

IA First Flights through Kuwait  
1932 - 1934



IA's Hano plane on a Kuwait Airport sandy runway in 1934

In March 1927, the British Marine Air Navigation, Damier Airways, Handley Page Transport and Intero Air Line, merged into the Imperial Airways (IA), a new entity which aimed to link the British Empire colonies. IA had two main routes, one through East Asia and all the way to Australia and the other through Africa. IA greatly contributed to developing mail services and accelerating its intercontinental movement.

In April 1929 the Persian Government agreed to let the IA fly over their territory. IA's route extended from Basra to reach Bushire, Lengeh, Jask, Gwadar and then Karachi. This made the journey between Croydon, England and Karachi take only seven days and the mail sent from Kuwait to Karachi to take only two days compared to the previous 10-14 days for mail sent by sea.

In July 1932 the Persian Government issued a ban of IA flights over its soil. This caused the British and Indian governments make an agreement with the ruler of 'Shahjah' to allow IA flights with an overnight stop for rest. As a result, Kuwait became the first stop for flights heading from Basra to Karachi.

NO.	Outline of Exhibit	Page No.
1	The Cairo - Basra Service, 1927-1929	2
2	The England - India Service: - Persian Coast, 1929-1932 - Arabian Coast, 1932 - 1st direct flight from Kuwait, 1933 - 1st flight: Baghdad, New Zealand, Athens - 1st flight: Kuwait, Calcutta - 1st flight: Kuwait, Rangoon	3 4 5 6,7 8,9 11
3	Trans-Atlantic - South America, 1934	12,13 16,16
4	African Service, 1st flight: Kuwait, Durban, South Africa	16

This exhibit showcases a number of memorial covers that were sent along each new route launched during that period (1932-1934). They were sometimes addressed to the sender's own names in order to have them sent back. Those covers are highly significant in tracking the first flights to and from Kuwait. The memorial covers highlight the influence of airlines on the development of postal services.

Main References:  
- The Postal in Eastern Arabia and Gulf, Neil Donaldson, Harry Hayes Philatelic Study, 1975. A Supplement 1994  
- Aircraft Movements on Imperial Airways Eastern Route, 1927-1939 (I, II, Y, Z), Peter Wigent, Winchester 2005  
- The Kuwait Mails, Collection of Kuwait, Government Philatelic Section, London 2011.  
Research Published by the Exhibitor:  
- Abdul Wahid, Eighty-five years of Imperial Airways flying through Kuwait in Arabia, Reseda, Al Kuwait magazine, P. 33-43, issue 61, Center for Research and Studies on Kuwait, Jan 2016.

"The Cairo - Basra Service"

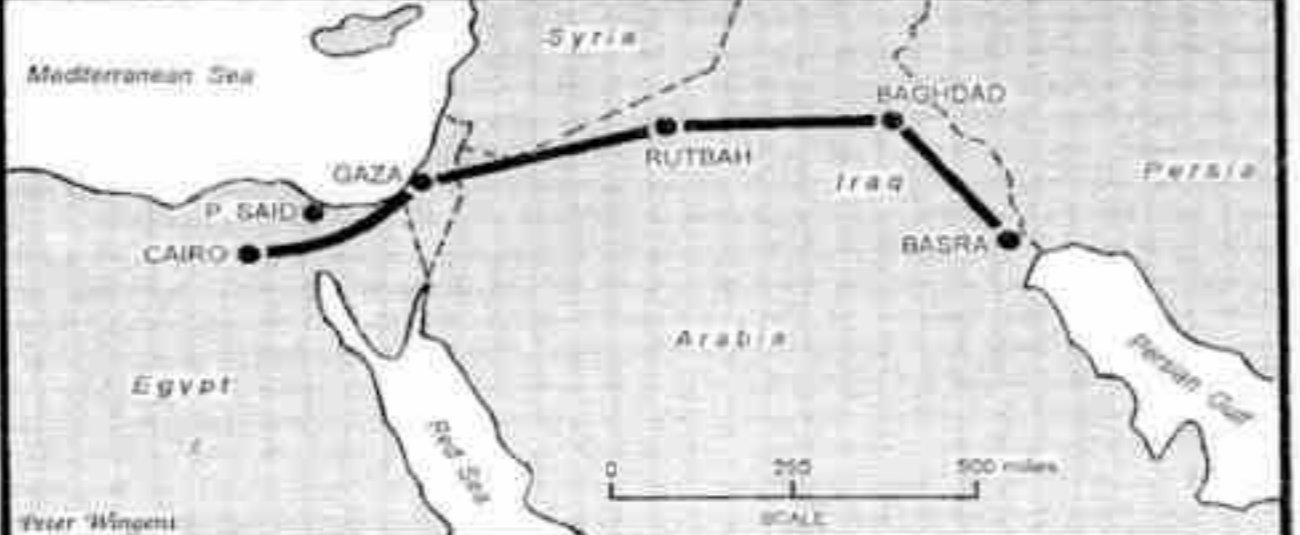
1927-1929

Imperial Airways took over the RAF Baghdad - Cairo service in January 1927 and extended it to Basra. The service was fortnightly until April when it became weekly. It had been expected that the air route would be extended to Karachi after a short time, but there were problems in negotiating flying rights over Persia and so the extension was delayed until 1929, and thus for two years operated only between Cairo and Basra.



"Air Mail" label affixed in blue  
Route: Basrah, Baghdad, Ruzbeh, Giza, Cairo, and then sea from Port Said to Marseilles and from there to London.  
Air Mail Rate 1% as for every 10 grams or fraction

1928 (Oct 9) A cover from Kuwait to Michigan, USA via Basra (Oct 11), bearing "KUWAIT" killer cancel, franked 4% as Indian stamps overprint "Kuwait" to pay the 3 as. Surface postage and the 1% as. air fee for letter up to 10 g in weight.



Map of "Imperial Airways" Cairo - Basra air service, January 1927 - March 1929

"The England - India Service"

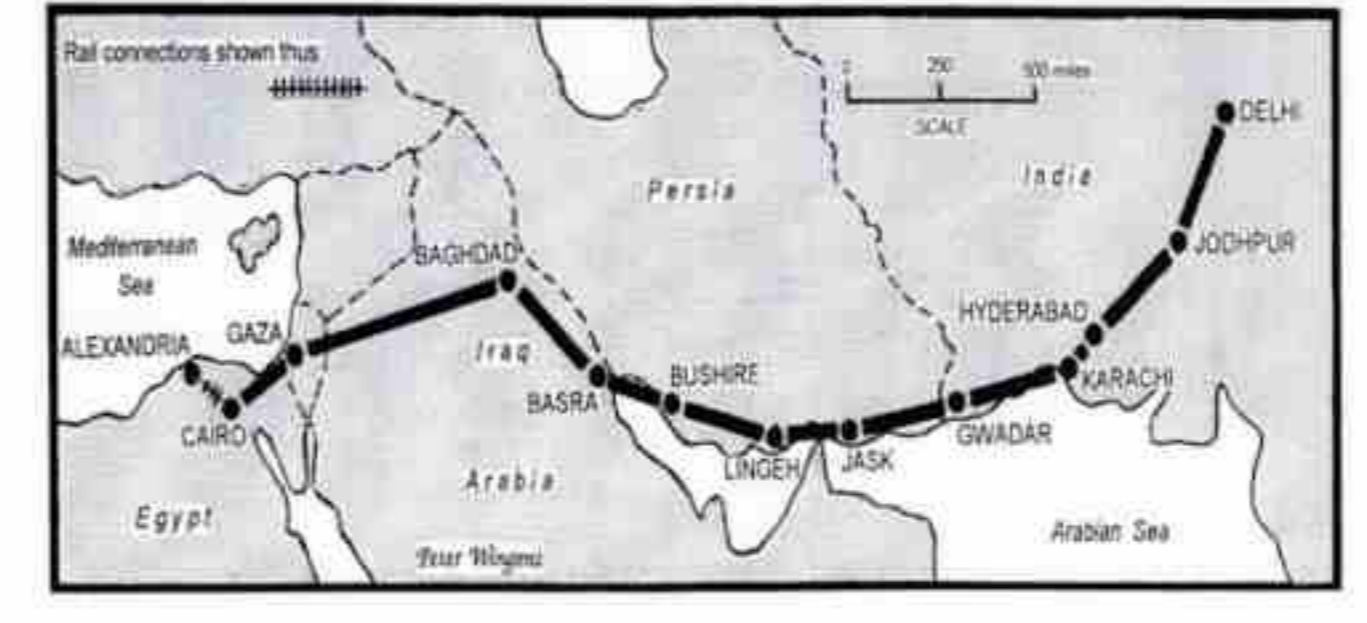
The Persian Coast  
1929-1932

Inauguration of Imperial Airways 'Condon-Karachi' Service opened on March 1929. The route started by airmail from London to Paris and Basel then by train to Genoa then again by air to Alexandria to Karachi with stops at Gaza, Ruzbeh, Baghdad, Basra, Bushire, Lengeh, Jask and Gwadar. In November 1929 the first section of the route was altered to an all air route from London to Paris, Cologne, Nuremberg, Vienna, Budapest, Skopje, Salonika, and Athens Crete, Alexandria.



"BY AIR" Handstamp applied in black  
This cover from Port Said to the first return flight, which left Karachi on 7 April 1929  
Route: Delhi, Karachi, Gwadar, Jask, Lengeh, Bushire, Basrah, then by car to Kuwait

1929 (Apr 3) A cover from Delhi, India to Kuwait (Apr. 14), via Karachi (Apr. 7), Bushire (Apr. 8), Basra (Apr. 9), franked 8 as Indian stamps overprint to pay surface postage 3 as. & air fee of 5 as. including 2 as. for internal air mail from Delhi to Karachi.



The Alexandria - Delhi section of the route as from December 1929

"The England - India Service"

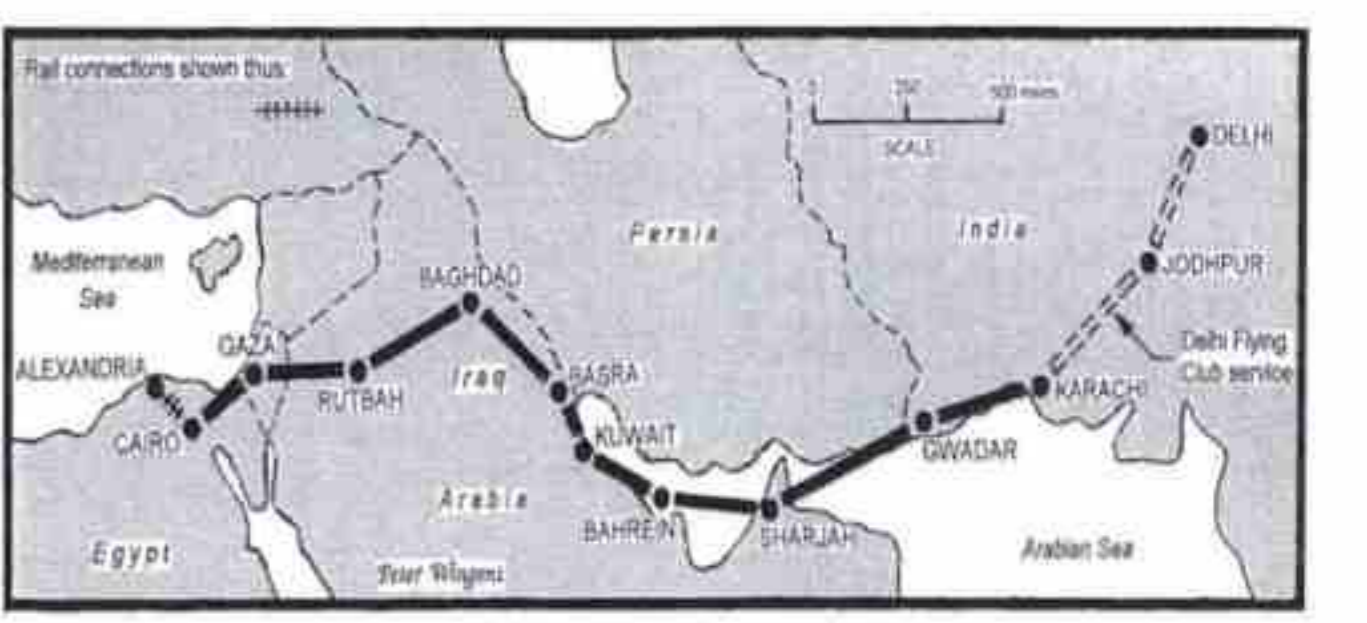
London to Kuwait  
1932

The Imperial Airways route to India changed to Arabian side of the Gulf in October 1932, altered from Persian side: Bushire, Lengeh, Jask to Basra, Bahrain - Sharjah (Arabian side) and Kuwait became a regular port of call for Imperial Airways aircraft and both Eastbound and Westbound mail and passenger carrying machines stop here.



First flight London - Kuwait  
Scan of backside

1932 (Sep 30) A cover from London to Kuwait (Oct 6) via Basra (Oct 6), franked G.B. 6 endorsed First Flight London-Kuwait in manuscript.



"The England - India Service"

The Arabian Coast  
1933

First Imperial Airways flight landed at Kuwait on 28th Oct. 1932. On 22nd Dec. 1932, Sheikh of Kuwait agreed with the British representative to operate an aviation line - on trial - for six months provided it will convey passengers as well as mail, and first direct flight from the West to Kuwait was on 6th Jan. 1933, and first flight to return direct from the East was on 14th January.

This cover was flown on first service timetable introduce Jan 1933, from Kuwait Westbound service.



1933 (Jan 5) A cover from Kuwait to England, via Basra (Jan 7) bearing "KUWAIT" killer cancel, franked 7 as Indian stamps overprint "Kuwait", to pay the 3 as. for surface postage and 4 as. air fee for letter up to 10 g in weight to England.

This cover was flown on first service timetable introduce Jan 1933, from Kuwait Eastbound service.



1933 (Jan 4) A cover from Kuwait to Calcutta, India, bearing "KUWAIT" killer cancel, franked 5 as Indian stamps overprint "Kuwait", to pay the 3 as. for surface postage and 2 as. air fee for letter up to 10 g in weight to Karachi.

"The England - India Service"

Incoming First Flights  
1933

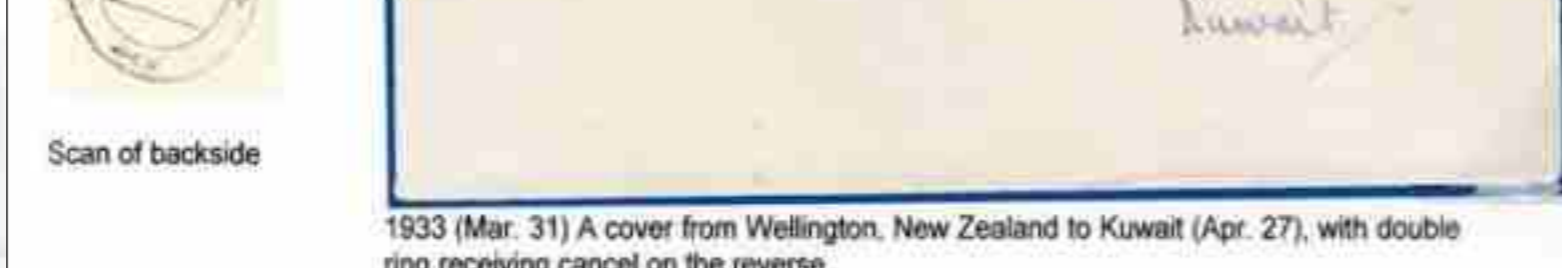
First Flight Baghdad - Kuwait Eastbound service



A special cachet was applied in Baghdad  
The first inward flight to Kuwait from Baghdad, the mail consisted of 43 registered and 10 ordinary letters.  
Scan of backside

1933 (Jan 4) A registered cover from Baghdad, Iraq to Kuwait (Jan 7), franked 21 fls, with double ring receiving cancel on the reverse.

First Flight New Zealand - Kuwait Westbound service.



A special cachet was applied in New Zealand  
39 Letters carried  
Scan of backside

"The England - India Service"

Athens / Kuwait / Athens  
1933

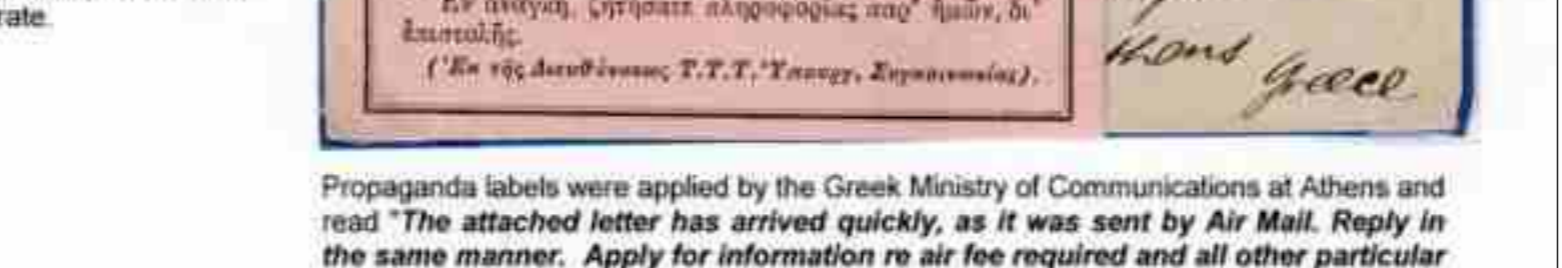
First Flight Athens - Kuwait



The first direct flight from Athens to Kuwait.  
23 Letters carried  
1933 (May 8) A registered cover from Athens to Kuwait (May 11), franked 100, 80, 30, with double ring receiving cancel on the reverse.  
Scan of backside

A letter addressed to New Zealand with "Missent to Kuwait" written and signed in red pen from the Postmaster of Kuwait, and returned via Basrah (May 14) backstamp.

First Flight Kuwait - Athens



Return flight to Athens, 17 Letters carried  
1933 (May 27) A cover from Kuwait to Rangoon, Burma (Oct 1), bearing "KUWAIT" killer cancel, franked 4% as Indian stamps overprint "KUWAIT", to pay for 3 as surface postage and 1% as air fee for printed letter rate.  
Scan of backside

Propaganda labels were applied by the Greek Ministry of Communications at Athens and read "The attached letter has arrived quickly, as it was sent by Air Mail. Reply in the same manner. Apply for information re air fee required and all other particulars to your local Post Office. If necessary apply in writing to us". Post Telegraph and Telephone H.O. Ministry of Communications.

"England - India Service Extension"

Calcutta - Kuwait  
1933

From 1 July 1933, the Imperial Airways London-Karachi-Delhi airmail service was extended to Calcutta via Cawnpore and Allahabad. The return flight left Calcutta on 11 July and arrived in London on 17 July.



First Flight Calcutta - Kuwait  
The return flight left Calcutta with the special rectangular postmark shows: Karachi-Calcutta 11 Jul First Airmail.  
Book Post printed letter  
Backside: A letter signed in blue pen 'unknown' from the Postmaster of Kuwait, and returned to Calcutta.  
Scan of backside

1933 (May 8) A cover from Calcutta to Kuwait (Jul 13), franked 3 as. 9 p., with double ring receiving cancel on the reverse.



"England - India Service Extension"

Kuwait - Calcutta  
1933

Opening of the regular airmail service by Imperial Airways and Indian Trans-Continental Airways between London and Calcutta. First mail from London was 1 July 1933, but Kuwait and mail was not flown until second flight.



First Flight Kuwait - Calcutta  
1933 (Jul 15) A cover from Kuwait to Calcutta, India (Jul 24) via Basra (Jul 16) bearing "KUWAIT" killer cancel, franked 7 as Indian stamps overprint "KUWAIT", to pay the 3 as. for surface postage and 4 as. air fee for letter up to 10 g in weight.  
Scan of backside



1933 (Jul 15) A cover from Kuwait to Asansol, India (Jul 22) via Basra (Jul 16) bearing "KUWAIT" killer cancel, franked 7 as Indian stamps overprint "KUWAIT", to pay the 3 as. for surface postage and 4 as. air fee for letter up to 10 g in weight.  
Printed Air Mail "label" affixed in Singapore by two red pencil lines, redirect - properly by sea mail - via Allahabad (Jul 24) to Bombay.

"Transatlantic - South America"

Graf Zeppelin - Brazil  
1933

Graf Zeppelin 4th - 1933 Flight to South America



Approximately 14 Letters carried  
Endorsed "By airmail to London, bearing Great Britain K.G.V. 5d. pair, tied by London cancel, two Zeppelin cachets, Berlin transit mark.  
1933 (Jul 20) A registered cover from Kuwait to Reelfe - Pernambuco, Brazil (Aug 9) via London (Jul 24) - 20 days in transit - Berlin - Friedrichshafen, Germany (Aug 5), bearing "KUWAIT" double ring "Reg" cancel, franked 8% as Indian stamps overprint "KUWAIT".  
Route: By Air: Baghdad, Cairo, Brindisi, Croydon, London and Friedrichshafen then by Zeppelin to Reelfe - Pernambuco, Brazil.  
Scan of backside



1934 (Sep 28) A registered cover from Kuwait to Pernambuco, Brazil (Oct 17) via Friedrichshafen (Oct 12), bearing "KUWAIT" double ring "Reg" cancel, franked 8% as Indian stamps overprint "KUWAIT".  
Endorsed "By airmail to London" but not sent through London.  
Route: Via Basra, Baghdad, Milano, Friedrichshafen.

"England - India Service Extension"

Rangoon / Kuwait / Rangoon  
1933

23 September 1933 Imperial Airways extended route from India to Rangoon, mail were posted from Kuwait on 28 September, and arrived in Rangoon on 1 October 1933.



First Flight Kuwait - Rangoon  
20 to 25 Letters carried  
1933 (Sep 23) A cover from Kuwait to Rangoon, Burma (Oct 1), bearing "KUWAIT" killer cancel, franked 9 as Indian stamps overprint "KUWAIT", (revers of cover carries 2 stamps) to pay for 3 as surface postage and 6 as air fee for rate.  
Scan of backside



First Flight Rangoon - Kuwait  
Few items were flown to Kuwait  
1933 (Oct 1) A cover from Rangoon to Kuwait (Oct 5), bearing "KUWAIT" double ring "Reg" cancel, franked 8% as Indian stamps overprint "KUWAIT", to pay for 3 as surface postage and 1% as air fee for letter up to 10 g in weight.  
There is a commemorative doublet cachet on the back which includes the date of 2 October.  
Scan of backside

"Indian National Airways & Trans-Continental"

Kuwait - Singapore - Kuwait  
1933

Opening of the regular airmail service by Imperial Airways and Indian Trans-Continental Airways between London and Singapore.



First Flight Singapore - Kuwait  
5 to 7 Letters carried  
1933 (Dec 8) A cover from Kuwait to Singapore (Oct 1), via Basrah 10 Dec, Penang 18 Dec, Kodan 19 Dec 1933, bearing "KUWAIT" killer cancel, franked 9 as Indian stamps overprint "KUWAIT" to pay for 3 as. surface postage and 6 as. air fee for rate.  
Scan of backside

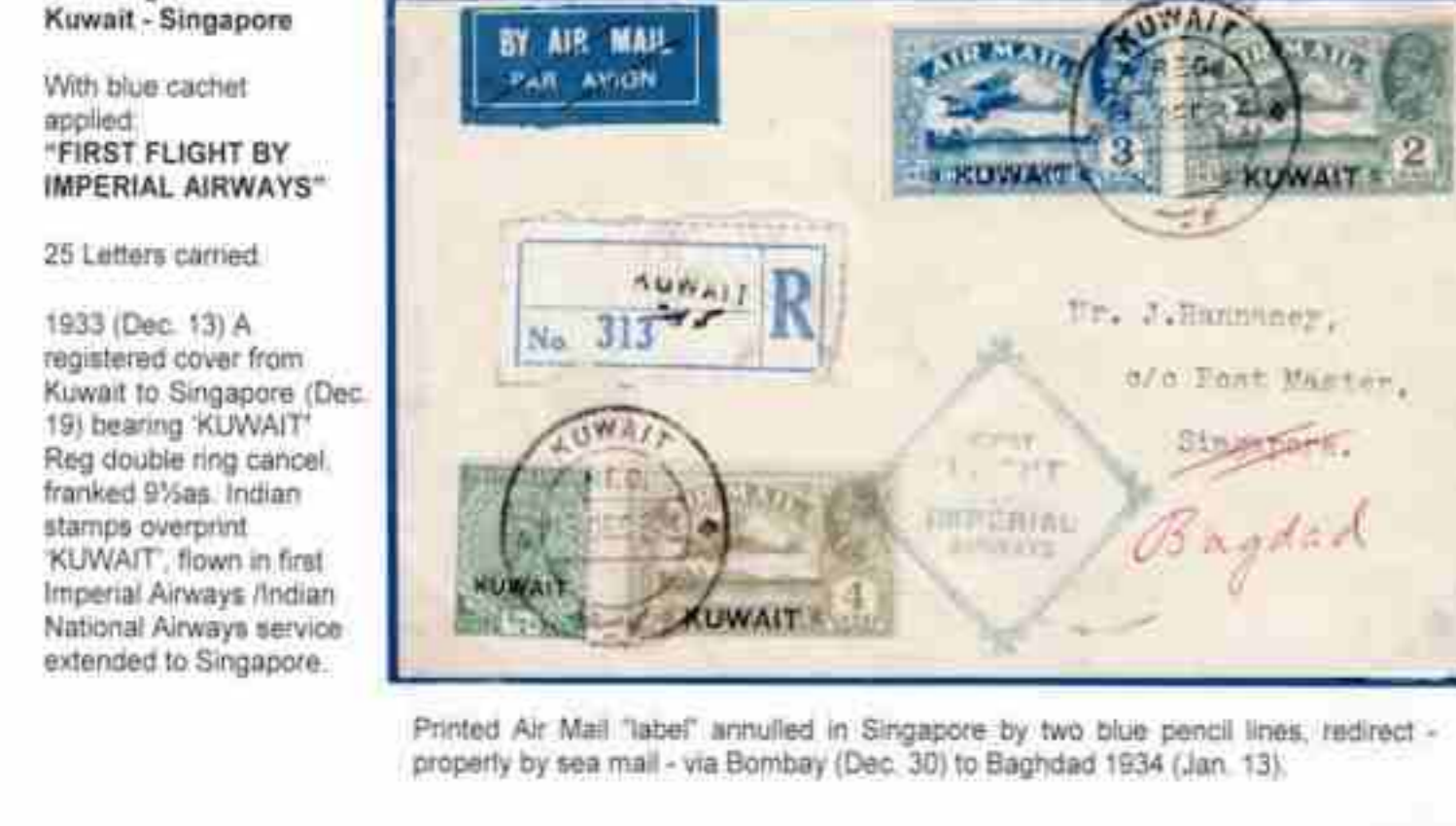


Return flight to Kuwait  
1933 (Dec 29) A cover from Singapore to Kuwait (Jan 11), bearing Straits Settlements 3/6, with circular framed "7" and boxed "POSTAGE DUE" with manuscript "one anna" and with Baghdad (Jan 34) Basra (Jan 34). (Liquid cancel) Kuwait arrival marks on reverse.  
Postal rate was 43 cents 33 cent paid one anna postage due collected in Kuwait.

"Indian National Airways & Trans-Atlantic"

Kuwait - Singapore  
1933

First Flight Kuwait - Singapore



With blue cachet applied  
"FIRST FLIGHT BY IMPERIAL AIRWAYS"  
25 Letters carried  
1933 (Dec 13) A registered cover from Kuwait to Singapore (Dec 19) bearing "KUWAIT" Reg double ring cancel, franked 9 as Indian stamps overprint "KUWAIT", flown in first Imperial Airways Indian National Airways service extended to Singapore.  
Printed Air Mail "label" affixed in Singapore by two blue pencil lines, redirect - properly by sea mail - via Bombay (Dec 30) to Baghdad 1934 (Jan 13).  
Scan of backside



First Flight Kuwait - Bangkok  
With blue cachet applied  
"FIRST FLIGHT BY IMPERIAL AIRWAYS"  
7 to 10 Letters carried  
1933 (Dec 13) A registered cover from Kuwait to Bangkok (Dec 16) bearing "KUWAIT" Reg double ring cancel, franked 9 as Indian stamps overprint "KUWAIT", flown in first Imperial Airways Indian National Airways service extended to Singapore.

"Singapore Imperial Airways Service"

Kuwait - Australia  
1934

Opening of the Air Mail Service by Imperial Airways and Qantas Empire Airways between England and Australia



1934 (Dec 8) A cover from Kuwait to Melbourne, Victoria (5 Jan 1935), Elizabeth St, Melbourne (7 Jan 1935), bearing "KUWAIT" killer cancel, franked 14 as Indian stamps overprint "KUWAIT".  
Imperial Airways was extended route from London to Australia via Batavia, and this cover was posted on 8 December in Kuwait, it did not join the mail at Basrah until after 12 Dec. is probably third regular flight.

"Indian National Airways Extended by Air Taxi Service"

Kuwait - Vizagapatnam  
1934

A bi-weekly service between Calcutta and Madras stopping at Gannavaram. Vizagapatnam and Puri to connect with the east and west bound service of the Indian Trans continental Airways and Indian National Airways.



First Flight Kuwait - Vizagapatnam  
6 Letters carried from Kuwait  
1934 (Feb 8) A cover from Kuwait to Vizagapatnam (Feb 14), via Calcutta (Feb 12) bearing "KUWAIT" killer cancel, franked 7 as Indian stamps overprint "KUWAIT", to pay the 3 as. for surface postage and 4 as. air fee for letter up to 10 g in weight to Karachi.  
(Service discontinued on 1st April 34, due to not paying its expenses)  
A letter carried by the Imperial Airways from Kuwait to Calcutta via Karachi picked up for Vizagapatnam on newly established Air Taxi Service.



First Flight Karachi - Lahore  
1934 (Feb 1) A cover from Kuwait to Lahore (Dec 15) via Basra (Dec 4) Karachi, bearing "KUWAIT" killer cancel, franked 9 as Indian stamps overprint to pay surface postage 3 as. & air fee of 6 as. including 2 as. for internal air mail from Karachi to Lahore.

"Trans-Atlantic - South America"

& First Flight to Durban / South Africa  
1934



Graf Zeppelin 3rd South America Flight (Argentinianfahrt)  
Endorsed "by airmail to London"  
1934 (Jun 14) A cover from Kuwait to Pernambuco, Brazil (Jun 26), Stuttgart (Jun 23), Friedrichshafen (Jun 23), bearing "KUWAIT" killer cancel, franked 10 1/2 as Indian stamps overprint "KUWAIT".  
Scan of backside



First Flight Kuwait - Durban / South Africa  
2 letters carried from Kuwait  
1934 (Jul 12) A registered cover from Kuwait to Durban, South Africa (Oct 31) via Baghdad (Jul 16), Cairo (Jul 17) bearing "KUWAIT" double ring "Reg" cancel, franked One R. Indian stamps overprint "KUWAIT".  
Route: via Basra, Baghdad, then connected to London - Cairo - Nairobi - Salisbury - Bulawayo - Durban - Returned to Baghdad

# IA First Flights through Kuwait 1932 ~ 1934



(IA's Hanno plane on a Kuwait Airport sandy runway in 1934)

In March 1927, the British Marine Air Navigation, Daimler Airways, Handley Page Transport and Intone Air Line, merged into The Imperial Airways (IA), a new entity which aimed to link the British Empire colonies. IA had two main routes, one through East Asia and all the way to Australia and the other throughout Africa. IA greatly contributed to developing mail services and accelerating its intercontinental movement.

In April 1929 the Persian Government agreed to let the IA fly over their territory. IA's route extended from Basra to reach Bushire, Lengeh, Jask, Gwadar and then Karachi. This made the journey between Croydon, England and Karachi take only seven days and the mail sent from Kuwait to Karachi to take only two days compared to the previous 10-14 days for mail sent by sea.

In July 1932 the Persian Government issued a ban of IA flights over its soil. This caused the British and Indian governments make an agreement with the ruler of "Sharjah" to allow IA flights with an overnight stop for rest. As a result, Kuwait became the first stop for flights heading from Basra to Karachi.

NO.	Outline of Exhibit	Page No.
1	The Cairo ~ Basra Service, 1927~1929	2
2	The England ~ India Service:	
	- Persian Coast, 1929~1932	3
	- Arabian Coast, 1932	4
	- 1 <sup>st</sup> direct flight from Kuwait, 1933	5
	- 1 <sup>st</sup> flights: Baghdad, New Zealand, Athens	6,7
	- 1 <sup>st</sup> flight: Kuwait, Calcutta	8,9
	- 1 <sup>st</sup> flight: Kuwait, Rangoon	11
	- 1 <sup>st</sup> flight: Kuwait, Singapore	12,13
3	Trans-Atlantic ~ South America, 1934	10,16
4	African Service, 1 <sup>st</sup> flight: Kuwait, Durban, South Africa	16

**This exhibit showcases a number of memorial covers that were sent along each new route launched during that period (1932-1934). They were sometimes addressed to the sender's own names in order to have them sent back. Those covers are highly significant in tracking the first flights to and from Kuwait. The memorial covers highlight the influence of airlines on the development of postal services.**

**Main Reference:**

- *The Postal in Eastern Arabia and Gulf*, Neil Donaldson; Harry Hayes Philatelic Study, 1975. & (Supplement) 1994.
- *Aircraft Movements on Imperial Airways Eastern Route 1927-1939 (V. 1 & V. 2)*, Peter Wigent; Winchester 2005.
- *The Francis Kiddle, Collection of Kuwait*, Grosvenor Philatelic Auction. London 2011.

**Research Published by the Exhibitor:**

- Abdul-Mughni, *Eighty-five years of Imperial Airways flying through Kuwait in Arabic*, Resalat, AL Kuwait magazine. P.35-45, issue 61, Center for Research and Studies on Kuwait, Jan 2018.

# "The Cairo ~ Basra Service"

1927-1929

Imperial Airways took over the RAF Baghdad - Cairo service in January 1927 and extended it to Basra. The service was fortnightly until April when it became weekly. It had been expected that the air route would be extended to Karachi after a short time, but there were problems in negotiating flying rights over Persia and so the extension was delayed until 1929, and thus for two year operated only between Cairo and Basra.

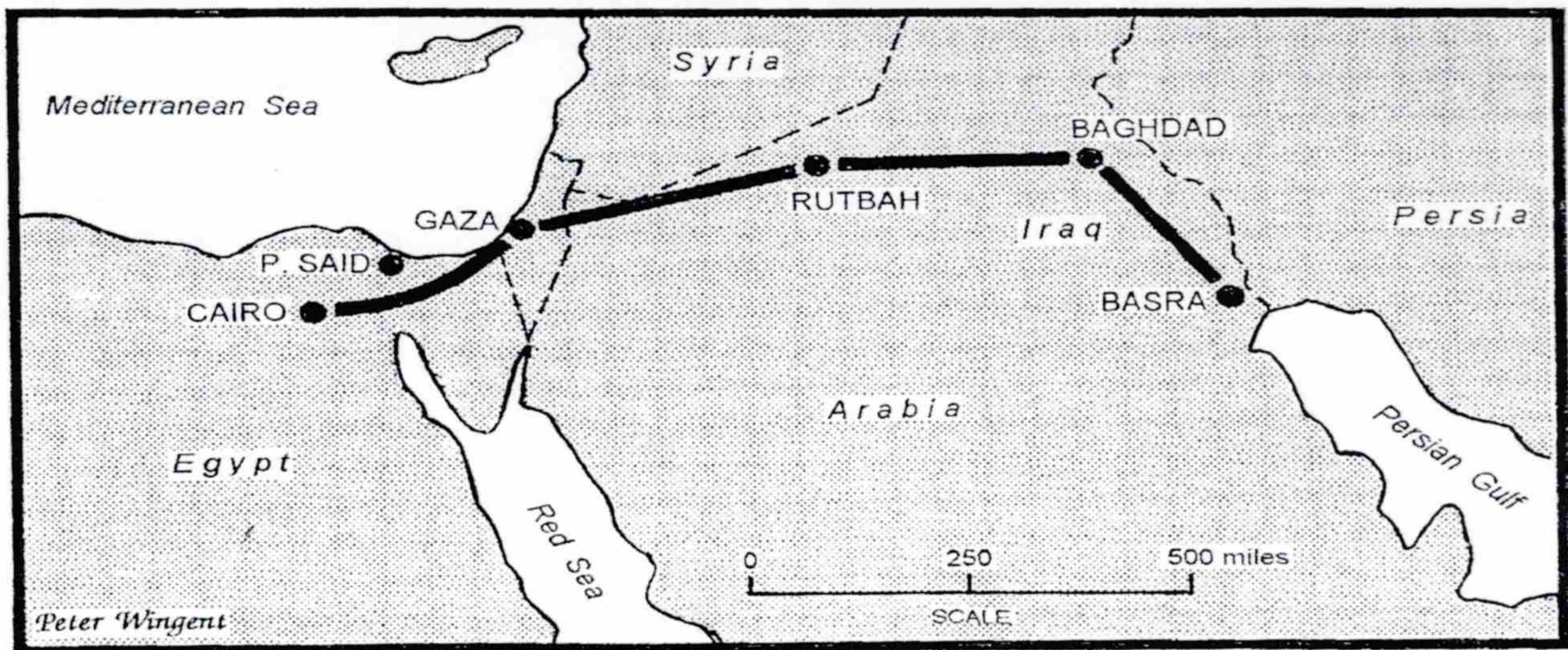
"Air Mail" label affixed in blue

**Route:** Basrah, Baghdad, Rutbah, Gaza, Cairo, and then sea from Port Said to Marseilles and from there to London.

Air Mail Rate  
1½ as. for every 10 grams or fraction



1928 (Oct. 9) A cover from Kuwait to Michigan, USA via Basra (Oct. 11), bearing 'KUWAIT' killer cancel, franked 4½ as. Indian stamps overprint 'Kuwait' to pay the 3 as. Surface postage and the 1½ as. air fee for letter up to 10 in weight.



Map of "Imperial Airways" Cairo ~ Basra air service, January 1927 – March 1929

# "The England ~ India Service"

The Persian Coast

1929-1932

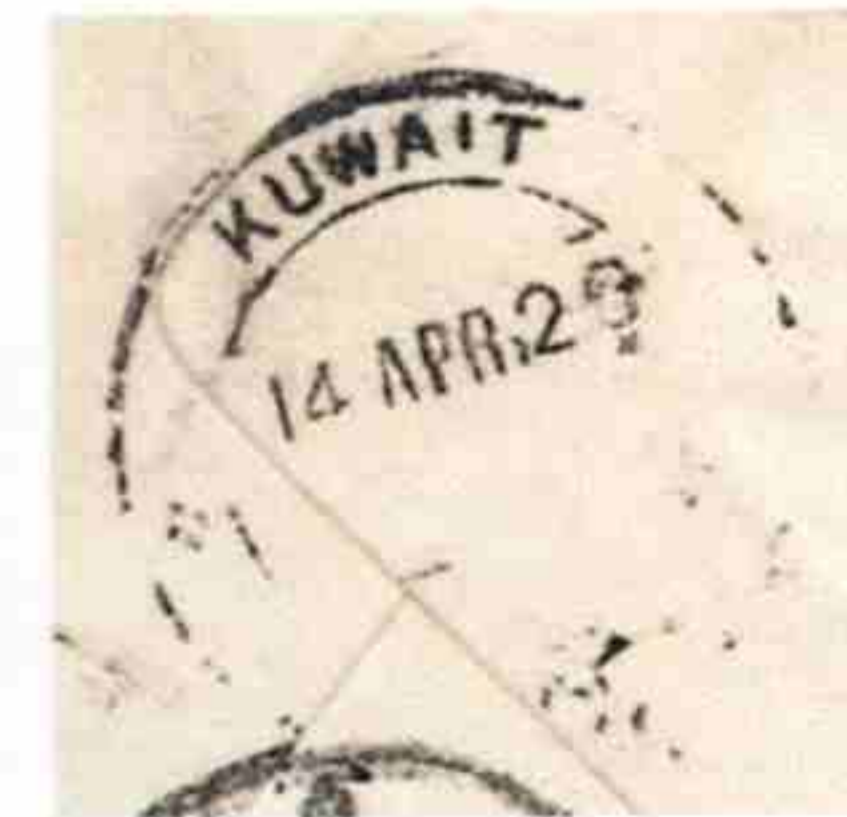
Inauguration of Imperial Airways 'Corydon-Karachi' Service opened on March 1929. The route started by airmail from London to Paris and Basel then by train to Genoa then again by air to Alexandria to Karachi with stops at Gaza, Rutbah, Baghdad, Basra, Bushire, Lengeh, Jask and Gwadar. In November 1929 the first section of the route was altered to an all air route from London to Paris, Cologne, Nuremburg, Vienna, Budapest, Skopje, Salonika, and Athens Crete, Alexandria.



"BY AIR"  
Handstamp applied  
in black

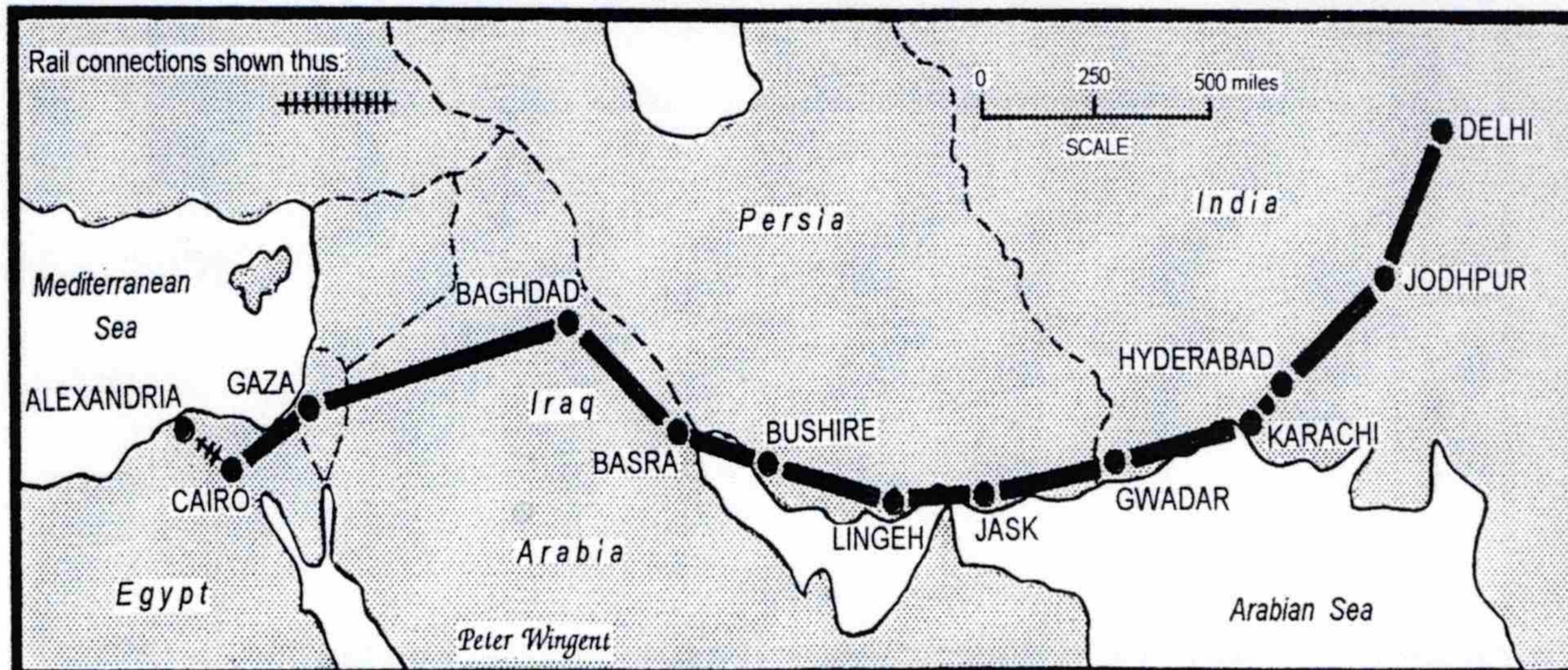
This cover flown  
on the first return  
flight, which left  
Karachi on 7 April  
1929

**Route:** Delhi,  
Karachi, Gwadar,  
Jask, Lengeh,  
Bushire, Basrah,  
then by car to  
Kuwait



Scan of backside

1929 (Apr. 3) a cover from Delhi, India to Kuwait (Apr. 14), via Karachi (Apr. 7), Bushire (Apr. 8), Basra (Apr. 9), franked 8 as Indian stamps overprint to pay surface postage 3 as. & air fee of 5 as. including 2 as. for internal air mail from Delhi to Karachi.



The Alexandria ~ Delhi section of the route as from December 1929

# "The England ~ India Service"

London to Kuwait

1932

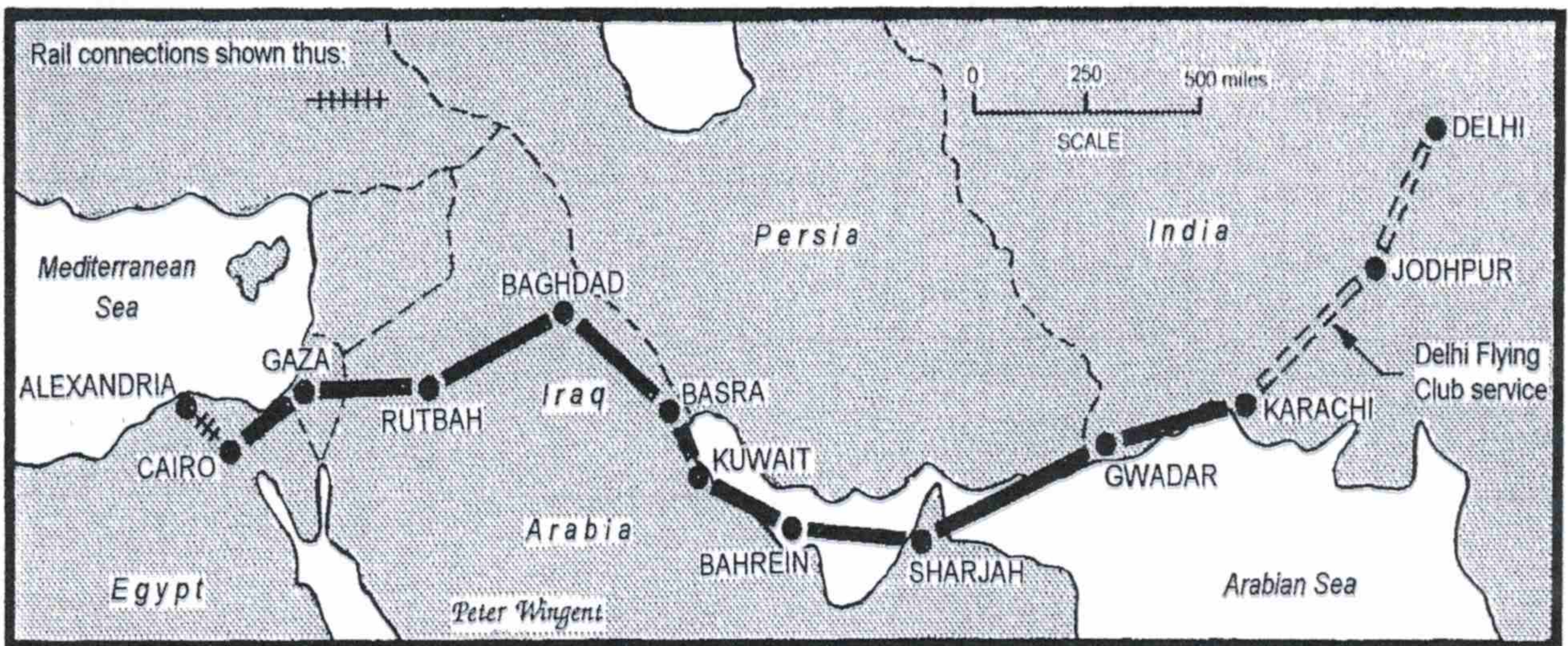
The Imperial Airways route to India changed to Arabian side of the Gulf in October 1932, altered from Persian side: Bushire, Lingeh, Jask to Basra, Bahrain – Sharjah (Arabian side) and Kuwait became a regular port of call for Imperial Airways aircraft and both Eastbound and Westbound mail and passenger carrying machines stop here.

First flight  
London – Kuwait



Scan of backside

1932 (Sep. 30) A cover from London to Kuwait (Oct. 8) via Basra (Oct. 6), franked G.B 6 d. endorsed First Flight 'London-Kuwait' in manuscript.



# "The England ~ India Service"

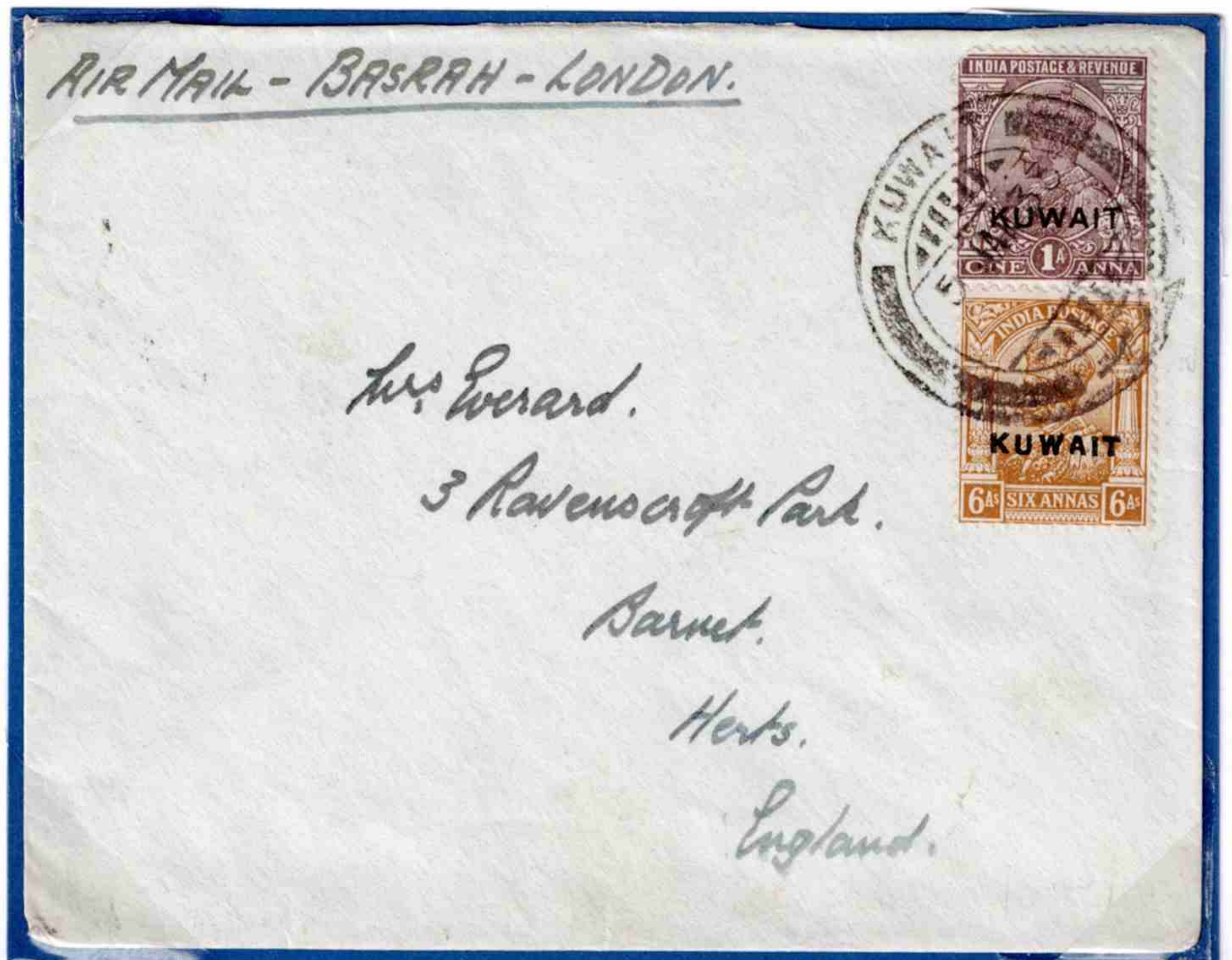
The Arabian Coast

1933

First Imperial Airways flight landed at Kuwait was on 28<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1932. On 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec. 1932, Sheikh of Kuwait agreed with the Political representative to operate an aviation line - on trial - for six months provided it will convey passengers as well as mail, and first direct flight from the West to Kuwait was on 6<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1933, and first flight to return direct from the East was on 14<sup>th</sup> January.

This cover was flown on first service timetable introduce Jan 1933, from Kuwait Westbound service.

1933 (Jan. 5) A cover from Kuwait to England, via Basra (Jan. 7) bearing 'KUWAIT' killer cancel, franked 7 as. Indian stamps overprint "Kuwait", to pay the 3 as. for surface postage and 4 as. air fee for letter up to 10 g. in weight to England.



This cover was flown on first service timetable introduce Jan 1933, from Kuwait Eastbound service.

1933 (Jan. 4) A cover from Kuwait to Karachi, India, bearing 'KUWAIT' killer cancel, franked 5 as. Indian stamps overprint 'Kuwait', to pay the 3 as. for surface postage and 2 as. air fee for letter up to 10 g. in weight to Karachi.



Scan of backside

# "The England ~ India Service"

Incoming First Flights

1933

## First Flight Baghdad - Kuwait Eastbound service

A special cachet was applied in Baghdad

The first inward flight to Kuwait from Baghdad, the mail consisted of 43 registered and 10 ordinary letters.



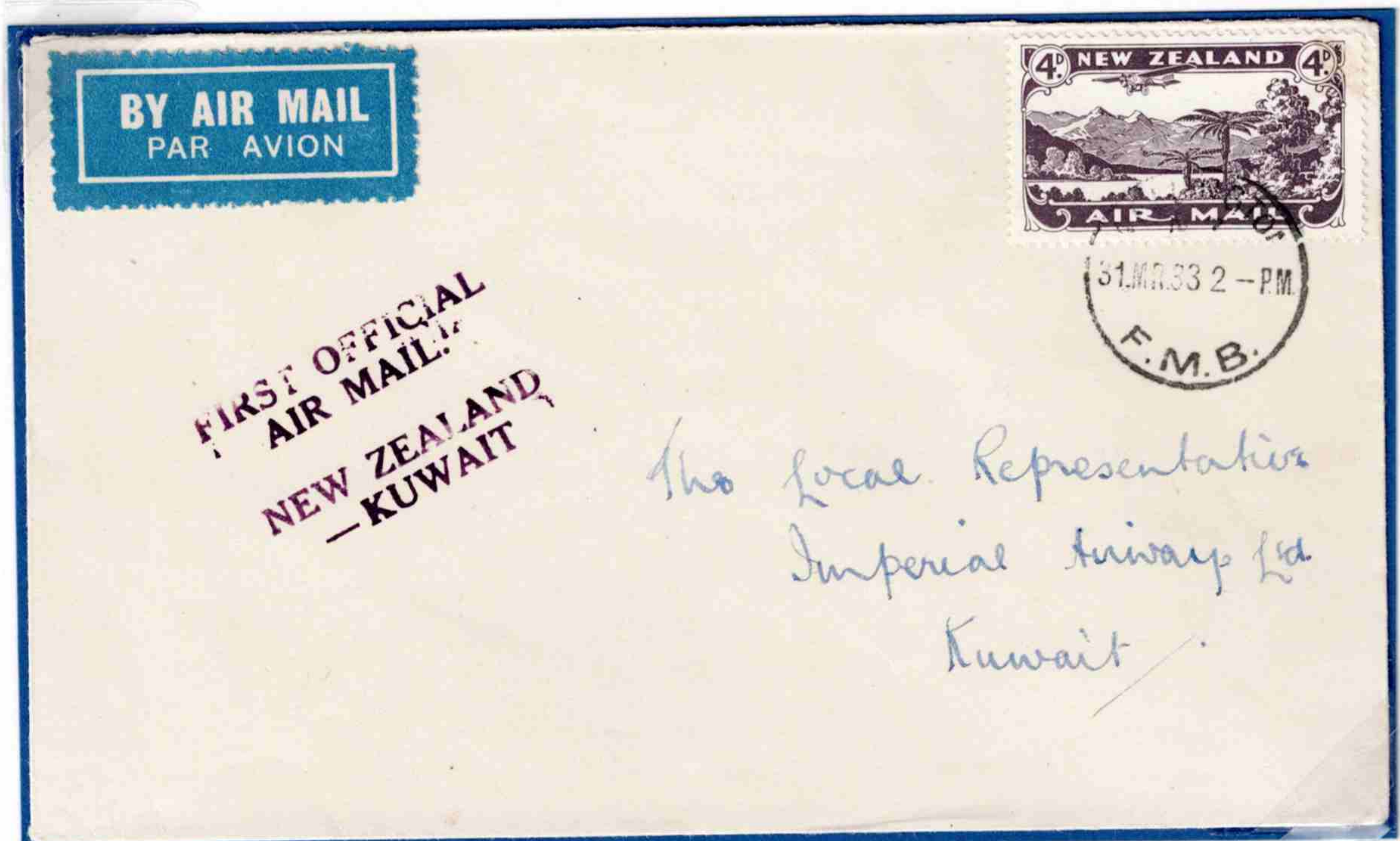
Scan of backside

1933 (Jan. 4) A registered cover from Baghdad, Iraq to Kuwait (Jan. 7), franked 21 fills, with double ring receiving cancel on the reverse.

## First Flight New Zealand - Kuwait Westbound service.

A special cachet was applied in New Zealand

39 Letters carried.



Scan of backside

1933 (Mar. 31) A cover from Wellington, New Zealand to Kuwait (Apr. 27), with double ring receiving cancel on the reverse

**"The England ~ India Service"**

Athens / Kuwait / Athens

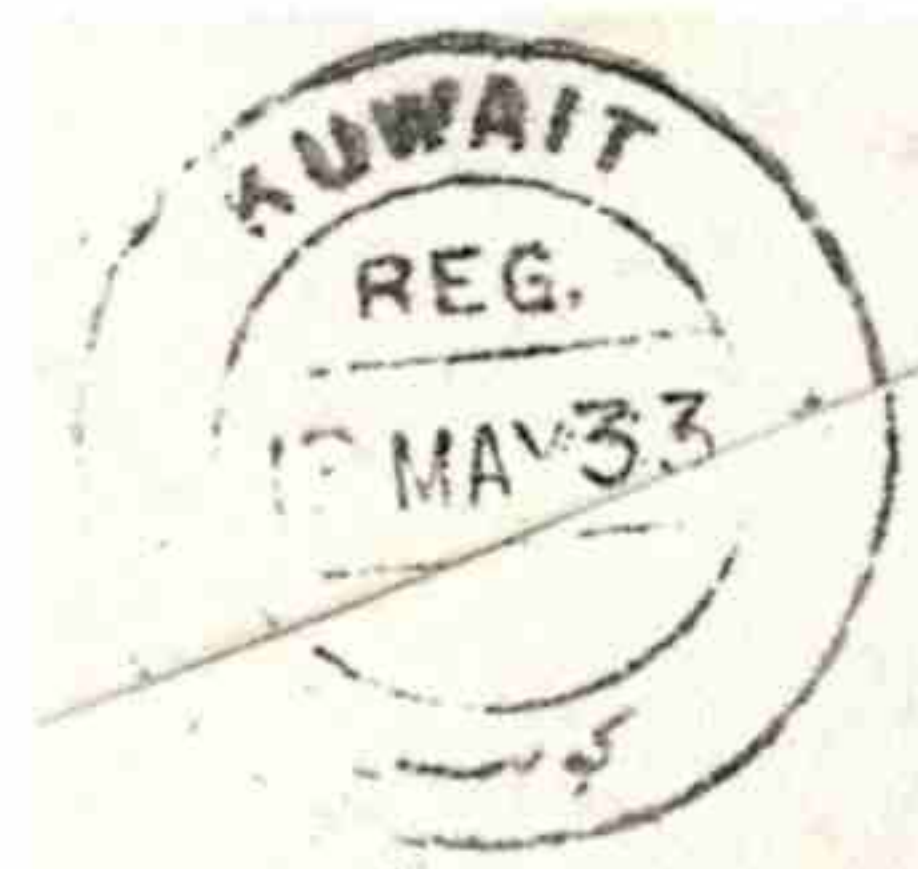
1933

**First Flight  
Athens - Kuwait**

The first direct flight from Athens to Kuwait.

23 Letters carried

1933 (May. 8) A registered cover from Athens to Kuwait (May. 11), franked 10D., 8D., 3D, with double ring receiving cancel on the reverse.



Scan of backside

A letter addressed to New Zealand with "Missent to Kuwait" written and signed in red pen from the Postmaster of Kuwait, and returned via Basrah (May. 14) backstamped

**First Flight  
Kuwait - Athens**

Return flight to Athens, 17 Letters carried

1933 (May. 23) A cover from Kuwait to Athens (May. 27), bearing 'KUWAIT' killer cancel, franked 4½ as. Indian stamps overprint 'KUWAIT', to pay for 3 as. surface postage and 1½ as air fee for printed letter rate.



Propaganda labels were applied by the Greek Ministry of Communications at Athens and read "The attached letter has arrived quickly, as it was sent by Air Mail. Reply in the same manner. Apply for information re air fee required and all other particular to your local Post Office. If necessary apply in writing to us". Post Telegraph and Telephone H.O. Ministry of Communications. "

**“England ~ India Service Extension”  
Calcutta ~ Kuwait  
1933**

From 1 July 1933, the Imperial Airways London-Karachi-Delhi airmail service was extended to Calcutta via Cawnpore and Allahabad. The return flight left Calcutta on 11 July and arrived in London on 17 July.

**First Flight  
Calcutta – Kuwait**

The return flight left Calcutta with the special rectangular postmark shows: **Karachi-Calcutta 11 Jul First Airmail.**

Book Post: printed letter rate

**Backside**

A letter signed in blue pen “unknown” from the Postmaster of Kuwait, and returned to Calcutta.



1933 (May. 8) A cover from Calcutta to Kuwait (Jul. 13), franked 3 as., 9. p., with double ring receiving cancel on the reverse.

Scan of backside:

**Route:** Calcutta (11. Jul), Kuwait (Jul. 13), **redirected:** to Calcutta from Kuwait (Jul. 25), Basra (Jul. 27), and to Calcutta (Jul. 7) then to Botanic Garden (Jul. 16)



**"England – India Service Extension"**

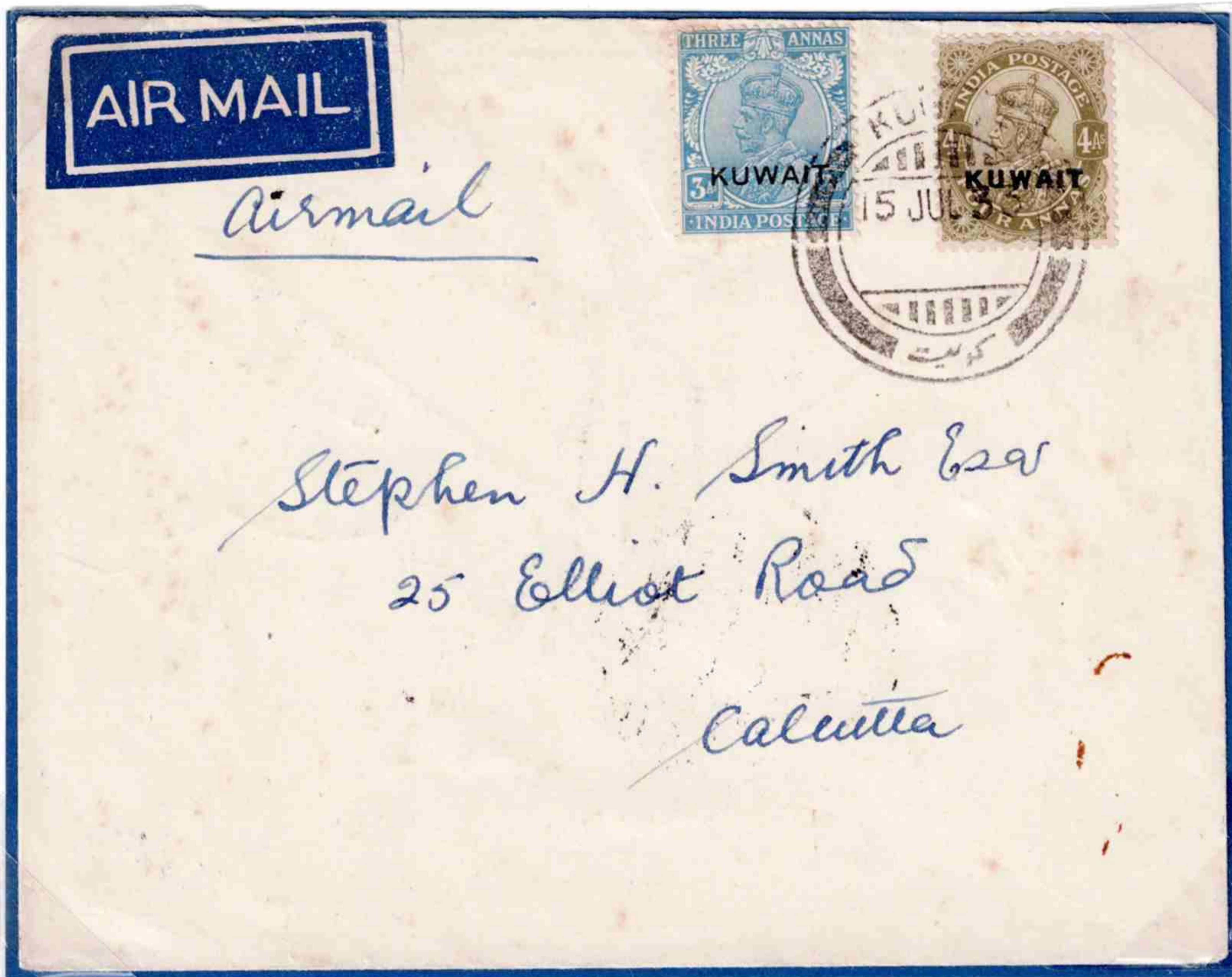
Kuwait ~ Calcutta

1933

Opening of the regular airmail service by Imperial Airways and Indian Trans-Continental Airways between London and Calcutta. First mail from London was 1 July 1933, but Kuwait and mail was not flown until second flight.

**First Flight  
Kuwait - Calcutta**

1933 (Jul. 15) A cover from Kuwait, to Calcutta, India (Jul. 24) via Basra (Jul. 16) bearing 'KUWAIT' killer cancel, franked 7as. Indian stamps overprint "KUWAIT", to pay the 3 as. for surface postage and 4 as. air fee for letter up to 10 g in weight.



**First Flight  
Kuwait - Asansol**

1933 (Jul. 15) A cover from Kuwait, to Asansol, India (Jul. 22) via Basra (Jul. 16) bearing 'KUWAIT' killer cancel, franked 7 as. Indian stamps overprint KUWAIT", to pay the 3 as. for surface postage and 4as. air fee for letter up to 10 g in weight.

Printed Air Mail "label" annulled in Singapore by two red pencil lines, redirect - properly by sea mail - via Allahabad (Jul. 24) to Bombay.



**"Transatlantic ~ South America"**

Graf Zeppelin: Kuwait ~ Brazil

1933

**Graf Zeppelin 4<sup>th</sup>  
- 1933 Flight to  
South America**

Approximately 14 Letters  
carried

Endorsed  
"By airmail to London",  
bearing Great Britain  
K.G.V. 5d. pair, tied by  
London cancel, two  
Zeppelin cachets, Berlin  
transit mark.



1933 (Jul. 20) A registered cover from Kuwait to Recife - Pernambuco, Brazil (Aug. 9) via London (Jul. 24) -20 days in transit-, Berlin – Friedrichshafen, Germany (Aug. 5), bearing "KUWAIT" double ring "Reg" cancel, franked 8½ as Indian stamps overprint 'KUWAIT'.

**Route:** By Air: Baghdad, Cairo, Brindisi, Croydon, London and Friedrichshafen then by Zeppelin to Recife - Pernambuco, Brazil.

**Graf Zeppelin 11<sup>th</sup>  
1934 Flight to South  
America**

Approximately 14  
Letters carried.

1934 (Sep. 28) A registered  
cover from Kuwait to  
Pernambuco, Brazil  
(Oct. 17) via Friedrichshafen  
(Oct. 12), bearing "KUWAIT"  
double ring "Reg" cancel,  
franked 8½ as. Indian  
stamps overprint 'KUWAIT'.

Endorsed "By airmail to  
London" but not sent through  
London,

**Routs**  
Via Basra, Baghdad, Milano,  
Friedrichshafen



**"England – India Service Extension"**

Rangoon / Kuwait / Rangoon

1933

23 September 1933 Imperial Airways extended route from India to Rangoon, mail were posted from Kuwait on 28 September, and arrived in Rangoon on 1 October 1933.

**First Flight  
Kuwait - Rangoon**

20 to 25 Letters  
carried

1933 (Sep. 23) A cover from Kuwait to Rangoon, Burma (Oct. 1), bearing 'KUWAIT' killer cancel, franked 9 as. Indian stamps overprint KUWAIT', (revers of cover carries 2 as.) to pay for 3 as. surface postage and 6 as. air fee for rate.



**First Flight  
Rangoon - Kuwait**

Few items were flown to  
Kuwait

1933 (Oct. 1) A cover from Rangoon to Kuwait (Oct. 5), franked 9 as., with double ring Kuwait receiving cancel on the reverse.

There is a commemorative dumbbell cachet on the back which includes the date of 2 October.



Scan of  
backside



"Indian National Airways & Trans-Continual"

Kuwait ~ Singapore ~ Kuwait

1933

Opening of the regular airmail service by Imperial Airways and Indian Trans-Continual Airways between London and Singapore.

**First Flight  
Kuwait - Singapore**

5 to 7 Letters carried.

1933 (Dec. 8) A cover from Kuwait to Singapore (Oct. 1), via Basrah 10 Dec, Penang 18 Dec, Kedah 19 Dec 1933, bearing 'KUWAIT' killer cancel, franked 9 as. Indian stamps overprint 'KUWAIT' to pay for 3 as. surface postage and 6 as. air fee for rate.



**First Flight  
Singapore - Kuwait**

Return flight to Kuwait.

1933 (Dec. 29) A cover from Singapore to Kuwait 1934 (Jan. 11), bearing Straits Settlements 33c. with circular framed "T" and boxed "POSTAGE DUE" with manuscript "one anna", and with Baghdad (6 Jan. 34) Basra (8 Jan. 34), (Unpaid canceller) Kuwait arrival marks on reverse.

Postal rate was 43 cents. 33 cent paid one anna postage due collected in Kuwait.



# "Indian National Airways & Trans-Atlantic"

Kuwait ~ Singapore

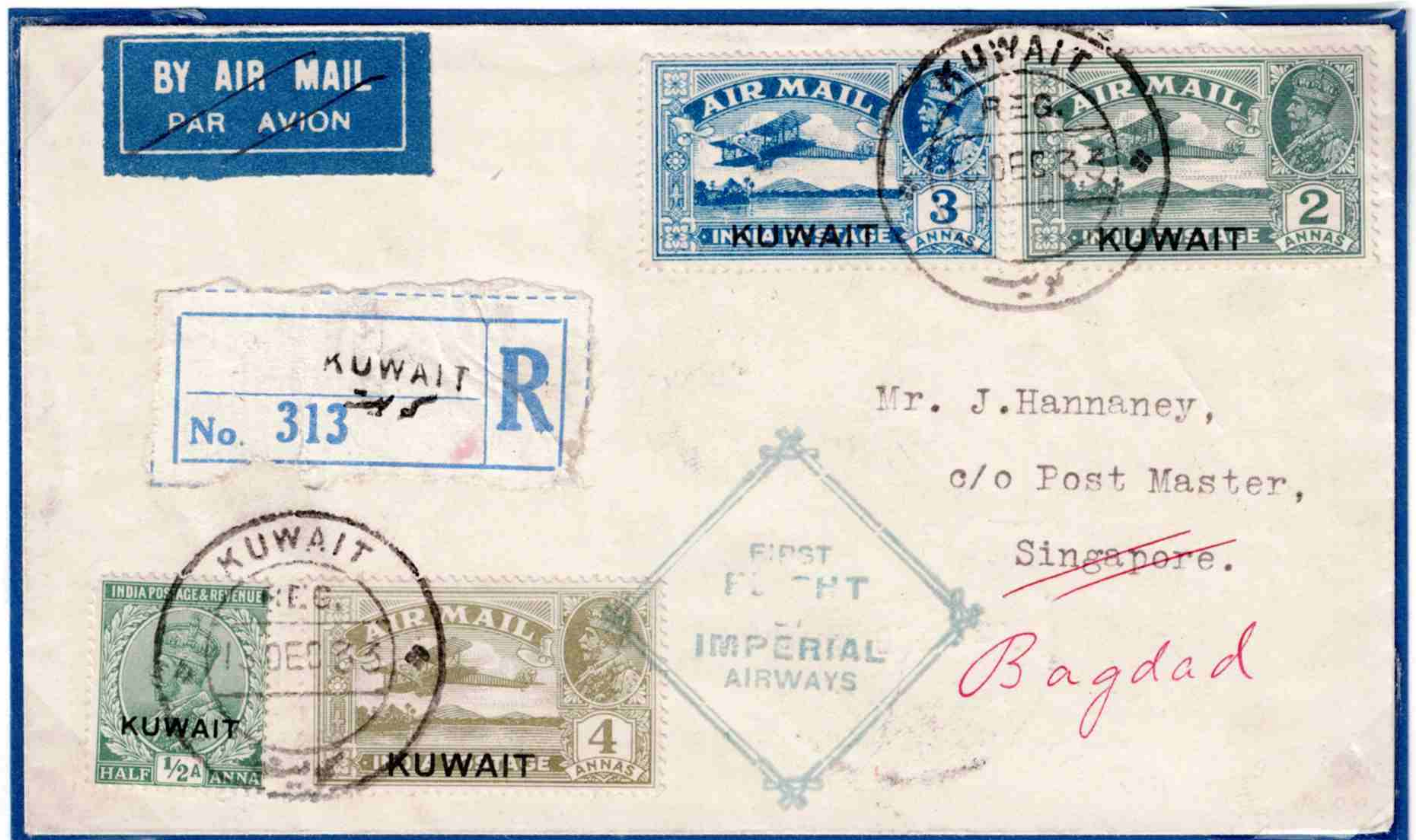
1933

## First Flight Kuwait - Singapore

With blue cachet applied:  
"FIRST FLIGHT BY  
IMPERIAL AIRWAYS"

25 Letters carried.

1933 (Dec. 13) A registered cover from Kuwait to Singapore (Dec. 19) bearing 'KUWAIT' Reg double ring cancel, franked 9½as. Indian stamps overprint 'KUWAIT', flown in first Imperial Airways /Indian National Airways service extended to Singapore.



Printed Air Mail "label" annulled in Singapore by two blue pencil lines, redirect - properly by sea mail - via Bombay (Dec. 30) to Bagdad 1934 (Jan. 13).

## First Flight Kuwait - Bangkok

With blue cachet applied:  
"FIRST FLIGHT BY  
IMPERIAL AIRWAYS"

7 to 10 Letters carried.

1933 (Dec. 13) A registered cover from Kuwait to Bangkok (Dec. 18) bearing 'KUWAIT' Reg double ring cancel, franked 9½as. Indian stamps overprint 'KUWAIT', flown in first Imperial Airways /Indian National Airways service extended to Singapore.



# "Singapore Imperial Airways Service"

Kuwait ~ Australia

1934

Opening of the Air Mail Service by Imperial Airways and Qantas Empire Airways between England and Australia.



1934 (Dec. 8) A cover from Kuwait to Melbourne, Victoria (5. Jan. 1935), Elizabeth St., Melbourne (7. Jan. 1935), bearing 'KUWAIT' Killer cancel, franked (5. Jan. 1935), franked 14 as. Indian stamps overprint 'KUWAIT'.

Imperial Airways was extended route from London to Australia via Batavia, and this cover was posted on 8 December in Kuwait, it did not join the mail at Basrah until after 12 Dec. ie probably third regular flight.

# "Indian National Airways Extended by Air Taxi Service"

Kuwait ~ Vizagapatam

1934

A bi-weekly service between Calcutta and Madras stopping at Gannavaram, Vizagapatam and Puri to connect with the east and west bound service of the Indian Trans continental Airways and Indian National Airways and Indian National Airways.

## First Flight

**Kuwait - Vizagapatam**

6 letters carried from Kuwait

1934 (Feb. 8) A cover from Kuwait to Vizagapatam (Feb. 14), via Calcutta (Feb. 12) bearing 'KUWAIT' killer cancel, franked 7 as. Indian stamps overprint 'Kuwait', to pay the 3 as. for surface postage and 4 as. air fee for letter up to 10 g in weight to Karachi.

(Service discontinued on 1st April 34, due to not paying its expenses)



A letter carried by the Imperial Airways from Kuwait to Calcutta via Karachi picked up for Vizagapatam on newly established Air Taxi Service.

## First Flight

**Karachi - Lahore**

1934 (Des. 1) A cover from Kuwait to Lahore (Dec. 15), via Basra (Dec. 4) Karachi, bearing 'KUWAIT' killer cancel, franked 9 as. Indian stamps overprint to pay surface postage 3 as. & air fee of 6 as. including 2 as. for internal air mail from Karachi to Lahore.



**“Trans-Atlantic ~ South America”  
& First Flight to Durban /South Africa**

1934

**Graf Zeppelin 3<sup>rd</sup>  
South America Flight  
(Argentinianfahrt)**

Endorsed “by airmail  
to London’

1934 (Jun. 14) A cover  
from Kuwait to  
Pernambuco, Brazil (Jun.  
26), Stuttgart (Jun. 23),  
Friedrichshafen (Jun. 23),  
bearing “KUWAIT” Killer  
cancel, franked 10 ¼ as.  
Indian stamps overprint  
KUWAIT’,



**First Flight  
Kuwait – Durban /  
South Africa**

2 letters carried  
from Kuwait

1934 (Jul. 12) A registered  
cover from Kuwait to  
Durban, South Africa  
(Oct. 31) via Baghdad (Jul.  
16), Cairo (Jul. 17) bearing  
“KUWAIT” double ring  
“Reg” cancel, franked  
One R. Indian stamps  
overprint ‘KUWAIT’.

**Routs:** via Basra, Baghdad,  
then connected to London –  
Cairo – Nairobi – Salisbury  
– Bulawayo – Durban  
Returned to Baghdad

