

British RAF 1936 Goodwill Flight

By Tom Reyman

The British Royal Air Force (RAF) dispatched three "Singapore III" flying boats from Singapore to Manila on February 13, 1936 to begin a "Goodwill Tour". This tour was to fly from Manila, Philippine Islands to Tokyo, Japan with several stops along the way including Hong Kong, Amoy (Szeming or Xiamen), and Shanghai. One of the three aircraft exhibited engine troubles after arrival at Manila, therefore two aircraft continued the tour.

The aircraft left Manila on February 16, 1936. The third aircraft was repaired and joined the other two as they arrived at Amoy/Szeming/Xiamen on February 23. The subject cover was one that completed this leg of the tour. All the posted mail from Manila carried on the tour received the cachet "Via Flying Boat of the British Royal Air Force" and the date of departure from Manila of February 16. The cover shows the machine imprint of the Szeming receipt.



The planes continued their journey and had reached Shanghai with the next planned stop being Tokyo. On February 26, there was an attempted military coup in Tokyo and the tour plans were changed. Mail for Tokyo was taken to Tokyo by surface means and the British aircraft continued the tour back to Hong Kong and then to French Indo China.

Reference:

- American Air Mail Catalogue, Volume 1, 7th Edition; 2014, National Color Graphics, Spokane, Washington; Page 320.

Tom Reyman is a Nevada Stamp Study Society member whose collecting interests are U.S. FAM covers, general Air Mail covers, Canadian Semi-Official Air Mail stamps and covers, and Cape Breton (Nova Scotia) covers.