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Absentee Rupee

Nick Levinge has pointed out that the French currency Morocco Agencies set is unique in that none of its denominations pays a proper rate, (except possibly the literature for the blind rate, from July), which creates difficulties for those collecting single stamps on cover at correct rates. A number of other of the Jubilee denominations bear no obvious relation to the standard postal rates.

Perhaps most notorious of them is the one rupee of Mauritius. Both Nick and John Cooper have kindly sent scans of commercial examples.

On its own, the one rupee serves the 10g airmail rate to a number of destinations but examples seem elusive. However, with slight overpayment, the rate might include a registered item to UK. Here, the 10g airmail rate to England via South Africa is 75c and the registration adds 20c.



Although not having direct airmail, Mauritius had several shipping destinations for joining the airmail network. These were: South Africa, Kenya, Madagascar and Java. Hence there are a plethora of rates with more than a dozen 10g rates of over one rupee.

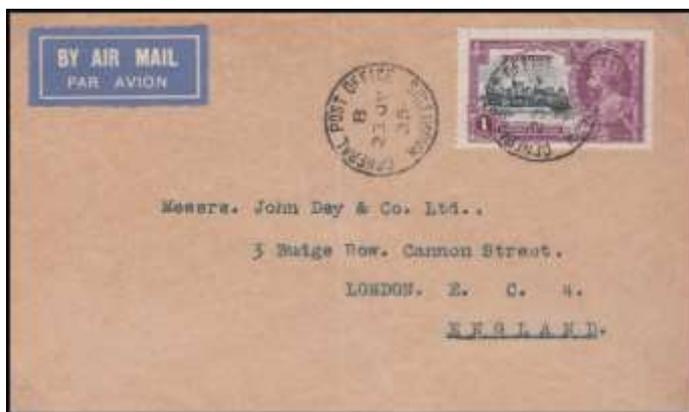
Via South Africa

Here the 1 rupee is accompanied by a 20c and two definitive 25c stamps tied to the reverse of a double weight registered airmail cover to London by Rose Hill cancels for 18 My 35. (75c for each of two 10g + 20c registration = 1.70 rupees).



Via Kenya

Another single use cover to U.K. but this time at the correct rate since it went via Kenya at double the 50c per 10g airmail rate. As such it is thought to be one of only two known.



Via Madagascar

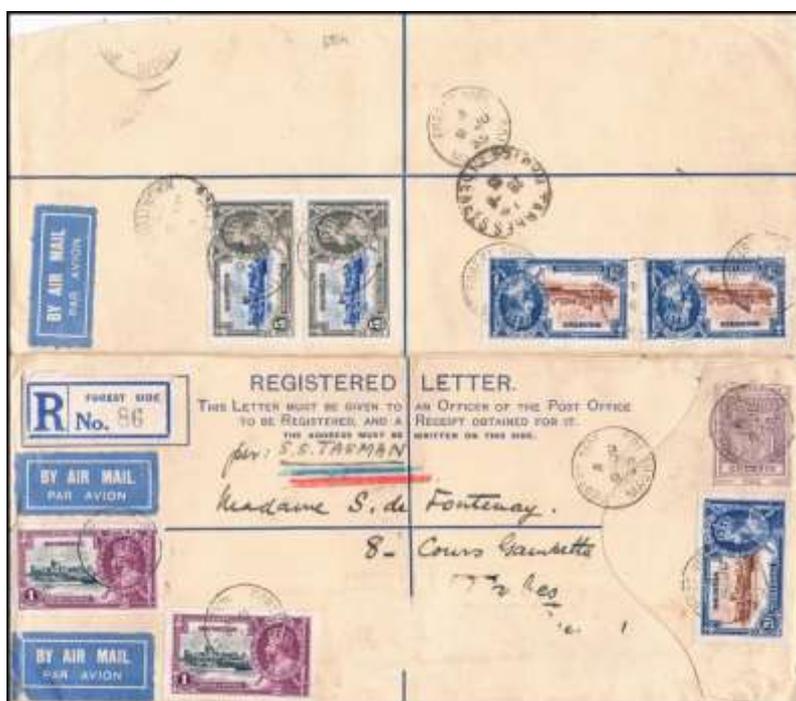
This piece bears 1.25 rupees, the 10g airmail rate to Europe when sent via Madagascar. The cancels are of Redit for Sp 23 35.



Here is a registered airmail cover to Paris and, with an airmail rate of 90c (1.10 rupees less the 20c registration) means it would have first been shipped to South Africa.



This opened out cover to France boasts two of the rupee stamps and enough others to total 2.90 rupees. With 20c registration, this leaves R2.70 – a triple weight at the 90c per 10g airmail rate when sent via South Africa.



With a backstamp of Nairobi, this cover to U.S.A. should have cost 80 cents plus a further 20 cents for registration. Thus the 20 cent stamp would appear to be surplus to requirements.



Another item sent via Madagascar – this time a full front and carrying enough franking for a double weight letter, (R1.25 x2). The route, apparently, was: Antananarivo, Mahajamba, Quelimane, Blantyre, then Broken Hill to join the Imperial Airways service.



Puzzle item

No less than three 1R stamps and 50c in definitives on this somewhat reduced registered cover to U.S.A. presents a bit of a conundrum. Were there further stamps on the full cover? As it stands, one might be tempted to regard it as a triple weight at R1.10 per 10g but no such rate appears on our table at: <http://silverjubileestamps.com/assets/mauritiusrates.pdf> or is a “by air in the USA” rate missing from the table?



Tailpiece

Perfins are hardly associated with anything other than commercial mail. The high value, perfinned “BB&Co” (Blyth Brothers) doesn’t appear to have been recorded amongst perfin listings.

