

SYNOPSIS : CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRMAILS 1919 – 1941

Treatment: *Scope:* The exhibit is intended to show how Canadian mail was sent to other countries via airmail from the Aero Club of Canada flight from Toronto to New York on August 25, 1919, to the U.S. entry into World War II December 7, 1941, when all Canadian mail overseas was temporarily stopped.

Organization and Development: The exhibit follows chronologically the use by Canadian mails of the U.S. government mail system following the experimental 1919 flight with the 1920 Victoria- Seattle FAM 2 flight. Frames 1-5 focus on the development of airmails to the Americas, since this was the earliest and most systematic progression. Frame 1 into Frame 2 focuses on mail to the U.S. In Frames 2-3 the development of FAMs 4, and 5 are shown as they extended to the Canal Zone. Frame 3-4 include FAM 6 and 17 material and Frame 4 FAM 8. Frame 5 focuses on the development of FAMs 9 and 10 (extension of FAM 6). Frame 6 shows mails to Europe as they developed related to European airmails. It includes the use of FAM 18 northern and southern routes. Frame 7 includes the mails to Africa and the Middle East. Frame 7 into 8 ends with mail to Asia and the Pacific, with U.S. FAMs 14, 17, as well as Canadian access to the Dutch and Chinese airmail systems along with routing via the British Imperial Airways routes. Rate changes that took place are presented approximately chronologically for each destination area: Americas, Europe, Africa, and Asia. All rates are shown to some destination along the routes that were in force for FAMs during the entire period, as well as the European and African and Asian routes by British and Dutch air systems.

Balance. The proportion of material devoted to each section appears to parallel the commercial and relative personal connections. Mail to the Caribbean, Central, and South America exists in greater quantity than to the other continents, although there is considerable commercial mail to Asia and Australia in the periods shown

Completeness: This is difficult to assess completeness. I show all major rates available to the U.S., and to the Americas. All major stops on the Caribbean Lindbergh circle route but one (Guadeloupe) are represented, and all major stops on the Central American routes, which changed several times during the 1920s and 1930s as they developed. Canadian mails through some of these changes are rare. The Africa route is represented by stops of some but not all of the stages, as is also the case for the British Imperial Airways routes to Hong Kong (stops such as Penang, Bangkok, and Hue are either unknown or literally unique to date). I show

multiple rates with high value stamps used commercially, especially to South America and Asia, as well as shortpaid mail to illustrate the uncertainty about rating by Canadian postmasters (about half of foreign airmails were underpaid in a Canadian government survey of the time). My goal for each FAM and routing is to show the routes as they developed for each stop on the route.

The Pacific clipper mail is incomplete as there are only a few examples of mail to Guam, and similarly for the intermediate stops on the New Zealand alternate in 1940 (Canton Island, Noumea, Siva are missing).. Onward mail from the clipper via Manila is represented, and scarce to rare to destinations such as mainland China, Singapore, Saigon, the Dutch East Indies, and India, all shown here.

Philatelic Importance. The material I show represents almost all important airmail rates and routes for the development of Canadian international airmail, which Canada did not develop itself until the end of World War II. I have attempted to put philatelic material with specific route and rate information, and I believe this is important to Canadian philately.

Philatelic and General Knowledge, Personal Study and Research: Analysis and evaluation of items displayed; original research. The primary research represented here is based on mapping covers to time periods and routes. The George Arfken & Walter Plomish book *Airmails of Canada 1925-1939* (2000), *AAMC, Airmails of Canada and Newfoundland, 6th Edition*, the *American Airmail Catalog 5th Edition*, and David Whitely's monograph on *Official Air Mail Rates to Foreign and Overseas Destinations as Established by the Canadian Post Office: 1925-December 1942* (2000) constitute the primary resources I used, along with Google searches on the internet. I edited the Plomish articles in BNA TOPICS in the early 1990s that his book was based on. The Whitely work provides the best current information on Canadian mail rates. It was recently updated to 1946 in a second edition, but the only new information was post 1942. To research each cover in the exhibit typically required accessing two or more works to put the needed information about its route and rate together.

Rarity: At present it is difficult to judge the rarity of the material shown.

Frame 1. Best documented are most of the early dates of use of the US Zone period covers from Canada to the US. I have seen 6 covers, five sent the same day, Feb. 6, 1926, by the same sender to the same address. All

but one cover is philatelic, and they at present are the bulk of Zone period usage by Canadians. I show 3 examples, including a unique registered example. I show a combination transcontinental and CAM additive rate that is the only such I have recorded.

Frame 2: The 12¢ rate to Cuba in 1928, SCADTA continuation covers, and high values to Colombia are notable.

Frame 3. The cover to Aruba, high value to St. Lucia, early cover to Barbados, and to Grenada are difficult to find.

Frame 4: The high values to the Bahamas are difficult to find, and all the early covers to Mexico are either scarce to rare or unique, such as the 22 cent, shortpaid cover with Mexican postage due paid with stamps.

Frame 5: This frame has many high value rate covers to Chile, Argentina, and Brazil. The cover to French Guyana is extremely rare, as is the cover to the Falkland Islands forwarded from Montevideo.

Frame 6: The 1926 Canada-US stamp combination to England is extremely rare. The 20 cent to Norway is unique as far as I know, as is the shortpaid to Sweden. The cover to the USSR is rare (people were shot or sent to Siberia for receiving mail from the West at the time). The shortpaid cover to Romania with postage due stamps is probably unique.

Frame 7: The cover to Tanganyika with US air service is probably a unique combination. The cover to Northern Nigeria, air to Lindi, is likely very scarce. The cover to French Sudan via FAM 22 is also probably a unique routing and destination.

Frame 8: In the material to the Far East the covers to Japan with air service to Formosa, to French Indochina, and the continuation covers via Pacific Clipper FAM 19 to the Middle East are notable, as is the final cover in the exhibit, which was mailed Dec. 3, 1941, intended for the Pacific Clipper but was sent around the world to Batavia, Dutch East Indies, after Dec. 7 via South America, Africa, and India.