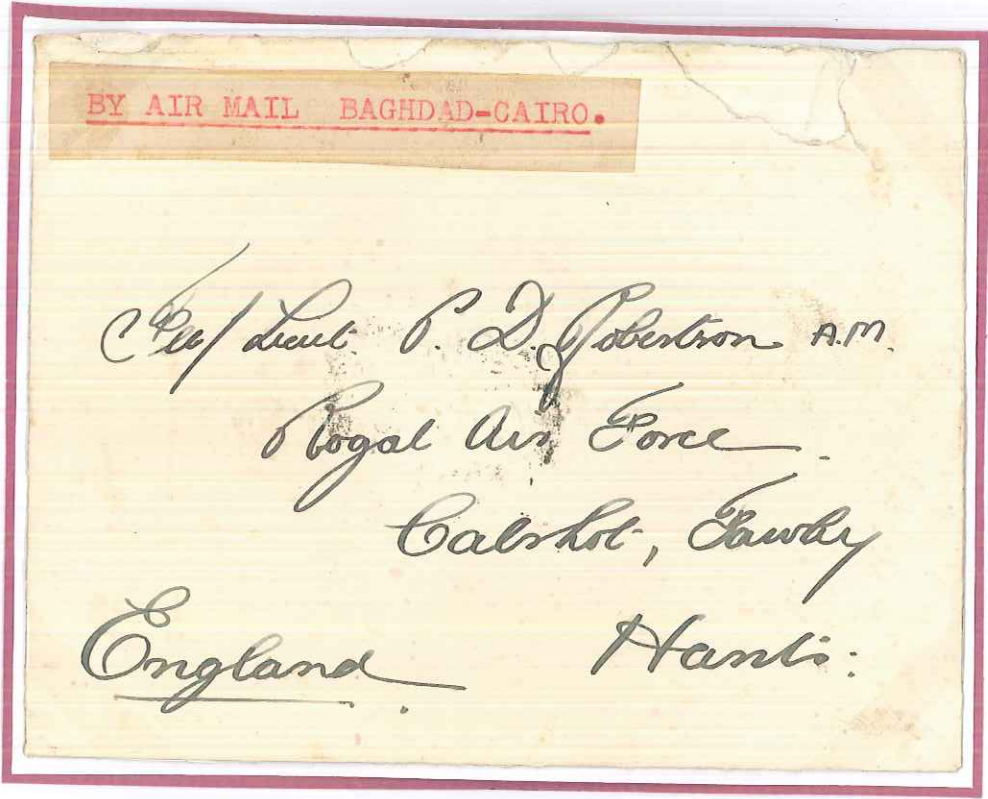


ILFRACOMBE 13 DE 22

Correct postage of 9d applied per ounce, 3d postage plus 6d air mail fee.

Rear of envelope has a receiving c.d.s. of Baghdad dated 22 DEC 22.

Total of 10 days in transit.



MAKINA CAMP 8.20A.M. 17 JAN. 23

Correct postage of 9 annas applied to rear of cover, made up of 3 annas surface letter rate up to 25 grams (½ ounce in weight) plus 6 annas special air fee.

Note; Letter travelled to Hinaidi airport (Baghdad) from Shaibah airport (Basrah) via aircraft from RAF No 45 or 70 Squadron flying between the two centers carrying official mail and dispatches on a needs basis. These two Squadrons were the ones charged with jointly transporting the mail between the military installations within Iraq and to Cairo and return. The flight in this case took approximately 4½ hours between the two centers in Iraq.

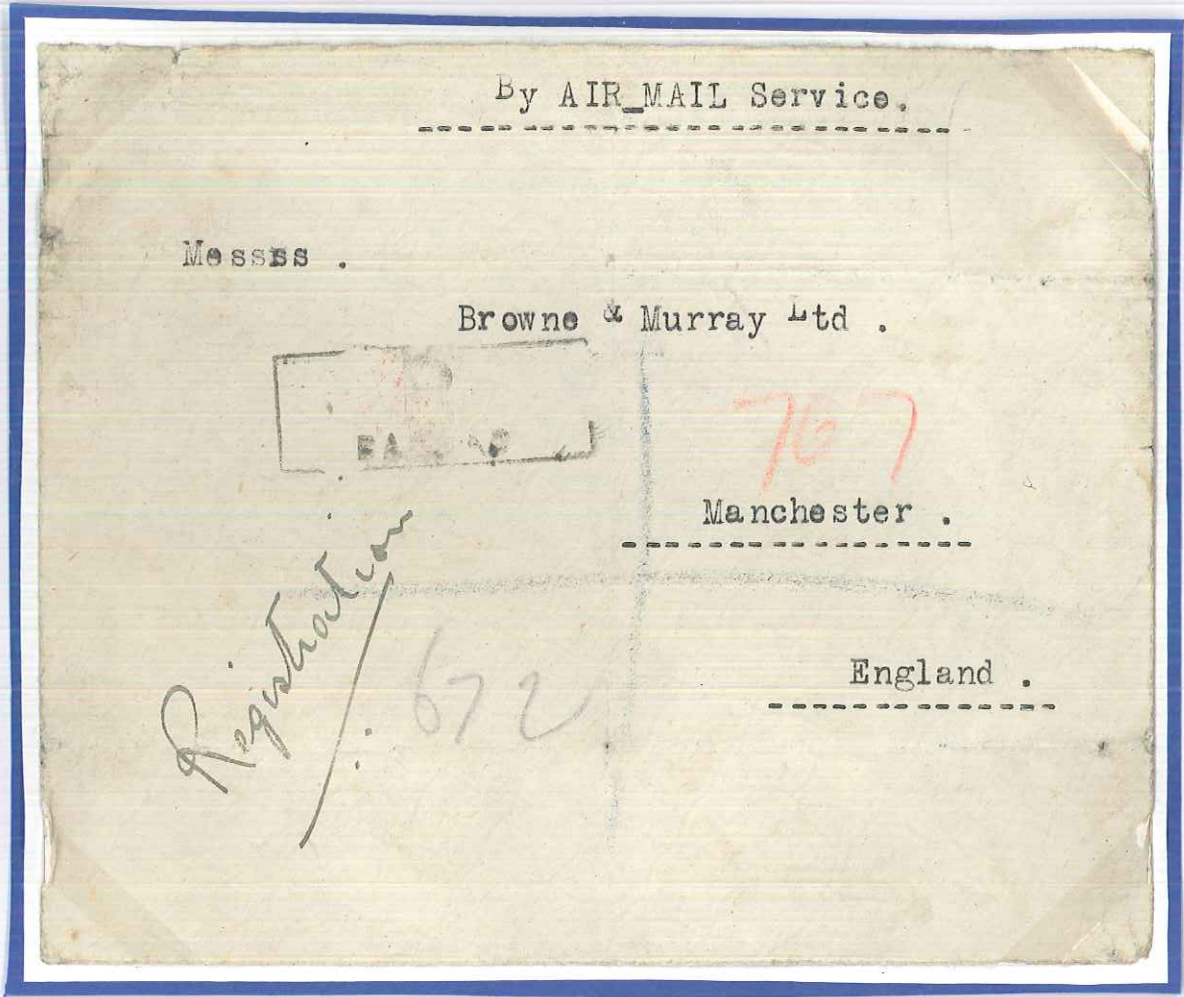


Reduced colour scan of reverse to show adhesives and backstamping.

Makina Camp c.d.s. Proud type KD2 used from 23 May 1920 to 17 January 1923.

Last day of c.d.s. recorded usage.

The envelope has a typed label, **"BY AIR MAIL BAGHDAD-CAIRO"**
This is the first recorded 'typed' Jusqu'a label known.



BAGHDAD REG. 19 JA 23

Correct postage of 12 annas applied prepaying air mail fee 6 annas, surface letter rate 3 annas plus 3 annas for the registration fee.



Reduced colour scan of reverse to show both the adhesives postage stamps and the receiving backstamping in London.

Transit time of 11 days.

Dispatch no 34 via Cairo – Baghdad Air Service

Depart London 25 January 1923	Arrive Port Said 3 February 1923
Depart Cairo 5 February 1923	Arrive Baghdad 7 February 1923

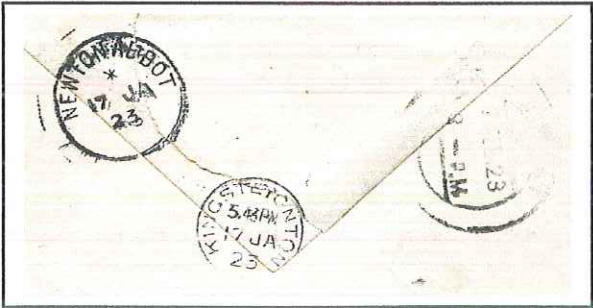


KINGSTEIGNTON 5.45PM 17 JA 23

UK letter rate 3d per ounce, plus air fee 6d per ounce (15 December 1921 to 14 May 1923), total 9d prepaid.

Framed air mail label, type 2 “BY AIR MAIL” in black on light greenish blue, lettering with serifs. Perforated 11¼ gauge, printed by Putney Press Ltd., London and available as from August 1920.

Total transit time of 21 days from date of posting to receipt in Iraq.



Reduced colour scan of reverse to show backstamping of Kingsteignton, 17 JA 23 Newton Abbot, 17 JA 23 and receiving c.d.s. of Baghdad, 7 FEB 23.

Dispatch no 35 via Cairo – Baghdad Air Service

Depart London 8 February 1923	Arrive Port Said 17 February 1923
Depart Cairo 19 February 1923	Arrive Baghdad 21 February 1923

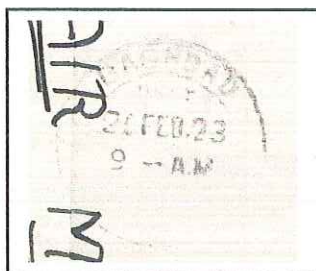


PECKHAM 30 JAN 1923

Correct postage of 9d applied, 3d letter rate to Iraq plus 6d air mail fee Cairo to Baghdad.

Envelope front has manuscript notation "AIR MAIL".

Total transit of 23 days from date of posting to receipt in Baghdad.



Reduced scan
of reverse
to show receiving
c.d.s. of Baghdad
dated 21 FEB 23

Large circular unframed handstamp "AIR MAIL" cachet known applied in red and/or purple ink during 1922 - 1923 to front of envelope is unlisted by McQueen.



MANCHESTER 1 FE 23

Correct postage of 9d per ounce letters to Iraq and beyond via the Cairo to Baghdad air service.

Total transit time of 43 days from date of posting to receipt at Ispahan, Persia. UK to Iraq 21 days and Iraq to Persia 22 days.



Reduced scan of reverse
to show backstamped
c.d.s. of Teheran dated 13 III.23

Boxed double line routing cachet applied to front of envelope at lower left stated to be one of a number of unofficial jusqu'a handstamps applied to the mails on this air service.

Dispatch no 35 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 3 March 1923	Arrive Cairo 8 March 1923
Depart Port Said 9 March 1923	Arrive London 15 March 1923



BAGHDAD 2 FEB. 23 10.30 A.M.

Correct postage of 9 annas applied, 6 annas special air fee plus 3 annas surface letter rate Iraq to Cairo and United Kingdom per ounce.

Letter endorsed in manuscript "**By AIR MAIL**".

Total transit time of 14 days from date of posting in Iraq to date of arrival in London.

Letter delayed in transit from Baghdad by 5 days, due to desert sand storm and mechanical breakdown to the aircraft.

Dispatch no 36 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 16 March 1923	Arrive Cairo 18 March 1923
Depart Port Said 20 March 1923	Arrive London 30 March 1923



BAGHDAD (IRAQ) 15 MAR 23

Correct postage of 9 annas on reverse of cover.

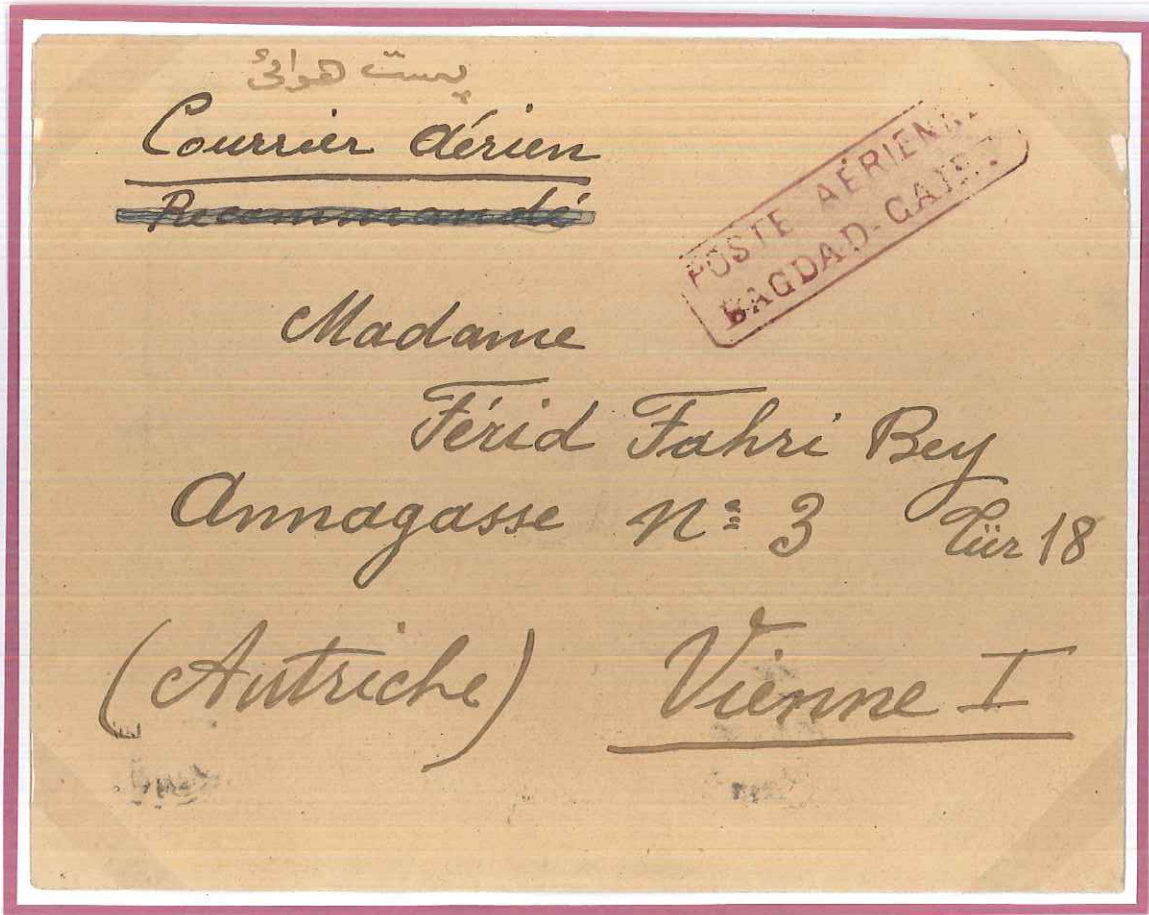
Total transit of 15 days from posting to receipt in the U.K.



Reduced colour scan of reverse to show backstamping and pre-paid postage.

Dispatch no 37 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Teheran 26 March 1923	Arrive Baghdad 30 March 1923
Depart Baghdad 30 March 1923	Arrive Cairo 1 April 1923
Depart Port Said 2 April 1923	Arrive London 9 April 1923



TEHERAN 26.III.23

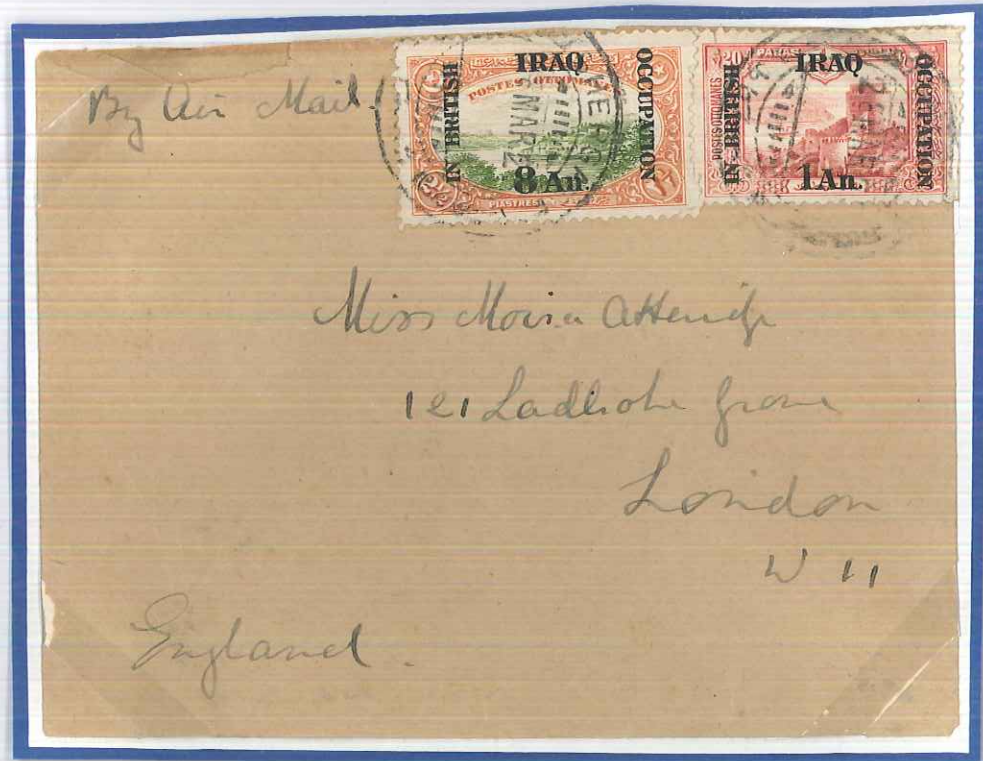
Correct prepaid postage of 3 Kran (equivalent to 15 annas), made up of 3 annas air fee plus 3 annas letter rate Persia to Iraq. Plus additional 6 annas special air fee and 3 annas letter rate, Iraq to Austria.

Letter travelled from Teheran, Persia to Baghdad, Iraq via surface road transport, Teheran circular datestamp dated 26 March 1923, arrival at Baghdad circular datestamp dated 30 March 1923. Transit between Persia and Iraq 5 days.



Reduced colour scan of reverse to show circular datestamps and prepaid postage applied.

Type 2 framed handstruck French worded cachet of two lines with rounded corners, top line with sans serif lettering and the bottom line with serif lettering applied in purple, normally applied in black by Post Office in Teheran, Persia.



SHERGAT
28. MAR. 23.

Correct postage of 9 annas applied, made up of 6 annas special air mail fee plus 3 annas surface letter rate.

Letter travelled to Baghdad from Shergat via surface transport.

Transit time 13 days.



LOWER BAGHDAD
REG.
29 MAR 23

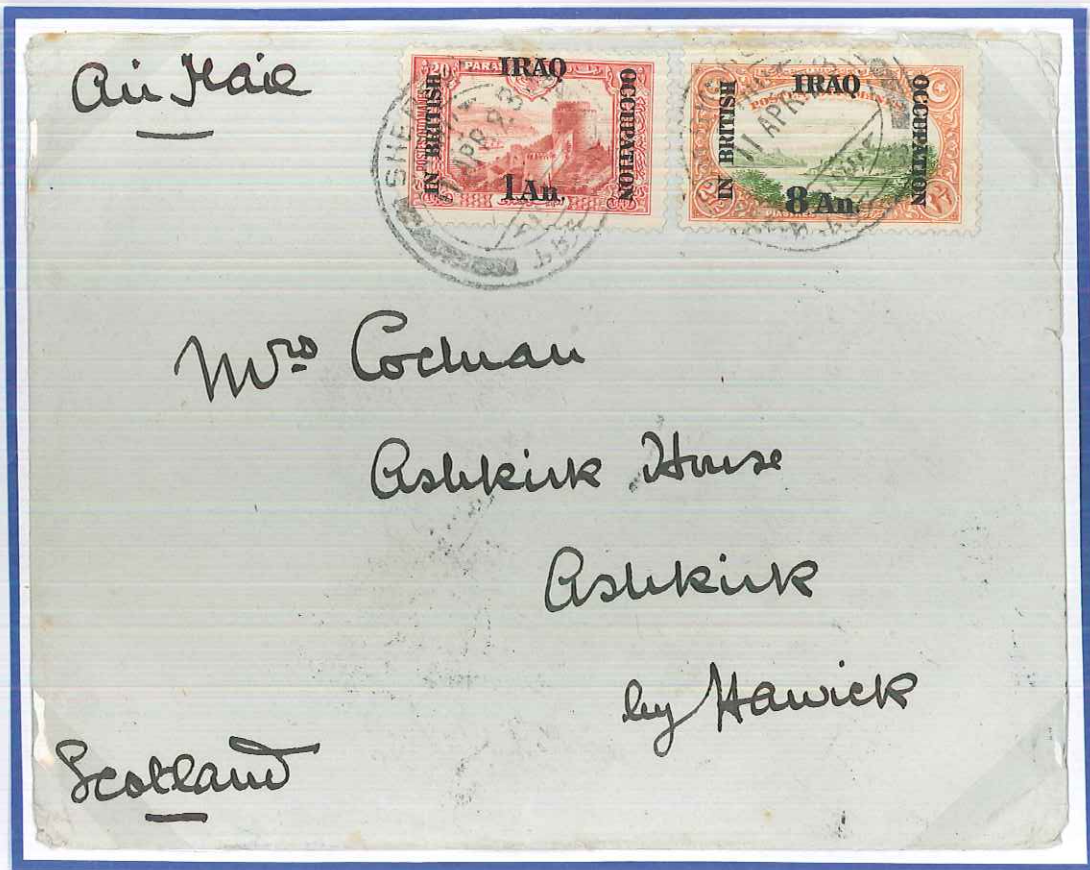
Correct postage of 12 annas applied, special air fee 6 annas, surface letter rate 3 annas plus registration fee 3 annas.

Air mail label, Mair type IRQ-A-1b.

Total transit time of 4 days.

Dispatch no 38 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 13 April 1923	Arrive Cairo 15 April 1923
Depart Port Said 16 April 1923	Arrive London 23 April 1923



SHERGAT 11 APR. 23

Correct postage prepaid of 9 annas, 6 annas special air fee plus 3 annas surface letter rate to the United Kingdom.

Letter carried from Shergat, northern Iraq to Baghdad via surface transport.

Cover endorsed with **"Air Mail"** in manuscript.

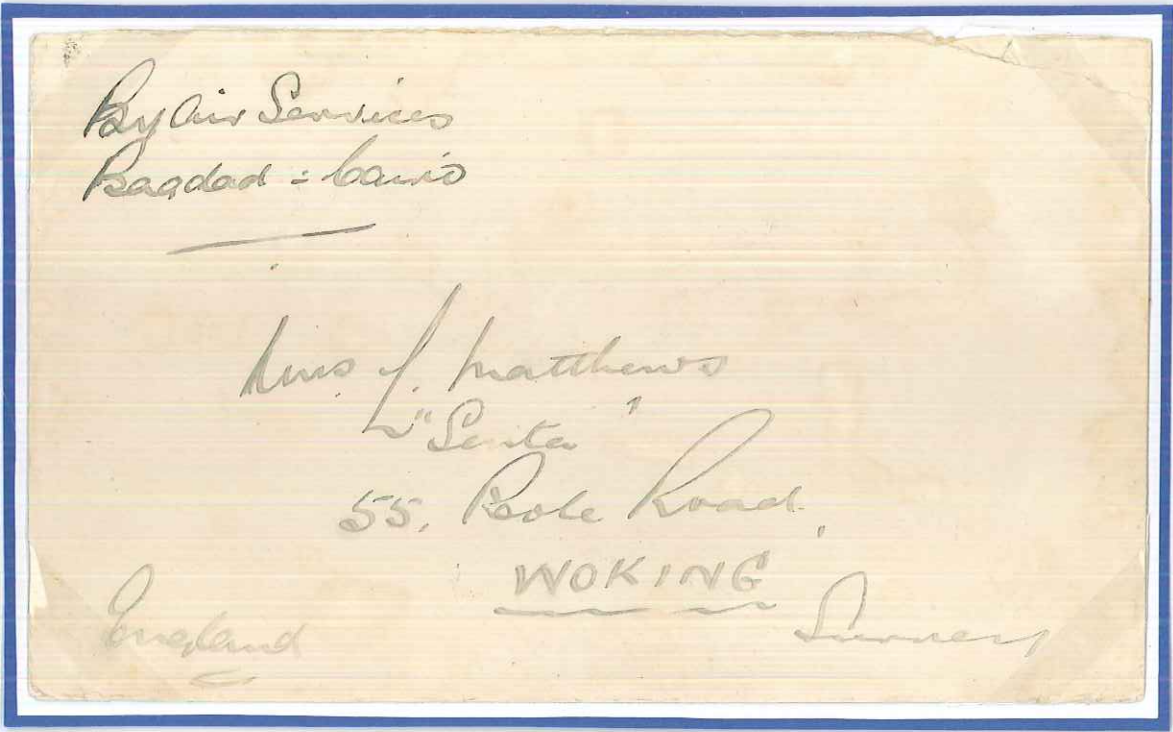
Transit time of 13 days from date of posting.



Reduced colour scan of reverse
to show circular date stamps and
dates of arrival at Baghdad
12 April 1923 and
Cairo 15 April 1923.

Dispatch no 39 via Baghdad – Cairo Air Service

Depart Baghdad 27 April 1923	Arrive Cairo 28 April 1923
Depart Port Said 29 April 1923	Arrive London 7 May 1923



BASRAH 25 APR 23

Correct postage of 9 annas applied to rear of cover (see below).

Total transit of 13 days from date of posting to receipt in London. Letter carried overland from Basrah to Baghdad, then via RAF air service to Cairo, railed to Port Said to meet the P&O contract mail steamer to Marseilles. From Marseilles across France by railway to the Channel port and on to the U.K. via channel ferry.



Reduced colour scan of reverse to show postage and backstamping.

Dispatch no 42 via Cairo – Baghdad Air Service

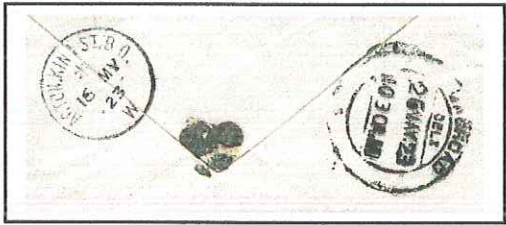
Depart London 17 May 1923	Arrive Port Said 22 May 1923
Depart Cairo 24 May 1923	Arrive Baghdad 25 May 1923



ACTON 12.15.PM 16 MY 23

Correct postage prepaid of 8½d, postage 2½d per 1 ounce or less, plus 6d per ounce air mail fee (14 May 1923 to 28 November 1923).

Total transit time of 11 days from date of posting in the United Kingdom to receipt in Baghdad.



Reduced colour scan of reverse
to show c.d.s. of
Acton King St. B.O. dated 16 MY 23
and Baghdad dated 26 MAY. 23.