

Great Britain

World War II Airmails, 1939 -1945

Background

By the close of 1938 the 'All-Up' or Empire Airmail Scheme, based on Imperial Airways fleet of Empire Flying Boats had introduced a uniform rate of One Penny-halfpenny, to most colonies in the old British Empire.

This had a two-fold effect, encouraging the use of airmail by the public and allowing Imperial Airways, and it's successor British Overseas Airways Corporation (B.O.A.C.) to expand on existing air routes. The cheap rate of postage allowed most families to afford sending letters abroad, confident that by airmail they would get there in a reasonable amount of time.

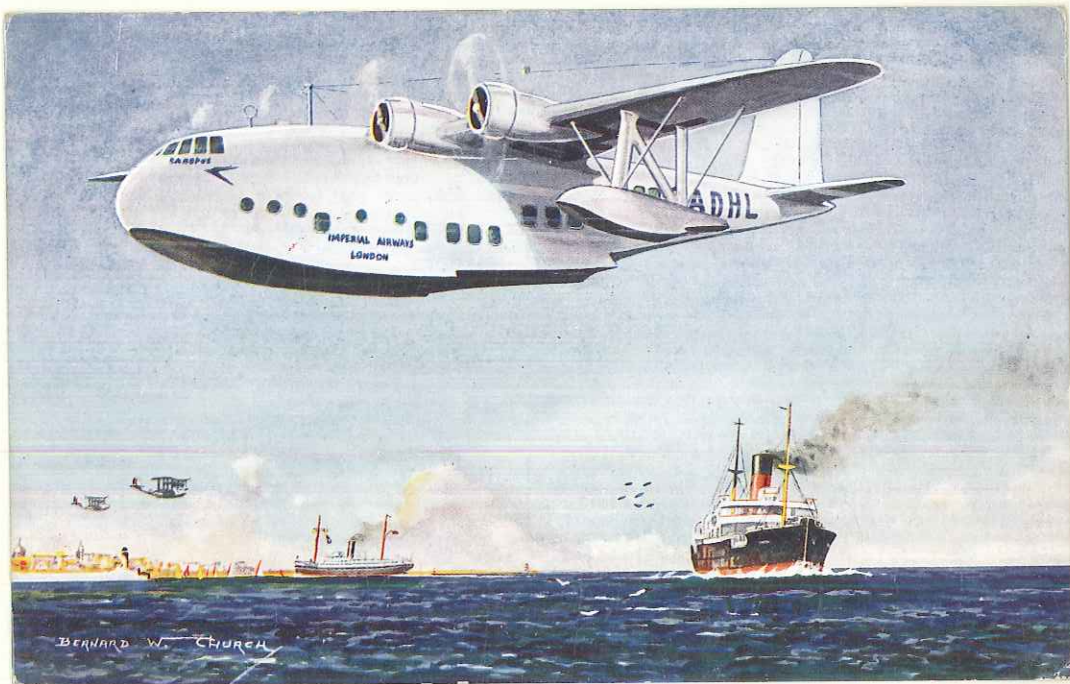
The outbreak of war

With the declaration of war on Germany on 3rd September, 1939 the Empire Airmail Scheme was immediately suspended and replaced by a ten-fold increase in letter rate to 1/- 3d. per half ounce, this, it was hoped would reduce the demand for airmail and allow priority mails from service personnel to be carried by plane. The war period saw some staggering postal rates being used to speed letter delivery, and examples can be seen in this small display. A study of the rarer destinations for airmail also makes an interesting collection.

Recommended further reading : 'The Postal History of British Air Mails' by Edward B. Proud (1991).

Great Britain

Flying Empires - The Short 'C' class, Empire Flying-boat.



G-ADHL 'Canopus' S.23 type.

The aircraft badge shows a Greek bireme under oar with sail furled and Canopus evident, aft.

Ordered: 24th January, 1935;

Delivered: 22nd October, 1936;

Broken up at Hythe: 23rd October, 1946.*

* For more technical information on this fascinating aircraft please consult *Flying Empires* by Brian Cassidy.



This leaflet gives the latest times at which you can post letters, at selected Post Offices in the United Kingdom, for India and the East and for Africa by the services of Imperial Airways

1A/T/236 50m 8/34
* October-May, 16.50 June-September
PRINTED BY HENDERSON AND SPALDING LTD., AND PUBLISHED BY IMPERIAL AIRWAYS LTD.,
AIRWAY TERMINUS, LONDON, S.W.1

[illegible]

SOME OF THE OFFICES AND AIRPORTS OF IMPERIAL AIRWAYS

GREAT BRITAIN

LONDON: PASSENGER DEPARTURE STATION, Airway Terminus, Victoria Station, S.W.1. Telephone: VICTORIA 2211 (Day and Night). Telegrams: Impairlim Telex London
WEST END BOOKING OFFICE, Airways House, Charles Street, Lower Regent Street, S.W.1. Telephone: VICTORIA 2211. Telegrams: Impairlim Telex London
SOUTHAMPTON: Imperial Airways Ltd., New Docks, Southampton. Telephone: Southampton 5411/2. Telegrams: Flying Southampton

FRANCE

PARIS: PASSENGER DEPARTURE STATION, Airway Terminus, Rue des Italiens. Telephone: Taitbout 6050/1/2/3 (Day and Night). Telegrams: Flying Paris
MARSEILLES: Imperial Airways, Marignane Air Port. Telephone: Colbert 89-12/3/4/5/6. Telegrams: Flying Marseilles

BELGIUM

BRUSSELS: 70 Rue Ravenstein. Telephone: Brussels 12.64.62. Telegrams: Flying Brussels

ITALY

BRINDISI: Imperial Airways, Idroscalo Civile. Telephone: Brindisi 1023 and 1467. Telegrams: Flying Brindisi
ROME: Central Administrative Offices, 86 Via Regina Elena. Telephone: Rome 485-658. Telegrams: Airways Rome
PASSENGER DEPARTURE STATION, 64 Piazza Dell' Esedra. Telephone: 487-205. Telegrams: Flying Rome

GREECE

ATHENS: Imperial Airways, Phaleron Bay Air Port, P.O. Box 162. Telephone: Old Phaleron 9266. Telegrams: Flying Athens

EGYPT

ALEXANDRIA: Imperial Airways, Central Administrative and Booking Offices, Airways House, 3 Rue Fatimites, Rue Fouad 1er, P.O. Box 1705. Telephone: Alexandria 27084-5-6. Telegrams: Airways Alexandria
MARINE AIR PORT, Ras-el-Tin. Telephone: Alexandria 27413. Telegrams: Airways Alexandria
CAIRO: Imperial Airways, Heliopolis Aerodrome. Telephone: 62293/4/5. Telegrams: Airways Cairo

ANGLO-EGYPTIAN SUDAN

KHARTOUM: Imperial Airways, Gordon Avenue, P.O. Box 250. Telephone: Khartoum (Office) 700, Airport 482, Flying-boat Base 720. Telegrams: Flying or Airways Khartoum

AIR LINES IN AMERICA

Imperial Airways are agents in Great Britain for United Airlines, Transcontinental Western Airways Inc., and American Airlines Inc. Reservations can be effected on all routes operated by these Companies and full information obtained from Imperial Airways, Airway Terminus, S.W.1. Telephone: VICTORIA 2211 (day and night service)

UGANDA

PORT BELL/KAMPALA: Imperial Airways, Kampala, P.O. Box 523. Telephone: (Office) Kampala 325, (Airport) Port Bell 377. Telegrams: Flying Kampala

KENYA COLONY

KISUMU: Imperial Airways, P.O. Box 15. Telephone: 11. Telegrams: Flying or Airways
NAIROBI: Wilson Airways Ltd., Rhodes House, Delamere Avenue, P.O. Box 1010. Telephone: Nairobi 2895, 2255, 2495. Telegrams: Flying Nairobi
MOMBASA: Imperial Airways, Kilindini Road. Telephone: (Office) 246, (Airport) 421/2. Telegrams: Flying Mombasa

TANGANYIKA TERRITORY

DAR-ES-SALAAM: Imperial Airways, Kelvin House, Acacia Avenue, P.O. Box 543. Telephone: (Office) 431, (Marine Air Port) 525. Telegrams: Wilsonaire Dar-es-Salaam

PORTUGUESE EAST AFRICA

BEIRA: Imperial Airways, Casa Infanta Sagres, P.O. Box 265. Telephone: Beira 276. Telegrams: Flying Beira

NORTHERN RHODESIA

LUSAKA: Rhodesian and Nyasaland Airways Ltd., c/o Kee's Ltd., P.O. Box 100. Telephone: 2951. Telegrams: Direct Lusaka

SOUTHERN RHODESIA

BULAWAYO: Rhodesian and Nyasaland Airways Ltd., Grand Hotel Buildings, P.O. Box 1000. Telephone: 2329. Telegrams: Rana Bulawayo
SALISBURY: Rhodesian and Nyasaland Airways Ltd., Municipal Airport, P.O. Box 210. Telephone: Day 2056, Night 3039. Telegrams: Rana Salisbury

NYASALAND

BLANTYRE: Rhodesian and Nyasaland Airways Ltd., c/o Messrs. C. J. Christowitz, P.O. Box 47. Telephone: 32. Telegrams: Rana Blantyre

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

DURBAN: Imperial Airways (Africa) Limited, Devonshire Court, Victoria Embankment (Esplanade), P.O. Box 936. Telephone: 20505/6/7. Telegrams: Flying Durban

NIGERIA

LAGOS: Elder Dempster Lines Ltd. Telephone: Lagos 127. Telegrams: Airways Lagos

Imperial Airways



africa TIMETABLE
IN FORCE FROM JULY 1938 UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE
This timetable cancels all previous editions and is
subject to alteration without notice

REGISTERED COMMERCIAL PAPERS.

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343/345 EUSTON ROAD,
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PIRELLI S/A COMPANHIA INDUSTRIAL BRASILEIRA,

Caixa Postal 2865,

S A O P A U L O,

BRASIL.



Great Britain



Airmail cover - Dundee to Guatemala, Central America.

Postmarked Dundee 6 pm 30th September, 1941.

Backstamped: Guatemala 27th November, 1941.

Cover inscribed 'Via North Atlantic Air Service.'

Also bears a patriotic label.

2/- rate is correct for the twice weekly United States Transatlantic Air service via the Azores.

691

EXAMINER



Via North Atlantic Air Service.

THE PHILADELPHIA NATIONAL BANK,
P.O. Box 7618,
PHILADELPHIA,

Pa.

U.S.A.





1940. 1

Mr. J. Prentice,
The Bank Line (China) Ltd.,
6, King's Buildings,
HONG KONG.
China.

BY AIR MAIL
PAR AVION

9595
PASSED
C. I. N.
10 JUN 21

F. W. TONKIN Esq.
Managing Editor
ASSOCIATED NEWSPAPERS LTD.
ELIZABETH STREET
Sydney
AUSTRALIA.



MINED
CENSOR
P. & C.B.

Great Britain



**Airmail cover - Haslemere, Surrey to Palo Seco, Trinidad,
British West Indies.**

**By surface mail (sea) to New York, then onward air
transmission by Pan-American Airways Ltd.**

Postmarked Haslemere, Surrey 7.15pm 5th April, 1940.

Backstamped: Port of Spain, Trinidad 5.30pm 20th April, 1940.

9d rate correct and most unusual for this period.¹

¹ Air throughout rate was 2/-

Great Britain



Airmail cover - Edinburgh to Zutphen, The Netherlands.

Flown by K.L.M. (Dutch Airways).

Postmarked Edinburgh 4pm 6th April, 1940.

Not backstamped.

As with all airmail flown to The Netherlands, at this time, sent via Shoreham by a direct K.L.M. flight to Amsterdam, via Brussels.*

* See previous exhibit. This airmail rate operated from the 30th October, 1939 to the 13th May, 1940, ceasing due to the German invasion of the Low Countries. Then from the 29th September, 1945 to the 31st December, 1945.

Great Britain



Airmail cover - Dorking to Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

Postmarked Dorking 7.30 pm 29th April, 1940.

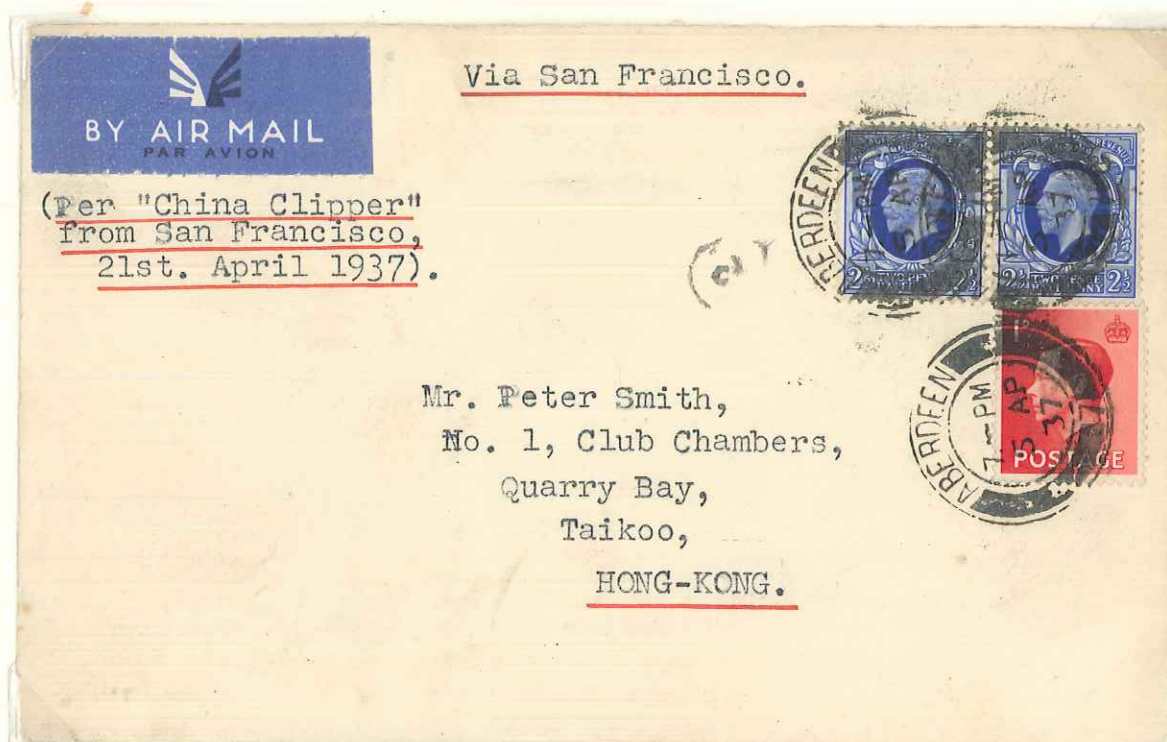
Cover bears no backstamps but was sent from Shoreham, via
Brussels to Amsterdam.

Airlines operating from neutral countries were encouraged.
Thus, K.L.M. (Dutch); S.A.B.E.N.A. (Belgium) and D.D.L.
(Danish) flew services from Amsterdam, Brussels and
Copenhagen.

Shoreham avoided the environs of London, so neutral countries
could not see our military defences.

This cover probably flown by S.A.B.E.N.A.

Great Britain



First flight cover - first acceptance from Great Britain for the extension of the "China Clipper" service to Hong Kong.

Flown by Pan-American Airways Ltd.

Postmarked Aberdeen 7pm 5th April, 1937.

Not backstamped.

Typed cachet: (Per "China Clipper" from San Francisco, 21st April 1937).

By surface mail (sea) to New York then onwards by air:
San Francisco-Honolulu-Midway Island-Wake Island-Guam-
Manila-Macao-Hong Kong.

The route was extended from Manila to Hong Kong with the first flight on 21st April, 1937.*

* Flown in a Martin H-130 (NC 14716). *Proud* page 537. The surface rate and combined air rate to mainland U.S.A. was 5d, did an additional 1d cover the airmail to Hong Kong?

THE MAGPIE Auction 97
LOT 43 £42.

122 Park Street
Aberdeen
6/4/37

Dear Peter.

If this reaches you it will mean that I have got another "first flight" cover which will prove of value ultimately. I have written today by Imperial Airways so have not more to say. Kindest Regards and hope you are keeping well and not too busy.

Albert.

Great Britain



**Airmail cover - London F.S. to Georgetown, Demerara,
British Guiana.**

Flown by B.O.A.C. and Pan-American Airways Ltd.

Postmarked: London F.S. 7.15pm 20 May, 1943.

Backstamped: Air Mail G.P.O. British Guiana 3pm 31 May,
1943.

Note: cover has been double censored.
2/9d airmail rate for air service all the way.

Great Britain



Airmail cover - South Shields to Curacao, Dutch West Indies.

Postmarked South Shields, Co. Durham 11.30 am

2nd January, 1940.

Backstamped: Curacao 30th January, 1940.

Sent by surface mail (sea) to New York, and then
onward air transmission.

1/6d. Rate correct.

A rare destination, not seen very often.

Great Britain



Airmail cover - Normanton-le-Heath, Leicestershire to Port-
of-Spain, Trinidad, British West Indies.
Flown by Pan-American Airways Ltd.*

Postmarked Normanton-le-Heath 21st November, 1939.

Backstamped: G.P.O. Port-of-Spain 5.30pm December 9 1939.

Airmail rate 9d to Trinidad (see footnote).

* By surface mail (sea) to New York then onward air transmission.

Great Britain



Airmail cover - Chalford to Kenya Colony.

Postmarked Chalford 5.45 pm 21st November, 1938.

Backstamped: Kisumu 27th November, 1938 and Muhoroni
28th November, 1938.

By this date Kenya came under the "All-up" Empire Airmail
Scheme and normal postage was therefore only 11/2d.

This cover which was registered bears the 4d. And 5d. Definitive
on the
First day of issue.

No airmail sticker was required.

Great Britain



Airmail cover - London to Ecuador, Central America.

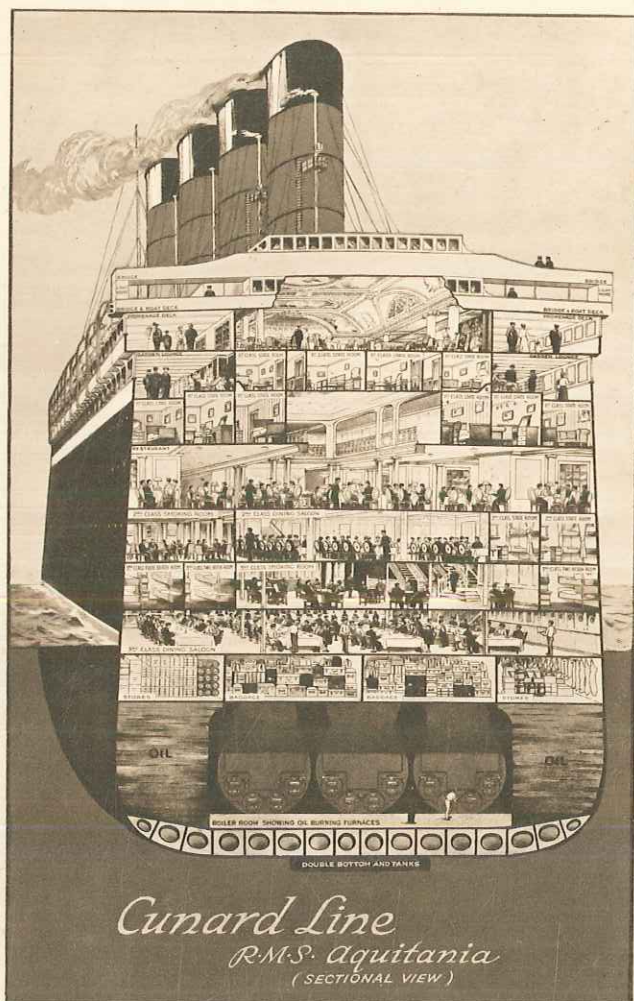
Postmarked London E.C. (time obscure) 23rd February,
1939.

By surface mail (sea) to New York on board the R.M.S. Aquitania
(see postcard).

Then onward air transmission to Ecuador.

9d. Rate is in fact the postcard rate to Ecuador, via
New York.

Very faint backstamp on reverse (unreadable).



Cunard Line
R.M.S. Aquitania
(SECTIONAL VIEW)

Great Britain



First flight cover - first acceptance direct service from London to Lagos, Nigeria.

Flown by Imperial Airways Ltd.

Postmarked with uncommon violet ink, London/15 Oct 36/Air Mail.

Backstamped: Lagos 1.45 pm 22 nd October, 1936.

No special cachet but manuscript inscription:

“1st Through Flight to Lagos.”

Letter rate of 6d. correct.

Likely flown direct to Oshogbo as aerodrome completed there.

AIRMAIL COLLECTOR

PO. BOX 99 • CARDIFF • CF2 6XP GREAT BRITAIN
PHONE: 029 2075 4748 • FAX: 029 2076 1076
E-MAIL AMC@FUT.NET WEB WWW.AIRMAILS.CO.UK

Nick Peacock B.A.
5 Caldy Avenue
Connahs Quay
Flintshire
CH5 4UA
18 June 2005

RECEIPT Sale 36, June 12th, 2005

Lot 293, Bid £75, Bought for £60
Lot 295, Bid £75, Bought for £55
P/P £4.50

PAID £119.50 BY PAYPAL June 17th, 2005

The purchaser may return any Lot that in his/her opinion does not match up to the description, and a refund will be given, but the Lot must be returned within three days..

*Regards
Nick Peacock*

Great Britain



Airmail cover - Accrington to Batavia, Dutch East Indies.

Flown by B.O.A.C.

Postmarked Accrington, Lancs 11 June, 1941

Backstamped: Dutch East Indies censorship cancellation 4
August, 1941.

Bears the correct airmail rate of 1/3d¹.

¹ A rare survival, most mail captured by the Japanese when they invaded the Far East in December, 1941 was destroyed. Bought from a dealer in the Netherlands.