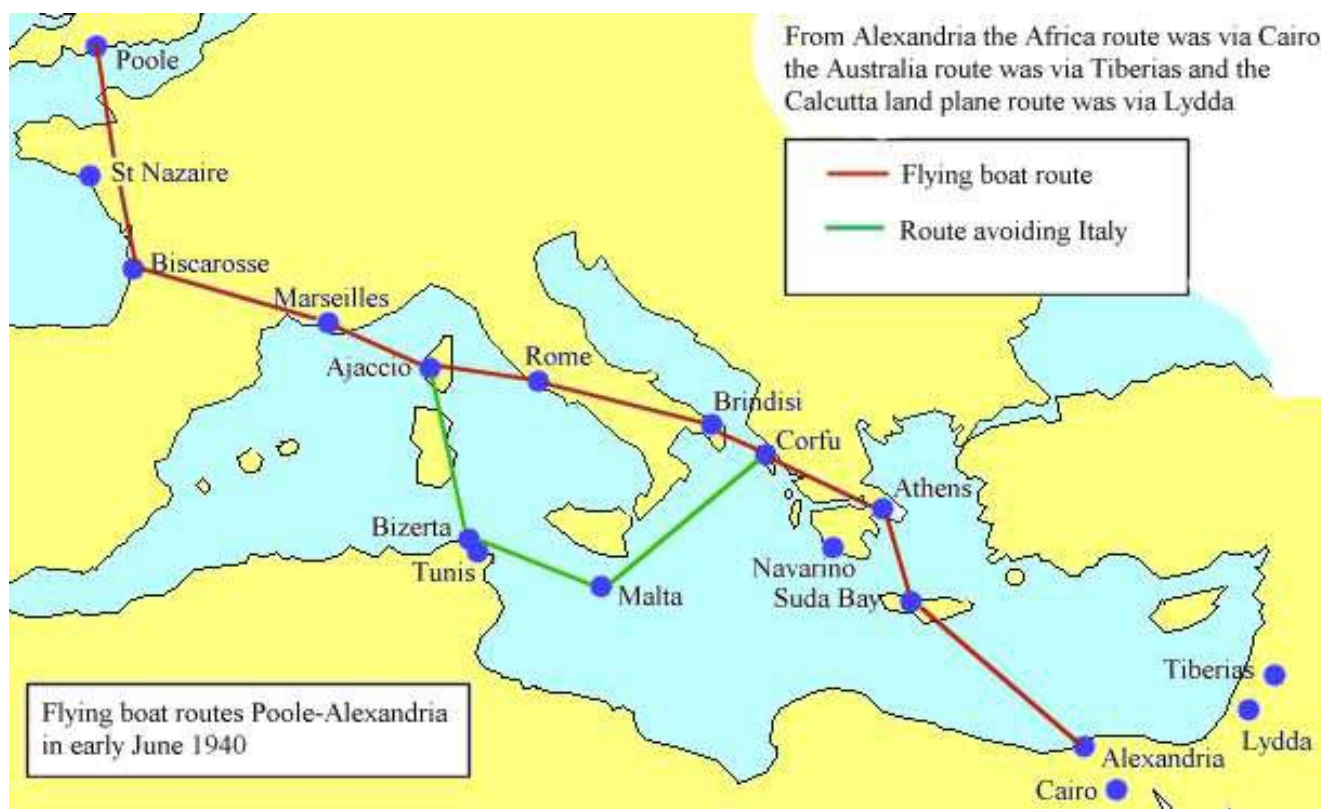


Chapter 1: Air Mail Services in Early June 1940

1.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the *BOAC* air mail services between the UK and Egypt, India, Malaya, Australia, New Zealand and Africa in June 1940 that completed their normal service despite Italy entering WW II on 10th June.

The British flying boat terminal had been moved from Hythe (Southampton) to Poole (Dorset) for a short time in September 1939 and was moved again to Poole on 4th January 1940 [Win]. At the beginning of May 1940, the flying boat route through the Mediterranean for both Australian and South African flights was: Poole – Biscarosse – Marseilles – Lake Bracciano (Rome) – Brindisi – Corfu – Athens – Suda Bay – Alexandria [Wil]. The landplane route through the Mediterranean was London (Heston) – Marseilles – Tunis (night stop) – Malta – Sollum (Egypt) – Alexandria.



Before the war, Hythe – Marignane (Marseilles) had often been flown without a stop, but on 27th August 1939, France had prohibited flights east of a line Calais – Paris – Lyon – Marseilles and so a more western route was taken between Britain and Marseilles with a stop at Biscarosse (with St Nazaire as an alternative) [AH].

An alternative route avoiding Italy was also explored at the beginning of the war and there was an experimental flight on 13th September 1939 over the route Poole – St. Nazaire – Biscarosse –

Marseilles – Bizerta (Tunisia) – Malta – Navarino (Greece) – Athens [Win] which was a useful preparation for 10th June.

As the entry of Italy into World War II was not unexpected, there were changes in the service in May and June. According to *CAIS 47 (8th May)* [Win], with the new timetable of 1st May, Rome was no longer used as a night stop which were now at Marseilles and Athens on the services from Poole and at Athens and Biscarosse on the services from Alexandria. However, according to the *BOAC* aircraft movement charts, Marseilles was used as the night stop in both directions in the second half of May [BA].

There were further changes in early June. The last services with Marseilles as a night stop were *CE 226* on 31st May / 1st June and *SW 243* on 1st / 2nd June. Ajaccio (Corsica) was introduced as the normal replacement night stop with *DS 276*, *XE 276* and *CW 222* all on 2nd / 3rd June [BA] although *CAIS 52* reports the start being on 6th June. A route avoiding Italy was introduced on 10th June. It was: Poole – Biscarosse – Marseilles – Ajaccio (night stop) – Bizerta – Malta – Corfu (night stop) – Athens [Win].

As well as the flying boat service, there had been a landplane service between Heston and Calcutta with the Heston – Alexandria section being by *Lockheed 14*, the Alexandria – Karachi section by *Handley Page HP 42* and the Karachi – Calcutta section by *Armstrong Whitworth Atalanta* aircraft. After accidents, the *HP 42* aircraft were withdrawn in March 1940 and an extra weekly Poole – Karachi flying boat service introduced although the Heston – Alexandria and Karachi – Calcutta landplane services continued.

Italy entered WWII on 10th June 1940 and on that date a letter from the Air Ministry to the GPO in London stated [EAS]:

“With reference to the Empire flying boat service, it has now been decided in view of the developments of the military situation, to suspend forthwith all services west of Egypt.

Arrangements are being made to substitute a landplane service via the Sahara, Kano, Khartoum to connect at Cairo with the flying boats operating eastwards to India and Australia and southwards to South Africa.”

The Sahara service is discussed in Chapter 5.

1.2 UK departures that completed their Mediterranean journey by 10th June

As well as the scheduled flying boat flights to Durban (*DS*), Sydney (*SE*) and Karachi (*CE*), there were three extra flights *XE 276*, *XE 252* and *XS 277* which avoided Italy and had an overnight stop in Malta.

According to *CAIS 52* on 12th June, Ajaccio was substituted for Marseilles as a night stop on 6th June “after the French authorities had requested that aircraft should not remain overnight at Marseilles” [Win]. However, the last flight from Poole to use Marseilles as a night stop was *CE 226* on the night of 31st May / 1st June and after that Ajaccio was a night stop on all flights from Poole [BA].



Figure 1.1 Postmarked in London on 31st May and again on 1st June in London. Flown on SE 252.

SE 252				XE 252			
Poole	dep	2 June	Cooe	Poole	dep	5 June	Corinna
Biscarosse	o'n	2-3 June	Cooe	Biscarosse		5 June	Corinna
Marseilles		3 June	Cooe	Marseilles		5 June	Corinna
Ajaccio	o'n	3-4 Jun	Cooe	Ajaccio	o'n	5-6 Jun	Corinna
Brindisi		4 Jun	Cooe	Malta	o'n	6-7 Jun	Corinna
Athens	o'n	4-5 Jun	Cooe	Athens	o'n	7-8 Jun	Corinna
Suda Bay		5 Jun	Cooe	Suda Bay		8 Jun	Corinna
Alexandria	o'n	5-6 Jun	Cooe	Alexandria	o'n	8-9 Jun	Corinna
Alexandria	rtn	6 June	Cooe	Basra	o'n	9-10 Jun	Corinna
Alexandria	dep	7 June	Carpentaria	Karachi	o'n	10-11 Jun	Corinna
Basra	o'n	7-8 Jun	Carpentaria	Calcutta	o'n	11-12 Jun	Corinna
Karachi	o'n	8-9 Jun	Carpentaria	Bangkok	o'n	12-13 Jun	Corinna
Calcutta	o'n	9-10 Jun	Carpentaria	Singapore	o'n	13-14 Jun	Corinna
Bangkok	o'n	10-11 Jun	Carpentaria	Sourabaya	o'n	14-15 Jun	Corinna
Singapore	o'n	11-12 Jun	Carpentaria	Darwin	o'n	15-16 Jun	Corinna
Sourabaya	o'n	12-13 Jun	Carpentaria	Townsville	o'n	16-17 Jun	Corinna
Darwin	o'n	13-14 Jun	Carpentaria	Sydney	arr	17 June	Corinna
Townsville	o'n	14-15 Jun	Carpentaria				
Sydney	arr	15 June	Carpentaria				
trans-Tasman 20 June Awarua				trans-Tasman 20 June Awarua			

Only the *Empire Airmail Services* that were still to cross the Mediterranean were suspended after 10th June. SE 252 and XE 252 / SE 253 continued and arrived in Sydney on 15th and 17th June respectively.

They connected with the *TEAL* service on the *Awarua* that flew from Sydney to Auckland on 20th June. The cover in Figure 1.1 is postmarked in London on 31st May and 1st June and was likely flown on *SE 252* that left Poole on 2nd June arriving in Sydney on 15th June and flown to Auckland on 20th June. A cover postmarked in Sheffield on 31st May was received in Carterton near Wellington on 21st June and would also have been flown on *SE 252*.

The Bangkok – Hong Kong service was via Udorn, Hanoi and Fort Bayard (present day Zhanjiang) and flight details are discussed in Section 1.5. A cover postmarked in Sussex on 4th June and addressed to Saigon has a Hanoi transit on 13th June and a Saigon arrival datestamp on 15th June. It was likely flown on *XE 252*, arriving in Bangkok on 12th June and then flown Bangkok – Hanoi by *BOAC* on *BH 244* on 13th June [BA].

DS 277

Poole	dep	5 June	Cleopatra
Biscarosse		5 June	Cleopatra
Marseilles		5 June	Cleopatra
Ajaccio	o'n	5-6 Jun	Cleopatra
Bracciano		6 Jun	Cleopatra
Brindisi		6 Jun	Cleopatra
Athens	o'n	6-7 Jun	Cleopatra
Suda Bay		7 Jun	Cleopatra
Alexandria	o'n	7-8 Jun	Cleopatra
Khartoum	o'n	8-9 Jun	Cleopatra
Kisumu	o'n	9-10 Jun	Cleopatra
Mozambique	o'n	10-11 Jun	Cleopatra
Durban	arr	11 June	Cleopatra

XS 277

Poole	dep	6 June	Clyde
Biscarosse		6 June	Clyde
Marseilles		6 June	Clyde
Ajaccio	o'n	6-7 Jun	Clyde
Malta	o'n	7-8 Jun	Clyde
Brindisi?		8 Jun	Clyde
Suda Bay		8 Jun	Clyde
Alexandria	arr	8 Jun	Clyde

According to *CAIS 52* [Win], flown at the request of the Air Ministry and important freight was flown.

Both *Corinna* with *XE 252* and *Clifton* with *SE 253* arrived in Alexandria on 8th June and they flew together to Karachi arriving on 10th June. *Corinna* then continued to Sydney on 11th – 17th June and likely flew both the *XE 252* and the *SE 253* mail. According to the *Straits Times* of 13th June, there was a delivery of air mail from London to box holders in Singapore on 13th June and a general delivery on the 14th. That corresponds to *XE 252* / *SE 253*.

The cover in Figure 1.2 is postmarked in Stirling on 2nd June and is addressed to Coimbatore in South India where it was backstamped on 13th June. It has a Madras (D) censor mark and would be flown to Karachi on *XE 252* on 5th – 10th June and then by *Tata Airlines* from Karachi to Madras on 11th – 12th June.

SE 253

Poole	dep	6 June	Clifton
Biscarosse		6 June	Clifton
Marseilles		6 June	Clifton
Ajaccio	o'n	6-7 Jun	Clifton
Bracciano		7 Jun	Clifton
Brindisi		7 Jun	Clifton
Athens	o'n	7-8 Jun	Clifton
Suda Bay		8 Jun	Clifton
Alexandria		8-9 Jun	Clifton
Basra	o'n	9-10 Jun	Clifton
Karachi	arr	10 Jun	Clifton

The mail was then flown from Karachi with *XE 252* on 11th June.

CE 228

Poole	dep	7 June	Circe
Biscarosse		7 June	Circe
Marseilles		7 June	Circe
Ajaccio	o'n	7-8 Jun	Circe
Bracciano		8 Jun	Circe
Brindisi		8 Jun	Circe
Athens	o'n	8-9 Jun	Circe
Suda Bay		9 Jun	Circe
Alexandria	o'n	9-10 Jun	Circe
Basra	o'n	10-11 Jun	Circe
Karachi	arr	11 Jun	Circe
Karachi	dep	12 Jun	Aurora & Astrea
Allahabad	arr	12-13 Jun	Aurora & Astrea
Calcutta	arr	13 Jun	Aurora & Astrea

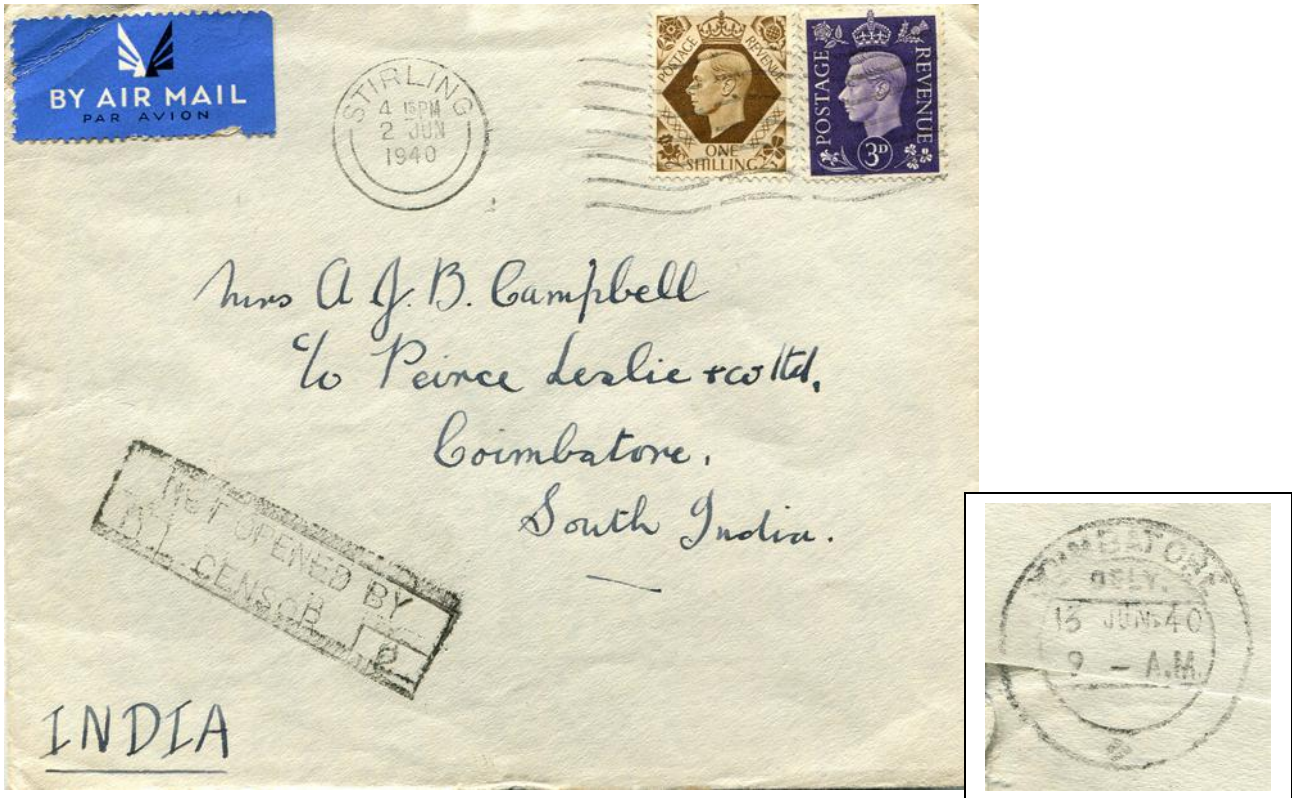


Figure 1.2 Postmarked Stirling on 2nd June, addressed to Coimbatore. Likely flown on XE 252.

The cover in Figure 1.3 is postmarked in London on 5th June and is addressed to the North West Frontier of India where it has a Peshawar transit on 12th June. It was likely flown on SE 253 which arrived in Karachi on 10th June and then completed its journey by rail.



Figure 1.3 Postmarked London on 5th June and addressed to India. Likely flown on SE 253.

The *Atalanta* service between Karachi and Calcutta connected with the flying boat services between Poole and Karachi and had the same flight number. After arriving in Karachi on 11th June, the *CE 228* mail was flown to Calcutta by the two *Atalanta* aircraft *Aurora* and *Astrea* arriving on 13 June.

The cover in Figure 1.4 is postmarked in London at 2.45 pm on 6th June and addressed to Calcutta where it was redirected at 2 pm on 14th June and has an arrival mark in Panposh on 16th June. It was too late to be sent from Poole on *SE 253* on 6th June and so was likely sent on *CE 228* which flew Poole – Calcutta on 7th – 13th June. The cover has a Bombay *Not Opened by Censor C 17* handstamp which seems to indicate that it was offloaded in Karachi and sent to Calcutta via Bombay.



Figure 1.4: Cover postmarked in London on 6th June and addressed to Calcutta.

b) Heston – Alexandria landplane service

In addition to the flying boat service, there was a twice-weekly *Lockheed 14* service between Heston and Alexandria. The route was Heston – Bordeaux – Marseilles – Tunis (night stop) – Malta – Sollum (Egypt) – Alexandria.

AE 227

Heston	dep	4 Jun	Lothair
Tunis	o'n	4-5 Jun	Lothair
Alexandria	arr	5 Jun	Lothair

AE 228

Heston	dep	7 Jun	Lafayette
Tunis	o'n	7-8 Jun	Lafayette
Alexandria	arr	8 Jun	Lafayette

The last flight from Heston was *AE 228* on 7th June arriving in Alexandria on 8th June.

1.3 UK arrivals that completed their Mediterranean journey by 10th June

According to *CAIS 52* on 12th June, Ajaccio was substituted for Marseilles as a night stop on 6th June [Win]. However, the last service from Alexandria to use Marseilles as a night stop was *SW 243* on the night of 1st / 2nd June. On occasions, St Nazaire or Biscarosse was used as a night stop instead of Ajaccio on services from Alexandria.

DN 274				trans-Tasman 22 May Awarua			
Durban	dep	29 May	Cordelia	Sydney	dep	25 May	Clio
Mozambique	o'n	29-30 May	Cordelia	Townsville	o'n	25-26 May	Clio
Kisumu	o'n	30-31 May	Cordelia	Darwin	o'n	26-27 May	Clio
Malakal	o'n	31/5-1/6	Cordelia	Sourabaya	o'n	27-28 May	Clio
Alexandria	arr	1 June	Cordelia	Singapore	arr	28 May	Clio
Alexandria	dep	2 June	Caledonia	Singapore	dep	29 May	Champion
Suda Bay		2 June	Caledonia	Bangkok	o'n	29-30 May	Champion
Athens	o'n	2-3 June	Caledonia	Calcutta	o'n	30-31 May	Champion
Brindisi		3 Jun	Caledonia	Karachi	o'n	31/5-1/6	Champion
Bracciano		3 Jun	Caledonia	Basra	o'n	1-2 Jun	Champion
Marseilles		3 June	Caledonia	Alexandria	arr	2 Jun	Champion
Biscarosse		3 June	Caledonia	Alexandria	dep	3 Jun	Cordelia
St Nazaire	o'n	3-4 June	Caledonia	Suda Bay		3 Jun	Cordelia
Poole	arr	4 June	Caledonia	Athens	o'n	3-4 Jun	Cordelia
				Brindisi		4 June	Cordelia
				Marseilles		4 June	Cordelia
				Biscarosse	o'n	4-5 Jun	Cordelia
				Poole	arr	5 June	Cordelia

The Auckland – Sydney service was due to be flown on Monday 20th May and connect with *SW 243*. However, due to a cyclone over the Tasman Sea, the flight was postponed until Wednesday 22nd May [EP]. The cover in Figure 1.5 would likely be on that flight and would therefore miss the connection with *SW 243* and connect instead with *SW 244*.



Figure 1.5: Postmarked Wellington on Saturday at 11 am on 18th May. Tasman mail closed at 12noon.

XW 244

Alexandria	dep	4 Jun	Champion
Suda Bay		4 Jun	Champion
Malta	o'n	4-5 June	Champion
Bizerta		5 June	Champion
Marseilles		5 June	Champion
Biscarosse	o'n	5-6 Jun	Champion
Poole	arr	6 June	Champion

DN 275

Durban	dep	1 June	Cassiopeia
Mozambique	o'n	1-2 Jun	Cassiopeia
Kisumu	o'n	2-3 Jun	Cassiopeia
Khartoum	o'n	3-4 Jun	Cassiopeia
Alexandria	o'n	4-5 June	Cassiopeia
Suda Bay		5 June	Cassiopeia
Athens	o'n	5-6 June	Cassiopeia
Brindisi		6 Jun	Cassiopeia
Bracciano		6 Jun	Cassiopeia
Ajaccio	o'n	6-7 Jun	Cassiopeia
Marseilles		7 June	Cassiopeia
Biscarosse		7 June	Cassiopeia
Poole	arr	7 June	Cassiopeia

The Calcutta – Karachi leg of service *CW 224* was flown by the *Atalanta* landplane *Aurora*.

trans-Tasman 27 May Awarua**SW 245**

Sydney	dep	29 May	Coolangatta
Townsville	o'n	29-30 May	Coolangatta
Darwin	o'n	30-31 May	Coolangatta
Sourabaya	o'n	31/5-1/6	Coolangatta
Singapore	arr	1 June	Coolangatta
Singapore	dep	2 June	Clio
Bangkok	o'n	2-3 Jun	Clio
Calcutta	o'n	3-4 Jun	Clio
Karachi	o'n	4-5 Jun	Clio
Basra	o'n	5-6 Jun	Clio
Alexandria	o'n	6-7 Jun	Clio
Suda Bay		7 Jun	Clio
Athens	o'n	7-8 Jun	Clio
Brindisi		8 Jun	Clio
Bracciano		8 Jun	Clio
Ajaccio	o'n	8-9 Jun	Clio
Marseilles		9 June	Clio
Poole	arr	9 June	Clio

CW 224

Calcutta	dep	4 Jun	Aurora
Delhi	o'n	4-5 Jun	Aurora
Karachi	arr	5 Jun	Aurora
Karachi	dep	6 June	Cathay
Basra	o'n	6-7 June	Cathay
Alexandria	arr	7 June	Cathay
Alexandria	dep	8 June	Cooee
Suda Bay		8 June	Cooee
Athens	o'n	8-9 Jun	Cooee
Brindisi		9 June	Cooee
Bracciano		9 June	Cooee
Marseilles		9 June	Cooee
Biscarosse		9 June	Cooee
St Nazaire	o'n	9-10 Jun	Cooee
Poole	arr	10 June	Cooee

This was the last *BOAC* flight to land in Italy.

Mail flown Auckland – Sydney on 27th May would connect with *SW 245*. An example is in Figure 1.6. The cover in Figure 1.7 is postmarked in Sydney on 28th May and redirected in Aldershot on 10th June and so was also flown on *SW 245*.

Mail from Hong Kong to connect at Bangkok with *SW 245* was flown by *Delphinus* on 2nd June on *HB 242*. Mail for Hong Kong flown on *SW 245* was flown from Bangkok by *Delia* on 3rd June on service *BH 241*.

The cover in Figure 1.8 is postmarked on 1st June 1940 in Bombay where it was passed by the censor (*C 16*). It is addressed to New York and is franked with 1 Rupee 5½ Annas which, according to Boyle [Boy], was the rate for *BOAC* to Athens, air by *Ala Littoria* to Lisbon and then by *Pan American* on *FAM 18* from Lisbon to New York. If that routing had been followed then it would be flown from Karachi on either *SW 245* or *CW 224* and offloaded at Athens. However, the two red parallel *Jusqu'a* bars cancelling the air mail etiquette were applied in London [McQ] which indicates that it was flown on to Poole and went from the UK to New York by surface.

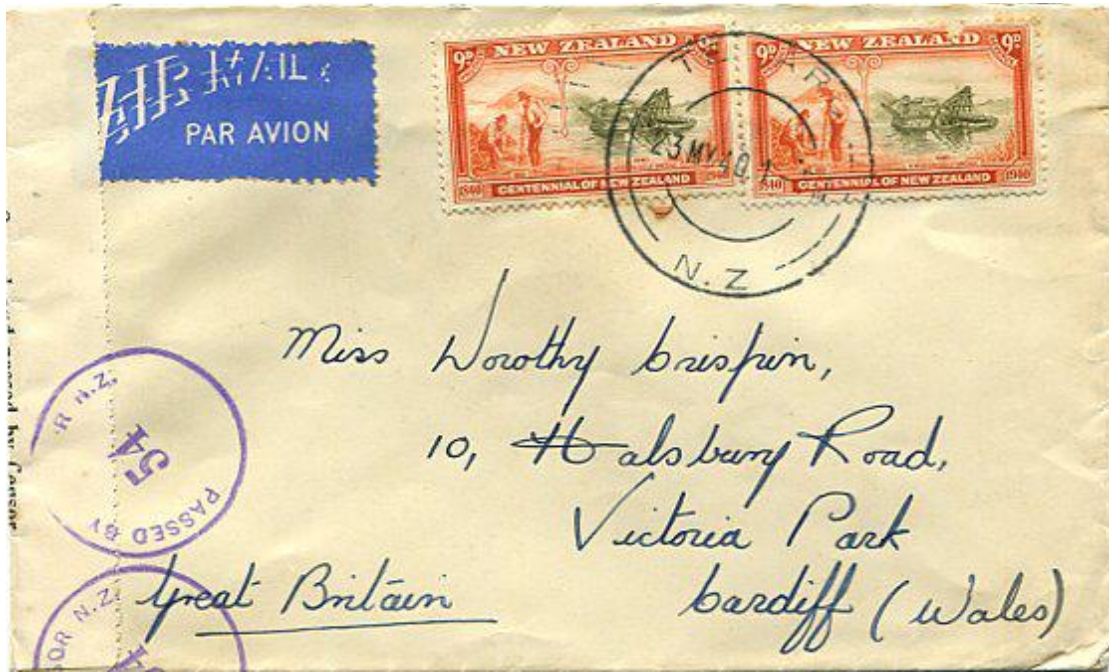


Figure 1.6: Cover postmarked Te Aro on 23rd May and censored in Wellington. Likely flown Auckland – Sydney on 28th May and then Sydney - Poole on last through flight SW 245 on 29th May - 9th June.



Figure 1.7: Postmarked Sydney 28th May, redirected in England on 10th June. Flown on SW 245.



Figure 1.8: India – USA, postmarked Bombay 1st June 1940. Flown on *SW 245* or *CW 224*

The cover in Figure 1.9 is postmarked in Napier on 21st May and is addressed to the *1st Australian Army Hospital* which was in Gaza, Palestine. It was flown Auckland – Sydney by *TEAL* on 27th May and on *SW 245* that left Sydney on 29th May and arrived in Calcutta on 3rd June. The cover was unloaded in Calcutta as it has a Calcutta transit mark on 4th June together with a Calcutta *Not Opened By Censor A 16* handstamp. It appears that censoring such mail in Calcutta was standard practice as two similarly censored covers sent to the same addressee in August are discussed in Chapter 7. The cover was possibly then flown on the land plane service *CW 224* on 4th June from Calcutta to Karachi and then on the connecting *CW 224* flying boat service from Karachi on 6th June or on *SW 246* on 8th June.

A registered airmail cover postmarked in Singapore on 30th May and addressed to Davos Platz in eastern Switzerland has a Brindisi transit mark on 8th June and a Milan transit on 12th June. Unfortunately, the Switzerland transit mark is incomplete. *SW 245* left Singapore on 2nd June arrived in Brindisi on 8th June. The cover was therefore travelling through Italy when Italy entered the war. Another air mail cover to Switzerland, this time to Montreux near the French border and postmarked in New Zealand on 20th May, has a Marseilles *jusqu'a* handstamp and so was offloaded there before continuing to Switzerland by surface. Was it the case that mail to Switzerland was offloaded at different points depending on its destination within Switzerland?



Figure 1.9: Cover postmarked in Napier on 21st May and addressed Palestine.

b) Alexandria – Heston landplane service

The *Lockheed 14* service between Alexandria and Heston was twice a week and the route was Alexandria – Sollum (Egypt) – Malta – Tunis (night stop) – Marseilles – Bordeaux – Heston.

AW 223				AW 224			
Alexandria	dep	3 June	Leander	Alexandria	dep	8 June	Lothair
Tunis	o'n	3-4 Jun	Leander	Tunis	o'n	8-9 Jun	Lothair
Heston	arr	4 Jun	Leander	Heston	o'n	9 Jun	Lothair

The last landplane service *AW 224* left Alexandria on 8th June and arrived in Heston on 9th June. *AW 225* was cancelled although it is listed in [AH].

1.4 Flights in the Mediterranean on 10th June.

According to *CAIS 52* on 12th June, a new route avoiding Italy was introduced on 10th June [Win] and was reported in *The Straits Times* of 10th June [SN]. In both directions, the new route between Poole and Athens was Biscarosse – Marseilles – Ajaccio (night stop) – Bizerta (Tunisia) – Malta – Corfu (night stop). On the morning of the 10th, *SE 254 (Caledonia)* was at Ajaccio while *DN 276 (Cathay)* was at Corfu and they both followed this new route.

a) Departures from Poole

DS 278 was flown from Athens to Alexandria on 10th June and so was out of the danger area. Both *DS 278* and *SE 254* continued to their destinations. The *Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser* on 17th June reported that the last British and Dutch (*KLM*) air mail planes from Europe had arrived on the previous day, that *KLM* had suspended their services and that it was likely that no British plane would arrive in Singapore for several weeks [SN].

The double rated registered cover in Figure 1.10, postmarked in London on 7th June, is addressed to the Governor of the Reserve Bank of New Zealand. It would have been flown from Poole on 9th June on

the last through flight *SE 254*, arriving in Sydney on 20th June. *SE 254* connected with the Sydney – Auckland *TEAL* service on 25th June.

DS 278				SE 254			
Poole	dep	8 June	Ceres	Poole	dep	9 June	Caledonia
Biscarosse		8 June	Ceres	Ajaccio	o'n	9-10 Jun	Caledonia
Ajaccio	o'n	8-9 Jun	Ceres	Bizerta		10 Jun	Caledonia
Bracciano		9 Jun	Ceres	Malta		10 Jun	Caledonia
Brindisi		9 Jun	Ceres	Corfu	o'n	10-11 Jun	Caledonia
Athens	o'n	9-10 Jun	Ceres	Athens		11 Jun	Caledonia
Alexandria	o'n	10-11 Jun	Ceres	Alexandria		11 Jun	Caledonia
Khartoum	o'n	11-12 Jun	Ceres	Tiberias	o'n	11-12 Jun	Caledonia
Kisumu	o'n	12-13 Jun	Ceres	Basra	o'n	12-13 Jun	Caledonia
Mozambique	o'n	13-14 Jun	Ceres	Karachi	arr	13 Jun	Caledonia
Durban	arr	14 June	Ceres	Karachi	dep	14 June	Circe
				Calcutta	o'n	14-15 Jun	Circe
				Bangkok	o'n	15-16 Jun	Circe
				Singapore	o'n	16-17 Jun	Circe
				Sourabaya	o'n	17-18 Jun	Circe
				Darwin	o'n	18-19 Jun	Circe
				Townsville	o'n	19-20 Jun	Circe
				Sydney	arr	20 June	Circe

trans-Tasman 25 June Awarua



Figure 1.10: Postmarked 7th June, flown UK – New Zealand on last through service *SE 254*.

An air mail cover postmarked in Hungary on 10th June is shown in [LK]. It was backstamped in Sydney on 20th June and so it must have joined *SE 254* at Athens on 11th June. It would then be flown Sydney – Auckland on 25th June and has a receiving mark in New Zealand on 28th June.

b) Arrivals at Poole

DN 276

Durban	dep	5 June	Castor
Mozambique	o'n	5-6 Jun	Castor
Kisumu	o'n	6-7 Jun	Castor
Khartoum	o'n	7-8 Jun	Castor
Alexandria	arr	8 June	Castor
Alexandria	dep	9 June	Cathay
Athens		9 June	Cathay
Corfu	o'n	9-10 Jun	Cathay
Malta		10 Jun	Cathay
Bizerta		10 June	Cathay
Ajaccio	o'n	10-11 Jun	Cathay
Biscarosse		11 June	Cathay
Poole	arr	11 June	Cathay

XN 276

Alexandria	dep	10 Jun	Clyde
Suda Bay		10 Jun	Clyde
Malta	o'n	10-11 Jun	Clyde
Biscarosse		11 June	Clyde
Poole	arr	11 Jun	Clyde

Carried RAF Officers including Air Chief Marshall, Sir Robert Brooke – Popham. Took off from Malta on 11th June with one of the four engines on half power and an Italian air raid expected [HM].

The registered cover in Figure 1.11 is postmarked in Bulawayo in Southern Rhodesia on Monday 3rd June and is addressed to London. The *Southern Rhodesia Air Services* 1940 timetable [ATT] shows a flight from Bulawayo to Salisbury on Tuesday 4th June and from Salisbury to Beira at 6.30 – 9.30 am on Wednesday 5th June which connected there with DN 276 on 5th June. That service arrived in Poole on 11th June and was the last through flight from Africa. The cover is franked with the *British South Africa Company's Golden Jubilee* commemoration set whose first day of issue was 3rd June.



Figure 1.11: Registered cover from Southern Rhodesia to UK, flown on DN 276.

The registered cover to Wellington in Figure 1.12 is postmarked in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia on 3rd June and is also franked with *Golden Jubilee* stamps. Although it has no air mail etiquette and insufficient postage, the transit datestamps indicate that it must have been flown. After being flown from Salisbury to Beira by *Southern Rhodesian Air Services* to connect with DN 276 on 5th June, it was offloaded in Alexandria on 8th June and flown on SE 253 that left Alexandria on 9th June. That flight arrived in Darwin on 15th June (there is a faint Darwin transit mark on that date) and in Sydney on 17th June and there is a Sydney registered (RS) transit marks on 17th June and a *Sydney Air* transit mark on 18th June.

It would then be flown Sydney – Auckland on 20th June and has *Out 21/6/40* in manuscript on the front that presumably denotes when it was dealt with by the receiving firm.

A cover postmarked in Khartoum on 5th June 1940 and addressed to Zurich has a Zurich receiving mark on 8th July. If it had been posted a couple of days earlier, it would have been sent on *DN 275* and offloaded in Italy on 6th June arriving in Switzerland a few days later. However, as the route of *DN 276* avoided Italy, the cover was presumably flown all the way to London and then took almost a month to get to Switzerland via Lisbon.



Figure 1.12: Registered cover from Southern Rhodesia to New Zealand, flown on *DN 276* and *SE 253*.

A third registered cover with the complete Golden Jubilee set and postmarked in Southern Rhodesia on 3rd June is shown in Figure 1.13. It is addressed to USA and has a New York transit mark dated 20th June. Its likely route was the same as the above to the UK and then on the last Heston – Bordeaux – Lisbon service by *BOAC* on 15th June by a *DH 91 Albatross*. That flight connected with the Lisbon – New York *FAM 18 Pan American* service on 19th – 20th June. The landplane service to Lisbon was replaced by a Poole – Lisbon flying boat service with the first flight on 19th June [BA].

Two similar registered surface covers to New York have very different New York transits, one on 8th July and the other on 21st July so one took 35 and the other 48 days by surface instead of 17 by air.



Figure 1.13: Registered cover from Southern Rhodesia to USA, flown on DN 276 to UK, UK – Portugal by BOAC and Portugal – USA by Pan Am.

1.5 Bangkok – Hong Kong Service

The table summarises the flights by DH 86 aircraft between Hong Kong and Bangkok in June 1940 that connected with the last flights on the *Eastern Service*. The route was via Fort Bayard, Hanoi and Udon [BA]. HB refers to Hong Kong – Bangkok flights and BH to Bangkok – Hong Kong. It was previously believed that this service was suspended on 11th June along with other Empire air services

[Cre], but the *BOAC Aircraft Movement Charts* [BA] show that although three flights were cancelled, the flights connecting with *BOAC* services from UK or Australia continued. *BH 242* had an overnight stop in Hanoi likely because it left late due to the late running of *SW 246*.

	Connection with:		DH 86		Connection with:		DH 86
HB 242	SW 245 & SE 250	2 Jun	Delphinus	BH 241	SW 245 & SE 250	3 Jun	Delia
HB 243	SW 246 & SE 251	5 Jun	Denebola	BH 242	SW 246 & SE 251	6-7 Jun	Denebola
HB 244	SW 247 & SE 252	9 Jun	Delia	BH 243	SW 247 & SE 252	11 Jun	Delphinus
HB 245	SW 249 & XE 252	12 Jun	Denebola	BH 244	XE 252 / SE 253	13 Jun	Delia
HB 246		cancelled		BH 245	SW 249 & SE 254	17 Jun	Dardanus
HB 247		cancelled		BH 246		cancelled	

The Hong Kong – Bangkok flights that connected with the early *Horseshoe Route* are listed in Appendix 4.

A cover franked with 5s 2d postmarked on 4th June in Prahran, Victoria and addressed to the USA via Hong Kong with a Hong Kong transit on 17th June was likely flown from Sydney on *SW 248* on 8th June arriving in Singapore on 11th June. It would then have been flown from Singapore to Bangkok on *SW 249* on 16th June and *BH 245* on 17th June before joining the *Pan American* service.

A cover postmarked in Bombay on 10th June and addressed to the Philippines has a Hong Kong transit on 17th June. It would have been flown on *SE 254* arriving in Bangkok on 15th June from where it was flown to Hong Kong on *BH 245*. It was dealt with by the Hong Kong censors and missed the *Pan Am* flight on 18th June as it has a Manila backstamp on 27th June which is the date of the next *Pan Am* flight.