
A STUDY OF
HONG KONG DEFINITIVES:
KING EDWARD VII AND
KING GEORGE V

by

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and

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CHINA overprints

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REQUISITION LETTERS

The requisition letter and sheet serial number appeared in the top margin at the right, above NE/1/6 (see illustration 3). Printed in black, this imprint might also appear at the top right of a half sheet divided horizontally through the central gutter. Sheets were apparently often divided this way for ease of handling. Quarter sheets were also recorded by the Crown Agents for shipments to the Treaty Port Offices during the reign of King George V, as well as earlier reports of this practice in 1904 (see page 9). The requisition letter can help date different printings.



ILLUSTRATION 3 - REQUISITION LETTER & NUMBER

PAPER

The first printings of these definitives appeared on regular wove paper. This type of paper is referred to as 'ordinary'. In 1905 a new type of paper was introduced. This has a surface coating of calcium oxide or carbonate, giving a smoother and generally whiter appearance. This type of paper is known as 'chalky'. It yielded crisper, brighter ink impressions, due to decreased surface irregularities and increased light reflection through the ink layer, off the paper and back through to the viewer, instead of the light being absorbed or reflected at random off a rough surface.

PILLARS

On the 3¢, 5¢ and 6¢ values, the horizontal interpanneau gutter contains 12 sets of 4 vertical boxes, or *pillars*, filled with horizontal lines (see illustration 18). These pillars, like the Jubilee line, all formed part of the duty plate. This device was originally introduced to prevent the paper sagging over this otherwise comparatively large empty space in the printing forme, which would have affected the registering of the next colour⁽²³⁾. It had the additional advantage of preventing the fraudulent use of the 12 adhesive-sized interpanneau pieces of watermarked paper.



ILLUSTRATION 18 - PILLARS

PLATE NUMBERS

Two key plates were used during the quarter-century that these adhesives were in use. These were numbered 1 and 2, respectively, the latter coming into use about mid-1932. We believe that each value only had one duty plate during the whole period of use. It is of interest to note that even the uni-coloured values were printed in two operations with two plates. In order to distinguish sheets with the second alphabet requisition letter (see next section), a cut was made in the top of the circle in which the plate number 1 appeared. Also the key plate Jubilee lines above and to the right of the top right adhesive (NE/1/6) were shortened and bevelled at the right and the top, respectively (see illustration 19). This cut

Hong Kong

Airmails

1924-1941

Duncan Crewe

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I am grateful to the following for giving permission to use material in their collections.: -Nick Halewood for Fig. 44, Peter Ball for Fig. 46 and K.K. Ho for Fig. 81.

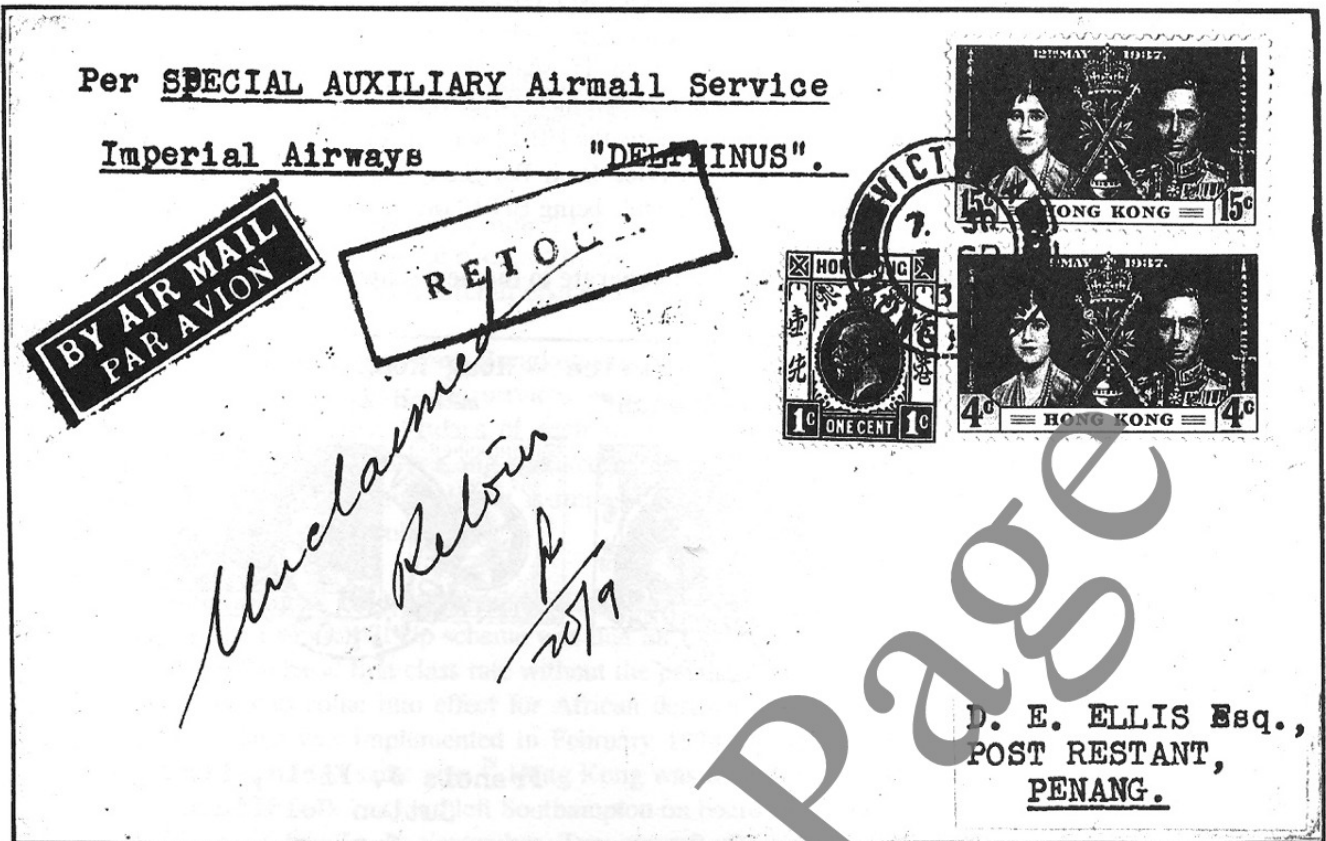
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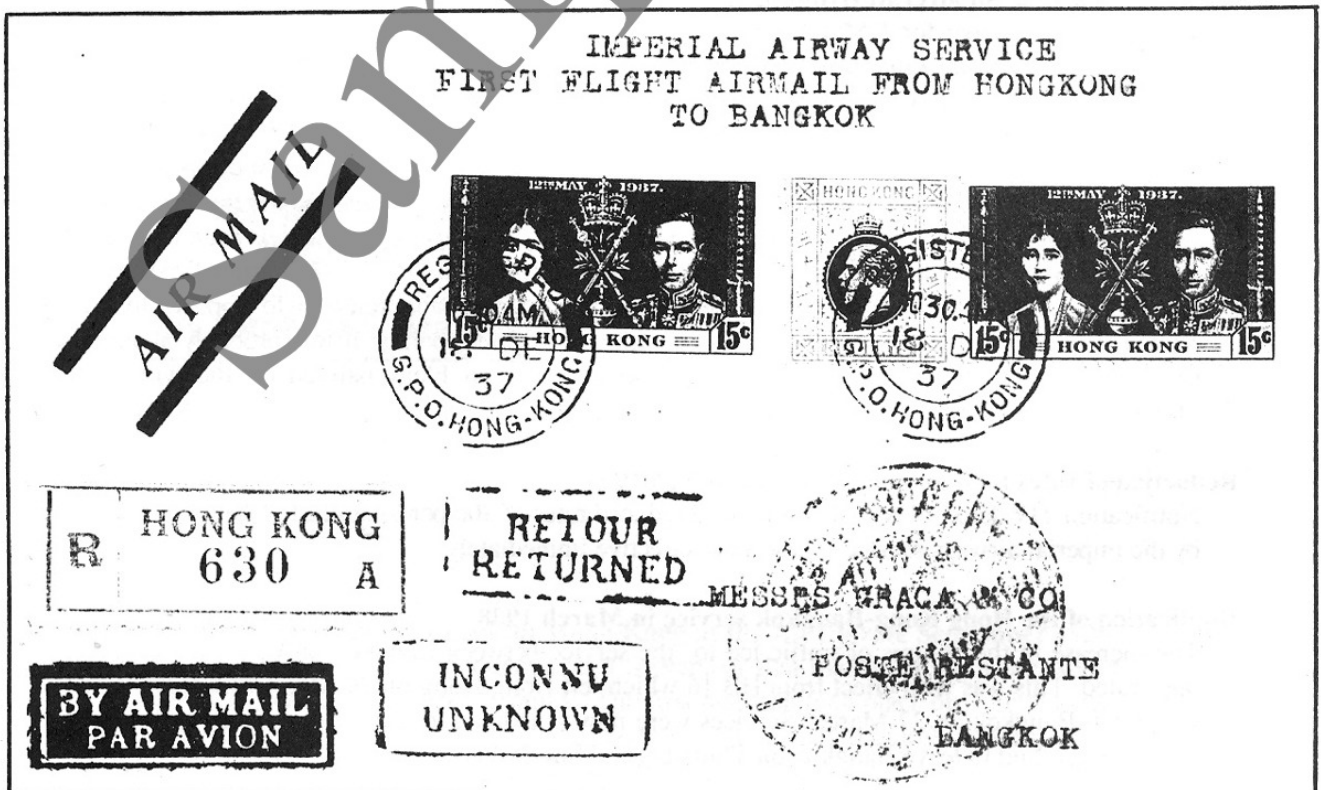
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Fig. 32 Cover to Penang flown on the supplementary service by *Delphinus* September 1937



to Bangkok. It had been hoped to commence with the service that left London on 27 November but a delay in the signing of the agreement meant that the first eastbound mail to use the new routing did not leave London until 11 December. Some covers had been prepared for the 27 November service but it was routed via Penang and reached Hong Kong on 7 December via FEE 90. The covers I have seen are all addressed to R.M.C Dobos, Imperial Airways manager in Hong Kong. He added a manuscript note explaining that the cover had gone via Penang. The first mail to go via Bangkok arrived in Hong Kong on 20 December on board *Delphinus* operating service BH 1. The last service Hong Kong service to operate via Penang was FEW 90, flown by *Dorado* on 11-12 December. The first service to fly via Bangkok was HB 1 on 19 December (see Fig. 33).

Fig.33 First dispatch from Hong Kong via the Bangkok feeder link 19 December 1937



APPENDIX B CHECK LIST OF HONG KONG AIRMAILS 1924-41.

The Webb No in column 2 refers to the listing given by Colonel Webb in his *Hong Kong Airmails* booklet published in 1968 by the Postal history Society.

No	Webb No	Date	Airline	Route	Comment
1924					
1	-	10 Jul		US Internal	With effect from 10 July 1924 the US Post Office accepted mail from overseas for airmail transmission within the USA. The earliest known Hong Kong cover sent in this way is March 1925.
1928					
2	1	16 Nov	RAF	Manila-Hong Kong	At the end of the Australia survey flight the Southampton flying boats flew a mail from Manila to Hong Kong. Arrived in Hong Kong on 18 November. Known locally as the London Orient Flight or LOF. The cover listed by Webb as No 2 was a FDC for special stamps issued in Philippines.
1929					
3	3	15 May	CAF	Saigon-Hong Kong	Trial flight via Hanoi by Tixier in a Schrab FBA 17. Arrived in Hong Kong on 18 May.
4	4	20 May	CAF	Hong Kong-Saigon	Return flight of the above. Reached Saigon via Hanoi on 24 May.
5	5	6 Sep	IA	Sea to India, then air from Karachi	Because of the suspension of the Trans-Siberian link, mail was dispatched by sea to Calcutta and then onwards by air from Karachi. Dispatches were on a fortnightly basis and three were made. The last dispatch was lost in the <i>City of Rome</i> crash.
6	6	7 Sep	IA	London to Karachi by air then sea to Hong Kong	During the suspension of the Trans-Siberian link mail was dispatched by air to Karachi and then forwarded by sea to Hong Kong from Calcutta. One dispatch was lost in the <i>City of Jerusalem</i> crash.
1930					
7	-	5 Sep	EAC	London-Hong Kong	Mail flown via Lufthansa to Berlin and Deruluft to Moscow and then by rail to Manchouli, air by EAC to Shanghai and sea to Hong Kong. Again provision was made to fly mail on the Moscow-Manchouli leg but this rarely happened.
1931					
8	-	11 Jun	IA	London-Karachi	Mail which left London on 6 June was delayed by an accident to the <i>City of Delhi</i> when landing at Bushire.
9	8	6 Jul	EAC	London-Hong Kong	First all air dispatch by the above service.
10	9	7 Jul	EAC	Hong Kong-London	Mail was dispatched by sea to Shanghai and then flown by EAC to Manchouli to be sent onwards by Trans-Siberian railway to Moscow and then air to London via Berlin using services of Deruluft and Lufthansa. Provision was made for the Manchouli-Moscow section to be flown but this rarely happened.
11	-	21 Sep	IA	London-Karachi	<i>City of Alexandria</i> delayed for three days in Mediterranean with eastbound mails that left London on 21 September.
12	-	30 Oct	IA	London-Karachi	<i>City of Alexandria</i> damaged in forced landing near Mersa Matruh. Mail for India and beyond forwarded late and in a water damaged state.
13	-	30 Nov	IA	London-Karachi	<i>City of Wellington</i> made forced landing near Frankfurt while carrying the mails for India and points east. Mail reached Karachi 3 days late.
1932					
14	-	24 Feb		Trans Pacific	Hong Kong mail was now accepted for airmail carriage by US airlines on both internal and external routes. Mail was sent by sea to San Francisco or Seattle. Mail could also be sent by sea to Vancouver for onwards transmission by Canadian air routes.
15	10	Mar-Apr	Priv	India-Hong Kong	Private flight by American flyer Smith Reynolds. One cover known from India to Hong Kong.
16	12	May-Jul	Priv	Hong Kong-Manila	Fernando Rein included Hong Kong as a stop on his Madrid-Manila flight. Originally intended to leave Hong Kong late May but delayed by engine problems and left on 11 July.
17	11	7 Jun	AO	Sea to Saigon then air to Marseilles	First experimental dispatch to Saigon for carriage over the Air Orient service to Marseilles. Only 15 covers were carried
18	13	3 Aug	AO	Sea to Saigon then air to Marseilles	First regular dispatch by sea to Saigon for the Air Orient service to Marseilles

HONG KONG

AIRMAILS

1945-1995

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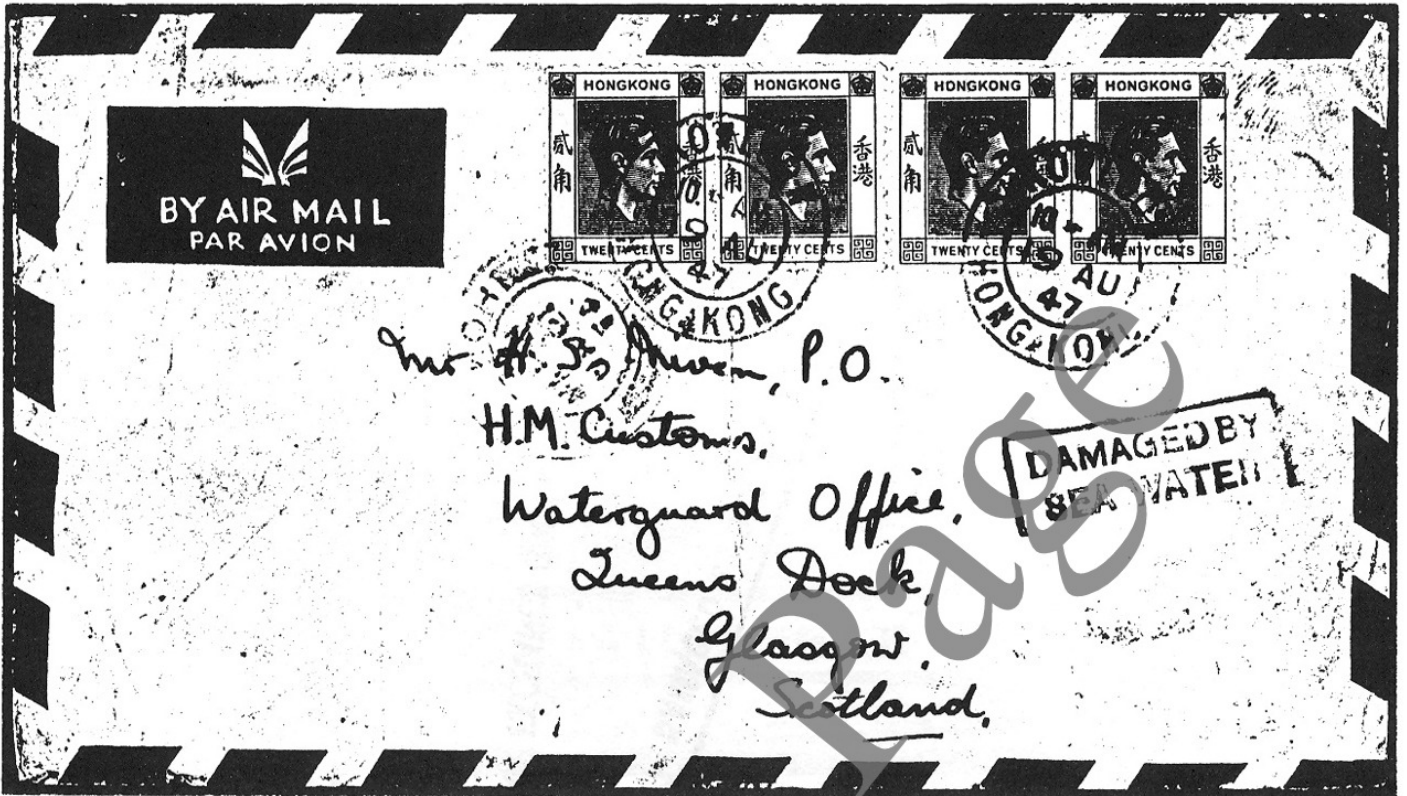


Figure 14. Cover to Scotland salvaged from "Portland" crash in Bahrein on 23 August 1947. Rate: 80¢ per 1/2oz. Cachet: Nierinck 470823a, in black.

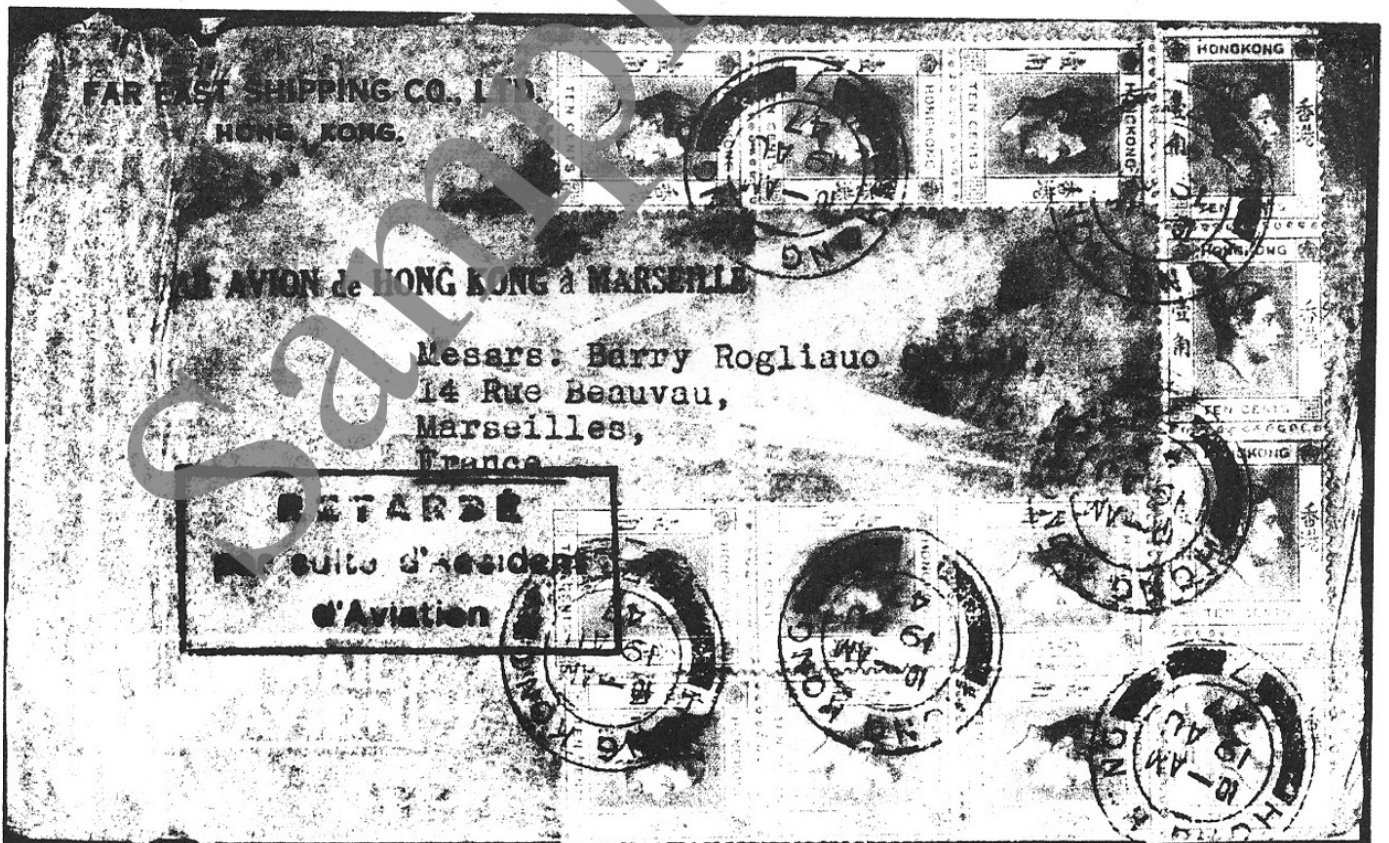


Figure 15. Cover to France salvaged from "Portland" crash in Bahrein on 23 August 1947. Rate: \$1.30 per 1/2oz (air to Marseille only). Cachet: Nierinck 470823d, in black.

JUSQU'A AIRMAIL MARKINGS OF HONG KONG, 1945-1949

Jusqu'a airmail markings applied in Hong Kong in the first 4 or 5 years after the end of World War II can be divided into the following types:

- 1 Handstamps in English indicating the place where air transmission was to cease
 - a including the name of the place
 - b including a space for the name of the place
 - c including "OFFICE OF EXCHANGE" instead of the name of the place
- 2 Handstamps in French indicating where air transmission was to start and cease
 - a including a space for the name of the place where air transmission was to cease
 - b including "MARSEILLE" as the place where air transmission was to cease

Type 1a. Offices of exchange, i.e. places where air transmission was to cease, known are Calcutta, Leyte, London, Singapore, Sydney and the U.S.A.

• **BY AIR TO CALCUTTA ONLY.** Mail for India and Ceylon went by air as far as Calcutta, examples to Bombay and Colombo (see Fig. 32; marking, grey-violet) known.



Figure 32. Cover to Colombo, Ceylon, dated 13 March 1946. Philatelic franking.