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Inside this Issue:

Expressing Our Appreciation to Jim Forte

Airmail to Niger Colony – The Unpublished 50 Cents Rate by Joseph G. Bock

Trans-Pacific Airmail to Europe – The 30 Cents Legacy Rate by Steven M. Roth

Two Interesting Covers to Pitcairn Island

Two Other Interesting Covers From Our Readers

Airmail to West Africa in 1940 & 1941 – Interruption and Resumption by Steven M. Roth

**What would you like to see in the Newsletter?
Let your Editor know. Better yet, send me an
article or a note to publish.**

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Expressing Our Appreciation to Jim Forte

Jeff Shapiro and I, on our behalf and on behalf of all subscribers to the Newsletter, thank postal history dealer Jim Forte who has generously contributed his labor to, and the costs of, mailing this Issue of the Newsletter.

Airmail to Niger Colony – The Unpublished 50 Cents Rate

by

Joseph G. Bock

The attempt to deliver the cover shown below via FAM 22 in 1942 was thwarted because of the then unpublished airmail rate to its original destination – Niger Colony of French West Africa.



The cover originally was addressed to Niger Colony. It was franked with 45 cents postage which correctly reflected the prior, published airmail rate to Niger Colony. However, when this cover was mailed (November 6 1942) the correct airmail rate to Niger was 50 cents, but this rate was as yet unpublished. Rather than return the cover to the post office of origin (Miami) for the missing postage (5 cents), the cover was handstamped “INSUFFICIENT POSTAGE/FOR AIRMAIL SERVICE”, and sent onward by ship. Upon reaching Niger the cover was forwarded to Nigeria. The entire trip took 10 months.

Editor’s Note: In November 1942 mail service to Niger Colony, which was controlled by the Vichy government, was suspended by the United States. Thus, this letter would not have been delivered even had the correct postage been paid.

Trans-Pacific Airmail to Europe – The 30 Cents Legacy Rate

by

Steven M. Roth

With the the fall of France and the entry of Italy into the War (both in June 1940) the carriage of mail to

Lisbon (the terminal and transit port for FAM 18 flights from the United States to various destinations in Europe), and then across Europe or the Mediterranean Sea became very precarious. Indeed, Italy, which had acted as the transit carrier, no longer would preform this service for the Allies. Accordingly, the Post Office Department shifted Trans-Atlantic FAM 18 traffic to FAM 14 – the Trans-Pacific route. This emergency rerouting would last until the opening of FAM 22 in December 1941. Basic Trans-Pacific airmail postage for letters addressed to Europe was set at 70 cents (compared to 30 cents for delivery via FAM 18).

The Post Office Department recognized that it would take time for postal patrons to adapt their practices to the new, slower (because of the greater distance) and more expensive routing over FAM 14. Accordingly, it provided, in general, that letters for Europe franked with 30 cents postage rather than 70 cents would be carried over the Trans-Pacific route for a limited time. In practice, however, this rule was applied differently for different destinations in Europe.

In this note I examine how letters franked with 30 cents postage were handled when the operative route to Europe was the Trans-Pacific route. This is a preliminary study only. I am examining specific destinations; others might follow in later Issues if appropriate.

Airmail to Greece

Italy invaded Greece in October 1940. After many months of ferocious combat, the Greek forces pushed the Italian army back into Albania, at great losses to Italy in manpower and equipment, so that in April 1941 the German Army had to come to Italy's rescue. It invaded Greece on April 6, 1941 to protect its interests in the oil fields of Rumania and as part of Germany's larger plan for the conquest of the Balkans.

Airmail to Greece during the period of combat with Italy was uncertain. Often the mail was intercepted by the Italian forces and held or returned to the sender. One such cover is that shown immediately below. It was mailed to Italy on October 21, 1940. It was flown to Lisbon via FAM 18 (Trans-Atlantic route) at the applicable 30 cents airmail rate. When it reached Greece it was intercepted, it received the label "Al mittente/a l'envoyeur/ SERVIZIO SOSPEO", and the cover was returned to the sender.



In February 1941 the Post Office Department published a Notice in the **Postal Bulletin Supplement** instructing all postmasters that airmail to Greece would be carried via the Trans-Pacific route [at 70 cents (up to one half ounce)] to Cairo, and then sent onward by ordinary means. This Notice also provided that mail to Greece franked with 30 cents postage (rather than the required 70 cents postage) *would be sent to*

Lisbon and held [emphasis added] until once again it became possible to deliver mail from Lisbon to Greece as previously. This instruction represented one method of dealing with former FAM 18 mail after February 1941.

FOREIGN AIR MAIL SERVICE—GREECE, BELGIAN CONGO

Air-mail service is available for transportation of articles for Greece via the trans-Pacific route to Cairo, thence by ordinary means. The postage required is 70 cents per half ounce. Articles for that route should be marked "Via Pacific Route." This routing is made available to senders because of interruption of through service to Greece via the trans-Atlantic air-mail route. However, articles mailed with postage at the rate of 30 cents per half ounce will continue to be sent via Lisbon for possible onward forwarding.

While there appears to be no air-mail service by which mails for the Belgian Congo may be expedited to that country, the domestic air-mail service within the Belgian Congo is still in operation. If senders desire their articles carried by such domestic air service after reaching an exchange office in the Belgian Congo by ordinary means, they should prepay the postage required of 9 cents per half ounce in addition to the regular postage and mark them "By Air Mail in Belgian Congo."

The current Foreign Air Mail Service leaflet should be corrected accordingly.

Below is a typical 30 cents cover addressed to Greece during the Trans-Pacific period. As is the case with all such covers (except one) I have recorded, it was carried to Lisbon, but never entered Greece, having been blocked by the German occupiers.



The only 30 cents cover I have recorded that was given Trans-Pacific service during this period was a quadruple rate cover that had been handstamped "VIA TRANS-ATLANTIC/AIR MAIL". Perhaps this cover was not recognized for what it was (an underpaid Trans-Pacific cover) because it had \$1.20 postage affixed. In any event, this cover was flown via FAM 14 to Singapore where it was opened by the British censorship, was resealed, was sent on to Greece, was refused entrance, and then was returned to the sender.

This cover appears below.



Once Germany consolidated its position in the Balkans in late April 1941, airmail to Greece once again was routed over FAM 18 through Lisbon at 30 cents. [Postal Bulletin Supplement, May 1941] Thus, the opportunity to find airmail covers to Greece carried over the Trans-Pacific route is limited to a period of not more than approximately ninety days.

Airmail to Turkey

The approach of the Post Office Department to airmail to Turkey during this same turbulent period differed from that described above. Ostensibly, all airmail to Turkey was carried via FAM 18 for 30 cents until December 17, 1941, when the Notice in the **Postal Bulletin** [December 18, 1941] informed postmasters that all airmail *previously carried* via the Trans-Pacific route (FAM 14) would now be carried via Miami and via Africa [FAM 22] at 70 cents. I have not been able to find a previous Notice routing the mail from FAM 18 to FAM 14 in the **Postal Bulletins** or in the **Postal Bulletin Supplements**.

SECOND ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL, Washington, December 17, 1941. FOREIGN AIR MAIL SERVICE

Air mails for Netherlands Indies, North Borneo, Sarawak, Straits Settlements, Malaya, Burma, unoccupied China and countries west thereof (including Turkey), which have heretofore been sent by the trans-Pacific route, shall be routed promptly via Miami, Fla. The total postage on articles for all these countries is 70 cents per half ounce.

Air mails for the countries listed in the **POSTAL BULLETIN** of December 2, 1941, under the heading "Foreign Air Mail Service To Africa," will of course also be sent via Miami, except any that are prepared to be carried by steamship to Africa thence by air.

I have recorded only one cover to Turkey via the Trans-Pacific route franked with 70 cents postage. That cover is in the exhibit of Stephen L. Suffet. All of the others I have seen have been franked with 30 cents postage, but carried over the Trans-Pacific route.

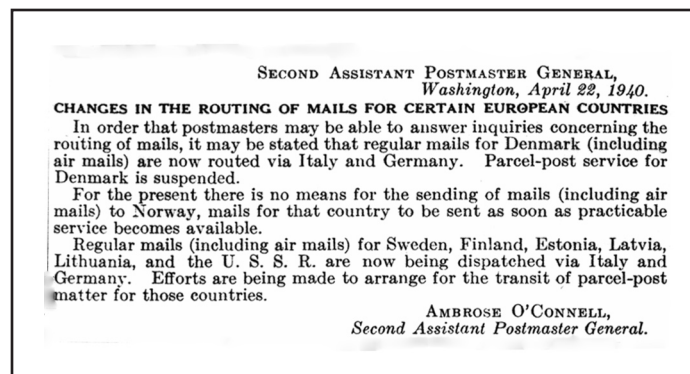
Here is an example of such a 30 cents Trans-Pacific cover to Turkey.



This cover is part of the extensive Elizabeth Tank correspondence. The letter was postmarked September 14, 1941. It was flown to Singapore where British censorship opened the letter, inspected it, and then resealed it. The cover arrived in Istanbul on November 16, 1941.

Airmail to Latvia

A Notice in the **Postal Bulletin** for April 24, 1940, announced that mail for Latvia would be routed via Italy and Germany. Presumably this required the same 30 cents airmail postage rate as before the announcement.



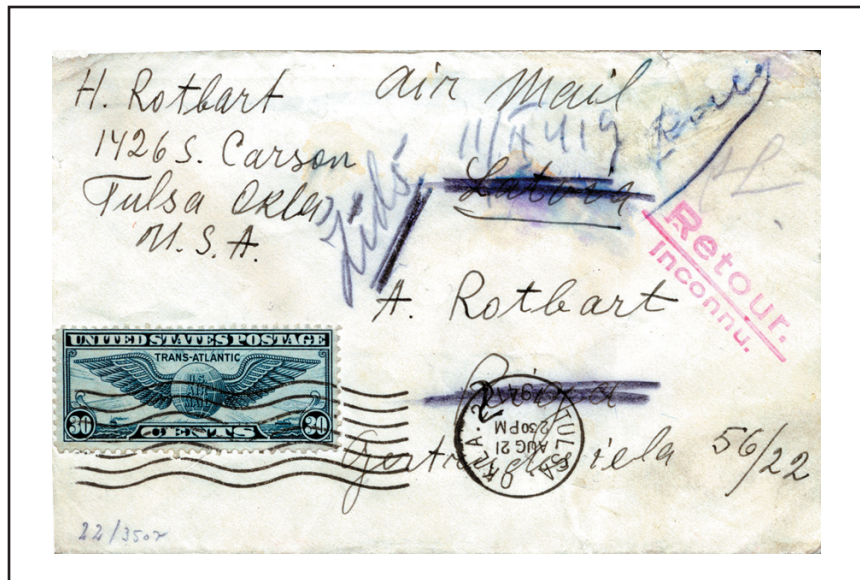
Such routing, however, was not possible after June 22, 1941, when Germany invaded the Soviet Union (which then included Latvia as a vassal state). Accordingly, on June 25, 1941, the Post Office Department published a Notice in the **Postal Bulletin** requiring that airmail for Latvia, the USSR, and other named destinations be carried over the Trans-Pacific route to Hong Kong at 70 cents. This Notice also stated that *for a time* letters franked with 30 cents postage *would be recognized and would be carried* over the Trans-Pacific route. [emphasis added]

This Notice, therefore, demonstrates a third approach (forwarding the letter at the old rate for a limited time) to the handling of 30 cents Trans-Pacific airmail in this quixotic period.

FOREIGN AIR MAIL SERVICE

Beginning at once, air mails for U. S. S. R., Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, shall be dispatched via the Pacific coast and the trans-Pacific air-mail route, to be sent onward from Hong Kong by ordinary means. The total postage shall be 70 cents per half ounce. However, for a time mails for those countries prepaid at the air-mail rate heretofore required, shall be given dispatch via the trans-Pacific route. Inquiring mailers may be informed that the sending of articles for the above-named countries by air mail may not expedite the articles materially over service by ordinary means.

An example of an airmail cover during this period, franked with 30 cents postage, addressed to Latvia and given Trans-Pacific service appears below.



This cover, postmarked August 16, 1941, traveled via Hong Kong to Latvia where it was returned to the sender because the addressee was unknown or could not be found.

Editor's Tip:

Watch for Dr. Roger G. Schnell's upcoming
article in the *Airpost Journal* on FAM 22
airmail to the USSR during WW II.

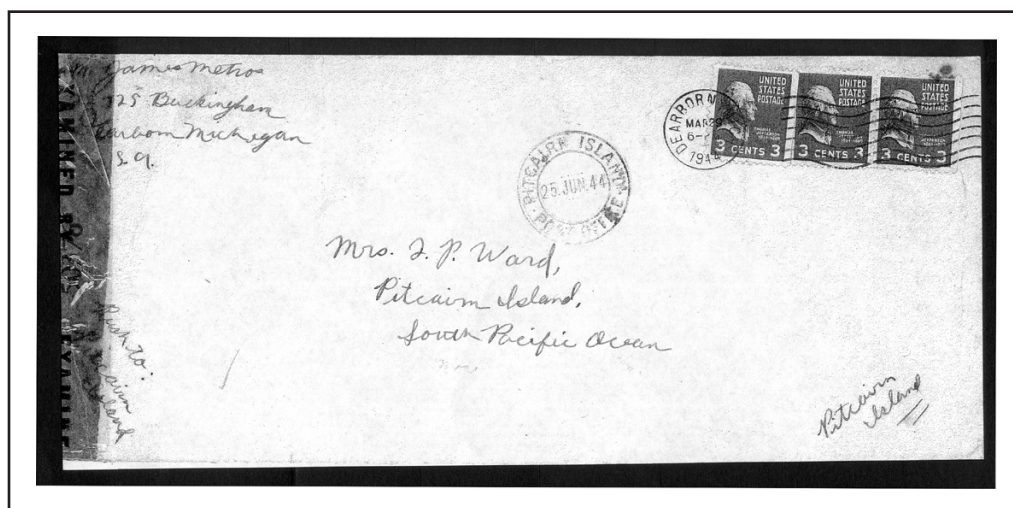
Two Interesting Covers to Pitcairn Island

Readers Ken Pitt and Charles O'Dell have sent us these two interesting covers addressed to Pitcairn Island.

From Ken Pitt:



From Charles O'Dell:



Coming in the next Issue: An Update
to Suspended Mail to Switzerland

Two Other Interesting Covers From Our Readers

In this Issue we are pleased to present two very interesting covers submitted for inclusion by one of our readers.

Larry Paige has submitted this parcel tag franked with six 22 cents *Cleavelands*:



Larry also contributed the following Registry form bearing a 3 cents horizontal coil:

U. S. Post Office **Hagerstown, Md.** 1940, 19

Registered Article No. **2133** mailed on **May 3**, 19**40**, by **Pascagoula**
National Bank Addressed **National Bank of Hagerstown,**
Hagerstown, Md. can not be delivered because **no such bank in Hagerstown**
 we have a 2nd National also **Nicodemus National Bank in Hagerstown**

Have sender indicate in spaces provided below disposition he desires made of the article.
 Prompt attention must be given to this notice, otherwise the article will be disposed of in accordance
 with the regulations.
 Postage required to forward or return the article.....cents

POSTMASTER at office where the registered article was mailed:
Hagerstown Trust Co.

the registered article described to
Hagerstown, Md.

(Signature of sender or authorized agent)
Arthur V. Smith

*Cross out words not applicable.
 The above signature is verified as that of the sender (or authorized agent) of
 the registered article.

MAY 8 - 1940 (Date) **ARTHUR V. SMITH** Postmaster.

NOTE TO POSTMASTER.—Return this card in an official envelope to the office where the registered article is held.

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Airmail to West Africa in 1940 & 1941 – Interruption and Resumption

by

Steven M. Roth

Airmail to West Africa was unavailable for at least thirteen months commencing sometime before November 1940, until the first flight over FAM 22 on December 6, 1941.

The **Postal Bulletin**, dated November 1, 1940, contained a leaflet entitled **Foreign Airmail Service Leaflet**. The leaflet provided, in pertinent part:

It appears that there is no air service by which mails for the following countries in west Africa may be materially expedited, the mails for such countries being sent by steamship from New York:

Angola	French Sudan	Niger
Belgian Congo	Gambia	Nigeria
Cameroons	Gold Coast Colony	Portuguese Guinea
Dahomey	Ivory Coast	Senegal
French Equatorial Africa	Liberia	Spanish Guinea
French Guinea	Mauritania	Togoland

I have not found an airmail cover from the U.S. to any of the listed destinations prior to the advent of FAM 22. Below is a cover I believe might have been carried on the first flight back to West Africa after the end of the temporary moratorium against airmail. Note the sender's admonition: "Clipper - via Miami".



This airmail cover was mailed from New York on December 4, 1941 to Cameroons, West Africa.