

# INDIAN AIRMAILS

## Development and Operations (1925-1934)

### Introduction :

**India became the first country in the world to carry officially sanctioned airmail from Allahabad to Naini on 18th February 1911.** India being the central terminus of world air routes. In 1920, an abortive attempt was made by the Indian Postal Department to start an Airmail service between Bombay and Karachi and vice-versa. During the years 1927 and 1928 several pioneer flights were made by world famous pilots across India and mail were carried on many occasions by these aviators. Regular commercial air mail services for India started in 1927 and rapidly expanded. Then onwards, officially and unofficially several attempts have been made by Imperial airways, several foreign companies and the postal authorities for the development of air services in India. **Indian aero-philately owes much to Stephen Smith for his pioneering work on Indian Airmails.**

### The Purpose and Scope :

The Purpose and Scope of this exhibit is to **study and illustrates the progressive Growth, Development and Operations of Indian Airmail Services between 1925 and 1934**, from experimental beginnings to the establishment of regular internal and international routes.

An attempt to **display Airmails carried on all the important flights** in chronological order during the period 1925-1934. In the exhibit **more significance is given on flights from and within India.**

### Treatment and Presentation :

The exhibit **includes the various crash mails, experimental flights, demonstration flights, survey flights, display flights and First Flight- Covers (Classified as Pioneer Covers of Indian Airmails) from 1925 to 1934.**

For each flight, information is given on the pilots, the purpose, date and destination of the flight, details of cachets, vignettes, labels, hand stamps, inscriptions and post marks etc. and the number of covers carried. **Almost all the Airmails in this exhibit are scarce and very significant.**

**The Airmails are arranged in chronological order.**

### Plan and Structure :

#### 1) Growth and Early Development 1925-1928 :

(Foundations & Early Services- Experimental Flights & Imperial Airways Beginnings)

Survey flights were conducted in order to determine the aerial routes and the establishment of necessary infrastructure.

#### 2) Development of Aerial Routes 1929-1932 :

(Expansion & Consolidation- Domestic Airmail Growth)

As a Result of the survey flights conducted by the RAF and others, aerial routes were established in India and outside.

#### 3) Operational Beginnings 1933-1934 :

(International Integration- Standardization & Global Connection)

After the establishment of aerial routes and necessary infrastructure, several efforts were taken to increase the capacity and reduce the travel time of the flights.

### Bibliography / References :

- 1) Indian Airmails : by Jeffrey Brown
- 2) Indian Airways : by Stephen H. Smith
- 3) Indian Airmails- Development and Operations (1911-1942) : by Pradip Jain
- 4) Stamps of India : by Jal Cooper

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1925 Calcutta - Risalpur Demonstration Flight by the RAF**  
**Calcutta – Nowshera, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1925**  
Pilot : Wing Commander R C M Pink, Aircraft : De Havilland 9 As  
**Mail Carried : 64 Covers and 25 Postcards**

A flight of six De Havilland 9As from Risalpur, the headquarters of the RAF in Northern India left Calcutta on 15 January 1925 under the command of Wing Commander R C M Pink CBE, with five other officers and mechanics. Halts were made at Rawalpindi, Ambala, Lucknow, Delhi and Allahabad. One Aeroplane developed engine trouble along the way and was sent back Risalpur by rail. Four of the aeroplanes arrived at Ellenborough Polo Course at 3pm on Sunday 18 January, joining another DH50 of the Indian Air Survey, piloted by Alan Cobham. The fifth aeroplane arrived about an hour later.

After five days, the flight left Calcutta at 9.30am on Friday 23 January 1925 for the return journey. 35 letters were carried to Ambala and 64 letters and 25 postcards for Nowshera. As the flight did not land at Ambala, all the mail was carried on to Risalpur, where it was posted in and the normal way. The mail for Nowshera was posted from Risalpur on 2 February 1925 and **signed by FLt Graham RAF.**



--Cover flown from Calcutta to Risalpur on 23 January 1925. Postmarked Risalpur 2 FEB 25 and Nowshera 3 FEB 25 on back. **Signed by FLt Graham RAF.**

**1925 Anglo - Indian Air Survey Flight**  
**Calcutta – London (Return Flight), 19 February 1925**  
Pilot : Mr Alan Cobham with his Engineer, Mr Arthur Elliot  
Aircraft : De Havilland DH50 G-EBFO  
**Mail Carried : 90 Covers and 31 Postcards**

General Sir William Sefton Brancker, Director of Civil Aviation was instructed by the British Government to survey every aspect, political as well as physical, of the route across Europe to India. Piloted by Mr Alan Cobham with his Engineer, Mr Arthur B Elliott, he left Croydon on 20 November 1924 in a De Havilland DH50 G-EBFO and flew into Calcutta during the first week of January 1925.

The return journey, with Sir Sefton back on board, started on 8 February 1925, with stops at Akyab, Calcutta, Delhi and Karachi. The flight was halted by a snowstorm in Germany, the aeroplane had to be dismantled and transported by lorry to an airfield near Stuttgart, where it was reassembled and was able to continue to Waddon Aerodrome, Croydon which was reached on 17 March 1925.

On the return journey, 32 letters were flown from Rangoon to Calcutta, 40 postcards from Calcutta to Delhi, 68 letters and 32 postcards from Calcutta to Karachi and 90 letters and 31 postcards from Calcutta to London. Of these last, 3 were addressed to people in France.



--Cover flown from Calcutta to London on 19 February 25. Postmarked Croydon 17 FEB 25.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1926 Calcutta - Risalpur by RAF**

**2 January 1926**

Pilot : F/o Brooks

Aircraft : De Havilland DH9As

**Mail Carried : 69 for Patna**

**51 Covers for Risalpur and**

**5 for Rawalpindi**

Six De Havilland DH9As of the Royal Air Force left their headquarters at Risalpur on 20 December 1925, arriving at Dum Dum aerodrome Calcutta on the afternoon of 24 December. The journey of 1,800 miles was accomplished in 18 flying hours, with landings at Ambala, Cawnpore and Patna. No mails were carried on this outward journey.

On 2 January 1926, the six aeroplanes left Dum Dum carrying mail for Patna, Risalpur and Rawalpindi. The mail for Risalpur and Rawalpindi received the RAF 27 Squadron cachet (The Flying Elephants) in violet and were **initialled 'EHS' by the receiving officer, E H Spence**. The mail for Rawalpindi was forwarded by ordinary post.

**1926 England – Australia Air Survey Flight by Alan Cobham**

**Calcutta – Rangoon, 23 July 1926**

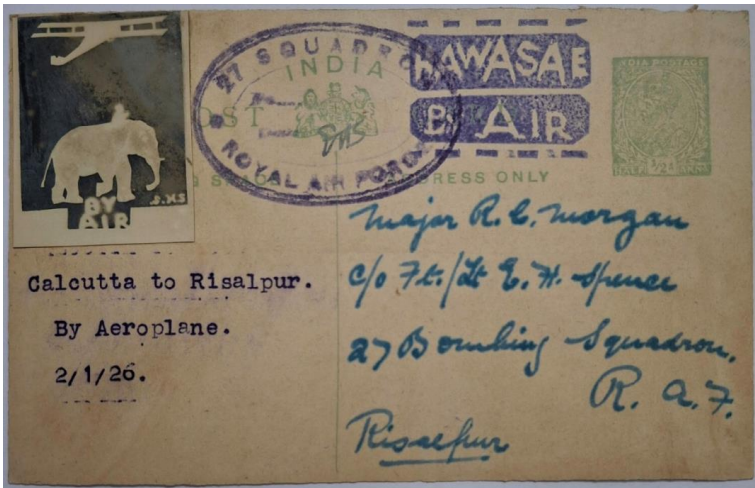
Pilot : Alan Cobham, Aircraft : De Havilland DH50J

**Mail Carried : 45 Covers**

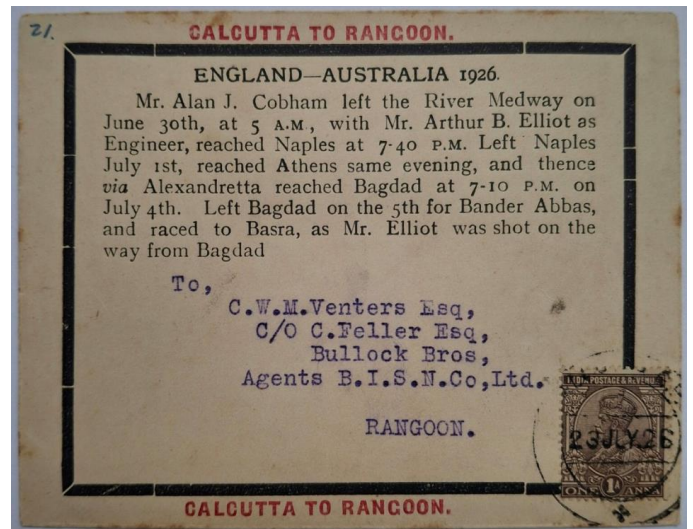
Alan Cobham, accompanied by his mechanic, Arthur Elliott, left the River Medway near Rochester on 30 June 1926 in a De Havilland DH50 seaplane G-EBFO to survey an air route to Australia.

The outward flight to Karachi was via Marseilles, Naples, Athens, Leros Island, Alexandretta, Baghdad, Basra, Bushire, Bandar Abbas and Chahbar. The journey was marred by the tragic death of Arthur Elliott, who was hit by a rifle bullet fired from the ground while the machine was flying from Baghdad to Basra. The flight was continued on 13 July, with Flight Sergeant A H Ward of the RAF replacing the dead man. The seaplane arrived in Karachi harbour on 18 July. From Karachi, Mr Cobham flew on via Bahawalpur, Delhi, Allahabad, Calcutta and Akyab. Between Akyab and Rangoon, he encountered very heavy rain and was forced to land in a creek on the River Irrawaddy, near Bassein, where he was obliged to seek directions from a passing river steamer. He reached Rangoon on 25 July, alighting at Monkey Point. From there, he flew via Victoria Point, Penang, Singapore, Muntok, Batavia, Sourabaya, Bima and Kapaung, arriving in Port Darwin on 5 August. The flight across Australia was via Newcastle Water, Camooweal, Charleville and Sydney, finishing at Melbourne on 14 August 1926.

The total distance of 13,000 miles 26 was completed in 156 flying hours (an average speed of 83 miles an hour) over 45 days.



--Cover flown from Calcutta to Risalpur on 2 January 1926.



--Cover flown Calcutta to Rangoon on 23 July 1926. Postmarked Calcutta 23 JUL 26 and Rangoon 26 JUL 26 on back.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1927 Karachi - Delhi by Messrs Stack and Leete**

**Karachi - Delhi, 16 February 1927**

Pilots : Neville Stack and Bernard Leete

Aircraft : De Havilland DH 60 Moth G-EBKU and G-EBMO

Neville Stack and Bernard Leete flew two De Havilland DH 60 Moth aeroplanes G-EBKU and G-EBMO leaving from Stag Lane aerodrome on 15 November 1926. Their flight took them to Paris, Lyons, Marseilles, Pisa, Rome, Naples, Malta where they were delayed by storms for nearly two weeks, Benghazi, Cairo, Rutba Wells, Baghdad, Bandar Bilan, Bushire where they stayed until 4 January, Bandar Abbas, Jask, Chahbar, reaching Karachi on 8 January 1927.

**At the time, this was the world's longest flight by a light aeroplane.**

On 11 January, the biggest crowd ever seen at a public function in Karachi assembled at the RAF aerodrome alongside Drigh Road, where the RAF organised an aerial display. Messrs Stack and Leete performed a number of aerial stunts. Messrs Stack and Leete left Karachi for Lahore on 16 February with a mail of 900 letters. The Moths arrived in Delhi on 18 February, but on 2 April Bernard Leete's Moth met with a serious accident when its tail skid caught a telegraph wire. The machine was wrecked beyond repair.

**1927 Flights over Calcutta by FLt W K Vetch**

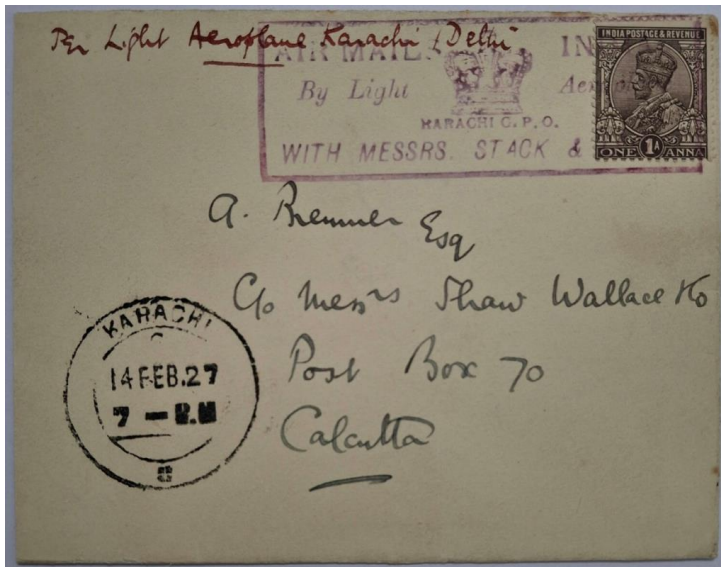
**Calcutta, 2 July 1927**

Pilot : FLt W K Vetch

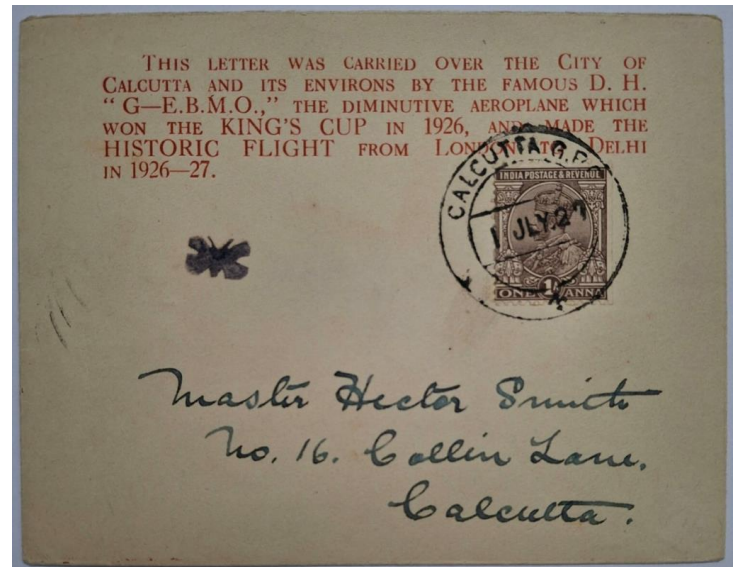
Aircraft : De Havilland Moth G-EBMO

**Mail Carried : 325 Letters**

On 20 June 1927 at 4.45pm, the De Havilland Moth G-EBMO, which won the King's Cup in 1926 and which had been flown by Neville Stack from London to Delhi, arrived at Calcutta Race Course. The Moth was piloted by Flight Lieutenant W H Vetch, who was accompanied by Mr E L Widdicombe. The object of the flight from Karachi was to survey for suitable landing grounds for use on flights between Karachi, Delhi and Calcutta. While in Calcutta, **two souvenir mail flights were made** by permission of the Postal Authorities.



--Cover flown from Karachi to Delhi on 16 February 1927. Postmarked Karachi 14 FEB 27 and Calcutta 20 FEB 27 on back.



--Cover flown over the Calcutta on 2 July 1927. Postmarked Calcutta 1 JUL 27.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1927 Calcutta to Shillong by FLt W H Vetch,  
Calcutta-Dacca-Cherrapunji-Shillong,  
15 July 1927**

Pilot : Flight Lieutenant W H Vetch  
Aircraft : De Havilland Moth G-EBMO

Flight Lieutenant W H Vetch and a passenger, Mr G Chammeay a retired planter from Shillong, flew the 400 miles from Calcutta to Shillong in his De Havilland Moth G-EBMO, which was the first aeroplane to be seen there. On 22 July, FLt Vetch gave a **demonstration flight**, during which the Moth was totally wrecked when it fouled a telegraph wire.

90 letters were carried from Calcutta to Shillong and 19 to Dacca. Of the 90, 39 were addressed to persons in Calcutta and were posted from Shillong. Of the remainder, 35 were inadvertently posted at Cherrapunji, although they were addressed to persons in Shillong.



--Cover flown from Cherrapunji to Shillong on 15 July 1927. Postmarked Cherrapunji 17 JUL 27 and Shillong 18 JUL 27 on back.

**1927 Paris - Saigon - Paris by Captain Leon Challe**

**3 November 1927**, Pilot : Captain Leon Challe and  
Engineer Mons Raymond Rapin

Aircraft : Potez 25 – Roger Latapie

**Mail Carried : 67 Covers** (For English destinations)

On 11 October 1927, Captain Leon Challe and M Raymond Rapin left Villa Coubay, near Paris, to fly to Saigon on behalf of the French Government. Their aeroplane was a Potez 25 fitted with a 460hp Lorraine Dietrich engine and was named **Roger Latapie** in memory of a famous French ace who had been killed a few years before. The journey to India via Rome, Athens and Aleppo took five days and the aviators reached Karachi on 16 October. From there, they flew to Calcutta via Allahabad arriving at Dum Dum on 18 October.

From Calcutta, the aviators carried a package of letters addressed to residents of Rangoon; however, the aeroplane did not land there, the packet being dropped over the side into a crowd of people. Whilst Captain Challe saw the packet picked up and assumed that someone would post them, the letters were never sent on and all were lost.

The journey was continued to Bangkok and thence to Saigon, arriving on 20 October. The return flight was started on 1 November and the *Roger Latapie* arrived back in Calcutta. A packet of mail, sanctioned by the postal authorities for transmission by air, was carried to Allahabad, Karachi and France. Some of the mail for France was addressed to destinations in England. All covers seen bear the circular seal of the CONSULAT GENERAL DE FRANCE, CALCUTTA.



--Cover flown from Calcutta to London on 3 November 1927. Postmarked Park Street, Calcutta 3 NOV 27.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1928 EMPIRE CRUISE SEAPLANE FLIGHT**

**by Commander Cave-Brown-Cave**

**Calcutta – Rangoon, 3 February 1928**

Pilot : Group Captain Henry Meyrick Cave-Brown-Cave

Aircraft : Seaplane- *Empire Cruise*

**Mail Carried : 88 Covers**

On 17 October 1927, four Southampton Supermarine flying boats S1127, S1150, S1151 and S1152 left Plymouth on a service flight to Australia. The flight was under the command of Group Captain H W Cave-Brown-Cave, with second in command Squadron Leader G E Livcock, pilots Flight Lieutenants R E Maitland, D V Carnegie, C G Wigglesworth, H G Sawyer, S D Scott and G E Nicholletts, engineer officers Flight Lieutenant S T Freeman and Flying Officer B Cheeseman, together with a crew of mechanics, riggers and wireless operators. The seaplanes were equipped to be entirely self-sufficient.

The route from Plymouth to Calcutta was via Hourtin, Berre, Naples, Brindisi, Alexandretta, Baghdad, Bandar Abbas, Karachi, Bombay, Mangalore, Cochin, Colombo, Trincomalee, Pulicat, Chilka Lake and Nawabgunge, about 20 miles from Calcutta.

From Calcutta, mails for Akyab and Rangoon were carried with the sanction of the Postal Authorities.

The seaplanes flew on to Akyab, Pozoondaung Creek near Rangoon, Mergui, Singapore, around the Australian Seaboard and back to Singapore.



--Cover flown from Calcutta to Rangoon on 3 February 1928. Postmarked Park Street, Calcutta 3 FEB 28 and Rangoon 8 FEB 28 on back.

**Calcutta-Rangoon (Plane crashed at Akyab)**

**16 May 1928**

Pilot : by D'Oisy, Gavin and Carol

Aircraft : Potez biplane

**Mail Carried : 121 Covers**

Captain Pelletier D'Oisy and Lieutenant Claude Gavin, officers in the French Air Service, accompanied by engineer Carol left Paris on 8 May 1928 on a flight to Hanoi. The intention was to establish an aerial link with the capital of French Indo-China. Their aeroplane was a Potez biplane powered by a 500hp 14 cylinder Lorraine-Deitrich engine.

Captain D'Oisy's flight from Paris to Calcutta occupied 11 days and took 51 hours 15 minutes **flying time, a record at that time.**

Having flown across the Bay of Bengal and approaching, Akyab, Captain D'Oisy was forced to land in paddy field, where the **aeroplane was severely damaged.** Whilst D'Oisy was only slightly injured, both Gavin and Carol had to be hospitalised.



--Cover flown from Calcutta to Rangoon on 16 May 1928. Postmarked Calcutta 16 MAY 28.

**1928 Paris to Akyab**

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1928 Amsterdam to Batavia  
First Experimental Flights  
Calcutta – Rangoon, 20 September 1928**  
Pilot : Captain G A Koppen  
Aircraft : H-NAFA  
Mail Carried : 111 Covers

During the months of September and October 1928, five **experimental air mail flights** were made from Amsterdam to Batavia delivering new Fokker F.VIIa-3ms to KNILM (KLM's Dutch East Indies subsidiary). The route across India was via Karachi, Allahabad and Calcutta. Mail was carried on the first four flights only.

The first flight H-NAFA piloted by Captain G A Koppen (who piloted the first air mail from the Netherlands to the Dutch East Indies) with navigator Capt D Kengen, mechanic Van Herk and passenger Zimmerman left Amsterdam on 13 September. It flew from Rangoon on 22 September carrying 35 letters for Bangkok but, as that city was under water, the flight continued to Singora (now Songkhala, Thailand) and the mail was posted therefrom.



--Cover flown from Calcutta to Rangoon on 20 September 1928. Postmarked Park Street, Calcutta 20 SEP 28.

**1928 Amsterdam to Batavia  
Third Experimental Flights  
Calcutta – Rangoon  
4 October 1928**  
Pilot : FLt Prellwitz  
Aircraft : H-NAFC  
Mail Carried : 87 Covers and 56 Cards

The third flight, H-NAFC piloted by FLt Prellwitz, left Amsterdam on 27 September, with navigator Flight Lieutenant Weymer and mechanic Lischer. 87 letters and 56 cards were held in readiness for despatch to Rangoon but, as the **plane unfortunately crashed** into hayricks while landing at Cawnpore, **the mail was carried on the fourth flight**. The crew were unhurt.



--Cover flown from Calcutta to Rangoon on 4 October 1928. Postmarked Park Street, Calcutta 4 OCT 28.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1928 Amsterdam to Batavia  
Fourth Experimental Flights  
Calcutta – Rangoon, 11 October 1928**

Pilot : by Captain Waltmann  
Aircraft : H-NAFD  
Mail Carried : 96 Covers

The fourth flight, H-NAFD piloted by Captain Waltmann, with Flying Officer Schott and mechanic Seaton, left Amsterdam on 3 October 1928 and arrived in Calcutta on 11 October. There it collected the mail intended for the third flight together with a second packet of 96 letters.

Captain Waltmann left Calcutta on the morning of 12 October intending to fly direct to Rangoon. But, while near Akyab, a petrol leak forced a landing which, with heavy rain, delayed the flight's arrival in Rangoon until 15 October. The flight was abandoned at Rangoon, where **the aeroplane was severely damaged** while trying to take off.

**1928 German WORLD FLIGHT in Kamerad  
by Baron von Koenig  
Calcutta – Rangoon, 5 February 1929**

Pilot : Baron von Koenig  
Aircraft : Kamerad  
Mail Carried : 58 Covers

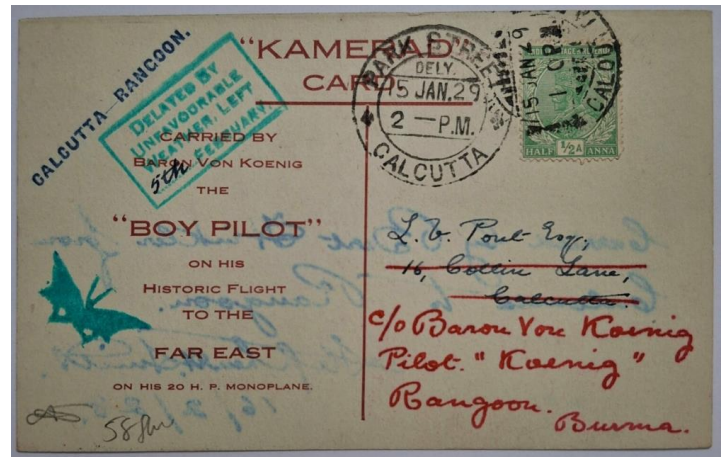
Baron Friederich von Koenig Warthausen flew round the world as a result of a competition for President Hindenburg's Cup for the most sporting amateur flight by a German. He left Berlin in August 1928 in the *Kamerad*, a Klemm-Daimler fitted with a Mercedes Benz 20hp 2-cylinder engine.

He flew to India via Moscow, Kharkov, Vladivaukas, Baku, Teheran, Ispahan, Shiraz, Bandar Abbas, Jask, Pasni, Karachi and thence via Uterlai, Jodhpur, Nazirabad, Agra, Allahabad and Gaya to Calcutta, where he arrived on 24 December 1928. The journey of approximately 8,500 km was completed in 82 flying hours over 16 days.

On 5 February 1929, he left Calcutta, flying via Akyab, Rangoon, Bangkok, Singapore and Osaka to Tokyo, arriving on 11 February. From Tokyo, the *Kamerad* was shipped to San Francisco, Baron von Koenig then flying across the United States to New York.



--Cover flown from Calcutta to Rangoon on 11 October 1928. Postmarked Park Street, Calcutta 20 OCT 28 and Rangoon 16 OCT 28 on back.



--Cover flown from Calcutta to Rangoon on 5 February 1929. Postmarked Park Street, Calcutta 15 JAN 29.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1929 Bengal Flying Club Inauguration Flight 2 February 1929**

Pilot : Capt. B.S.Leete

Aircraft : De Havilland Gipsy Moth

Mail Carried : 225 Cards

The inaugural flight of the Bengal Flying Club was in a De Havilland Gipsy Moth piloted by Captain Bernard S Leete AFC, who with Neville Stack had flown De Havilland Gipsy Moth to India in 1927.



--Cover flown from Dum Dum to Barrackpore on 2 February 1929. Postmarked Dum Dum, Calcutta 2 FEB 29 and Barrackpore 3 FEB 29.

**1929 IMPERIAL AIRWAYS 1ST FLIGHT London To India**

**England – India**

**27 March 1929**

Pilot : Captain A S Wilcockson

Aircraft : City of Glasgow G-EBLF

Thus at 10am on 30 March 1929, the *City of Glasgow* G-EBLF, an Armstrong Whitworth Argosy 1 piloted by Captain A S Wilcockson, left Croydon to inaugurate the England-India Air Service. The route taken on this pioneer service is of interest in showing the lack of cooperation by the Italian authorities, who declined to allow flights over their territories by way of France or Switzerland. The airliner carried the mail to Basle, from where it was taken by train overnight to Genoa, by the *City of Athens* G-EBVH, a Short S8 Calcutta flying boat via Rome, Naples, Corfu, Athens, Suda Bay (Crete) and Tobruk to Alexandria, from where it was flown on the *City of Jerusalem* G-EBMZ to Karachi, arriving at 7pm on 6 April.



--Cover flown from London, England to Bombay, India on 27 March 1929. Postmarked London 27 MAR 29 and Bombay 9 APR 29 on back.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1929 Alcock & Brown Commemorative Flight  
Dum Dum Airport, 14 June 1929  
Mail Carried : 298 Covers**

A Commemorative Souvenir of the First Successful Trans-Atlantic Flight from Newfoundland to Ireland by Captains J Alcock & Whitten Brown.

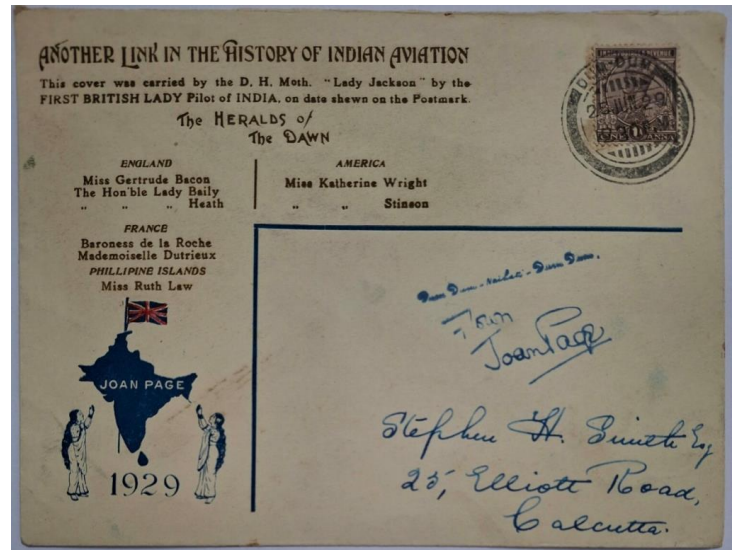


--Cover flown from Dum Dum to Calcutta on 14 June 1929. Postmarked Dum Dum 14 JUN 29 and Calcutta -- JUN 29 on back.

**1929 First British Lady Pilot of India, Miss Joan Page  
Dum Dum-Naihati-Dum Dum  
25 June 1929**

Pilot : Miss Joan Page  
Aircraft : De Havilland Moth, Lady Jackson  
**Mail Carried : 290 Covers**

Miss Joan Page lays claim to be the **first British lady pilot of India**. On 25 June 1929, she flew from Dum Dum to Naihati and back in a De Havilland DH60G Moth Lady Jackson (named for the wife of the Governor of Bengal). The total flying time was some fifty minutes. Cover **Signed by Pilot Joan Page**.



--Cover flown from Dum Dum to Naihati and back to Dum Dum on 25 June 1929. Postmarked Dum Dum 25 JUN 29 and Park Street, Calcutta 25 JUN 29 on back.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1929 Karachi to Delhi**  
**By Indian State Air Service**  
**30 December 1929**

**Aircraft : De Havilland DH66 Hercules G-EBMX**

The Indian State Air Service was inaugurated on 30 December 1929. The De Havilland DH66 Hercules G-EBMX ***City of Delhi*** flew from **Karachi to Delhi** carrying mail, with picked up enroute. Special covers were printed for these flights and a cachet ***By City of Delhi / Air Liner*** applied on the outward journey and ***By City of Baghdad / Air Liner*** applied on the return.

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**By Indian State Air Service**  
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--Cover flown from Karachi to Delhi on 30 December 1929. Postmarked Karachi 28 DEC 29 and Park Street, Calcutta 2 JAN 29.

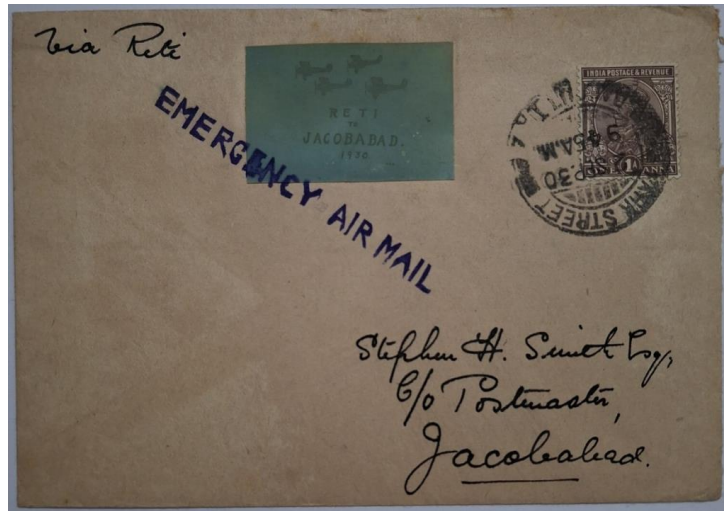


--Cover flown from Delhi to Karachi on 30 December 1929. Postmarked Park Street, Calcutta 27 DEC 29 and Karachi 30 DEC 29 on back.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1930 Emergency Flood Flight**  
**Reti – Jacobabad**  
**10 August 1930**  
Aircraft : Bristol Fighter

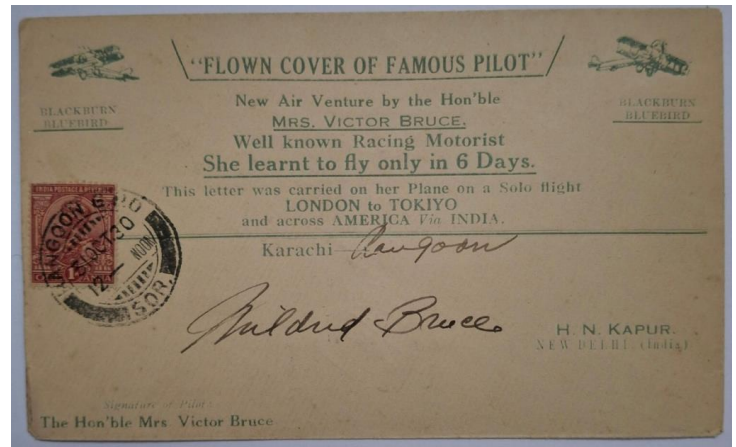
As a result of severe flooding between Sultankot and Shikarpur, resulted in eight post offices being closed between 27 July and 10 August 1930 and disruption for a further month. The floods caused numerous breaches of the North West Railway Between Sukkur and Quetta, one breach being three miles long. There was severe dislocation of the mails, including boats, trolleys, bullock carts and tongas. An **emergency service** flown between Reti and Jacobabad in four Bristol Fighter aeroplanes of 36 Squadron RAF between 10 August and 9 September 1930.



--Cover flown from Reti to Jacobabad on 10 August 1930. Postmarked Park Street, Calcutta 2 SEP 30 and Jacobabad 6 SEP 30 on back.

**1930 The WORLD FLIGHT by Hon Mrs Victor Bruce**  
**Karachi – Rangoon**  
**29 Oct 1930**  
Pilot : Mildred Bruce  
Aircraft : Blackburn Bluebird IV G-ABDS

In July 1930, after only 40 hours of solo flying in her log book, The Hon Mildred Bruce left Croydon in her Blackburn Bluebird IV G-ABDS attempting to make the first solo flight to encircle the globe. She took the customary route to Karachi, then on to Rangoon and Shanghai. On 18 November 1930, she made the dangerous 600 mile crossing of the Yellow Sea, and then flew on to Tokyo. The Bluebird was shipped from Tokyo to Vancouver, from where she flew to New York. It was again shipped from there to Le Havre and she flew in to Croydon on 20 February 1931. **Signed by Pilot Mildred Bruce.**



--Cover flown from Rangoon to Karachi on 29 October 1930. Postmarked Rangoon 31 OCT 30 and Delhi 6 NOV 30.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1930 India to Strait Settlements by RAF**  
**Delhi – Calcutta**  
**1 Nov 1930**  
Pilot : FLt D F Anderson  
Aircraft : Wapiti and Hanaiidi  
**Mail Carried : 72 Covers**

Royal Air Force units stationed in India and the Middle East were obliged to complete a scheduled number of flying hours. As part of this programme, a **demonstration flight** of Wapiti and Hanaiidi planes left Delhi for the Straits Settlements on 1 November 1930 under the command of Air Marshal Sir Geoffrey Salmond. Flt D F Anderson flew a Wapiti plane from Karachi on 30 October to join the flight at Calcutta on 4 November. The return flight left Singapore on 14 November 1930.

Covers in both directions are known with **FLt Anderson's signature**.

**1930 Calcutta to Shaibah**  
**by Mr A B Murad**  
**Dum Dum – Delhi**  
**21 Dec 1930**

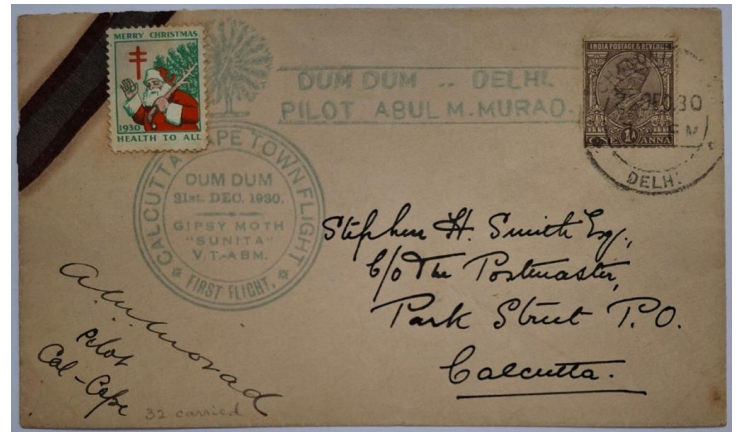
Pilot : Abul M Murad  
Aircraft : DH Gipsy Moth VT- ABM named *Sunita*

**Mail Carried : 32 Covers**

Mr Abul B Murad flew from Calcutta to Karachi to attempt to be the first Indian to fly solo from Karachi to Cape Town, for which H H The Aga Khan had offered a prize of £500. His plane, a DH Gipsy Moth VT- ABM named ***Sunita*** crashed into the old war trenches at Shaibah, near Basra in Iraq, on 1 January 1931.



--Cover flown from Delhi to Calcutta on 1 November 1930, Postmarked Calcutta 4 NOV 30.



--Cover flown from Delhi to Dum Dum on 22 December 1930. Postmarked Delhi 22 DEC 30 and Calcutta 24 dec 30 on back.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1931 Marseilles to Saigon (and return) by Air Orient  
Calcutta-Rangoon, 25 January 1931**

Pilot : M Launay

Aircraft : Fokker F7 monoplane La Joyeuse PH-AEN

**Mail Carried : 232 Covers**

The French airline, **Air Orient**, introduced its first regular mail between France and French Indo-China with a flight that left Marseilles on 18 January 1931 and arrived in Saigon on 27 January. The seaplane *Syrie* (a CAMS 53/1 F-AIZA) piloted by M Pichodou, flew via Naples to Corfu. The journey to Beirut via Athens and Castelrosso was continued in another seaplane *Flandre* (a CAMS 53/1 F AJLK). The mail was then sent to Damascus, where it was transferred to a Fokker F7 monoplane *La Joyeuse* PH-AEN, piloted by M Launay, accompanied by M Leon Challe, who flew to Karachi via Baghdad and Bushire, arriving on 23 January. From there, it followed the conventional route via Jodhpur, Delhi and Allahabad reaching Calcutta on 25 January. The Flight to Saigon was via Akyab, Rangoon and Bangkok. The total distance of 8000 miles was covered in 11 days, despite the loss of two days due to bad weather.

**1931 Hollywood to Singapore  
by Messrs Hadley and Pratt**

Pilot : Ross Hadley and John E. Pratt

Aircraft : "Stearland" Biplane - N. R.- 8809

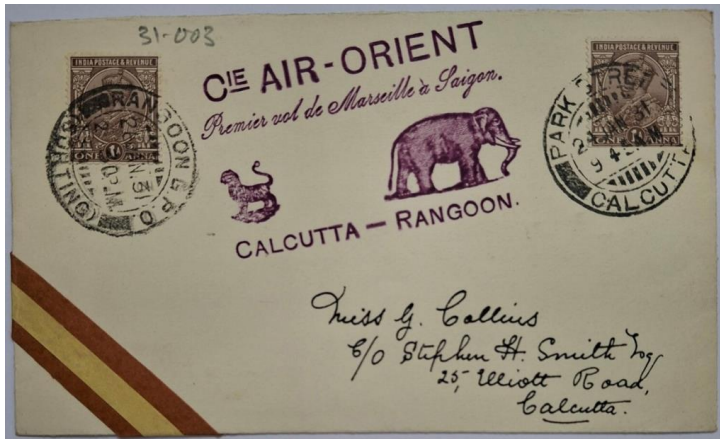
**Karachi – Calcutta**

**26 March 1931**

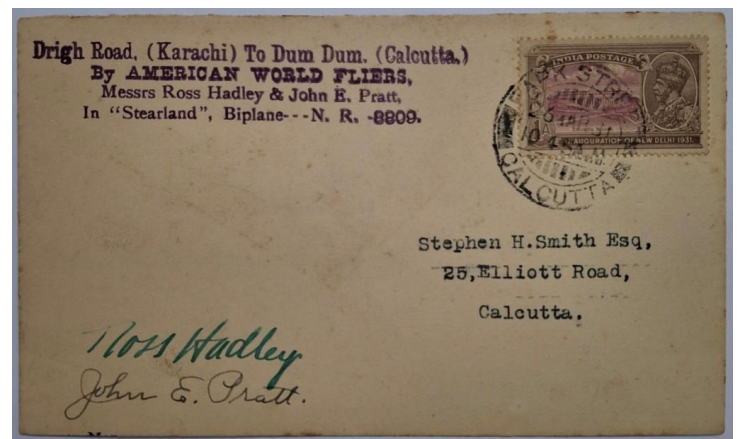
**Mail Carried : 18 Covers**

Posted on arrival in Calcutta : Park Street Calcutta despatch 26 MAR.31 10.45am and delivery 12 noon.

**Cachet : Drigh Road (Karachi) TO Dum Dum (Calcutta) / By AMERICAN WORLD FLIERS, / Messrs Ross Hadley and John E. Pratt / In "Stearland", Biplane - N. R.- 8809. Signed by both fliers.**



--Cover flown Calcutta to Rangoon on 25 January 1931. Postmarked Park Street, Calcutta 24 JAN 31.



--Cover flown from Karachi to Calcutta on 26 March 1931. Postmarked Park Street, Calcutta 26 MAR 31.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1931 Hollywood to Singapore  
by Messrs Hadley and Pratt**  
Pilot : Ross Hadley and John E. Pratt  
Aircraft : "Stearland" Biplane - N. R.- 8809  
**Calcutta - Akyab**  
**1 April 1931**  
**Mail Carried : 35 Covers**

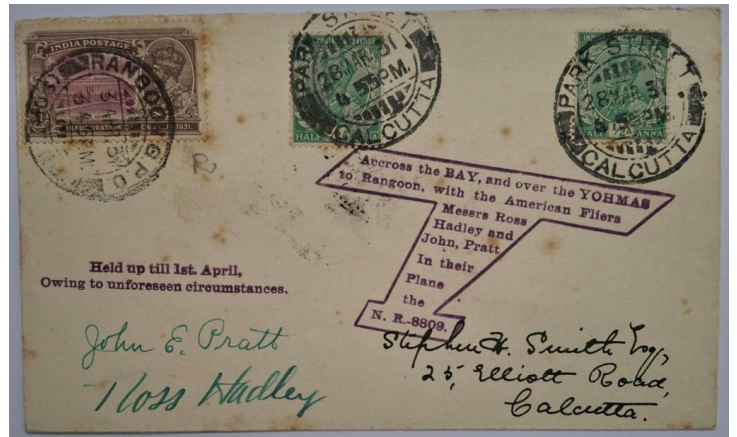
**1931 Hollywood to Singapore  
by Messrs Hadley and Pratt**  
Pilot : Ross Hadley and John E. Pratt  
Aircraft : "Stearland" Biplane - N. R.- 8809  
**Calcutta – Rangoon**  
**1 April 1931**  
**Mail Carried : 45 covers**

Posted to Calcutta on arrival. **Photo vignette of fliers and plane.**  
**Cachets :** "AMERICAN WORLD FLIERS" / Carried by Messrs Hadley & Pratt / Across the Bay, to Akyab, in "Stearman" / Biplane, :- N. R.-8809. and Held up till 1st April, / Owing to unforeseen circumstances. **Signed by both fliers.**

Posted to Calcutta on arrival. Aeroplane-shaped **Cachet :** *Accross the BAY, and over the YOHMAS / to Rangoon, with the American fliers / Messrs Ross / Hadley and / John. Pratt / In their / Plane / the / N. R.-8809. and delay cachet as on cover. Signed by both fliers.*



--Cover flown from Calcutta to Akyab on 1 April 1931. Postmarked Park Street, Calcutta 28 MAR 31 and Akyab 2 APR 31.



--Cover flown from Calcutta to Rangoon on 1 April 1931. Postmarked Park Street 28 MAR 31 and Rangoon 3 APR 31.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1931 First Experimental Flight  
by Major Craveiro Lopes  
Bombay – Goa  
13 April 1931  
Pilot : Major Craveiro Lopes  
Aircraft : Marao**

These were the first of two flights by the Portuguese aeroplane Marao from Mormugao to Bombay and back. It was arranged with the Portuguese Indian Administration that no air fee should be charged nor transit charges claimed in respect of air mail articles. The transit time between Bombay and Goa by the air service was only 3 hours against the 20 hours by the steamer service. The second flight was made in February 1932.

**1931 Second Experimental Flight,  
England – Australia (and Return)  
Delhi – Calcutta, 5 May 1931**

The second experimental flight left London on 25 April 1931. However, the outward mail was only carried by Imperial Airways as far as Akyab, where it was handed over to Charles Kingsford Smith in exchange for the return mail of the first experimental flight. From Akyab, he carried it to Darwin for onward transmission by Qantas. Imperial Airways carried the return mail all the way to London, having purchased a replacement airliner VH-UJD from Western Australian Airways. Meanwhile, Mollard has been flown by Captain J F Nicholson of West Australian Airways in the newly purchased Hercules (soon to be renamed City of Cape Town) to Darwin. From there, he flew the return service through to Karachi where the mail join the established service to Croydon.

A full regular through service to Australia was not inaugurated until December 1934.



--Cover flown from Bombay to Goa on 13 April 1931. Postmarked Bombay 13 APR 31 and Goa 14 APR 31 on back.



--Cover flown from Delhi to Calcutta on 5 May 1931. Postmarked Delhi Cant. 3 MAY 31 and Park Street, Calcutta 6 MAY 31 on back.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1931 Second Experimental Flight  
England – Australia (and Return)  
Allahabad – Calcutta  
5 May 1931**

The second experimental flight left London on 25 April 1931. However, the outward mail was only carried by Imperial Airways as far as Akyab, where it was handed over to Charles Kingsford Smith in exchange for the return mail of the first experimental flight. From Akyab, he carried it to Darwin for onward transmission by Qantas. Imperial Airways carried the return mail all the way to London, having purchased a replacement airliner VH-UJD from Western Australian Airways. Meanwhile, Mollard has been flown by Captain J F Nicholson of West Australian Airways in the newly purchased Hercules (soon to be renamed City of Cape Town) to Darwin. From there, he flew the return service through to Karachi where the mail join the established service to Croydon. A full regular through service to Australia was not inaugurated until December 1934.

**1931 Second Experimental Flight  
Australia - England  
Rangoon – Calcutta  
25 May 1931**

The second experimental flight left London on 25 April 1931. However, the outward mail was only carried by Imperial Airways as far as Akyab, where it was handed over to Charles Kingsford Smith in exchange for the return mail of the first experimental flight. From Akyab, he carried it to Darwin for onward transmission by Qantas. Imperial Airways carried the return mail all the way to London, having purchased a replacement airliner VH-UJD from Western Australian Airways. Meanwhile, Mollard has been flown by Captain J F Nicholson of West Australian Airways in the newly purchased Hercules (soon to be renamed City of Cape Town) to Darwin. From there, he flew the return service through to Karachi where the mail join the established service to Croydon. A full regular through service to Australia was not inaugurated until December 1934.



--Cover flown from Allahabad to Calcutta on 5 May 1931. Postmarked 4 MAY 31 and Park Street, Calcutta 6 MAY 31 on back.



--Cover flown from Rangoon to Calcutta on 25 May 1931. Postmarked Rangoon 20 MAY 31 and Park Street, Calcutta 25 MAY 31 on back.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1931 Second Experimental Flight  
Australia - England  
Calcutta – Allahabad  
25 May 1931**

The second experimental flight left London on 25 April 1931. However, the outward mail was only carried by Imperial Airways as far as Akyab, where it was handed over to Charles Kingsford Smith in exchange for the return mail of the first experimental flight. From Akyab, he carried it to Darwin for onward transmission by Qantas. Imperial Airways carried the return mail all the way to London, having purchased a replacement airliner VH-UJD from Western Australian Airways. Meanwhile, Mollard has been flown by Captain J F Nicholson of West Australian Airways in the newly purchased Hercules (soon to be renamed City of Cape Town) to Darwin. From there, he flew the return service through to Karachi where the mail join the established service to Croydon. A full regular through service to Australia was not inaugurated until December 1934.

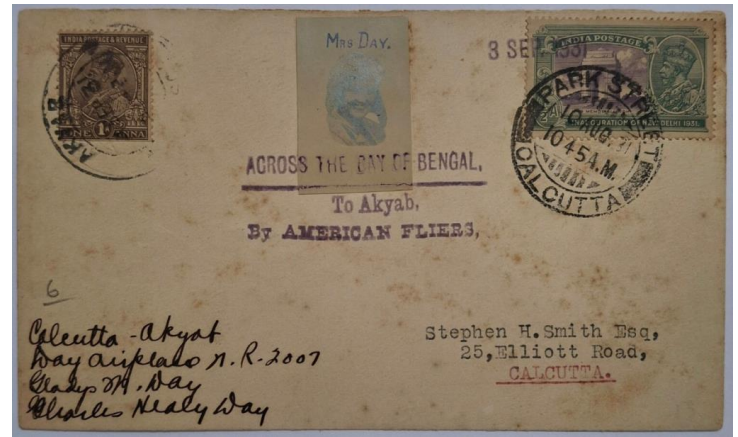
**1931 Croydon to Shanghai  
by Mr & Mrs C H Day  
Calcutta – Akyab  
3 September 1931**

Pilot : Charles Healy Day and Gladys McLeary Day  
Aircraft : Day Airplane N.R. 2007  
**Mails Carried : 28 Covers**

Charles Healy Day and Gladys McLeary Day, an American couple, undertook a pleasure **trip around the world in an aircraft designed by Mr Day himself**. Their flight was delayed at Calcutta when Mr Day had to be carried off to the Presidency General Hospital, so that the pilots did not leave for Akyab until 3 September. They then made a forced landing in the jungle near Sandoway. They eventually left for Rangoon on 19 September, arriving the same day.



--Cover flown from Calcutta to Allahabad on 25 May 1931. Postmarked Park Street, Calcutta 21 MAY 31 and Allahabad 26 MAY 31 on back.



--Cover flown from Calcutta to Akyab on 3 September 1931. Postmarked Park Street, Calcutta 10 AUG 31 and Akyab 4 SEP 31.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1932 Karachi to Delhi by Delhi Flying Club  
Karachi – Delhi, 2 January 1932**

Pilot : Mr P D Sharma and Captain A J Riley (a pilot instructor),  
**Mail Carried : 175 Covers**

As the Indian State Air Service ceased to exist on 31 December 1931, this section of the Imperial Airways route from London to Delhi via Jodhpur was first flown by the Delhi Flying Club. Two aeroplanes left Karachi on 2 January 1932 piloted by Mr P D Sharma and Captain A J Riley (a pilot instructor). Both pilots signed covers.

The return flight was made by Mr Sharma alone. Sadly, he and his brother, **piloting two aeroplanes, were both killed** when their machines collided near Karachi on 23 February 1939. The Club continued to provide this service until 4 July 1933, when Indian Trans-Continental Airways introduced its Karachi-Calcutta service.

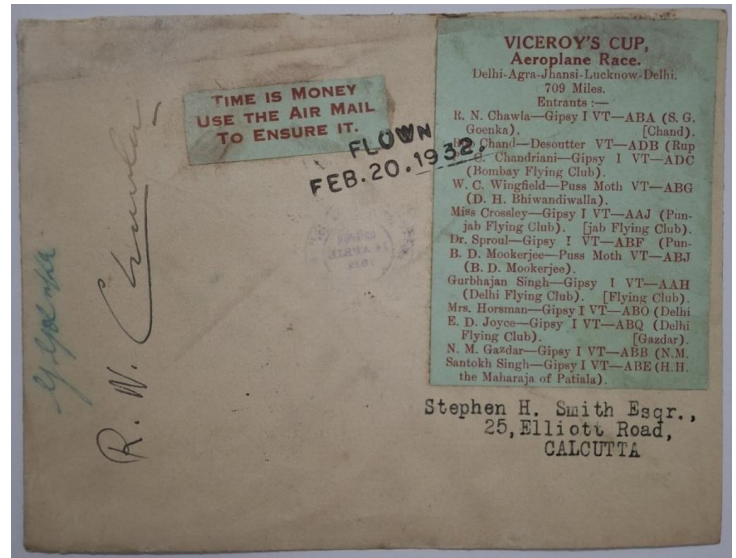


--Cover flown from Karachi to Delhi on 2 January 1932. Postmarked 29 DEC 31 and Park Street, Calcutta 5 JAN 32 on back.

**1932 Viceroy's Cup Air Race  
Delhi-Agra-Jhansi-Lucknow-Delhi  
20 February 1932, Mail Carried : 90 Covers**

On 20 and 21 February 1932, the first all-India civil aviation meeting was held at Delhi. A race for the Viceroy's Cup was held on the first day and an air display on the second. The race was over a course of 708 miles, starting at Delhi and flying by way of Agra, Jhansi, Lucknow and back to Delhi. There were landing controls at Agra and Lucknow. Twelve competitors took part, six British (of which two were women) and six Indian.

The race started at 6.39am from the Civil Aerodrome, New Delhi. The first to take off was Mrs Horsman, piloting a Gipsy Moth of the Delhi Flying Club. She was followed at three minutes intervals by E D Joyce, Gurbachan Singh and Miss Crossley. Seventeen minutes later, P C Chandriani, J L Castel, R N Chawla, Santok Singh and Dr Sproul took off, all closely following one another. At 8.34am, Lala Rupchand took off in his Desoutter, seven minutes ahead of the Puss Moths of B D Mukherjee and W G Wingfield. The first to arrive at Agra was E D Joyce at 7.50am, followed two minutes later by Gurbachan Singh, with Miss Crossley only fifteen seconds behind. The only accident to occur was when B D Mukherjee's Puss Moth VT-ABJ of the Bengal Flying Club crashed into a pillar when landing at Lucknow; the machine was badly damaged, though neither the pilot nor his passenger was injured. A large crowd gathered to watch the raachines return to Delhi. The Cup and first prize of Rs2,000 was awarded to Dr Sproul, who reached Delhi at 4.29pm in a De Havilland Gipsy Moth of the Delhi Flying Club. Second, at 4.35pm, were Mr and Mrs Wingfield, who did the best overall time. Third, at 4.45pm, was P C Chandriani.



--Cover flown from Delhi to Lucknow and back to Delhi on 20 February 1932.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1932 BERTRAM ATLANTIS EXPEDITION**

**Round The World Flight By German Seaplane**

**Calcutta – Rangoon, 14 April 1932,**

Pilot : Captain Hans Bertram, Herr Von Thom,

Aircraft : Junkers Seaplane, *Atlantis D-1925*

**Mail Carried : 75 Covers**

This was the stage of the world flight from Cologne by Captain Hans Bertram in his Junkers Seaplane Atlantis. The plane reached Bombay on 30 March and flew on to Burma via Colombo, alighting on the River Hoogli at Ishapore. From there the Atlantis flew via Bangkok and Singapore to Batavia, which was reached on 6 May. On 14 May, it departed for Darwin, but was blown off course coming down at Cape Bernier, near Wyndham. It was not until 15 June that the Atlantis was found by Aborigines and not until 4 July that the crew was found, having survived on a diet of lizards and snakes. The Atlantis left Darwin on 12 December 1932. **It crash landed** at Soerabaya on the following day and was not able to resume its journey until 10 April 1933. It finally reached Berlin on 17 April 1933.



--Covers flown from Rangoon to Calcutta on 14 April 1932. Postmarked Rangoon 22 APR 32 and Park Street, Calcutta 27 APR 32.

**1932 FIRST FLIGHT BY TATA SONS LTD**  
**Karachi-Ahmedabad-Bombay-Bellary-Madras**  
Karachi – Madras, 15 October 1932  
**Pilot : J R D Tata, (Karachi-Bombay)**  
**Nevill Vintcent (Bombay-Madras-Bombay) and**  
**Homi Baroucha (Bombay-Karachi)**  
**Aircraft : De Havilland DH80A Puss Moth VT-AND**

The Imperial Airways service which left London on 8 October 1932 connected at Karachi with the **first flight of the internal service operated by Tata**. Mail addressed to Ceylon was also accepted on this flight. The total distance from Karachi to Madras is 1330 miles. The pilots were Mr J R D Tata (Karachi-Bombay), Mr Nevill Vintcent (Bombay-Madras-Bombay) and Mr Homi Baroucha (Bombay-Karachi). The aeroplane was a **De Havilland DH80A Puss Moth VT-ADN**.

This was the **first scheduled air service within India**. At this time, Tata Sons Ltd consisted of 2 Puss Moth aeroplanes, the 3 pilots, one engineer and a few unskilled assistants. From these small beginnings grew the airline that became Air India International.

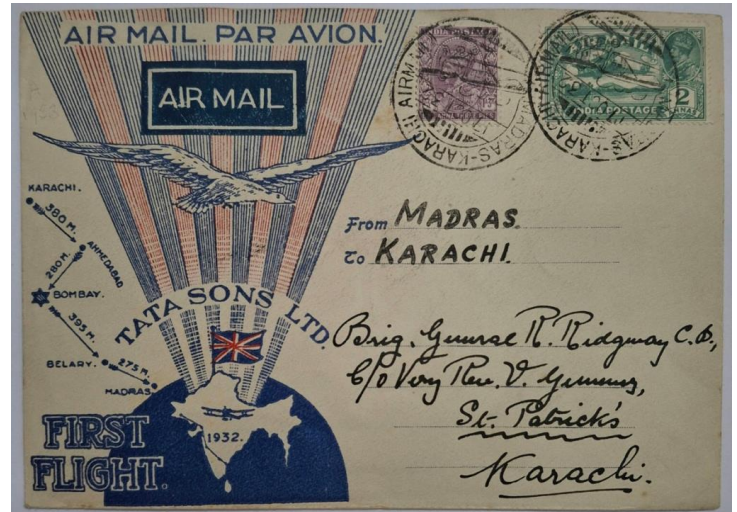
**1932 FIRST FLIGHT BY TATA SONS LTD**  
**Karachi-Ahmedabad-Bombay-Bellary-Madras**  
Madras – Karachi, 17 October 1932  
**Pilot : J R D Tata, (Karachi-Bombay)**  
**Nevill Vintcent (Bombay-Madras-Bombay) and**  
**Homi Baroucha (Bombay-Karachi)**  
**Aircraft : De Havilland DH80A Puss Moth VT-AND**

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This was the **first scheduled air service within India**. At this time, Tata Sons Ltd consisted of 2 Puss Moth aeroplanes, the 3 pilots, one engineer and a few unskilled assistants. From these small beginnings grew the airline that became Air India International.



--Cover flown from Karachi to Madras on 15 October 1932. Postmarked Karachi 14 OCT 32 and Madras 16 OCT 32 on back.



--Cover flown from Madras to Karachi on 17 October 1932. Postmarked Madras 17 OCT 32 and Karachi 19 OCT 32 on back.

**1932 Australia to South Africa by CAPTAIN DICKSON**

**Calcutta – Bombay, 5 November 1932**

Pilot : Captain James B Dickson and Mr Arthur M Loew

Aircraft : *Sprit of Fun*, Lockheed Orion NC-12229

**Mail Carried : Only 15 Covers**

The *Sprit of Fun*, a Lockheed Orion NC-12229 aeroplane was launched from SS Monterey at Sydney on 13 October 1932, where it was assembled. The crew were **Captain James B Dickson**, **Arthur Loew** (officer in charge of foreign distribution of MGM films) and J Rosenthal (attorney). On 15 October, the Orion flew from Sydney heading for Shanghai. From Shanghai, it flew via Hong Kong and Hanoi to Calcutta and then to Bombay, **becoming the first plane to cover the 1,200 miles non-stop**. It then continued to Johannesburg via Baghdad and Khartoum, arriving 15 November. Two days later after visiting Victoria Falls, **the plane crashed during take-off, killing Captain Dickson** and injuring the two passengers. The aircraft was a write-off.

--Cover flown from Calcutta to Bombay on 5 November 1932. Postmarked Park Street, Calcutta 5 NOV 32 and Bombay 6 NOV 32.



Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1932 ROUND THE WORLD FLIGHT**

by French Canadian Flier  
**Jacques R Hébert**

**Calcutta – Akyab, 17 November 1932**

Pilot: Monsieur Jacques R. Hébert

Aircraft : De Havilland DH60M Gipsy Moth CF-ADC

**Mail Carried : 57 Covers**

Between 12 October and 6 December 1932, Jacques Hébert flew a De Havilland DH60M Gipsy Moth CF-ADC from Heston to Darwin on an intended **round the world flight**. His 55 was fairly uneventful, with no substantial mechanical problems, though he did encounter a dust storm over Iraq and monsoonal rains between Singapore and Koepang.

Intending to fly to Sydney, he reached Cloncurry and, unable to find the aerodrome, he landed in a paddock, where a herd of goats interfered with his run in; he panicked and the Moth went over, **extensively damaging** the wings and fuselage.

**1933 Penang to Bombay**

by Prince Ali Khan

**Dum Dum – Santa Cruz**

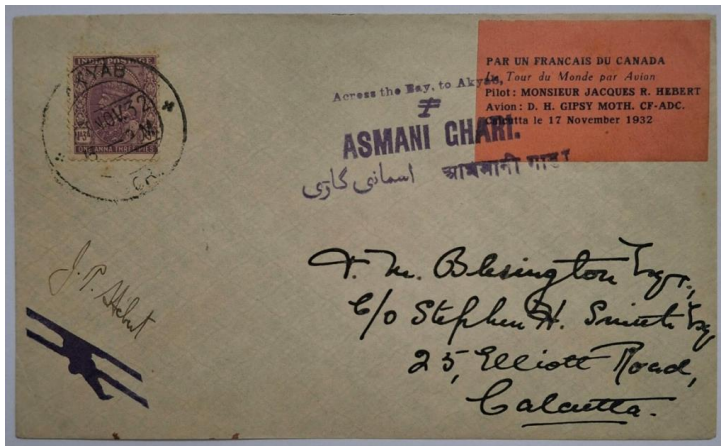
**16 January 1933**

Pilot : Prince Ali Khan & Major Vetch

Aircraft : DH80 Puss Moth VT-ABG

**Mail Carried : 91 Covers**

Prince Ali Khan, son of HH The Aga Khan, and Major Vetch, Chief Instructor of the Bombay Flying Club flew from Bombay to Penang and back in a DH80 Puss Moth VT-ABG loaned by De Havilland of India. The flight may have been part of a survey of routes in Bengal.



--Cover flown from Akyab to Calcutta on 17 November 1932. Postmarked Akyab 17 NOV 32 and Calcutta 21 NOV 32.



--Cover flown from Santa Cruz to Calcutta on 16 January 1933. Postmarked Santa Cruz 17 JAN 33 and Park Street, Calcutta 19 JAN 33 on back.

**1933 FIRST SURVEY FLIGHT By Air Commodore P F M Fellowes  
Purnea - MOUNT EVEREST – Purnea  
8 April 1933**

Pilot : Air Commodore P F M Fellowes, FLt D F McLntyre, SqL Lord Clydesdale

**Aircraft : Westland, PV-3 G-ACAZ & Wallace PV-6 G-ACBR**

Named “**Houston-Westland**” specifically built for this flight.

**Mail Carried : 87 Souvenir Covers**

**From Purnea over Mount Everest and back with Special fee of Rs. 21 (one Guinea) for each for RAF charities.**

The Mount Everest Expedition, left England on 16<sup>th</sup> February, arrived at Karachi on 7<sup>th</sup> March and at Purnea on 25<sup>th</sup> March.

The **Houston Mount Everest Exhibition** was an attempt to fly over the summit of Mount Everest, two attempts having been sanctioned by the King of Nepal. The **aeroplanes** used were both Westlands, a PV-3 G-ACAZ and a Wallace PV-6 G-ACBR (named the **Houston-Westland** after Lady Houston, who sponsored the enterprise to the tune of £15,000) powered by a single Bristol Pegasus engine. The two flights over the summit were both successful, the first on 3 April 1933 by FLt D F McLntyre in the PV-6 and the second on 19 April by Squadron Leader Lord Clydesdale in the PV-3. There were also two survey flights, the first on 8 April by **Air Commodore P F M Fellowes** DSO and the second on 20 April.

Each member of the expedition was allowed to place one envelope in the mailbag to be flown on the first attempt. The Aero Club of India arranged with Colonel Blacker, the Chief Observer of the Expedition, for 87 covers to be carried on the first survey flight on 8 April, paying one guinea for each in aid of RAF charities; they are postmarked Purnea 8 APR.33.

--Cover flown from Purnea over Mount Everest and back to Purnea on 8 April 1933, Postmarked Purnea 8 APR 33 and Park Street, Calcutta 10 APR 33. On back.



Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1933 Paris to Hanoi**  
**by Mlle Maryse Hiltz**  
**Calcutta – Rangoon**  
**5 April 1933**  
**Pilot : Mlle Hiltz**  
**Aircraft : Farman monoplane**  
**Mail Carried : 90 Covers**

Mlle Hiltz flew her Farman monoplane from Paris to Hanoi in 5 days and 22 hours. She had previously flown to India in November 1930. This mail was intended for Rangoon but, as Mlle Hiltz did not land there, it was taken on to her next stop at Hanoi. It was then brought back by an airliner of the French Air Orient Service and consequently bears a cachet in black. On 13 April, she flew on to Tokyo, arriving three days later. Her return journey was completed between 23 April and 14 May 1933. Her mechanic on both outward and return flights was Lemaire.



--Cover flown from Calcutta to Rangoon on 5 April 1933. Postmarked Calcutta 21 APR 33 and Park Street, Calcutta 22 APR 33 on back.

**1933 England-India Extension**  
**by Indian Trans-Continental Airways**  
**Karachi – Calcutta, 7 July 1933**  
**Pilot : Captain L. Ecclesfield**

Aircraft : *Arethusa* (an Armstrong Whitworth AW15 Atalanta VT-AEF)

The first flight by the Indian Trans-Continental Airways was from Karachi to Calcutta via Jodhpur, Delhi, Cawnpore, Allahabad and Asansol. Mail for this flight had left Croydon on 1 July 1933 and, at Cairo, connected with the incoming flight from South Africa, South West Africa and Rhodesia. The mails were transferred to the Imperial Airways airliner *Hanno* (a Handley Page HP42 G-AAUD) which left for Karachi via Bahrain and Sharjah on 5 July. There the flight was continued by the Indian Trans-Continental airliner *Arethusa* (an Armstrong Whitworth AW15 Atalanta VT-AEF) piloted by Captain L. Ecclesfield.

Until this flight, mail from Australia was transferred to the regular service to London from Karachi. The Calcutta-Karachi flight carried the first direct air mail bag to Athens (arriving on 15 July 1933). Subsequently, KLM started transporting air mail within India and that for Athens was flown by this line to Karachi and thence by Imperial Airways to London.



--Cover flown from Karachi to Calcutta on 7 July 1933. Postmarked Karachi 5 JUL 33 and Park Street, Calcutta 10 JUL 33 on back.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1933 England-India Extension  
by Indian Trans-Continental Airways  
Calcutta - Karachi, 11 July 1933**

**Pilot : Captain L. Ecclesfield**

Aircraft : *Arethusia* (an Armstrong Whitworth AW15 Atalanta VT-AEF)

The first flight by the Indian Trans-Continental Airways was from Karachi to Calcutta via Jodhpur, Delhi, Cawnpore, Allahabad and Asansol. Mail for this flight had left Croydon on 1 July 1933 and, at Cairo, connected with the incoming flight from South Africa, South West Africa and Rhodesia. The mails were transferred to the Imperial Airways airliner *Hanno* (a Handley Page HP42 G-AAUD) which left for Karachi via Bahrain and Sharjah on 5 July. There the flight was continued by the Indian Trans-Continental airliner *Arethusia* (an Armstrong Whitworth AW15 Atalanta VT-AEF) piloted by Captain L. Ecclesfield.

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--Cover flown from Calcutta, India to Cornwall, England on 11 July 1933. Postmarked Calcutta 10 JUL 33 and Cornwall 18 JUL 33 on back.

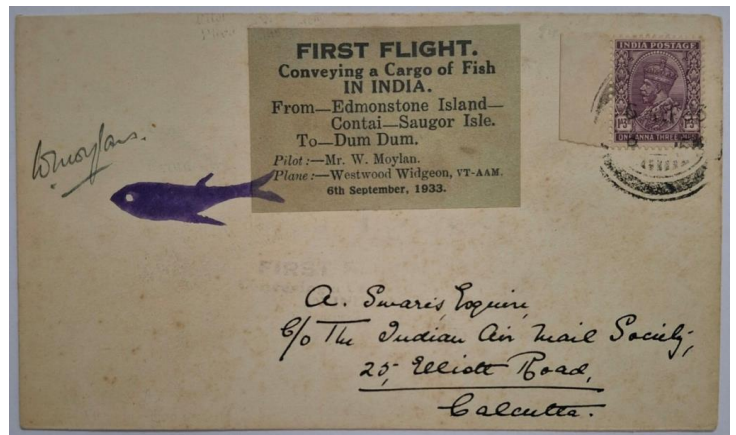
**1933 Edmonstone Island to Dum Dum  
by Mr W Moylan  
Edmonstone Island - Dum Dum  
6 September 1933**

**Pilot : Mr W Moylan**

Aircraft : Westland Widgeon III VT-AAM

**Mail Carried : 55 Covers**

The aeroplane was in fact a Westland (not Westwood) Widgeon III VT-AAM. Contai is a coastal village at the mouths of the Ganges, south-west of Calcutta.



--Cover flown from Edmonstone Island to Dum Dum on 6 September 1933. Postmarked Dum Dum 6 SEP 33 and Park Street, Calcutta 7 SEP 33 on back.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1933 England-India Extension From Calcutta to Rangoon  
by Imperial Airways and Indian Trans-Continental Airways**

**Calcutta – Rangoon**

**1 October 1933**

Aircraft : *Arethusa* G-ABPI

The first mails from England to Burma left Croydon on 23 September 1933. At Cairo they were transferred to an Imperial Airways Hannibal class airliner for the flight to Karachi via the Arabian halts. From there they were carried by Indian Trans-Continental there they were carried by Indian Trans-Continental Airways *Arethusa* G-ABPI to Rangoon via Akyab, arriving on 1 October 1933, nine days after leaving England. The flight added 700 miles to the England-Australia chain.

The return flight, by the airliner *Athena* G-ABTK left Rangoon at 7am on 2 October 1933, connecting with Imperial Airways at Karachi on 4 October.

**1933 First Flights by Indian National Airways  
Calcutta-Rangoon**

**1 December 1933**

Aircraft : De Havilland DH84 Dragons VT-AEK

**Mail Carried : 352 Covers**

The formation of Indian National Airways Ltd was marked by the introduction of a daily passenger and mail service between Calcutta and Dacca and a weekly service between Calcutta and Rangoon. The flights would have been made in INA's newly purchased De Havilland DH84 Dragons VT-AEK and VT-AEL. The flight from Calcutta to Rangoon was via Chittagong, Akyab and Bassein. The Calcutta Rangoon Service ceased operation on 9 August 1935.



--Cover flown from Calcutta to Rangoon on 1 October 1933. Postmarked Cawnpore 30 SEP 33 and Rangoon 1 OCT 33 on back.



--Cover flown from Calcutta to Rangoon on 1 December 1933. Postmarked Park Street, Calcutta 4 DEC 33 and Akyab 5 DEC 33 on back.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1933 England-India Extension From Rangoon to Singapore  
by Imperial Airways and Indian Trans-Continental Airways  
Karachi – Singapore  
15 December 1933  
Aircraft : *Astraea* G-ABTC**

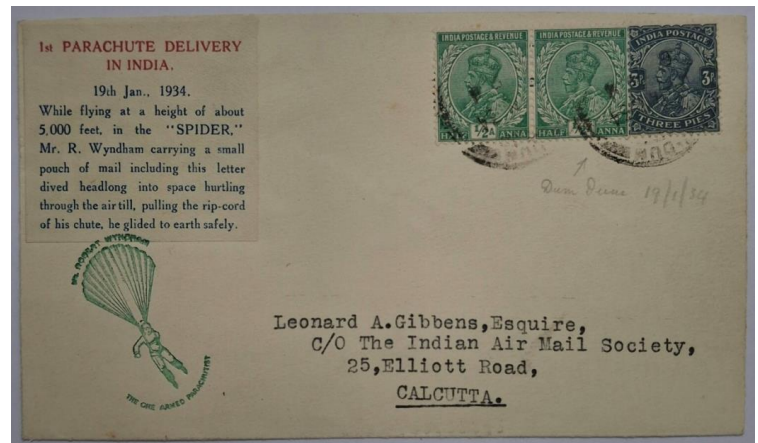
The first air mails from England to Singapore left Croydon on 9 December 1933, travelling by air to Paris, by train to Brindisi, thence by seaplane via Athens and Alexandria to Cairo. There the UK mails and those from Africa were flown by a Hannibal class airliner to Karachi. On 16 December, Trans-Continental's *Astraea* G-ABTC left for Singapore, stopping after Rangoon at Bangkok and Bandon in Thailand and Alor Star in Northern Malaya, before reaching Singapore on 19 December 1933. The flight added a further 1400 miles to the England-Australia chain. The return flight left Singapore on 31 December and arrived in London on 10 January 1934.

**1934 Captain Barnard's Flying Circus  
FIRST PARACHUTE DELIVERY IN INDIA  
Dum Dum, 19 January 1934  
Pilot : Captain C D Barnard  
Aircraft : Fokker monoplane, *The Spider* G-EBTS**

Captain C D Barnard organised the **First Indian Air Pageant** in January 1934. He was a famous pilot who had flown the equally famous *Princess Xenia* H-NADAK, the Duchess of Bedford's Fokker monoplane, from Croydon to Karachi and back in 1928. Indeed, his aeroplane was that same Fokker, now renamed *The Spider* G-EBTS. On 19 January, While flying at a height of about 5000 feet, in the "Spider", **one-armed parachutist Mr. Robert Wyndham**, carrying a small pouch of mail including this letter dived headlong into space hurtling through the air till, pulling the rip-cord of his chute, he glided to earth safely.



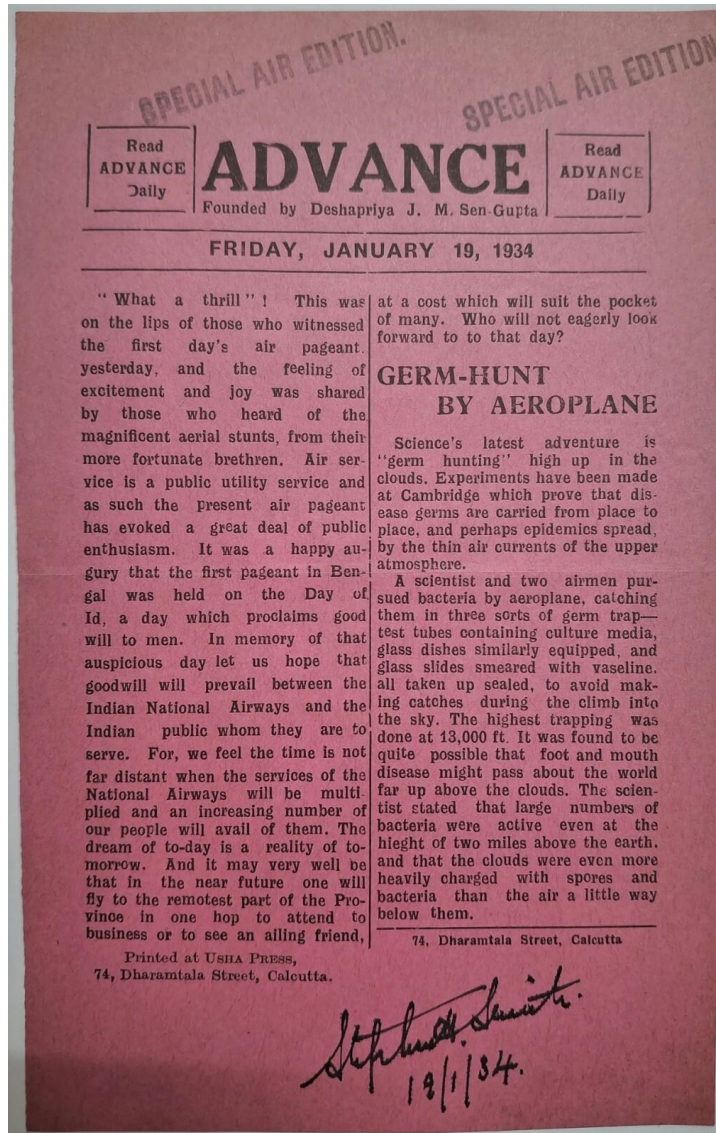
--Cover flown from Karachi to Singapore on 15 December 1933. Postmarked Karachi 14 DEC 33 and Bangkok 18 DEC 33 on back.



--Cover flown from Dum Dum to Calcutta on 19 January 1934. Postmarked Dum Dum 19 JAN 34 and Park Street, Calcutta 21 JAN 34 on back.

**Dum Dum, 19 January 1934, Pilot : Captain C D Barnard**  
Aircraft : Fokker monoplane, *The Spider* G-EBTS

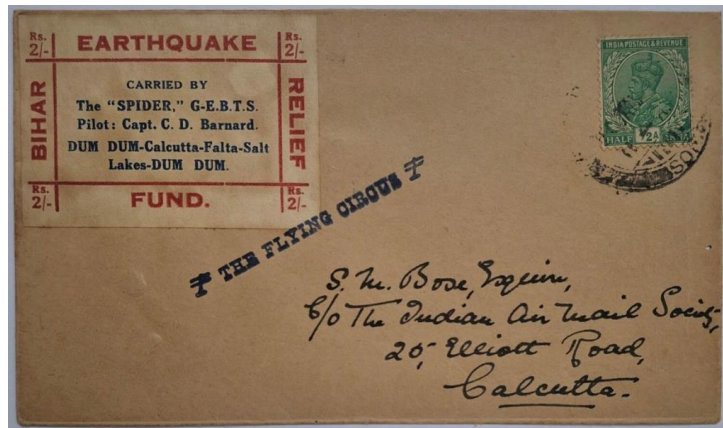
Captain C D Barnard organised the **First Indian Air Pageant** in January 1934. His aeroplane was Fokker monoplane, now renamed *The Spider* G-EBTS. On 19 January 1934, While flying at Dum Dum in the "Spider", carrying a **Special Air Edition of newspaper "ADVANCE"**, printed leaflets in three different colours and these were dropped from the air, but most were destroyed.



Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1934 Special Flight 'The Flying Circus'**  
**for Bihar Earthquake Relief Fund**  
**By Captain C D Barnard**  
**Dum Dum-Calcutta-Falta-Salt Lakes-Dum Dum**  
**20 January 1934**  
Pilot : Captain C D Barnard  
Aircraft : Fokker monoplane, *The Spider* G-EBTS  
**Mail Carried : 234 Covers**

On 20<sup>th</sup> January, special flights were organised for the **Bihar Earthquake Relief Fund** and some covers were carried by pilot Captain C D Barnard.



--Cover flown from Dum Dum to Bihar and back on 20 January 1934. Postmarked Calcutta 20 JAN 34 and Park Street, Calcutta 21 JAN 34 on back.

**1934 Earthquake Emergency Flight**  
**By F/O K D Knocker**  
**Dum Dum-Darbhanga**  
**29 January 1934**  
Pilot : F/O K D Knocker  
Aircraft : De Havilland DH60G Moth VT-ACN  
**Mail Carried : 6 Covers**

A severe earthquake on 15 January 1934 severely disrupted communications in the province of Bihar and in the parts of United Provinces, Bengal and Assam. Two days after the **earthquake**, an **emergency flight** made by Flying Officer K D Knocker from Dum Dum to Darbhanga. The aeroplane (a De Havilland DH60G Moth VT-ACN) was damaged on landing and the return flight delayed for seven days. Flying Officer Knocker made a second flight to Darbhanga on 29 January 1934.



--Cover flown from Dum Dum to Darbhanga on 29 January 1934. Postmarked Darbhanga 30 JAN 34 and Park Street, Calcutta 31 JAN 34 on back.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1934 Earthquake Relief Plane**  
**By F/O K D Knocker**  
**Muzaffarpur-Darbhanga-Dum Dum**  
**17 January 1934**

Pilot : F/O K D Knocker  
Aircraft : De Havilland DH60G Moth VT-ACN  
Mail Carried : 50 Covers

A severe earthquake on 15 January 1934 severely disrupted communications in the province of Bihar and in the parts of United Provinces, Bengal and Assam. Two days after the **earthquake**, an **emergency flight** made by Flying Officer K D Knocker from Muzaffarpur to Dum Dum Dum. The aeroplane (a De Havilland DH60G Moth VT-ACN) was damaged on landing and the return flight delayed in transit. The mail was posted from Dum Dum on 2 February 1934.

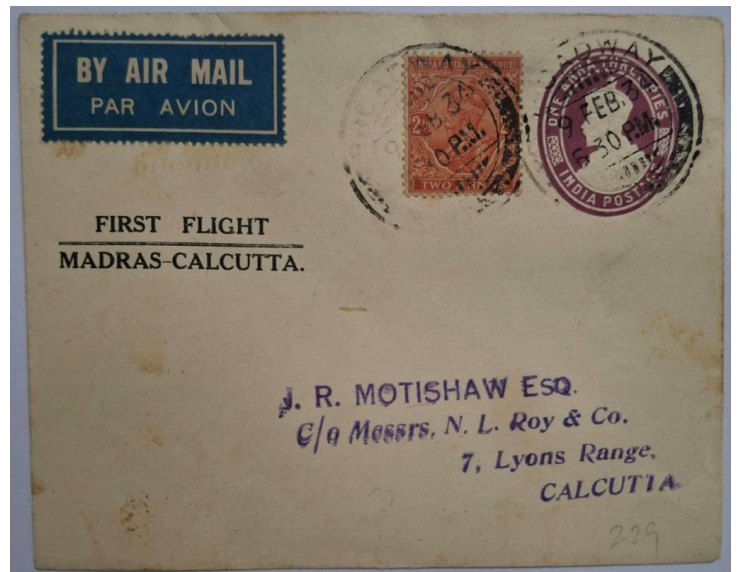


--Cover flown from Muzaffarpur to Dum Dum on 17 January 1934. Postmarked Muzaffarpur 2 FEB 34 and Park Street, Calcutta 3 FEB 34 on back.

**1934 Madras Air Taxi Service**  
**Madras - Calcutta, 10 February 1934**  
Aircraft : De Havilland DH83 Fox Moth VT-AEQ

A postal notice was issued by T Ryan, Office of the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs on 26 January 1934 announcing an airmail service between Madras and Calcutta: "The Madras Air Taxi Service will operate a bi-weekly **air service between Madras and Calcutta stopping at Gannavaram, Vizagapatam and Puri**, to connect with the east and westbound services of the Indian Trans-Continental and the Indian National Airways. The first plane will leave Madras on Saturday, the 10th February 1934 and, in the reverse direction, will leave Calcutta on the following day".

The first flight is believed to have been by a De Havilland DH83 Fox Moth VT-AEQ.



--Cover flown from Madras to Calcutta on 10 February 1934. Postmarked Broadway 9 FEB 34 and Calcutta 11 FEB 34 on back.

Indian Airmails (1925-1934)

**1934 Weekly Air Mail Service between Lahore and Karachi  
by Indian National Airways  
Lahore-Multan-Sukkur-Karachi  
**4 December 1934**  
Pilot : P D Sharma**

On 4 December 1934, Indian National Airways inaugurated a new weekly service, using Percival Gulls, between **Lahore and Karachi**, where it connected with the Imperial Airways flight to and from London (IW.296 and IE.297). The first flight was piloted by P D Sharma. The intermediate halts were Multan and Sukkur, the later to connect with the mail train from Quetta.

Covers franked with Convention States stamps were inadmissible for transmission by airmail, mail so was sent by surface transport. However, an exception was made for this flight and 62 letters were authorised to have Chamba States stamps affixed and cancelled *Chamba State*, on 3 DEC 34 and 6 DEC 34.



--Cover flown from Lahore to Karachi on 4 December 1934. Postmarked Lahore 4 DEC 34 and Sukkur 4 DEC 34.

**1934 Weekly Air Mail Service between Karachi and Lahore  
by Indian National Airways  
Karachi-Sukkur-Multan-Lahore  
**6 December 1934**  
Pilot : P D Sharma**

On 6 December 1934, Indian National Airways inaugurated a new weekly service, using Percival Gulls, between **Karachi and Lahore**, where it connected with the Imperial Airways flight to and from London (IW.296 and IE.297). The first flight was piloted by P D Sharma. The intermediate halts were Multan and Sukkur, the later to connect with the mail train from Quetta.



--Cover flown from Karachi to Lahore on 6 December 1934. Postmarked Karachi 6 DEC 34 and Multan 7 DEC 34 on back.