

Saigon – Bangkok – Amsterdam – Paris  
1-12 January 1930

For the second departure of the combined Air Asia-KLM Saigon- Paris service via Bangkok, a two-line, framed cachet was employed to mark letters. It meant “by Dutch airmail.” The second departure occurred on New Year’s Day 1930.

PARMALLE AÉRIENNE  
HOLLANDAISE



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 1-1 30  
airmail and registration labels  
“by Dutch airmail” handstamp

REVERSE

PARIS 43 R. LITTRE 14-1 30

Saigon – Bangkok – Amsterdam – Paris  
16-25 January 1930

For the third Air Asia-KLM service to Europe, the flight started at Saigon on 16 January. Mail arrived at Paris on 25 January. The “by Dutch airmail” cachet was always struck in red for the third airmail service. After this flight, the service was suspended until the fall of 1930.

PARMALLE AÉRIENNE  
HOLLANDAISE



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 15-1 30  
airmail and registration labels  
“by Dutch airmail” handstamp

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 15-1 30  
AJACCIO CORSE 28-1 30

Hanoi – Tourane – (Saigon)  
12-14 April 1930

While the main purpose of the military's 12-14 April flight was to transport mail to the S.S. *Athos II* at Saigon, some mail was delivered to Tourane, an intermediate stop on the Hanoi – Saigon route.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HA-NOI R.P. TONKIN 12-4 30  
airmail label

“Unknown” and “Return to Sender” handstamps

REVERSE

HA-NOI R.P. TONKIN 17-4 30

Hanoi - Saigon  
25 April 1930

A military plane left Hanoi on 25 April carrying the mail to Saigon in order to make connections with the boat departing for Marseille. Internal mail addressed to Cochinchina benefited because airmail service cost the same as regular mail.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HA-NOI R.P. TONKIN 25-4 30  
airmail label

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 27-4 30

Saigon – Hanoi  
30 April 1930

With a crew of Sergeant-Chef Perrier as pilot and Lieutenant-Colonel de Prémorel as navigator, a military plane carried local mail as well as mail offloaded from the steamer *General Metzinger* from Saigon to Hanoi on 30 April 1930.



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 28-4 30  
airmail label

REVERSE

HANOI R.P. TONKIN 30-4 30

Hanoi – Saigon  
10 May 1930

A military airplane left Hanoi on 10 May 1930 carrying mail to Saigon. Most of the mail was bound for the mail boat S.S. *Angers* in port at Saigon. The military performed this service without a requirement for additional postage in order to demonstrate the value of airmail to the public.



POSTAL MARKINGS

NAM-DINH, TONKIN 9-5 30  
airmail label

REVERSE

HANOI R.P. TONKIN 9-5 30  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 10-5 30

Saigon – Hanoi  
14 May 1930

Carrying mail from the packet boat “André Lebon” as well as local mail, a military Potez 25 A2 made the return flight from Saigon to Hanoi on the 14th.

No additional fee was charged for air transport. By carrying mail to connect with the long-established packet boat service, the military demonstrated the timesavings achievable with airmail.



POSTAL MARKINGS

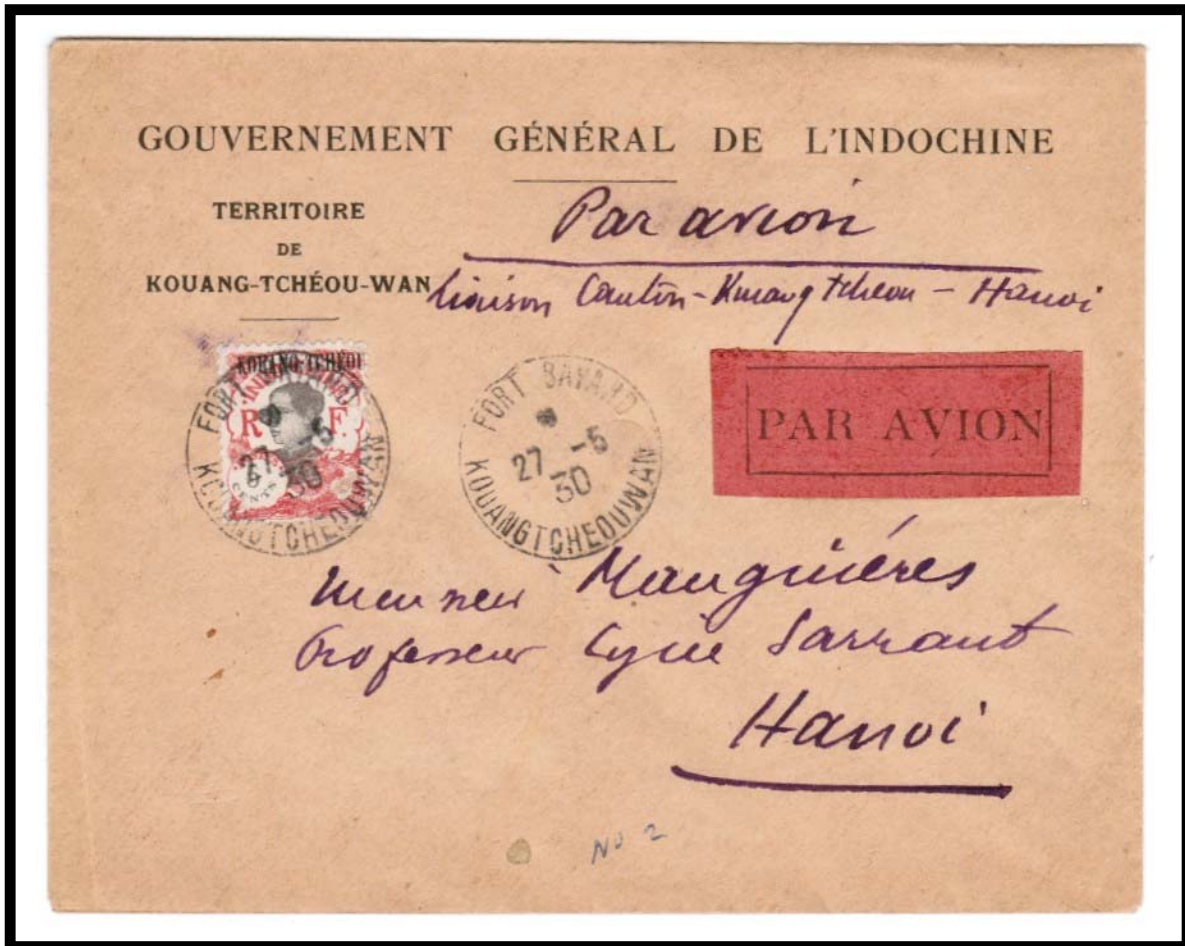
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 13-5 30  
airmail label

REVERSE

HA-NOI R.P. TONKIN 14-5 30  
NAM-DINH TONKIN 15-5 30

Fort Bayard – Hanoi  
27 May 1930

Two planes departed Canton on 26 May 1930 for Fort Bayard, Kouang Cho Wan. Upon arrival, the plane piloted by Commander Mathis made a forced landing in a cemetery. The other plane, piloted by Lieutenant Durand, continued on carrying 50 letters from Kouang Cho Wan to Hanoi.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
FORT BAYARD KOUANGTCHÉOUWAN 27-5-30  
airmail label  
REVERSE  
HANOI TONKIN 27-5-30



Hanoi – Saigon  
21 June 1930

A military Potez 25 A2 left Hanoi on 21 June carrying mail to Saigon in order to make connections with the sea mail service to France. The S.S. *André Lebon*, a Messageries Maritimes steamer, departed Saigon on 23 June.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
HANOI R.P. TONKIN 20-6 30  
REVERSE  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 24-6 30

Saigon – Hanoi  
24-7 June 1930

The normal flying time from Saigon to Hanoi was 9 or 10 hours. The military plane that left Saigon on 24 June 1930 experienced engine problems and was forced to remain at Tourane.

The plane's mail, consisting of 32 letters, was taken from Tourane to Hanoi by train arriving three days later on 27 June.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
SAIGON-TANDINH COCHINCHINE 24-8 30  
REVERSE  
HANOI TONKIN 27-6 30

Saigon – Hanoi  
(14 August 1930)

A military plane had departed Saigon for Hanoi on 13 August with mail from the S.S. *Sphinx*. Postmarked Saigon-Central in red the next day, this letter did not reach Hanoi until 17 August indicating that it had traveled north by train.



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 14-8 30  
airmail label

REVERSE

HANOI R.P. TONKIN 17-8 30

Amsterdam – Saigon  
25 September - 3 October 1930

In the fall of 1930, postal agreements between KLM and Air Orient allowed the exchange of mails. From Amsterdam, the KLM plane carried mail to Bangkok on its way to the Dutch Indies. Air Orient transported the mail on the final leg from Bangkok to Saigon.

The first flight began from Amsterdam on 25 September and terminated at Saigon on 3 October 1930.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
AMSTERDAM 64 23.IX 1930  
REVERSE  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 3-10 30

Saigon - Bangkok - Amsterdam - Europe  
17-25 October 1930

To take advantage of KLM's biweekly service from Indonesia to Amsterdam, the newly constituted Air Orient established an air link from Saigon to Bangkok, a stop on the KLM route. Letters sent by the first service were posted at Saigon on 17 October and reached Paris on 25 October 1930.



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 17-10 30  
registry and airmail labels

REVERSE

PARIS GARE DU NORD AVION 25-10 30  
TROYES AUBE 26-10 30

Hanoi – Saigon  
19 October 1930

Departing on 19 October, a military flight flew from Hanoi to Saigon in order to connect with the S.S. *André Lebon* before she departed for her return voyage to France.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
HANOI R.P. TONKIN  
airmail label

Paris – Saigon  
8-13 November 1930

Marcel Goulette and Marcel Lalouette flew a Farman 197 from Paris to Saigon from 8-13 November 1930 establishing a new time record of 5 days, 3 hours and 50 minutes for the route. Fifty specially printed envelopes were carried on the flight. Goulette signed this example with the number “09.”

The routing was as follows:

8 November	Paris (Le Bourget) – Brindisi	1,550 kilometers
8-9 November	Brindisi – Alep – Bassorah	3,010 kilometers
9-10 November	Bassorah – Djask – Karachi	2,160 kilometers
10-11 November	Karachi – Allahabad – Calcutta	2,200 kilometers
12 November	Calcutta – Moulmein – Bangkok	1,630 kilometers
13 November	Bangkok – Saigon	800 kilometers
	Total	11,350 kilometers



POSTAL MARKINGS

LE BOURGET PORT-AERIEN 8-11 30  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 1-9 34

Saigon – Hanoi  
19-21 November 1930

After arriving at Saigon on 13 November 1930, Lalouette and Goulette rested for a few days. On 19 November, they continued their voyage northward to Hanoi. Letters were backstamped Hanoi 14:45, 21 November upon arrival.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 19-11 30  
airmail and registration labels

REVERSE  
HA-NOI R.P. TONKIN 21-11 30



Hanoi – Saigon  
26 November 1930

On 26 November 1930, pilot Lalouette and navigator Goulette departed Hanoi for Saigon as the first step of their long voyage home to France.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HAI-PHONG TONKIN 25-11-30  
registration label

REVERSE

MARSEILLE-GARE-AVION 8-12-30  
ALGER-GARE SECTION-AVION 9-12-30

Saigon – Paris  
1-8 December 1930

After their speed record flight, Lalouette and Goulette took Pierre Pasquier, the Governor-General of Indochina, as their passenger for the return trip to Paris. Leaving Saigon on 1 December, the plane reached Paris on the 8th. There was no official marking given to the 5,600 letters that were carried on the return trip.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HANOI R.P. TONKIN 22-11 30  
airmail and registration labels

REVERSE

HANOI R.P. TONKIN 22-11 30  
PARIS IX DISTRIBUTION 8-12 30

20th Anniversary of First Flight  
December 1930

The first airplane to fly over Indochina was piloted by van den Born. The flight occurred outside Saigon on 10 December 1910. The plane was named "Wanda" after the daughter of the Governor-General.

To commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the event, the Indochinese Post Office handstamped some 3,400 letters to Europe with a cachet in the form of bird wings.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HA-NOI R.P. TONKIN 19-12 30  
airmail and registration labels

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 22-12 30

20th Anniversary of First Flight  
December 1930

In an unusual occurrence, the commemorative cachet was struck with pink ink on this airmail cover to France.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HA-NOI R.P. TONKIN 19-12 30  
airmail and registration labels

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 22-12 30

Bangkok – Hanoi  
31 December 1930

A squadron of three Thai military airplanes paid a goodwill visit to Hanoi at the very end of 1930. The mail, which was composed of 142 pieces (116 registered items), was given a bilingual handstamp.

The lead pilot and the Director-General of the Air Mail Department both signed the front of this cover.



POSTAL MARKINGS

BANGKOK G.P.O. 28.12.30  
registration label and framed PAR AVION  
flight cachet (red)

REVERSE

HANOI R.P. TONKIN 31-12-30  
BANGKOK G.P.O. 6. 1 .31

Bangkok – Hanoi  
31 December 1930

Of the 142 pieces that were carried on the goodwill flight, only 26 were not registered. While registered letters received a red cachet, a black cachet was applied to the unregistered items.



POSTAL MARKINGS

BANGKOK G.P.O. 30.12.30  
framed PAR AVION  
flight cachet (black)  
HA-NOI R.P. TONKIN 31-12 30

Hanoi – Bangkok  
5 January 1931

Through the courtesy of the postmaster at Hanoi, mail was allowed on the return trip of the Thai military contingent that had paid the friendship visit. A total of 25 letters from Hanoi were carried on the return trip from Hanoi to Don Muang airport.

No official markings were applied to the letters transported on the return trip. This particular cover was addressed to and signed by Major Luang Bhasa, a member of the Thai military mission to Hanoi.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HANOI R.P. TONKIN 5-1 31  
airmail label  
plain R with manuscript registration number

REVERSE

BANGKOK G.P.O. 6. 1 .31  
DON MUANG

Paris – Saigon  
17-27 January 1931



The inauguration of Air Orient's Far East service was on the morning of 17 January 1931. Letters deposited with Air Orient in Paris or Marseille were handstamped with a cachet noting the first regular airmail service by a single company, Air Orient.

The airmail surtax for letters to Indochina was 6 francs per 10 grams.



POSTAL MARKINGS

PARIS 13-1 31  
airmail label and flight cachet

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 27-1 31



Paris – Saigon  
January 1931

For the inaugural flight, a total of 3,768 letters were carried to Saigon. Cachets were struck in purple at Paris and Marseille. Black cachets were only applied in Paris.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
PARIS-GARE-AVION-P.L.M.-AVION 18-1 31  
flight cachet  
REVERSE  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 27-1 31

Marseilles – Saigon  
17-27 January 1931

Letters posted from Marseilles for the inauguration of the Air Orient service received a purple, rectangular handstamp. The first Air Orient leg was from Marseilles to Athens.

LIAISON AÉRIENNE COMMERCIALE  
MARSEILLE-SAIGON  
PREMIER VOL AÉROPOSTAL RÉGULIER



POSTAL MARKINGS

MARSEILLE-GARE-AVION 15-1 31  
airmail labels and flight cachet

REVERSE

flight cachet  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 22-1 31

Beirut – Saigon  
21-27 January 1931

From Athens, a seaplane carried the mail to Beirut and arrived on the 21st. From Beirut, it went overland to Damascus and then onward by air.

Letters posted from Beirut for the first Air Orient service were handstamped with a triangular cachet.



POSTAL MARKINGS

BEYROUTH R.P. DEP. 21 | 1931  
airmail and registration labels  
flight cachet

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 27-1 31

Damascus – Saigon  
22-27 January 1931

Air Orient's inaugural Far East service from Damascus departed on 22 January. Letters were given a circular cachet to commemorate the opening of the new route. From Damascus, the Air Orient service went to Karachi where a plane change was made.



POSTAL MARKINGS

DAMAS 19. - 1.- 31-  
airmail and registration labels  
flight cachet

REVERSAL

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 27-1 31

Calcutta – Rangoon  
January 1931

As part of the first Air Orient service, forty-five specially prepared letters were carried on the Calcutta-Rangoon segment. Covers were given a distinctive red-violet “elephant” cachet.

C<sup>IE</sup> AIR - ORIENT

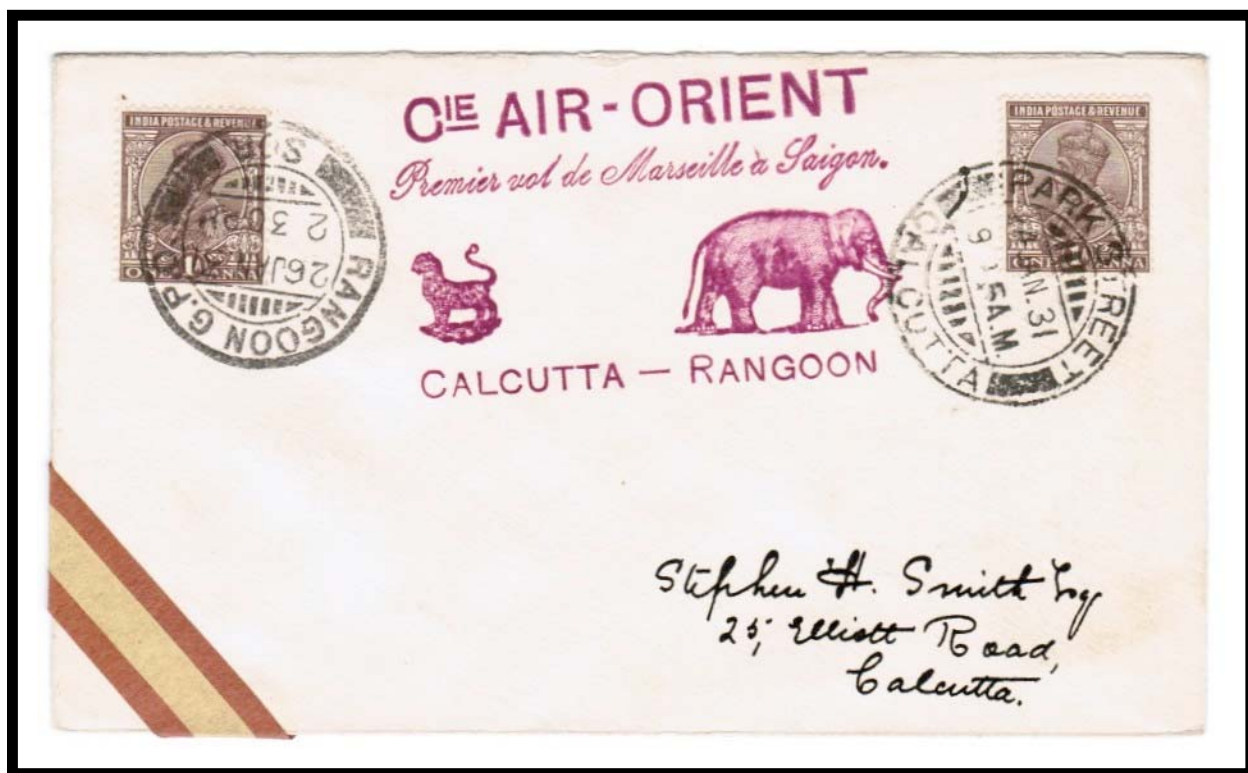
*Premier vol de Marseille à Saigon.*



CALCUTTA



RANGOON



POSTAL MARKINGS

PARK STREET CALCUTTA 24 JAN. 31

RANGOON G.P.O. SQR. 26 JAN. 31

flight cachet

REVERSE

PARK STREET CALCUTTA 24 JAN. 31

Saigon – Marseille  
4-16 February 1931

The first plane for Air Orient's westward service to Europe left Saigon on 4 February. Accomplished in stages with several different planes and crews, the mail arrived at Marseille on 16 February. The winged seahorse cachet used on the inbound flight was also used on letters deposited at Saigon for the return trip.



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 2-2 31  
airmail and registration labels  
flight cachet

REVERSE

PARIS XVII DISTRIBUTION 18-2 31

Saigon – Beirut  
February 1931



As with inbound letters, cachets were struck with both purple and black ink.

Also affixed to this inaugural flight cover to Beirut is the "VIA AIR ORIENT" airmail label.

The surcharge for airmail service was 50 cents.



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 3-2 31

airmail label  
flight cachet

REVERSE

PENANG 9 FE 1931

BEYROUTH R.P. D. 2 • III 1931

Saigon – Mid-East  
February 1931

The bag of letters from Saigon to the Mid-East on Air Orient's inaugural service was somehow left behind at Bangkok. It was transported to Penang, Malaysia then via sea mail through the Suez Canal onward to Beirut. The mail finally arrived at Beirut on 2 March 1931, a month after the initial posting.



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 2-2 31  
airmail and registration labels  
flight cachet

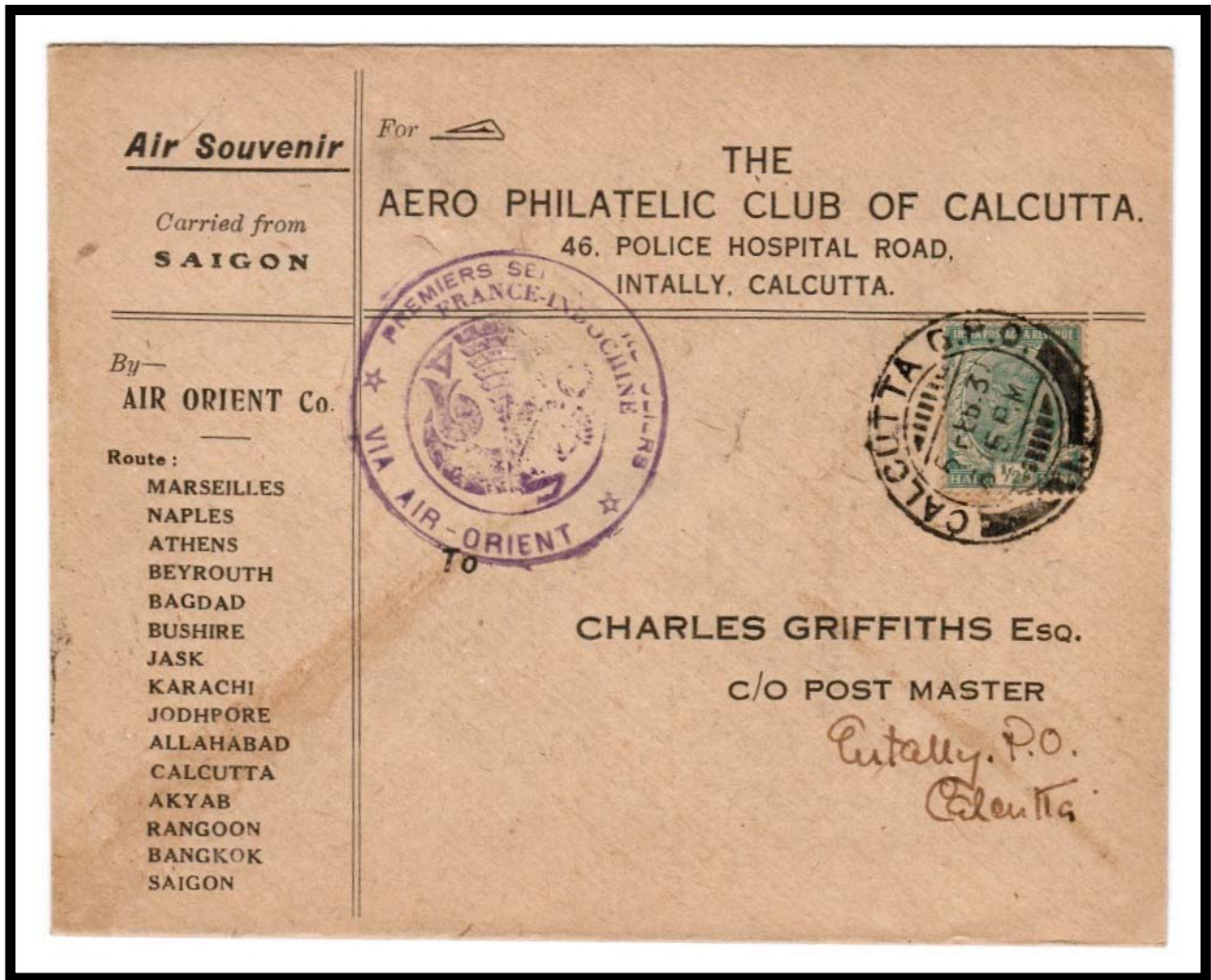
REVERSE

BANGKOK G.P.O. -4 2 31  
PENANG 9 FE 1931  
PORT TAUFIQ 31 MR 31  
BEYROUTH R.P. D. 2 • III 1931



Calcutta – Calcutta  
February 1931

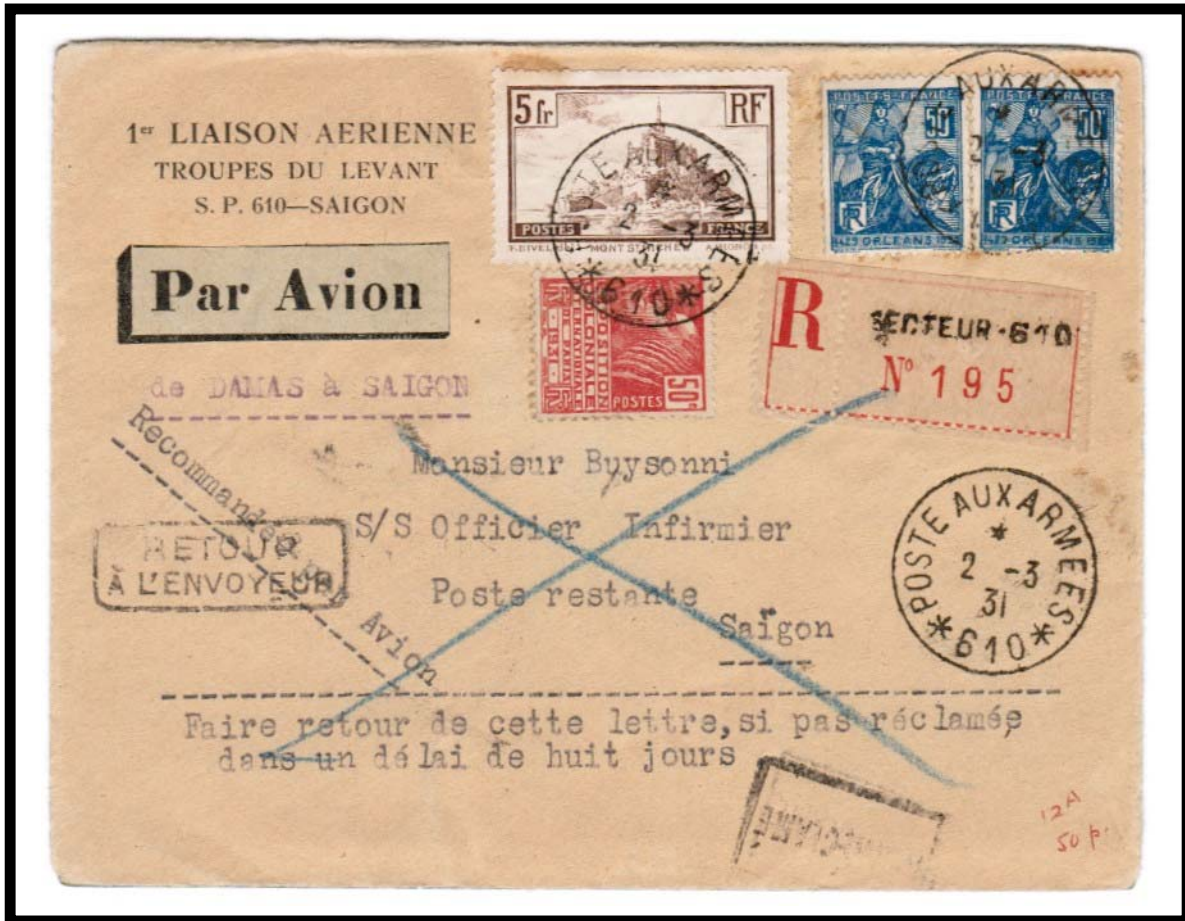
This envelope was printed to be an “Air Souvenir Carried from Saigon.” It was posted at Calcutta on 5 February and was handstamped with the first flight cachet. However, because it was given a local address, the mailing reentered the local mail service was not carried on the return flight.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
CALCUTTA G.P. O. 5 FEB. 31  
flight cachet  
REVERSE  
INTALLY CALCUTTA 5 FEB. 31

Damascus – Saigon  
March 1931

Soldiers in Damascus took advantage of the eastward Air Orient service to commemorate the first connection between military Post Office 601 and Saigon. Specially printed envelopes were employed for the flight, which departed on 2 March 1931. Reaching Saigon on 10 March, this envelope was redirected back to the sender.



POSTAL MARKINGS

POSTE AUX ARMEES \*610\* 2-3 31  
registration label

“unclaimed” and “return to sender” handstamps

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 10-5 31  
POSTE AUX ARMEES \*600\* 13-4 31  
POSTE AUX ARMEES \*610\* 14-4 31

Hanoi – Saigon  
8 March 1931

As one of the military flights that provided connection between the North of Indochina and the packet boats that departed from Saigon, a flight from left from Hanoi to Saigon on 8 March 1931. Mail on the flight was backstamped upon arrival at Saigon on 9 March. At Saigon, mail for France was deposited aboard the S.S. *Chenonceaux* for her return trip to Europe.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HA-NOI R.P. TONKIN 7-3 31  
airmail label

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 9-3 31

Saigon – Tourane – Hanoi  
11 March 1931

A military flight that carried mail from France, which had arrived by ship at Saigon, as well as locally mailed items, departed Saigon on 11 March 1931. A stop en route allowed letters to be offloaded at Tourane.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 10-3 31  
airmail label

Hanoi – Saigon – Marseille  
13-16 March 1931

The sender clearly provided routing instructions for airmail service from Indochina to France. Fortunately, his mailing was handled by a military flight that effected the movement from Hanoi to Saigon in four days to connect with the outbound air service.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HA-GIANG TONKIN 8-3 31  
airmail label

REVERSE

HA-NOI R.P. TONKIN 12-3 31  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 16-3 31  
PARIS GARE DU NORD AVION 31 • III 1931

Hanoi – Saigon  
15 May 1931

A military plane carried the mail from Hanoi to Saigon in order to make connections with the packet boat “Metzinger” during its stop at Saigon. Letters were transported without any surcharge for airmail service.

Postage was computed as follows:

internal letter rate	5 cents
registration fee	15 cents
<u>airmail surcharge</u>	<u>free</u>
total	20 cents



POSTAL MARKINGS

HANOI.A TONKIN 15-5 31  
airmail and registration labels

REVERSE

SAIGON CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 17-5 31

Saigon – Hanoi  
19 May 1931

As part of a continued service to expedite handling of the mails, the military transported mail from Saigon to Hanoi on 19 May 1931.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 18-5 31  
airmail and registration labels  
REVERSE  
HANOI R.P. TONKIN 18-5 31

Saigon – Marseille  
Accident of 7 June 1931

After leaving Saigon, an Air Orient plane crashed in the Sandoway River near Akyab, Burma. The entire crew (pilot Beauregard, copilot Bourgeois, mechanic Patard and radioman Leroux) was killed. The mail was saved and sent on to Marseille. There letters were given an explanatory cachet.



**COURRIER ACCIDENTÉ**  
**LE 7 JUIN 1931**

POSTAL MARKINGS  
HANOI R.P. TONKIN 1-6 31  
airmail label  
accident cachet  
REVERSE  
MARSEILLE-GARE-AVION 2-7 31  
post office sealing label  
PARIS GARE DU NORD AVION 2•VII 1931



Saigon – Ban-Me-Thuot  
30 June 1931

A military plane based at the Bien-Hoa military airbase carried the squadron's commander on a round trip to Ban-Me-Thuot, Annam on 30 June. On the outbound leg, six letters were carried from Saigon to Ban-Me-Thuot.



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 30-6 31

BAN-ME-THUOT ANNAM 30-6 31

REVERSE

BAN-ME-THUOT ANNAM 30-6 31

Marseille – Saigon  
Accident of 10 July 1931

Air Orient put a new Fokker into service for the 30 June departure to Saigon, which replaced the one destroyed at Akyab, Burma in June. After experiencing several problems at Calcutta, the plane finally reached Akyab on 13 July. An engine fire caused serious damage to the plane, taking a week for repairs. The plane and the mail finally reached Saigon on 22 July.



POSTAL MARKINGS

PARIS GARE DU NORD AVION 1-VII 1931  
airmail labels

REVERSE

PARIS-GARE-AVION 1-7 31  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 22-7 31  
HANOI R.P. TONKIN 27-7 31  
TUYEN-QUANG TONKIN 28-7 31

Athens – Saigon  
18 July 1931

The first mail originating from Athens to Saigon traveled via Air Orient service starting on 18 July 1931. A total of 22 covers was carried on the first flight.



POSTAL MARKINGS

(ATHENS) 18 EYA.1931

registration label

“via airmail,” unclaimed” and “return to sender” handstamps

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 24-7 31

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 25-7 31

PORT SAID 14. AU.31

Saigon – Athens  
23 July 1931

The first return service Saigon-Marseille that dropped mail at Athens originated on 23 July 1931. This cover bears the red airmail rate certification handstamp, which verified that the correct airmail postage had been affixed. An airmail cachet was applied in black upon arrival in Greece.



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 23-7 31  
airmail rate certification handstamp (red)  
airmail label  
flight cachet

REVERSE

ATHENS 31 VII 31

Saigon – France  
Accident of 18 August 1931

South of Corfu, the Air Orient seaplane developed an engine fire and had to land, but was able to make its way to the port of Amalfi. With the engine repaired, the crew (Pommereau, pilot and Richard, mechanic) reached Marseilles the later the same day.



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 6-8 31  
airmail label and rate certification handstamp

REVERSE

MARSEILLE-GARE BCHES DU RHONE 18 • 8 1931

Saigon – Marseille  
22 August 1931

The regular Air Orient plane that had departed Saigon on 13 August 1931 later made a forced landing near Damascus because of a sandstorm. No explanation of the incident was indicated on letters carried by this airmail service.



POSTAL MARKINGS

PHU-THO TONKIN 10-8 31  
HANOI R.P. TONKIN 10-8 31  
airmail label

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 13-8 31  
MARSEILLE-GARE B~~CHES~~ DU RHONE 24 • 8 1931  
TROYES AUBE 26 • VIII 1931

Saigon – Marseille  
Accident of 30 September 1931

On 30 September 1931, an eastbound Air Orient mail plane crashed 150 kilometers northwest of Karachi and caught fire. There were casualties among the crew including the death of the radioman. Mail, which had been posted up through 24 September at Saigon, was rescued and sent onward with no indication of the incident.



POSTAL MARKINGS

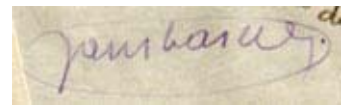
HANOI R.P. TONKIN 21-9 31  
airmail label

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 24-9 31  
PARIS-R.P. 4 DISTRIBUTION 8 • X 1931

Hanoi – Vientiane  
13 November 1931

Using six military airplanes, Minister of Colonies Paul Reynaud, accompanied by Governor-General Pasquier, made an inspection trip to Vientiane on 13 November 1931. One of the airplanes was entrusted with 16 letters. Chief Sergeant Gambarelli signed the reverse of this cover.



Gambarelli' signature  
(reverse)



POSTAL MARKINGS

HANOI R.P. TONKIN 12-11 31  
airmail label

REVERSE

VIENTIANE LAOS 13-11 31





# Colonial Exposition 1931



To promote the 1931 Colonial Exposition in Paris, Air Orient handstamped letters with a cachet that advertised the event. The cachet employed Air Orient's winged seahorse logo as the central element of the design.



## POSTAL MARKINGS

EXPOSITION COLONIALE INTALE PARIS 1-11 31  
exposition cachet

## REVERSE

MARSEILL GARE BCHES DU RHONE 2 • II 1931  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 14-2 31

Vientiane – Hanoi  
27 December 1931

A military airplane flew the route Vientiane-Hanoi-Saigon at the very end of 1931.  
Covers originating from Hanoi received the large framed "Par Avion" handstamp.

**PAR AVION**



POSTAL MARKINGS  
VIENTIANE LAOS 27-12 31  
registration label  
framed Par Avion handstamp  
REVERSE  
HA-NOI R.P. TONKIN 28-12 31

Marseilles – Saigon  
31 December 1931 - 11 January 1932

The CAMS 53 seaplane on the Marseilles-Corfu leg suffered engine failure at Naples. A replacement plane resumed the journey on 2 January.

A second engine problem occurred with the Fokker VII b-3m carrying mail on the Karachi-Saigon leg requiring a forced landing shortly after departing Allahabad. Bad weather and more engine troubles resulted in yet another forced landing at Moulmein, Burma.

Finally, the mail reached Saigon on 11 January.



POSTAL MARKINGS

PARIS 80 R. DU PIN 28-12 31  
airmail label

REVERSE

PARIS-GARE-P.L.M.-AVION 28-12 31  
MARSEILLE-GARE BCHES DU RHONE 30 • XII 1931  
HANOI R.P. TONKIN 14-1 32

Hanoi – Paris  
21-24 January 1932

Codos and Robida left Hanoi on 21 January in their attempt to establish a new speed record to Paris. Flying a converted military biplane, the pair flew for 3 days 4 hours and 17 minutes to reach Paris demolishing the old record by a day and a half.

Letters were given two official handstamps.

LIAISON HANOI-PARIS  
AVION CODOS ROBIDA  
Janvier 1932.

PAR AVION  
HANOI PARIS



POSTAL MARKINGS

HA-NOI TONKIN 19-1 32  
airmail label  
flight handstamps

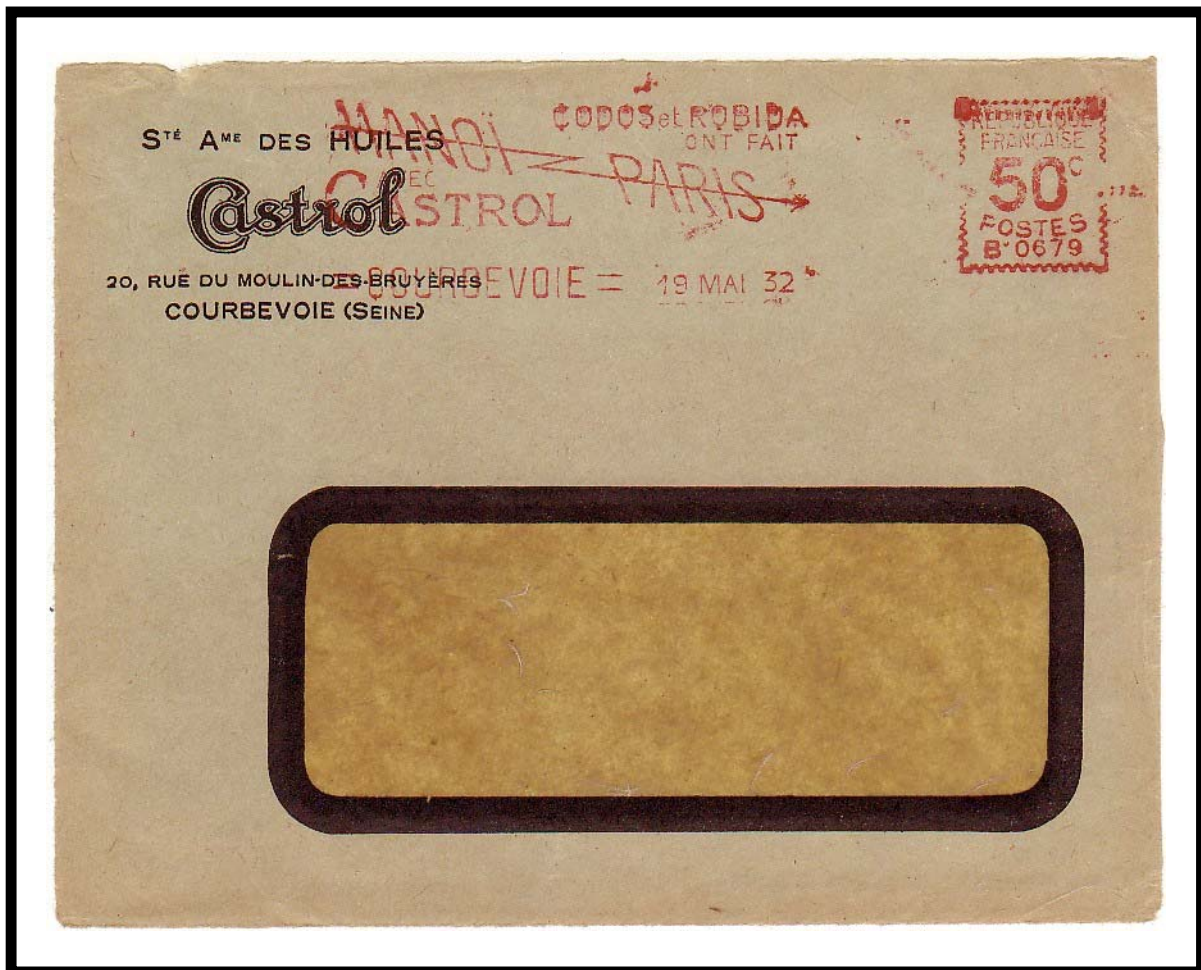
REVERSE

PARIS GARE D'AUSTERLITZ 24-1 32  
SAINT MICHEL S/ ORGE SEINE ET OISE 25-1 32

## Record Flight of Codos and Robida 21-24 January 1932

Departing from Paris on 4 January 1932, the crew of Paul Codos and Henri Robida reached Hanoi on 12 January. On their return, they hoped to better the record time set by Costes and Bellonte in November 1929. Leaving Hanoi on 21 January, the two landed at Le Bourget (the main Paris airport) in 3 days, 4 hours and 17 minutes smashing the previous record by a day and a half.

This cover shown is from the French company Castrol in the French town of Courbevoie. The meter recognizes the achievement of Codos and Robida and promotes the part that Castrol played in the event.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
COURBEVOIE 19 MAI 32 (meter in red)

Saigon – Marseilles  
Regular Air Orient Service in January 1932

Leaving Indochina the time as the Codos-Robida flight, the regular Air Orient flight took 10 days to reach France.



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 21-1 32  
framed Saigon-Marseille routing instruction  
airmail fee certification handstamp  
DIGOIN SAONE ET LOIRE 2-2 1932

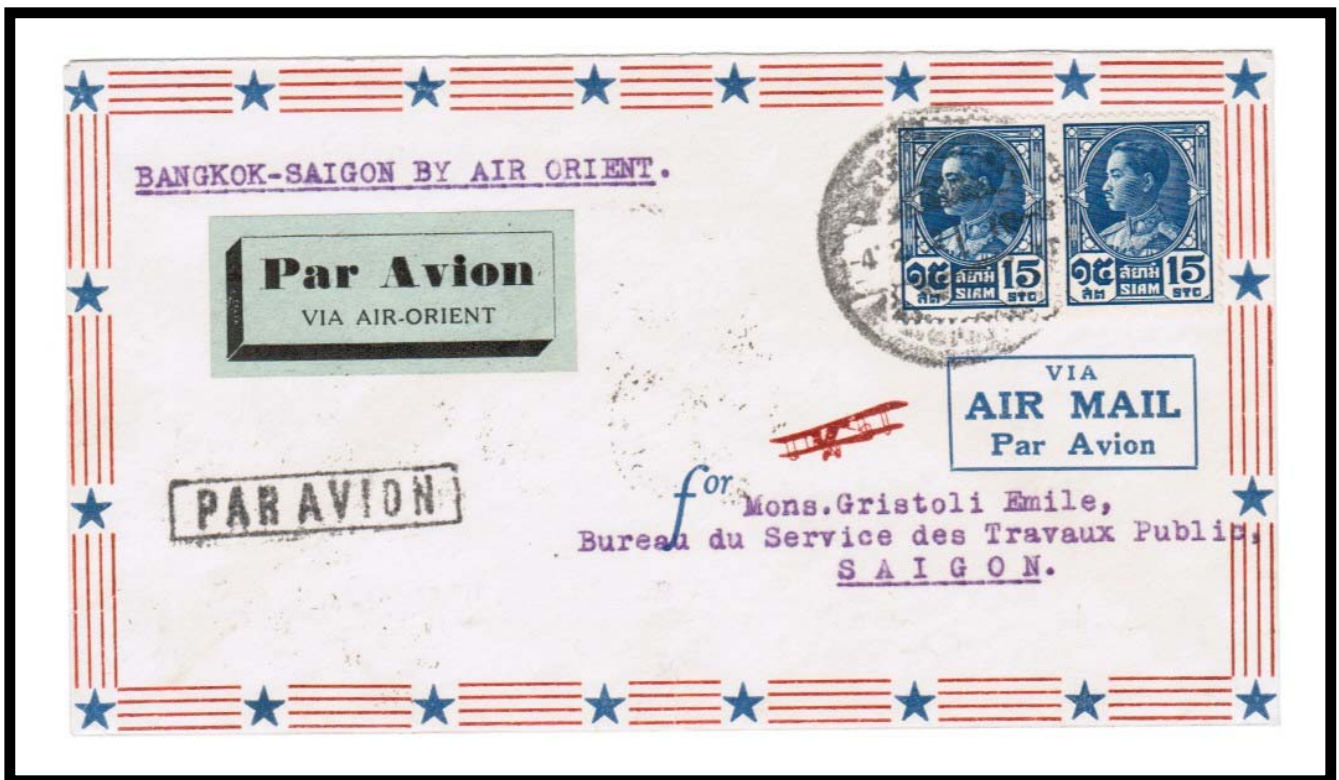
REVERSE

MARSEILLE-GARE AVION B<sup>CHES</sup> DU RHONE I • II 1932

Bangkok – Saigon  
4 February 1932

Air Orient's first service carrying mail from Bangkok to Saigon occurred on 4 February 1932. No special markings were used to commemorate the service, though mail was handstamped with a "PAR AVION" marking.

PAR AVION



POSTAL MARKINGS  
BANGKOK 4 2 32  
airmail label and handstamp  
REVERSE  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 5-2 32

Marseille – Saigon  
Accident of March 1932

The Air Orient flight that departed Marseille on 2 March 1932 suffered an accident. Mail arrived at Saigon in 12 days on 12 March, which was the usual 10-day transit time.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
MARSEILLE-TERREAUX RHONE 2-3 32  
airmail label  
REVERSE  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 12-3 32



Saigon – Marseille  
Accident of 28 March 1932

While flying between Corfu and Naples, the westbound Air Orient seaplane landed as a precaution against bad weather. The seaplane broke away from its moorings and became stranded on the beach. Once the mail was dried out, it went on by relief plane to Marseille arriving on 31 March. Letters were given a “mail accident” handstamp.

COURRIER ACCIDENTÉ



POSTAL MARKINGS

QUI-NHON ANNAM 16-3 32  
airmail label and routing instruction  
“mail accident” handstamp

REVERSE

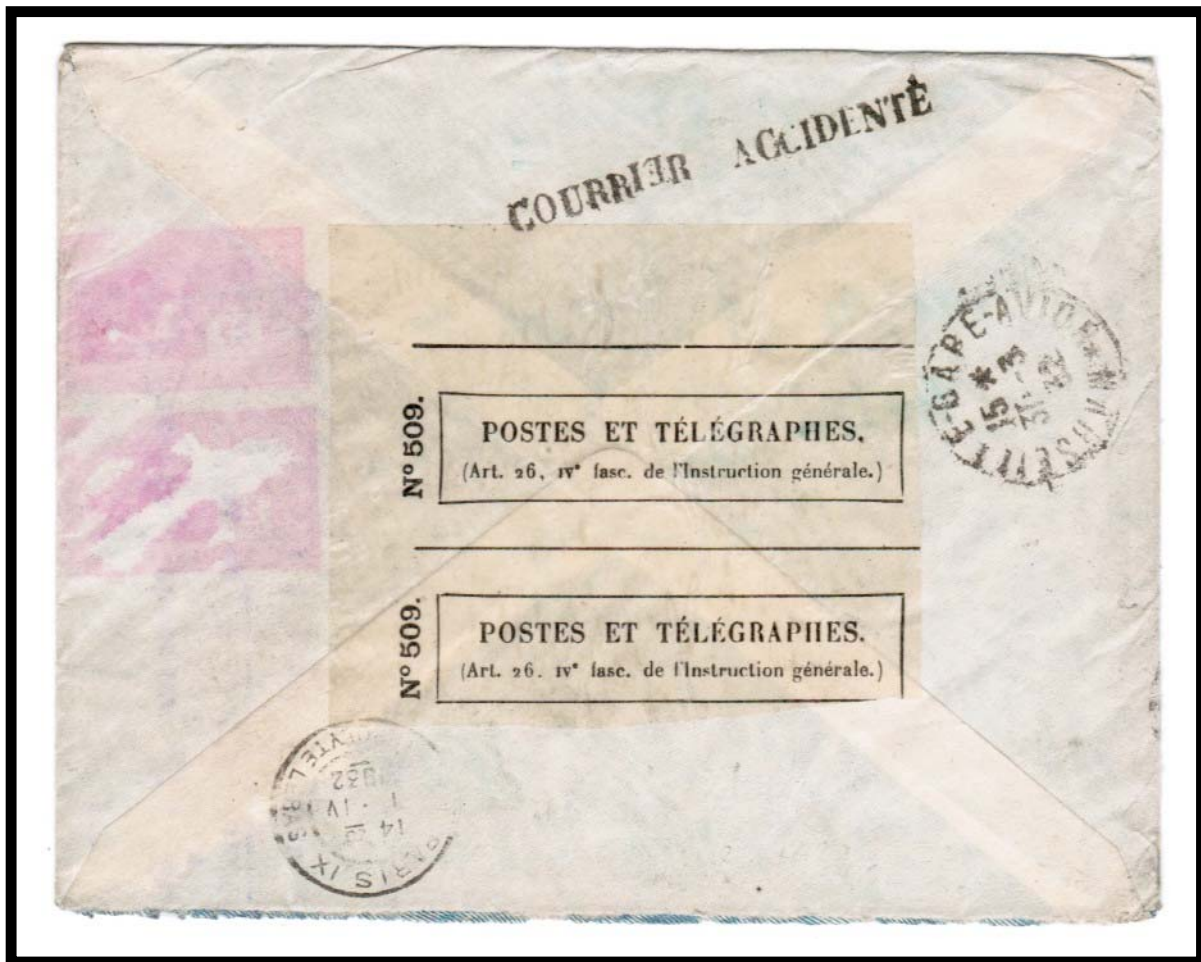
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 17-3 32  
MARSEILLE-GARE-AVION 31-3 32

Saigon – Marseille  
Accident of 28 March 1932

The accident cachet was struck with a second variety. The “E” in the word “COURRIER” is reversed.

The variation was struck on this envelope, which had been resealed with an official French Post Office label.

**COURRIER ACCIDENTÉ**



POSTAL MARKINGS

MARSEILLE-GARE-AVION 31-3 32  
resealing label  
PARIS IX RUE HIPPOLYTE LEBAS 1 • IV 1932

REVERSE

PNOMPENH CAMBODGE 17-3 32  
airmail label and routing instruction

Vientiane – Vinh  
28 April 1932

The military conducted an exploratory flight from Vientiane, Laos to Vinh, Annam on 28 April 1932. Letters were marked with Vientiane's large format "Par Avion" handstamp.



POSTAL MARKINGS

VIENTIANE LAOS 27-4 32  
airmail handstamp

REVERSE

VINH ANNAM 28 -4 32  
NINH-BINH TONKIN 29-4 32

Marseille – Saigon  
4-11 May 1932

Air Orient and KLM cooperated in transporting mail from Europe to the Far East. Every other trip, KLM was responsible for the Baghdad-to-Bangkok portion of the route. In May 1932, Air Orient took control of the entire route from Marseilles to Saigon. From that time on, mail delivery between France and Indochina was completely under French control. This mailing was from the first all French service.



POSTAL MARKINGS

LYON-TERREAUX RHONE 4-5 32  
airmail label

REVERSE

MARSEILLE-GARE-AVION B<sup>CHES</sup> DU RHONE 5 • V 1932  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 12-5 32

Saigon – Nhatrang  
9 May 1932

On 24 May 1932, a typhoon devastated southern Annam disrupting normal communications. The PTT organized airmail services for moving the mail between Saigon and Nhatrang. Maurice Nogues piloted the first Air Orient flight, which departed Saigon on 9 May.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
SAIGON CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 8-5 32  
REVERSE  
NHA-TRANG ANNAM 9-5 32

Nhatrang – Saigon  
9 May 1932

After reaching Nhatrang around midday, Nogues picked up the mail and returned to Saigon on the same day. After the initial flight by Air Orient, the military took over flying the relief mission.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
NHA-TRANG ANNAM 9-5 32  
airmail label  
REVERSE  
SAIGON CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 9-5 32

Nhatrang – Saigon  
9 May 1932

Normally, a letter sent from Haiphong would reach Saigon in three days via the railroad's "expedited service." However, a typhoon in May 1932 had damaged the rail bed leaving mail stranded at Nhatrang. The post office organized special flights to keep the mails moving. The first was an Air Orient flight piloted by Maurice Noguès, which transported mail both ways.

This letter posted from Haiphong on 2 May ultimately reached its destination after combined train and airplane service on 9 May.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HAI-PHONG TONKIN 2-5 32  
expedited service label

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 9-5 32

Saigon – Nhatrang  
12 May 1932

The second Saigon-Nhatrang military flight in four days was organized by the Post and Telegraph Office to ensure reliable communications with Southern Annam following the typhoon of 4 May. Because 12 May had been declared a day of mourning after the assassination of President Doumer, very few letters were posted to connect with the special military service.



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 12-5 32  
airmail label

REVERSE

NHA-TRANG ANNAM 13-5 32



Saigon – Hanoi  
29 May 1932

In 1932, the military began a regular service carrying mail between Saigon and Hanoi. The first northbound flight on a military Potez 25 A2 occurred on 29 May.

Postage for this mailing was calculated as follows:

internal letter rate	5 cents
<u>airmail surcharge</u>	<u>5 cents</u>
total	10 cents



POSTAL MARKINGS  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 28-5 32  
REVERSE  
TOURANE ANNAM 29-5 32  
VINH ANNAM 31-5 32  
NINH-BINH TONKIN 31-5 32

Saigon – Hanoi  
11 June 1932

The military plane that had brought mail to Saigon for the departure of the S.S. *Athos II* returned to Hanoi on 11 June 1932.



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 10-6 32  
airmail label

REVERSE

HANOI R.P. TONKIN 11-6 32  
NINH-BINH TONKIN 12-6 32

Saigon – Hanoi  
18 June 1932

The military's return flight from Saigon to Hanoi was carried out on 18 June 1932.  
The outbound trip from Hanoi had originated the previous day.



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 17-6 32  
airmail and registration labels

REVERSE

HA-NOI R.P. TONKIN 18-6 32  
NINH-BINH TONKIN 20-6 32

Saigon – Hanoi  
18 June 1932

The registration receipt for the item mailed via the military airmail service bears the handwritten “Par Avion” notation on the top border of the form.

SAIGON CENTRAL COCHINCHINE  
17-6-32  
17-6-32  
RÉCÉPISSÉ  
mettre au déposant  
G-B2b  
735  
Par avion  
Nom et adresse du destinataire :  
M. Nguyen Van Thuc  
Rue n°  
à Hanoi (Tonkin)  
A remplir par l'agent des Postes :  
Nature de l'objet  
Valeur déclarée  
Remboursement  
Poids  
(1) Voir notice spéciale au verso.  
(2) Coller ici l'étiquette gommée extraite du G n°30.  
Signature de l'agent

POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 17-6 32  
registration label tag “735”

Marseille – Saigon  
Accident of 13 August 1932

The eastbound Air Orient seaplane capsized in Beirut harbor. The pilot and copilot were badly injured but the radioman and three passengers were unhurt. Mail was forwarded by another plane and arrived at Saigon on 19 August.

Upon arrival in Saigon, an explanatory cachet was handstamped on the backs of covers to explain their water-damaged condition.

Lettre Parvenue Détériorée  
Suite Accident Courrier Avion



POSTAL MARKINGS  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 19-8 32  
accident cachet

France – Indochina  
Accident of 2 September 1932

After leaving Marseille on 1 September, Air Orient's seaplane had a rough landing the next day at Naples. The fuselage was damaged and the plane filled with water. The mail was recovered and sent on by another plane arriving at Saigon on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September.



POSTAL MARKINGS

PARIS-GARE-P.L.M-AVION 31-8 32  
"VIA AIR ORIENT" airmail label

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 8-9 32

Saigon – British India  
23 September 1932

Based on an agreement with British authorities, Air Orient was allowed to offload mail at stops in India effective 1 October 1932. The first service by Air Orient was actually carried out a week earlier on 23 September with four stops. The final stop was at Karachi where mailed was postmarked at 9:45 AM.



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 23-9 32  
registration label

REVERSE

KARACHI REG. 29 SEP 32

Saigon – Hanoi (– Fort Bayard – Cantho – Hong Kong)  
30 October - 1 November 1932

To explore routes beyond Indochina, Air Orient conducted an exploratory flight from Saigon to Hong Kong in stages. Leaving Saigon at six o'clock in the morning, the plane reached Hanoi in the evening.

The flight crew was Launay (pilot), Schwayer (mechanic) and Queyrel (radioman). This cover was addressed to Queyrel, the radio operator.



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 28-10 32  
expedited service label

HANOI R.P. TONKIN 30 -10 32

REVERSE

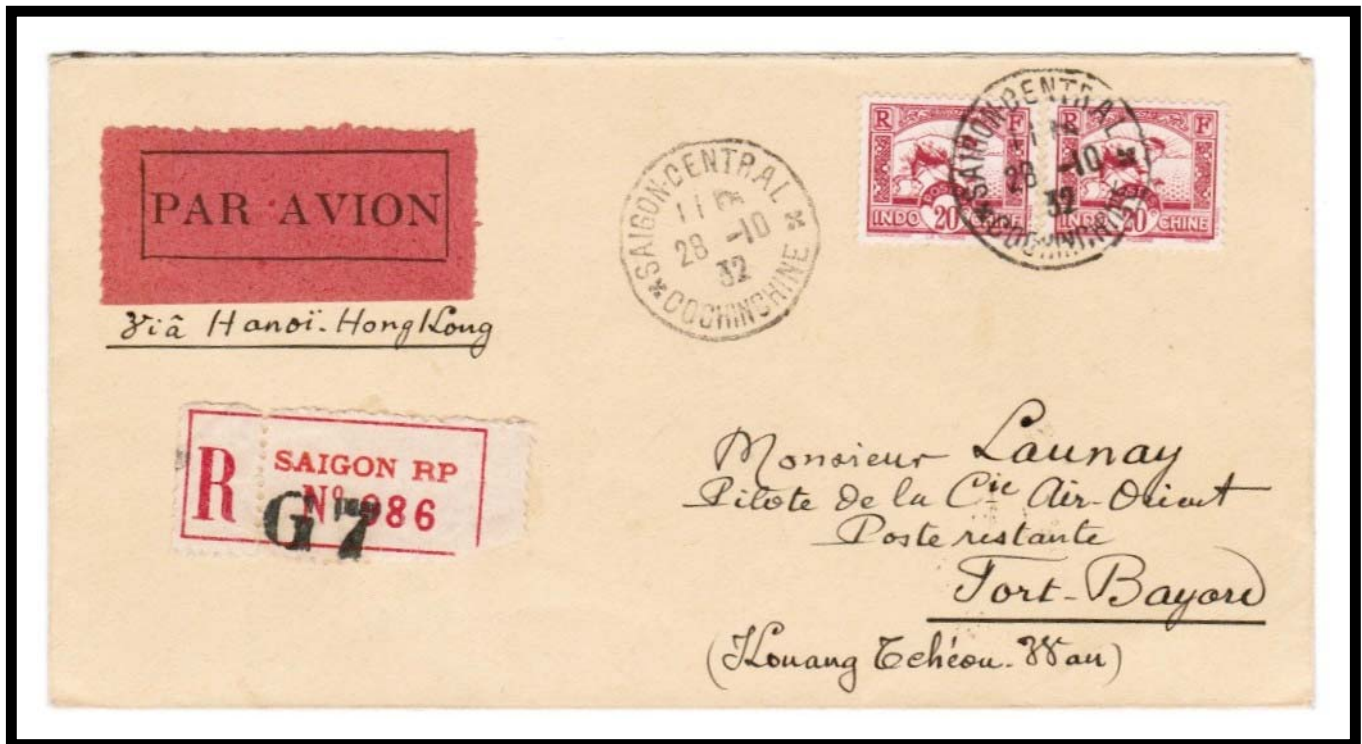
HANOI R.P. TONKIN 30 -10 32



Saigon – Hanoi – Fort Bayard (– Cantho – Hong Kong)  
30 October - 1 November 1932

After Hanoi, the study flight went on to Fort Bayard, Kouang Cho Wan for a short stop. Mail addressed to Fort Bayard was off loaded at the scheduled stop.

This envelope was addressed to Launay, the Air Orient pilot for this exploration flight.



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 28-10 32  
airmail and registration labels

REVERSE

HA-NOI R.P. TONKIN 30-10 32  
FORT BAYARD KOUANGTCHEOUWAN 31-10 32

Saigon – Hanoi – Fort Bayard – Cantho (– Hong Kong)  
30 October - 1 November 1932

After spending the night at Hanoi, the Air Orient study flight went on to Canton following a stop at Fort Bayard. The plane arrived at Canton at 15:30 on the afternoon of the 31st.

This letter was given a private cachet for the airmail service.

Par premier vol Avion  
SAIGON à CANTON



POSTAL MARKINGS  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 29-10 32  
airmail label  
flight cachet  
REVERSE  
PUNYU (CANTON)

Saigon – Hanoi – Fort Bayard – Cantho – Hong Kong  
30 October - 1 November 1932

After passing the previous day in Canton, Air Orient's plane continued on to Hong Kong, the terminus of the exploratory trip arriving on the first of November.

The plane carried four passengers including Maurice Nogues, the motivating force behind Air Orient.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 28-10 32  
REVERSE  
HONG KONG 1 NOV 32

Saigon – Hanoi – Fort Bayard – Cantho – Hong Kong  
30 October - 1 November 1932

Although the exploration flight terminated at Hong Kong on 1 November, letters were addressed beyond Hong Kong. For instance, this cover addressed to Shanghai went into the local mail stream and arrived at Shanghai on 4 November.



POSTAL MARKINGS

NINH-BINH TONKIN 30-10 32  
airmail and registration labels

REVERSE

HANOI R.P. TONKIN 30-10 32  
REGISTERED G.P.O. HONG KONG 1 NOV 32  
SHANGHAI 4. 11. 21

Hong Kong – Canton – Fort Bayard – Hanoi – Saigon  
5-8 November 1932

The return of the Air Orient study began from Hong Kong on 4 November. Letters deposited at Hong Kong for the airmail service were postmarked in red ink for the special service.

The practice of red postmarks was in place for mail deposited at Hong Kong that went by fast boat to Indochina to connect with Air Orient airmail service to Europe.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HONG KONG 4 NOV 32 (red)  
airmail label

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 8-11 32  
MARSEILLE-GARE-AVION BCHES DU RHONE 22 • II 1932

Hong Kong – Canton – Fort Bayard – Hanoi (– Saigon)  
5-8 November 1932

The return of the Air Orient flight was reported to have carried 853 letters from Hong Kong. Certainly most letters were addressed to Europe. A small minority were directed to Indochina for a much reduced rate (HK 20 cents) as compared to the HK\$ 1.47 rate for letters to the United Kingdom.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HONG KONG 4 NO 32 (red)  
airmail label

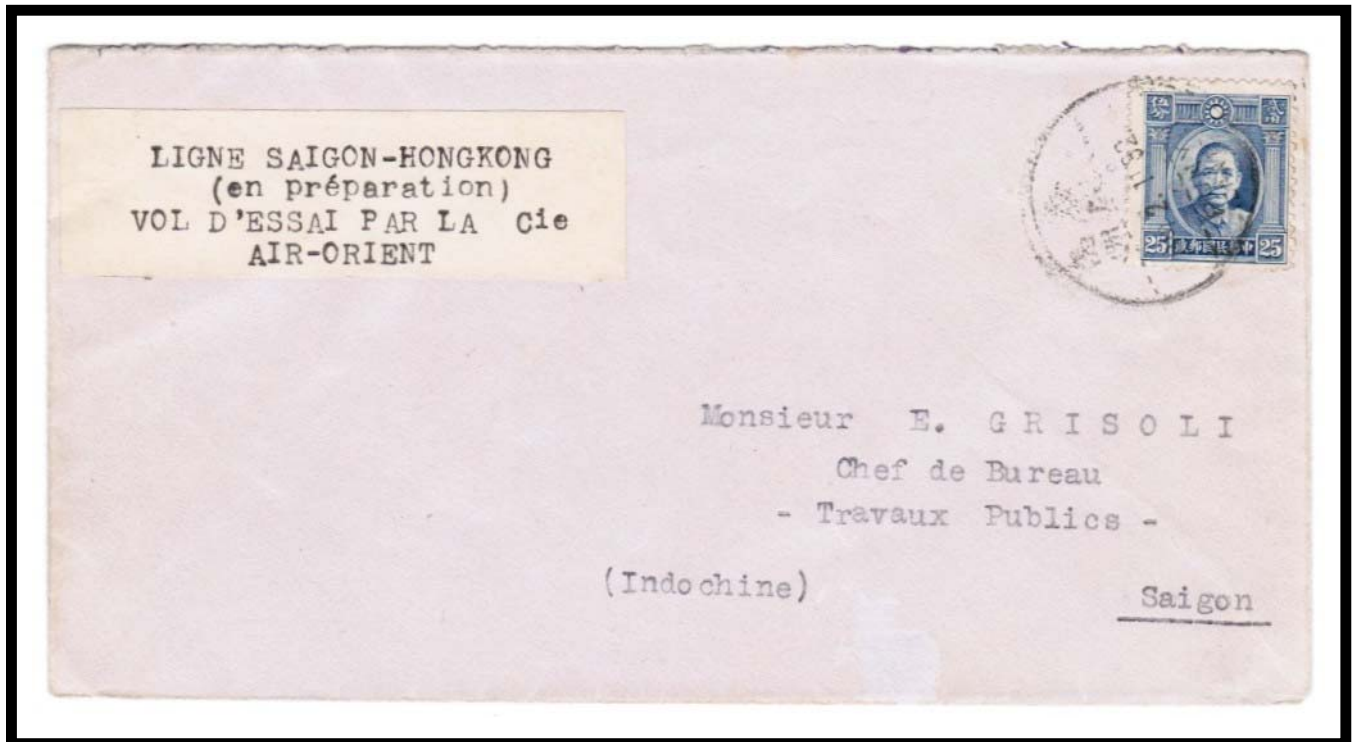
REVERSE

HANOI R. P. TONKIN 5-11 32  
NINH-BINH TONKIN 5-11 32

(Hong Kong –) Canton – Fort Bayard – Hanoi – Saigon  
5-8 November 1932

Letters designated for the return of Air Orient's study flight from Canton were postmarked 2 November. On the return trip the plane carried 70 ordinary letters and 31 registered letters.

The Air Orient plane, named "La Zellée," reached Saigon on 8 November.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
PUNYU (CANTON) 2. 11. 32  
REVERSE  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 8-11 32

Vientiane – Saigon – Marseilles  
15-28 November 1932

The last leg of Air Orient's "La Zellee" exploratory trip departed Vientiane 15 November 1932. The winged "PAR AVION" handstamp was used for this special flight. Letters carried on the flight received an 18 November transit marking at Saigon.



POSTAL MARKINGS

VIENTIANE LAOS 15-11 32  
winged PAR AVION handstamp

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 18-11 32  
MARSEILLE ARRIVEE BCH<sup>ES</sup> DU RHONE 28 • XI 1932



Saigon – Hanoi  
20 November 1932

Starting in November 1932, Air Orient began a series of Saigon – Hanoi – Saigon trial flights. Carried on the first northbound flight, this letter was charged a 5-cent airmail fee in addition to the regular postage of 5-cents.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 19-11 32  
REVERSE  
HANOI R.P. TONKIN 20-11 32

Hanoi – Saigon  
26 November 1932

The round trip flights were meant to promote the airline's services to the public.  
The first return flight from Hanoi to Saigon occurred on 26 November 1932.



POSTAL MARKINGS

NINH-BINH TONKIN 25-11 32  
airmail and registration labels

REVERSE

HANOI R.P. TONKIN 25-11 32  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 26-11 32

Saigon – Athens - Europe  
12-19 November 1932

By the end of 1932, airmail service to Europe was becoming more routine. Mailed from Saigon, this letter went via the Air Orient service westward. At Athens, the letter was diverted from Air Orient to the surface mail stream to Czechoslovakia. The mailing arrived at Pisek 10 days after having been posted.



POSTAL MARKINGS

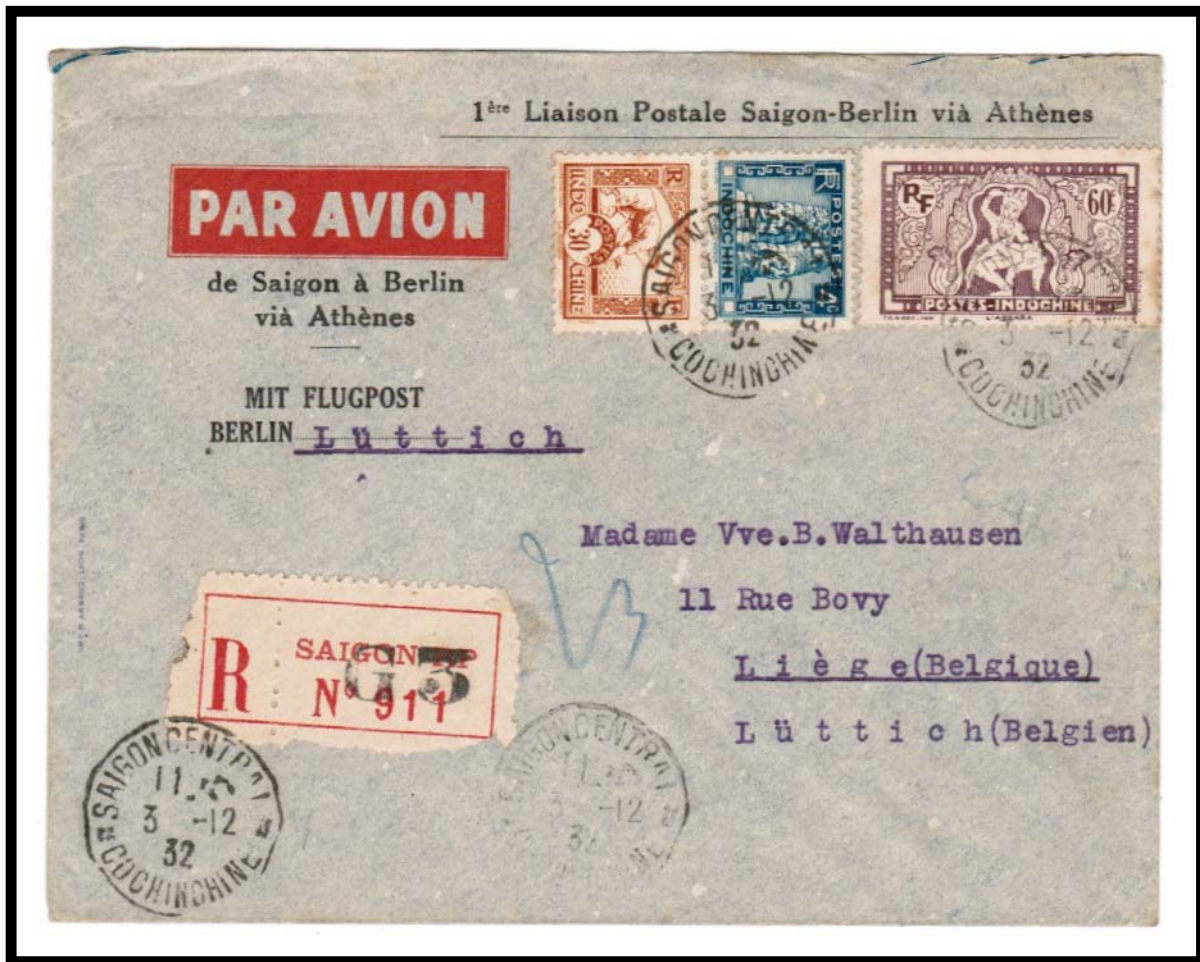
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 12-11 32  
airmail label

REVERSE

ATHENS 19.XI.32  
PISEK 22.IX.32

Saigon – Berlin  
3-13 December 1932

In December 1932, Air Orient established a connection for service to Berlin. Leaving Saigon on 4 December, the airmail service reached Athens on the 10th. From there, 53 letters from Saigon were transferred to Deutsche Luft Hansa (DLH) for delivery to Berlin. Envelopes, specially printed with “1<sup>ère</sup> Liaison Postale Saigon-Berlin via Athènes,” commemorated the flight connection.



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 3-12 32  
registration label

REVERSE

DRI-CEN-TETSHEN BAHNPOST 13.12.32

Saigon – Pakse – Savannakhet  
10-11 December 1932

The military flight that departed Saigon on 10 December 1932 reached Savannakhet the following day. Since the CAMS 37 seaplane had broken down there, mail bound for Luang Prabang, the original destination, had to be forwarded by riverboat.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 10-12 32  
REVERSE  
SAVANNAKHET LAOS 11-12 32

Saigon – Hanoi  
17 December 1932

The propaganda flight from Hanoi to Saigon returned the same day, 17 December 1932. Despite the flight's publicity purpose, no special markings were applied to the mail.



POSTAL MARKINGS

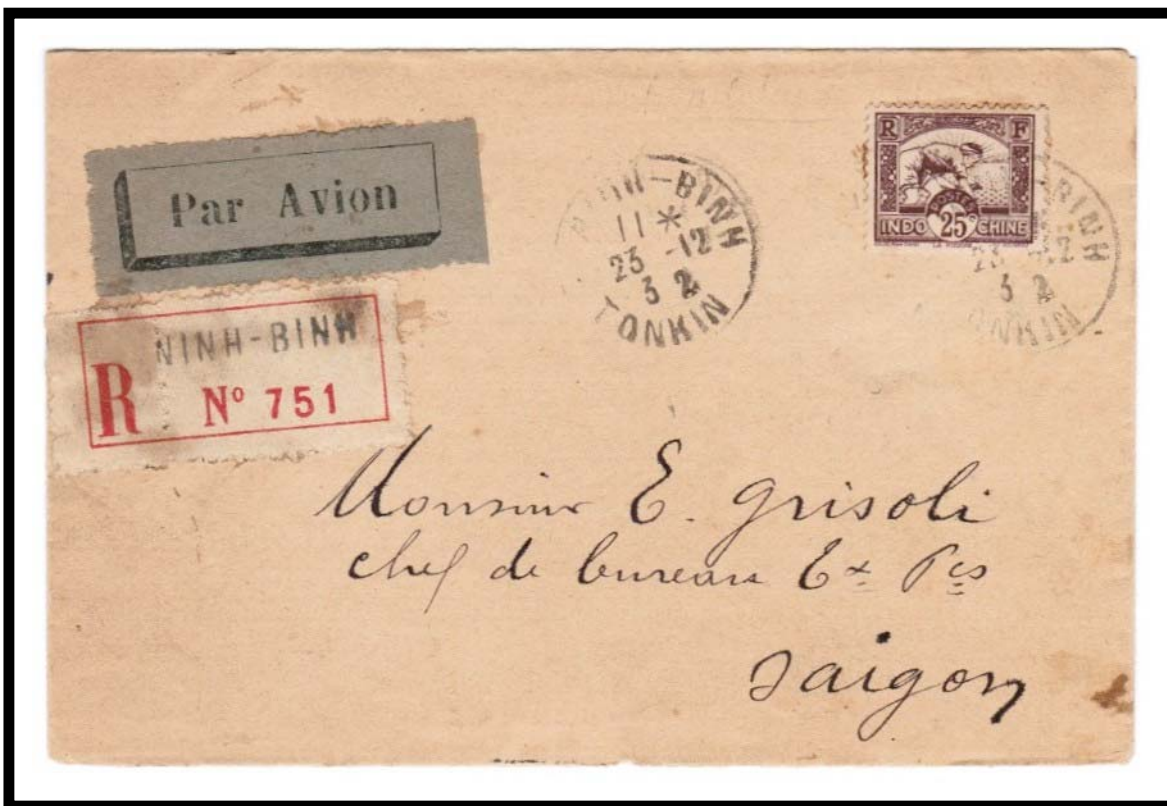
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 16-12 32  
registration label

REVERSE

HANOI R.P. TONKIN 17-12 32  
NINH-BINH TONKIN 18-12 32

Ninh Binh – Hanoi – Saigon  
24 December 1932

Air Orient initiated a round trip from the North to the South just before Christmas Eve 1932.



POSTAL MARKINGS

NINH-BINH TONKIN 23-12 32  
airmail and registration labels

REVERSE

HANOI R.P. TONKIN 23-12 32  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 24-12 32

Seaplane Base  
at Donnai

Located near Saigon, the Donnai River served as a base for seaplanes. Curiously, this mailing from the base on the last day of 1932 was sent to France by surface mail rather than by airmail.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 31-12 1932  
REVERSE  
ROCHEFORT S/ MER CHARENTE INFRE 21-1 43



Vientiane – Hanoi  
3 January 1933

Twelve Potez 25 military airplanes made an exploratory round trip from their base at Bach Mai to Vientiane. Mail on the 3 January return trip received the stylized airmail handstamp in the form of wings.



POSTAL MARKINGS

M99

VIENTIANE LAOS 2-1 33  
VIENTIANE LAOS 3-1 33  
flight cachet and airmail label

REVERSE

HANOI R.P. TONKIN 3-1 33  
NINH-BINH TONKIN 4-1 33

Military Sea Base Tour  
Missed Flight  
10 February 1933

The military's tour of Lao sea bases departed Luang Prabang on 13 February and returned to Saigon on 16 February. The transit postmark on this cover shows that it reached Saigon on 24 February. Perhaps the letter missed the military flight because it was posted too early, three days before the departure of the military group.



POSTAL MARKINGS

LUANG-PRABANG LAOS 10-2 33  
airmail and registration labels

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 24-2 33 (blue)

Vientiane – Saigon  
14-16 February 1933

The military seaplanes touring Laos carried a small amount of mail from Vientiane to Saigon. The planes departed Vientiane on 14 February and reached Saigon on the 16<sup>th</sup>.



POSTAL MARKINGS

VIENTIANE LAOS 14-2 33  
flight cachet

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 16-2 33  
VINH ANNAM 20-2 33  
NINH-BINH TONKIN 21-2 33

France – Saigon  
28 February 1933

To encourage use of airmail service between France and Indochina, the post office would sometimes select letters posted by regular mail and carry them by air. The selected letters were handstamped with a framed marking noting that the mailing had received special service. Presumably, the recipient would be impressed by the fast service and, as a result, would be more inclined to use it himself in the future.

LETTRE TRANSPORTÉE  
EXCEPTIONNELLEMENT PAR AVION  
À TITRE DE PROPAGANDE



POSTAL MARKINGS

PARIS VIII 49. R. DE LA BOËTTE 28 • II 1933  
propaganda handstamp

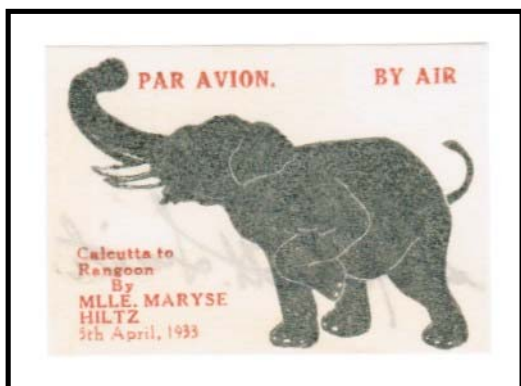
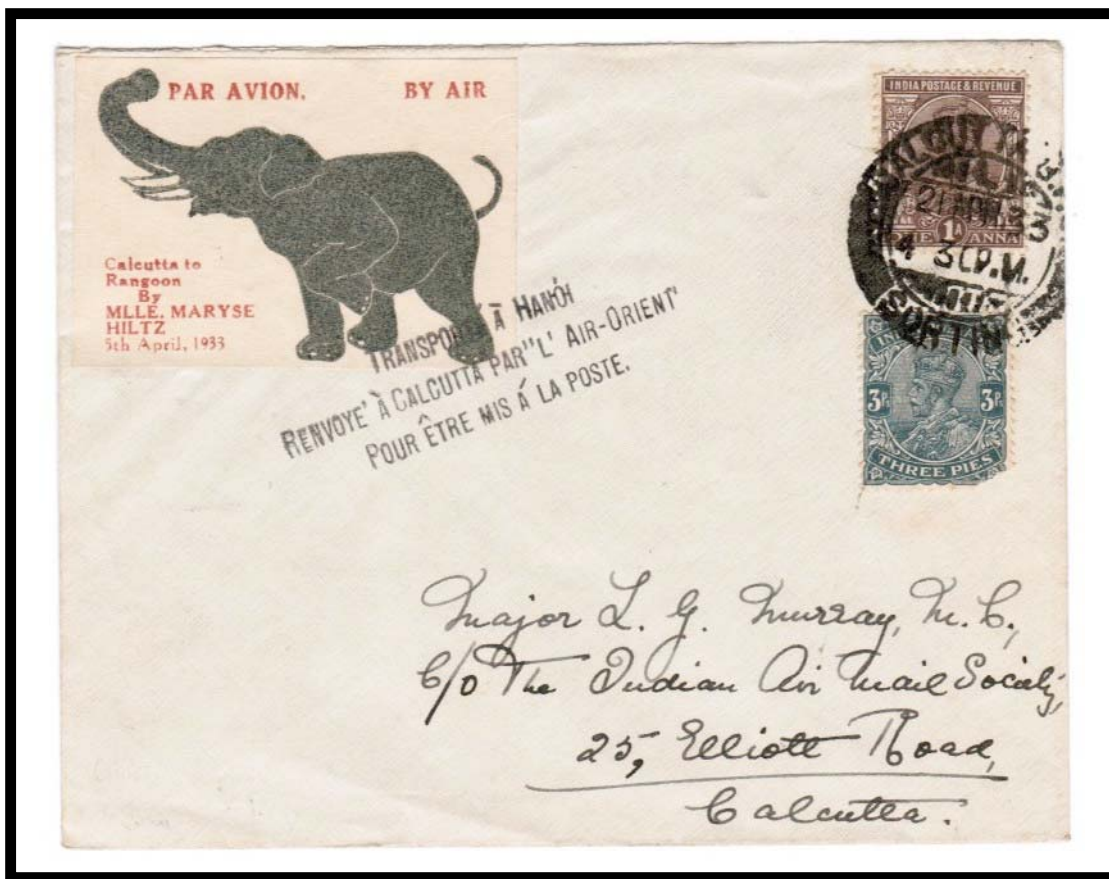
REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 9-3 33

Calcutta-Rangoon  
21 April 1933

Maryse Hiltz flew from Paris to Tokyo leaving on 1 April and arriving 6 April 1933. At Calcutta, she was given 90 letters with special labels for transport to Rangoon. Hiltz had forgotten about the letters until she had reached Hanoi. From there they were returned to Calcutta by Air Orient and deposited in the local mail stream.

TRANSPORTÉ À HANOÏ  
RENOVÉ À CALCUTTA PAR "L' AIR-ORIENT"  
POUR ÊTRE MIS À LA POSTE.



POSTAL MARKINGS

CALCUTTA G.P.O. SORTING 21 APR 33  
airmail label and Air Orient handstamp

REVERSE

Air Orient handstamp  
PARK STREET CALCUTTA 22 APR 33

Saigon – Marseille  
Accident of 23 April 1933

An Air Orient seaplane left Corfu on 23 April 1933 for Naples. A downdraft in a snowstorm caused the plane to crash into a mountain. After five days of searching, the wreckage was found. Two crew and three passengers died but one crewmember and two passengers survived.

Mail scattered around the crash site was collected and sent on to Marseille arriving on 2 May.



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 15-4 33 (blue)  
registration label

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 15-4 33  
ARRIVE MARSEILLE 3-5 33

Saigon – Marseille  
Forced Stop of 24 June 1933

Following engine problems, the west bound Air Orient plane made a forced stop at Simi, about 30 kilometers north of Rhodes. The mail was carried by a following plane, which left Beirut on the 25th. Letters were postmarked upon arrival at Marseille's airport on 26 June.



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 17-6 33  
airmail rate certification handstamp

REVERSAL

MARSEILLE-GARE-AVION B~~CHES~~ DU RHONE 26 • 6 1933

Saigon – Paris  
Accident of 6 October 1933

The westbound Air Orient plane damaged the undercarriage and fuselage when landing at Baghdad. The crew and the four passengers were not hurt. Along with the people, the mail traveled by a following relief plane which reached Paris on 10 October.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HANOI R.P. TONKIN 27-9 33

registration label

Saigon-Marseille routing instruction

REVERSAL

MARSEILLE-GARE-AVION BCHES DU RHONE 26 • 6 1933



National Air Day  
12 November 1933

To commemorate National Air Day, the Post Office employed a winged hexagonal cachet on airmail letters for the 12 November Air Orient departure from Saigon. It is uncertain why 12 November, in particular, had been selected for commemoration.



POSTAL MARKINGS

CHAUDOC COCHINCHINE 10-11 33  
airmail and registration labels  
commemorative cachet

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 10-11 32

National Air Day  
12 November 1933

A prominent local philatelist, Arthur Walthausen, was instrumental in commemorating air events by providing handstamps to the Post Office. This certification of destruction attests that two copper handstamps for National Air Day were demolished in the presence of observers. The certificate also notes that only black ink was authorized for the handstamp.



Sous-Direction des P.T.T.  
Circonscription du Sud.

**COPIE**

PROCES-VERBAL DE DESTRUCTION

Ce jour, le 14 novembre 1933, s'est présenté en nos bureaux Monsieur Arthur WALTHAUSEN, Président de l'Association Amicale Philathélique Indo-chinoise de Saïgon à l'effet de demander la destruction des deux cachets tampons en cuivre offerts par lui à l'Administration des Postes, Télégraphes et Téléphones à l'occasion de la Fête Nationale de l'Air le Douze Novembre 1933 pour oblitérer le courrier de Saïgon emporté le même jour par l'avion de la Compagnie Air-France pour Marseille.

Déférant à sa demande nous avons procédé à la destruction de ces deux cachets en présence de M. Walthausen et de MM. Chevron, Sous Directeur et Chaudier, Agent mécanicien principal dont la signature qui en fait foi est apposée au bas des présentes.

L'encre grasse noire seule a été autorisée pour l'application de ces cachets spéciaux.

En foi de quoi nous avons dressé le présent procès-verbal, signé ensemble et délivré une copie à Monsieur Walthausen.

Saïgon, le 14 Novembre                      signé:

Walthausen,  
Chevron, Chaudier

National Air Day  
12 November 1933

In addition to the commemorative cachet, sponsors printed special stationery for the occasion. Printed at the top of the envelope is "JOURNÉE NATIONALE DE L'AIR – SAIGON 12 NOVEMBRE 1933."



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 11-11 33  
commemorative cachet

REVERSE  
NICE ARRIVE ALPES-MARITIMES

Paris – Saigon  
21-28 December 1933

The tri-motor Emeraude departed Paris on 21 December 1933 with a number of aviation officials including Maurice Nogues, head of Air France. No special cachets were used for the outbound trip from France to Indochina. With a stop in Marseilles on 22 December, the flight reached Saigon on 28 December.



POSTAL MARKINGS

PARIS XIV AV. D'ORLEANS 20-12 33

REVERSE

PARIS R.P. AVION 20 • XII 1933

HANOI R.P. TONKIN 1-1 34

Saigon – Paris  
6 January 1934

The Emerald was a three-engine Dewoitine 332 airplane that had made a promotional trip to Indochina for Air France. On the return trip, its landing gear was damaged during a rough landing at Gwalior. Mail was sent on by the regular Air France plane.

A special flight cachet was applied at Saigon to commemorate the return trip.



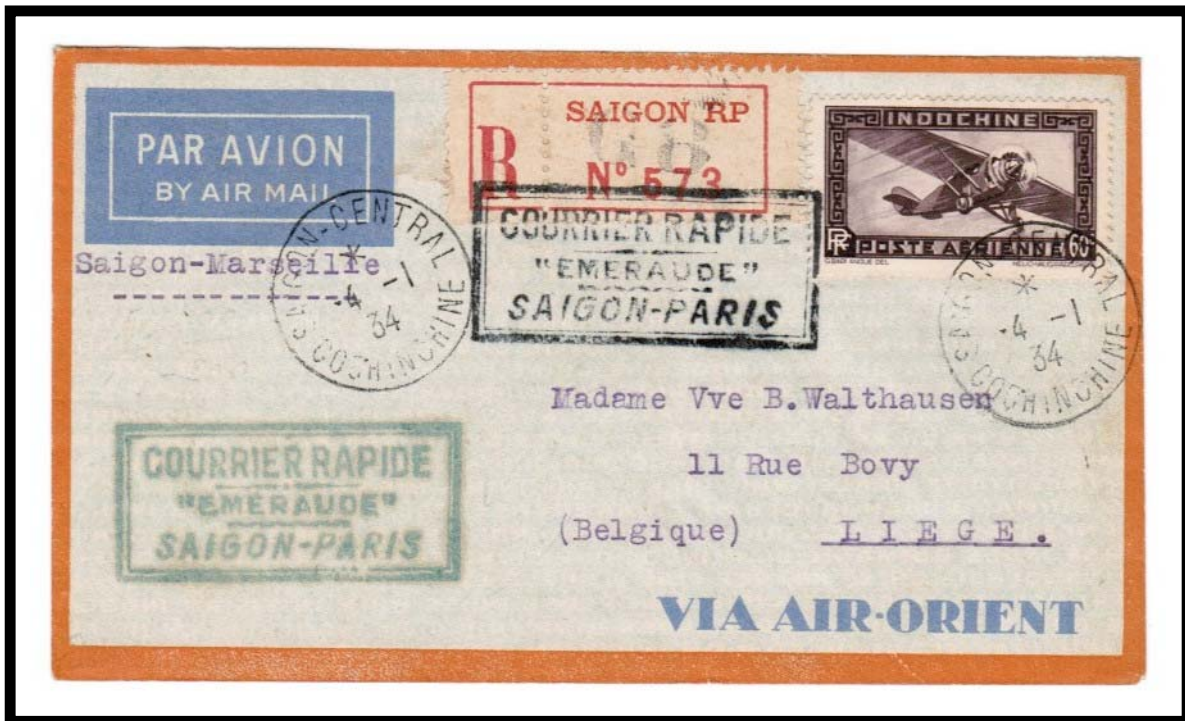
COURRIER RAPIDE  
"EMERAUDE"  
SAIGON-PARIS

POSTAL MARKINGS  
CHAUDOC COCHINCHINE 3-1 34  
airmail label  
flight cachet  
REVERSE  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 4-1 34

Saigon – Paris  
6 January 1934

The Emeraude left at Saigon at 3 o'clock on 5 January 1934. The plane had a crew of three and several notable passengers. After leaving Marseille, all perished in the crash of the Emeraude including Pasquier, Governor General of Indochina, and Maurice Nogues, General Manager of Air France.

Mail had been removed from the Emeraude prior to the crash. Cachets were applied in black ink as well as green ink (perhaps because "emeraude" is "emerald" in English). This cover bears examples of both colors.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 4-1 34  
registration label  
flight cachets

Saigon – Paris  
6 January 1934

Air France flew the Emeraude on several well-publicized trips to Europe and Africa, so the long-distance trip to Indochina was no doubt in the news. The plane left for Saigon on 21 December and arrived on 28 December 1933. As part of the plane's publicity, specially printed envelopes were made available for the Emeraude's return trip.



COURRIER RAPIDE  
"EMERAUDE"  
SAIGON-PARIS

POSTAL MARKINGS  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 4-1 34  
flight cachet

Saigon – Paris  
6 January 1934



PHOTOGRAPH OF EMERAUDE



M. Pierre Cot, ministre de l'Air, et M. Delesalle, sous-secrétaire d'Etat à l'Air,  
devant une partie des décombres de l'*Emeraude*.

PERIOD MAGAZINE PICTURE OF CRASH SITE



Vientiane – Luang Prabang  
5 February 1934

A small amount of mail was carried on Lieutenant Retourna's Lao study mission. Letters to Luang Prabang at the terminus of the outbound leg were handstamped with Vientiane's stylized bird cachet.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
VIENTIANE LAOS 5-2 34  
stylized bird cachet  
REVERSE  
LUANG-PRABANG LAOS 5-2 34

Luang-Prabang – Vientiane  
6 February 1934

The Luang-Prabang to Vientiane leg was the first part of the return trip of the study mission by the military's CAMS 37 seaplane.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
LUANG-PRABANG LAOS 6-2 34  
airmail label  
REVERSE  
VIENTIANE LAOS 6-2 34

Vientiane – Saigon  
7 February 1934

The return of the military study mission into Laos was accomplished on 7 February 1934. Letters were carried for 5 cents, the regular postage rate, with no surcharge for airmail transport.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
VIENTIANE LAOS 7-2 34  
airmail label  
REVERSE  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 8-2 34

Paris – Indochina  
7 May 1934

In May 1934, the French post office selected some mail that had been franked at the surface rate and carried it by airmail to promote the service. A handstamp advertised the special handling.

LETTRE TRANSPORTÉE  
EXCEPTIONNELLEMENT PAR AVION  
À TITRE DE PROPAGANDE



POSTAL MARKINGS

PARIS -115 R. DES SAINTS-PERES 7 • V 1934  
promotional handstamp

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 16 MAI 34  
HANOI R.P. TONKIN 18-5 34

Saigon – Marseille  
Accident of 19 August 1934

The weekly Air Orient mail plane collided with a number of vultures that frequent the skies over Allahabad. Because the plane was damaged, the mail was sent onward by train to Karachi, where it connected with air service reaching Marseille on 30 August. No special markings were applied to the mail.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HUE ANNAM 16-8 34

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 18-8 34

PARIS X RUE HIPPOLYTE LEBAS 31 • VIII 1934

Saigon – Hanoi  
2 November 1934

The military flight, which had traveled from Hanoi to Saigon via Pakse, Laos, departed for Hanoi from Saigon for the return flight on 2 November 1934.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 2-11 34  
REVERSE  
HANOI R-P TONKIN NOV 34

Saigon – Hanoi  
18 November 1934

Air France conducted a trial flight from Saigon to Hanoi 18 November 1934. To promote airmail service, a rectangular handstamp was applied to mail on the trial flight.

TRANSPORTE EXCEPTIONNELLEMENT  
PAR AVION DE  
SAIGON A HANOI



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 17-11 34  
exceptional transport handstamp

REVERSE

NINH-BINH TONKIN 19-1 34

Luang-Prabang – Saigon  
23 November 1934

Mail was carried on the flight from Luang Prabang, Laos to Saigon. A military crew in a CAMS 37 seaplane accomplished the flight.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
LUANG-PRABANG LAOS 23-11 34  
REVERSE  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 24 NOV 34



Hanoi – Saigon  
24 November 1934

After Air France's exploratory trip from Saigon to Hanoi, the plane returned to Saigon within the week on 24 November. No special markings were used to commemorate the flight. The postage requirement for this internal airmail service was only 10 cents as compared to 36 cents for airmail delivery to France.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
HANOI R.P. TONKIN 23-11 34  
REVERSE  
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 24 -11 34

Saigon – Hanoi  
24 December 1934

Mail carried on Air France's Christmas Eve 1934 flight from Saigon to Hanoi received a handstamp promoting airmail service.

TRANSPORTÉ EXCEPTIONNELLEMENT  
PAR AVION DE  
SAIGON À HANOI



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 23-12 34  
flight cachet

REVERSE

HANOI R-P TONKIN 24 DEC 34

Hanoi – Paris  
28 December 1934 – 10 January 1935

Air France continued making exploratory connections from Hanoi to Saigon in its interest of developing the Indochinese market for air services. This airmail letter traveled via one of these flights at the end of December 1934.



POSTAL MARKINGS  
HANOI TONKIN 28-12 34  
framed Saigon-Marseille routing instruction  
REVERSE  
PARIS X DISTRIBUTION 10 • I 1935