

Chapter 12: Reserve Route 3: January 1941 – February 1942

12.1 Introduction

This chapter describes Reserve Route 3 which was used after 30 December and in which Singapore also avoided. The route between Rangoon and Batavia was Rangoon – Port Blair – Sabang – Padang (West Sumatra) – Batavia [HM].

Singapore was no longer on the main route and was connected by a shuttle from Batavia. This was four times a week until 12th January and twice a week from 13th January – 15th February according to [Wil]. However, the *BOAC* aircraft movement charts show the last flying boat shuttle on 4th February.

The *Horseshoe* route was cut in February 1942 and after that only operated between Durban and Calcutta. Singapore fell on 15th February 1942.

12.2 Reserve Route 3

NE 149 is complex. After arriving in Rangoon on 30th December, the December *BOAC* movement chart shows *Ceres* returned to Calcutta on 31st December as *XWS 151* and overnight there while the January movement chart shows *Ceres* at Akyab on 31st and flying to Calcutta on 1st January. *Ceres* then left Calcutta as *NE 149* on 2nd January. After arriving in Batavia on 4th January, *Ceres* flew to Singapore as *NE 149* and returned on the same day.

NE 149					WS 151			
Durban	dep	20 Dec	Cleopatra		Sydney	dep	25 Dec	Corsair
Mozambique	o'n	20-21 Dec	Cleopatra		Townsville	o'n	25-26 Dec	Corsair
Dar es Salaam	o'n	21-22 Dec	Cleopatra		Darwin	o'n	26-27 Dec	Corsair
Port Bell	o'n	22-23 Dec	Cleopatra		Sourabaya	o'n	27-28 Dec	Corsair
Khartoum	o'n	23-24 Dec	Cleopatra		Batavia	o'n	28-29 Dec	Corsair
Cairo	arr	24 Dec	Cleopatra		Port Blair	o'n	29-30 Dec	Corsair
Cairo	dep	27 Dec	Ceres	W	Akyab	o'n	30-31 Dec	Corsair
Basra	o'n	27-28 Dec	Ceres		Gwalior or	o'n	31/12-1/1	Corsair
Karachi	o'n	28-29 Dec	Ceres		Allahabad?			
Calcutta	o'n	29-30 Dec	Ceres		Karachi	arr	1 Jan	Corsair
Rangoon	o'n	30-31 Dec	Ceres		Karachi	dep	2 Jan	Canopus
Akyab	o'n	31/12-1/1	Ceres		Basra	o'n	2-3 Jan	Canopus
Calcutta	o'n	1-2 Jan	Ceres		Cairo	o'n	3-6 Jan	Canopus
Rangoon	o'n	2-3 Jan	Ceres		Khartoum	o'n	6-7 Jan	Canopus
Sabang	o'n	3-4 Jan	Ceres		Kisumu	o'n	7-8 Jan	Canopus
Batavia		4 Jan	Ceres		Mozambique	o'n	8-9 Jan	Canopus
Singapore		4 Jan	Ceres		Durban	arr	9 Jan	Canopus
Batavia	arr	4 Jan	Ceres					
Batavia	dep	5 Jan	Cleopatra					
Sourabaya	o'n	5-6 Jan	Cleopatra		XWS 151			
Darwin	o'n	6-7 Jan	Cleopatra		Rangoon	dep	31 Dec	Ceres
Townsville	o'n	7-8 Jan	Cleopatra		Akyab	o'n	31/12-1/1	Ceres
Sydney	arr	8 Jan	Cleopatra		Calcutta	arr	1 Jan	Ceres

The shuttle between Batavia and Singapore continued throughout January.

A cover franked with a 25c Perak stamp and postmarked *FPO 29* (Kuala Lumpur) on 26th December and *Base Post Office 4* on 28th December was redirected in Sydney on 8th January. Likely flown on the

Singapore – Batavia shuttle on 4th January and then to Sydney on *NE 149*. Kuala Lumpur fell to the Japanese on 11th January.

NE 150

Durban	dep	24 Dec	Canopus
Mozambique	o'n	24-25 Dec	Canopus
Port Bell	o'n	25-26 Dec	Canopus
Khartoum	o'n	26-27 Dec	Canopus
Cairo	arr	27 Dec	Canopus
Cairo	dep	28 Dec	Cleopatra
Tiberias	o'n	28-29 Dec	Cleopatra
Sharjah	o'n	29-30 Dec	Cleopatra
Karachi	o'n	30-31 Dec	Cleopatra
Calcutta	o'n	31/12-1/1	Cleopatra
Rangoon	o'n	1-2 Jan	Cleopatra
Sabang	o'n	2-3 Jan	Cleopatra
Batavia	o'n	3 Jan	Cleopatra
Batavia	dep	4 Jan	Cameronian
Sourabaya	o'n	4-5 Jan	Cameronian
Darwin	o'n	5-6 Jan	Cameronian
Townsville	o'n	6-7 Jan	Cameronian
Sydney	arr	7 Jan	Cameronian

WS 152

Sydney	dep	29 Dec	Caledonia
Townsville	o'n	29-30 Dec	Caledonia
Darwin	o'n	30-31 Dec	Caledonia
Sourabaya	o'n	31/12-1/1	Caledonia
Batavia	o'n	1-2 Jan	Caledonia
Sabang	o'n	2-3 Jan	Caledonia
Akyab	o'n	3-4 Jan	Caledonia
Calcutta	o'n	4-5 Jan	Caledonia
Karachi	arr	5 Jan	Caledonia
Karachi	dep	6 Jan	Corsair
Basra	o'n	6-7 Jan	Corsair
Cairo	o'n	7-8 Jan	Corsair
Khartoum	o'n	8-9 Jan	Corsair
Kisumu	o'n	9-10 Jan	Corsair
Mozambique	o'n	10-11 Jan	Corsair
Durban	arr	11 Jan	Corsair

NE 150 arrived before *NE 149*. The cover in Figure 12.1 is postmarked in Singapore on 2nd January 1942 and addressed to Bombay where it was backstamped on 13th January. It would have been flown on the shuttle from Singapore to Batavia on 4th January and then from Batavia on *WS 153* on 7th January. It was then likely off-loaded at Karachi on 11th January.

NE 151

Durban	dep	27 Dec	Castor
Mozambique	o'n	27-28 Dec	Castor
Port Bell	o'n	28-29 Dec	Castor
Khartoum	o'n	29-30 Dec	Castor
Cairo	arr	30 Dec	Castor
Cairo	dep	31 Dec	Canopus
Basra	o'n	31/12-1/1	Canopus
Karachi	arr	1 Jan	Canopus
Karachi	dep	2 Jan	Corinna
Allahabad	o'n	2-3 Jan	Corinna
Akyab	o'n	3-4 Jan	Corinna
Sabang	o'n	4-5 Jan	Corinna
Batavia	arr	5 Jan	Corinna
Batavia	dep	6 Jan	Ceres
Sourabaya	o'n	6-7 Jan	Ceres
Darwin	o'n	7-8 Jan	Ceres
Townsville	o'n	8-9 Jan	Ceres
Sydney	arr	9 Jan	Ceres

WS 153

Sydney	dep	1 Jan	Camilla
Townsville	o'n	1-2 Jan	Camilla
Darwin	o'n	2-4 Jan	Camilla
Sourabaya	o'n	4-5 Jan	Camilla
Batavia	o'n	5-7 Jan	Camilla
Port Blair	o'n	7-8 Jan	Camilla
Calcutta	o'n	8-11 Jan	Camilla
Karachi	arr	11 Jan	Camilla
Karachi	dep	12 Jan	Caledonia
Basra	o'n	12-13 Jan	Caledonia
Cairo	arr	13 Jan	Caledonia
Cairo	dep	14 Jan	Clifton
Khartoum	o'n	14-15 Jan	Clifton
Kisumu	o'n	15-16 Jan	Clifton
Mozambique	o'n	16-17 Jan	Clifton
Durban	arr	17 Jan	Clifton

MT

After *Camilla* arrived in Batavia on 5th January on *WS 153*, it flew a shuttle to Singapore and back on 6th January as *NE 151*. *Camilla* then continued with *WS 153* on 7th January. After arriving in Calcutta on 8th January, *Camilla* made a flight to Rangoon and back on 9th January. It was then delayed in Calcutta by mechanical trouble on 10th January before continuing with *WS 153* on the 11th.



Figure 12.1: Postmarked Singapore 2nd January 1942, arrived Bombay 13th January.

NE 152			WS 154				
Durban	dep	31 Dec	Coore	Sydney	dep	5 Jan	Coorong
Mozambique	o'n	31/12-1/1	Coore	Townsville	o'n	5-6 Jan	Coorong
Port Bell	o'n	1-2 Jan	Coore	Darwin	o'n	6-7 Jan	Coorong
Khartoum	o'n	2-3 Jan	Coore	Sourabaya	o'n	7-8 Jan	Coorong
Cairo	arr	3 Jan	Coore	Batavia	o'n	8-11 Jan	Coorong
Cairo	dep	4 Jan	Castor	Port Blair	o'n	11-12 Jan	Coorong
Basra	o'n	4-5 Jan	Castor	Calcutta	o'n	12-13 Jan	Coorong
Karachi	o'n	5-6 Jan	Castor	Karachi	arr	13 Jan	Coorong
Calcutta	o'n	6-7 Jan	Castor	Karachi	dep	14 Jan	Camilla
Rangoon	o'n	7-8 Jan	Castor	Basra	o'n	14-15 Jan	Camilla
Sibolga	o'n	8-9 Jan	Castor	Cairo	o'n	15-16 Jan	Camilla
Batavia	arr	9 Jan	Castor	Khartoum	o'n	16-17 Jan	Camilla
Batavia	dep	11 Jan	Corinna	Kisumu	o'n	17-18 Jan	Camilla
Sourabaya	o'n	11-12 Jan	Corinna	Mozambique	o'n	18-19 Jan	Camilla
Darwin	o'n	12-13 Jan	Corinna	Durban	arr	19 Jan	Camilla
Townsville	o'n	13-14 Jan	Corinna				
Sydney	arr	14 Jan	Corinna				

After arriving in Batavia on *WS 154* on 8th January, *Coorong* made a shuttle flight to Singapore and back on 9th January while *Castor* which had arrived on *NE 152* on 9th January made a similar shuttle flight on 10th January. *Corinna* made a flight from Batavia to Sibolga on the 9th, returning on the 10th.



Figure 12.2: Postmarked 4th January 1942. Likely flown by *KLM*.

NE 153			WS 155				
Durban	dep	3 Jan	Coriolanus	Sydney	dep	9 Jan	Cameronian
Mozambique	o'n	3-4 Jan	Coriolanus	Townsville	o'n	9-10 Jan	Cameronian
Port Bell	o'n	4-5 Jan	Coriolanus	Darwin	o'n	10-11 Jan	Cameronian
Khartoum	o'n	5-6 Jan	Coriolanus	Sourabaya	o'n	11-12 Jan	Cameronian
Cairo	arr	6 Jan	Coriolanus	Batavia	o'n	12-14 Jan	Cameronian
Cairo	dep	7 Jan	Cooe	Singapore	o'n	14-15 Jan	Cameronian
Haifa	o'n	7-8 Jan	Cooe	Port Blair	o'n	15-16 Jan	Cameronian
Basra	o'n	8-9 Jan	Cooe	Akyab	o'n	16-17 Jan	Cameronian
Karachi	o'n	9-10 Jan	Cooe	Calcutta	o'n	17-18 Jan	Cameronian
Calcutta	o'n	10-11 Jan	Cooe	Karachi	o'n	18-19 Jan	Cameronian
Rangoon	o'n	11-12 Jan	Cooe	Basra	o'n	19-20 Jan	Cameronian
Padang	o'n	12-13 Jan	Cooe	Cairo	arr	20 Jan	Cameronian
Batavia	o'n	13-15 Jan	Cooe	Cairo	dep	21 Jan	Coorong
Sourabaya	o'n	15-16 Jan	Cooe	Khartoum	o'n	21-22 Jan	Coorong
Darwin	o'n	16-17 Jan	Cooe	Kisumu	o'n	22-23 Jan	Coorong
Townsville	o'n	17-18 Jan	Cooe	Mozambique	o'n	23-24 Jan	Coorong
Sydney	arr	18 Jan	Cooe	Durban	arr	24 Jan	Coorong

After arriving in Batavia on *WS 155* on 12th January, *Cameronian* flew the shuttle to Singapore and back on 13th January. It then continued with *WS 155* on 14th January and that included an overnight stop at Singapore on 14th – 15th.

Castor flew from Batavia to Singapore on the 13th and then flew an unnumbered service from Singapore on 14th January to Sydney arriving on 17th January.

NE 154			WS 156				
Durban	dep	7 Jan	Circe	Sydney	dep	12 Jan	Cleopatra
Mozambique	o'n	7-8 Jan	Circe	Townsville	o'n	12-13 Jan	Cleopatra
Port Bell	o'n	8-9 Jan	Circe	Darwin	o'n	13-14 Jan	Cleopatra

Khartoum	o'n	9-10 Jan	Circe	Sourabaya	o'n	14-15 Jan	Cleopatra
Cairo	arr	10 Jan	Circe	Batavia	o'n	15-17 Jan	Cleopatra
Cairo	dep	12 Jan	Coriolanus	Port Blair	o'n	17-18 Jan	Cleopatra
Basra	o'n	12-13 Jan	Coriolanus	Akyab	o'n	18-19 Jan	Cleopatra
Karachi	o'n	13-14 Jan	Coriolanus	Calcutta	o'n	19-20 Jan	Cleopatra
Calcutta	o'n	14-15 Jan	Coriolanus	Karachi	o'n	20-21 Jan	Cleopatra
Port Blair	o'n	15-16 Jan	Coriolanus	Basra	o'n	21-22 Jan	Cleopatra
Sibolga	o'n	16-17 Jan	Coriolanus	Cairo	o'n	22-23 Jan	Cleopatra
Batavia	o'n	17-19 Jan	Coriolanus	Khartoum	o'n	23-24 Jan	Cleopatra
Sourabaya	o'n	19-20 Jan	Coriolanus	Kisumu	o'n	24-25 Jan	Cleopatra
Darwin	o'n	20-21 Jan	Coriolanus	Mozambique	o'n	25-26 Jan	Cleopatra
Townsville	o'n	21-22 Jan	Coriolanus	Quelimane	o'n	26-28	Cleopatra
Sydney	arr	22 Jan	Coriolanus	Durban	arr	28 Jan	Cleopatra

After arriving in Batavia on *WS 156* on 15th January, *Cleopatra* flew the shuttle to Singapore and back on 16th January before continuing with *WS 156* on 17th January. Similarly, after arriving in Batavia on *NE 154* on 17th January, *Coriolanus* flew the shuttle to Singapore and back on 18th January before continuing with *NE 154* on 19th January.

NE 154 diverted to Sibolga from Sabang due to an air raid at Sabang [Pr].

NE 155

Durban	dep	10 Jan	Corio
Mozambique	o'n	10-11 Jan	Corio
Port Bell	o'n	11-12 Jan	Corio
Khartoum	o'n	12-13 Jan	Corio
Cairo	arr	13 Jan	Corio
Cairo	dep	14 Jan	Circe
Basra	o'n	14-15 Jan	Circe
Karachi	o'n	15-16 Jan	Circe
Calcutta	o'n	16-18 Jan	Circe
Akyab	o'n	18-19 Jan	Circe
Rangoon	o'n	19-20 Jan	Circe
Sibolga	o'n	20-21 Jan	Circe
Batavia	o'n	21-23 Jan	Circe
Sourabaya	o'n	23-24 Jan	Circe
Darwin	o'n	24-25 Jan	Circe
Townsville	o'n	25-26 Jan	Circe
Sydney	arr	26 Jan	Circe

WS 157

Sydney	dep	16 Jan	Ceres
Townsville	o'n	16-17 Jan	Ceres
Darwin	o'n	17-18 Jan	Ceres
Sourabaya	o'n	18-19 Jan	Ceres
Batavia	o'n	19-21 Jan	Ceres
Sibolga	o'n	21-22 Jan	Ceres
Port Blair	o'n	22-23 Jan	Ceres
Calcutta	o'n	23-24 Jan	Ceres
Karachi	o'n	24-25 Jan	Ceres
Basra	o'n	25-26 Jan	Ceres
Cairo	o'n	26-27 Jan	Ceres
Khartoum	o'n	27-28 Jan	Ceres
Kisumu	o'n	28-29 Jan	Ceres
Mozambique	o'n	29-30 Jan	Ceres
Durban	arr	30 Jan	Ceres

After arriving in Batavia on *WS 157* on 19th January, *Ceres* flew the shuttle to Singapore and back on 20th January before continuing with *WS 157* on 21st January. Similarly, after arriving in Batavia on *NE 155* on 21st January, *Circe* flew the shuttle to Singapore and back on 22nd January before continuing with *NE 155* on 23rd January.

A registered cover franked with 1s 9d from a suburb of Melbourne postmarked on 15th January 1942 and addressed to a soldier at the H.Q. 8th Indian Division, c/o No 41 Field Post Office, Basrah, Iraq has a *Base Air Post Depot* transit (Karachi) on 31st January, a *C-Base Post Office* transit on 1st February and an *F.P.O. No 41* receiver on 4th February. It would have been in time to connect at Darwin with *WS 157* on 18th January and may have then been offloaded in Karachi on 24th January, perhaps to check that the regiment had not been moved, before being flown to Basra on *WS 158* on 1st February. Alternatively it could have been flown to Karachi as 'troop mail' by *KLM*.

12.3 Loss of the *Corio*

NE 156

Durban	dep	15 Jan	Corinthian
Mozambique	o'n	15-16 Jan	Corinthian
Port Bell	o'n	16-17 Jan	Corinthian
Juba	o'n	17-18 Jan	Corinthian
Khartoum	o'n	18-19 Jan	Corinthian
Cairo	arr	19 Jan	Corinthian
Cairo	dep	21 Jan	Corio
Basra	o'n	21-22 Jan	Corio
Karachi	o'n	22-23 Jan	Corio
Calcutta	o'n	23-24 Jan	Corio
Rangoon	o'n	24-25 Jan	Corio
Sibolga	o'n	25-26 Jan	Corio
Batavia	o'n	26-27 Jan	Corio
Sourabaya	o'n	27-28 Jan	Corio
Darwin	arr	28 Jan	Corio

NE 156 ended at Darwin. Corio on 29th January flew north and was destroyed by enemy action at Koepang.

WS 158

Sydney	dep	19 Jan	Corinna
Townsville	o'n	19-20 Jan	Corinna
Darwin	o'n	20-21 Jan	Corinna
Sourabaya	o'n	21-22 Jan	Corinna
Batavia	o'n	22-26 Jan	Corinna
Sabang	o'n	26-27 Jan	Corinna
??	o'n	27-28 Jan	Corinna
Port Blair	o'n	28-29 Jan	Corinna
Akyab	o'n	29-30 Jan	Corinna
Calcutta	arr	30 Jan	Corinna
Calcutta	dep	31 Jan	Canopus
Karachi	o'n	31/1-1/2	Canopus
Basra	o'n	1-2 Feb	Canopus
Cairo	o'n	2-3 Feb	Canopus
Khartoum	o'n	3-4 Feb	Canopus
Kisumu	o'n	4-5 Feb	Canopus
Mozambique	o'n	5-6 Feb	Canopus
Durban	arr	6 Feb	Canopus

It was common at this time for flying boats to be diverted from their normal service to carry out a vital flight. That was the case with *Corio* on 29th January which was flying men to the war zone and had planned to return from Sourabaya with women and children.

The *BOAC* movement charts show the loss of the *Corio* on 29th January while it was reported in the press as being on Friday 30th January. Although *Corio* was carrying mail and had the service number *XWS160*, according to it the *Canberra Times* on 7th February it was not carrying any mail posted in New South Wales [Tro] while the *Melbourne Argus* reported that it was carrying mail posted about 27th January. The New Zealand Postmaster General stated that it was probable that some mail from New Zealand was lost [EP]. If *Corio* had returned safely then presumably it would have continued with *NE 156*. Two crew and two passengers survived the attack and subsequent sinking of the *Corio*, but three crew and ten passengers were killed [HM].

After arriving in Batavia on *WS 158* on 22nd January, *Corinna* flew the shuttle to Singapore on the 23rd returning on the 24th. It then again flew the shuttle to Singapore and back on 25th January before continuing with *WS 158* on 26th January.

A cover postmarked in Singapore on 20th January and addressed to Katoomba in New South Wales has *Recd 4 Feb* in manuscript. Likely flown on one of the *Corinna* shuttles from Singapore and then on the *Corio* to Darwin. It would then have been flown from Darwin to Sydney on *NE 157*.

NE 157

Durban	dep	17 Jan	Canopus
Mozambique	o'n	17-18 Jan	Canopus
Port Bell	o'n	18-19 Jan	Canopus
Khartoum	o'n	19-20 Jan	Canopus
Cairo	arr	20 Jan	Canopus
Cairo	dep	22 Jan	Corinthian
Basra	o'n	22-23 Jan	Corinthian
Karachi	o'n	23-24 Jan	Corinthian
Calcutta	o'n	24-25 Jan	Corinthian
Rangoon	o'n	25-26 Jan	Corinthian
Sibolga	o'n	26-27 Jan	Corinthian
Batavia	o'n	27-29 Jan	Corinthian

WS 159

Sydney	dep	22 Jan	Castor
Townsville	o'n	22-23 Jan	Castor
Darwin	o'n	23-24 Jan	Castor
Sourabaya	o'n	24-25 Jan	Castor
Batavia	o'n	25-30 Jan	Castor
Port Blair	o'n	30-31 Jan	Castor
Akyab	o'n	31/1-1/2	Castor
Calcutta	o'n	1-2 Feb	Castor
Karachi	o'n	2-3 Feb	Castor
Basra	o'n	3-4 Feb	Castor
Cairo	o'n	4-5 Feb	Castor
Khartoum	o'n	5-6 Feb	Castor

Sourabaya	o'n	29-30 Jan	Corinthian	Kisumu	o'n	6-7 Feb	Castor
Darwin	arr	30-31 Jan	Corinthian	Mozambique	o'n	7-8 Feb	Castor
Townsville	o'n	31/1-1/2	Corinthian	Durban	arr	8 Feb	Castor
Sydney	arr	1 Feb	Corinthian				

After arriving in Batavia on *WS 159* on 25th January, *Castor* flew the shuttle to Singapore and back on 26th January and again on 27th January before continuing with *WS 159* on 30th January. Similarly, after arriving in Batavia on *NE 157* on 27th January, *Corinthian* flew the shuttle to Singapore and back on 28th January before continuing with *NE 157* on 29th January.

Watt shows a cover postmarked on 22nd January from Indian Section base *P.O.4* which he says was in Singapore. It was and backstamped in Poona on 4th February [Wat2] and would have been flown on a Singapore – Batavia shuttles on 23rd/24th, 25th, 26th or 27th January and then flown from Batavia to Calcutta on either *WS 158* on 26th – 30th January or on *WS 159* on 30th January – 1st February.

A *NZEF* cover postmarked in Egypt on 3rd January and addressed to Auckland has an arrival backstamp on 6th February. A trans-Tasman flight was scheduled for 4th February. Assuming that the delay was likely to be in the Middle East, it may have arrived in Sydney on *NE 157* on 1st February in which case it may have been flown on 21st – 28th January from Cairo to Darwin on *NE 156* and off-loaded there from the *Corio* before it made its ill-fated flight on 29th January. Alternatively, it may have been flown from Lydda on 23rd January by *KLM*.

12.4 Further Disruption

The records are incomplete from this time with contradictory information. After the loss of the *Corio*, services between Batavia and Darwin were temporarily suspended and then re-routed. That explains the delayed departure of *NE 158* from Batavia and why *NE 159* did not proceed beyond Calcutta. *NE 158* was the first service routed via Tjilatjap and Broome. *WS 160* had already arrived in Batavia on 29th January and *WS 161* was held at Darwin for two weeks and then did not proceed beyond Broome.

NE 158				WS 160			
Durban	dep	21 Jan	Corsair	Sydney	dep	26 Jan	Cooee
Mozambique	o'n	21-22 Jan	Corsair	Townsville	o'n	26-27 Jan	Cooee
Port Bell	o'n	22-23 Jan	Corsair	Darwin	o'n	27-28 Jan	Cooee
Khartoum	o'n	23-24 Jan	Corsair	Sourabaya	o'n	28-29 Jan	Cooee
Cairo	arr	24 Jan	Corsair	Batavia	o'n	29-?? Jan	Cooee
Cairo	dep	26 Jan	Canopus	??	??	??	Cooee
Tiberias?	o'n	26-27 Jan	Canopus	Calcutta	o'n	3-4 Feb	Cooee
Basra	o'n	27-28 Jan	Canopus	Karachi	o'n	4-5 Feb	Cooee
Karachi	o'n	28-29 Jan	Canopus	Basra	o'n	5-6 Feb	Cooee
Calcutta	arr	29 Jan	Canopus	Cairo	o'n	6-7 Feb	Cooee
Calcutta	dep	31 Jan	Corinna	Khartoum	o'n	7-8 Feb	Cooee
Rangoon	o'n	31/1-1/2	Corinna	Kisumu	o'n	8-9 Feb	Cooee
Sibolga	o'n	1-2 Feb	Corinna	Mozambique	o'n	9-12 Feb	Cooee MT
Batavia	o'n	2-8 Feb	Corinna	Durban	o'n	12 Feb	Cooee
Tjilatjap	o'n	8-9 Feb	Corinna				
Broome	o'n	9-10 Feb	Corinna				
Darwin	o'n	10-11 Feb	Corinna				
Townsville	o'n	11-12 Feb	Corinna				
Sydney	arr	12 Feb	Corinna				

February movement chart shows arrival in Batavia from Sibolga on 1st, not 2nd, February.

A cover postmarked in Singapore on 29th January and addressed to Katoomba in New South Wales has *Recd 14 Feb* in manuscript. Flown on one of the last shuttles from Singapore and then on from Batavia to Sydney on *NE 158*.

After arriving in Batavia on *NE 158* on 2nd February, *Corinna* flew the shuttle to Singapore and back on 3rd February and again on 4th February. That was the last shuttle service to leave Singapore and was flown by Captain Crowther. According to [HM], the last shuttle arrived in Singapore on 3rd February and left early in the morning of 4th February by moonlight with 40 passengers. The route was changed again and *NE 158* left Batavia on 8th February for Tjilatjap and flew from there to Broome in Australia.

A cover postmarked Basra on 19th January 1942 and addressed to Bombay where it was backstamped on 30th January is shown in Figure 12.3. It was posted in time to be sent on *NE 156*, but the Bombay date suggests it was delayed by Iraqi censorship and the lack of capacity and flown Basra – Karachi on *NE 158* on 28th January.

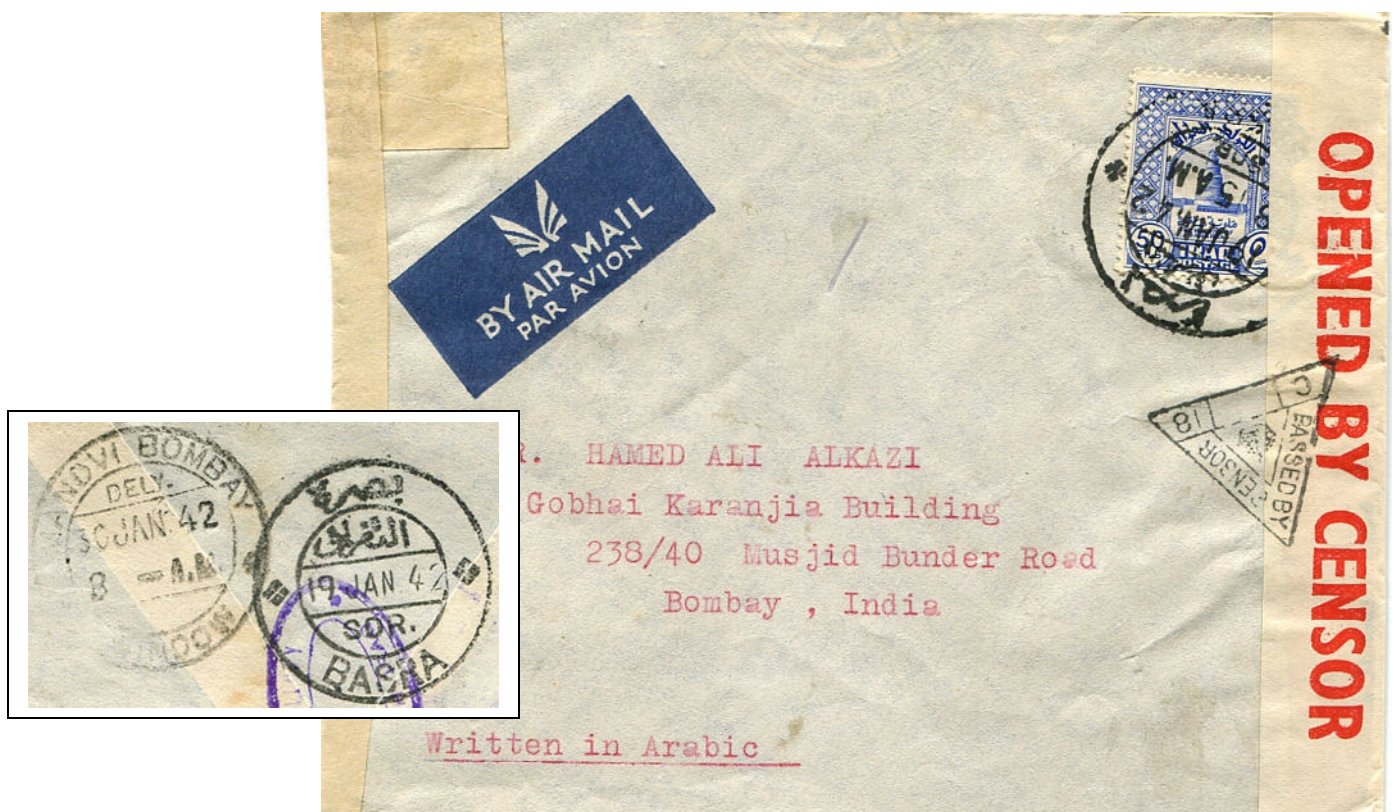


Figure 12.3: Iraq to Bombay

On 23rd January, New Zealand troops in Egypt were warned to restrict their use of air mail and the air mail dispatch from Cairo on 25th January arrived in New Zealand on 19th February [Sta]. It would have been sent on *NE 158* or flown by *KLM*. The *Active Service* cover to New Zealand in Figure 12.4 is postmarked in Egypt on 23rd January 1942 and so may have been on this dispatch.

There is a gap in the record for *WS 160* between 29th January and 3rd February, but it was likely delayed in Batavia until 1st February. This was the last through service from Sydney to Durban. A cover on this flight postmarked Melbourne on 22nd January and backstamped in Bombay on 7th

February is shown by Watt [Wat2]. A cover from Sydney and postmarked on 22nd January and addressed to Durban is shown in Figure 12.5 while one addressed to Devon and postmarked in Calcutta on 2nd February is shown in Figure 12.6. They were both likely flown on *WS 160*.

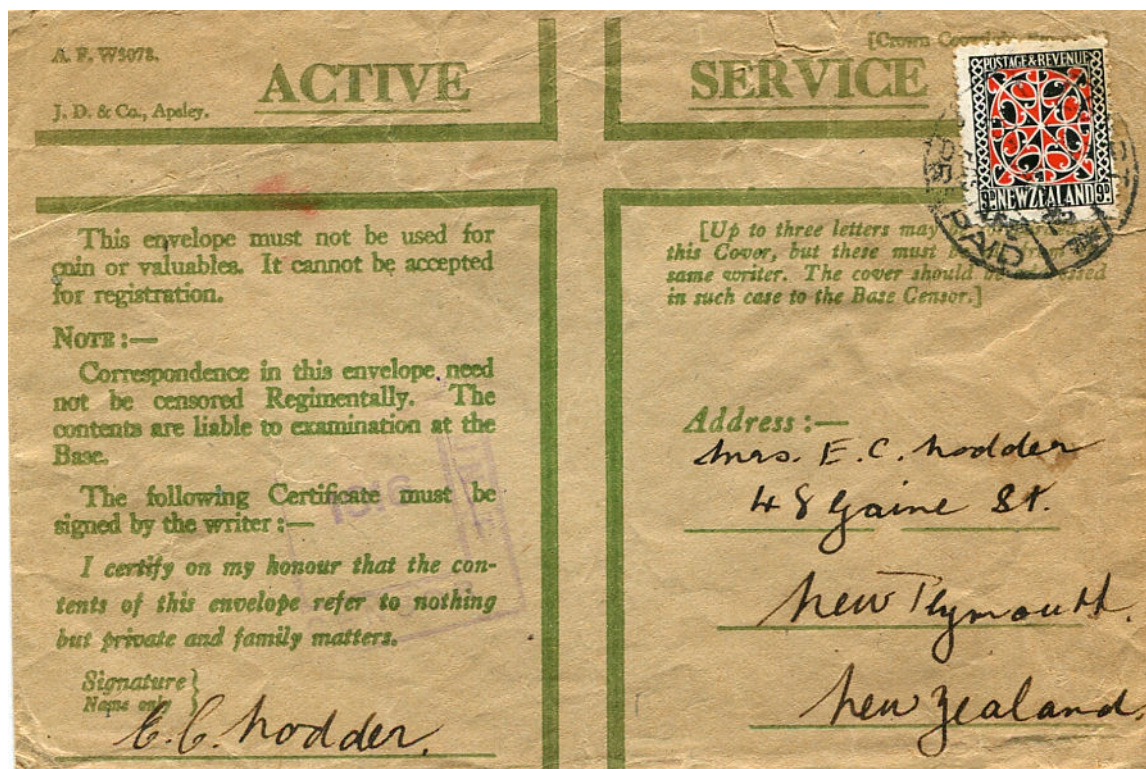


Figure 12.4: NZEF in Egypt to New Zealand, postmarked 23rd January 1942, flown on *NE 158* or by *KLM*.

NE 159				WS 161			
Durban	dep	24 Jan	Clifton	Sydney	dep	29 Jan	Coriolanus
Mozambique	o'n	24-25 Jan	Clifton	Townsville	o'n	29-30 Jan	Coriolanus
Port Bell	o'n	25-26 Jan	Clifton	Darwin	o'n	30/1-13/2	Coriolanus
Khartoum	o'n	26-27 Jan	Clifton	Broome	arr	13 Feb	Coriolanus
Cairo	arr	27 Jan	Clifton	Calcutta	dep	6 Feb	Corsair
Cairo	dep	28 Jan	Corsair	Karachi	o'n	6-8 Feb	Corsair
Basra	o'n	28-29 Jan	Corsair	Basra	o'n	8-10 Feb	Corsair
Karachi	o'n	29-30 Jan	Corsair	Cairo	o'n	10-11 Feb	Corsair
Calcutta	arr	30 Jan	Corsair	Khartoum	o'n	11-12 Feb	Corsair
				Kisumu	o'n	12-13 Feb	Corsair
				Mozambique	o'n	13-14 Feb	Corsair
				Durban	o'n	14 Feb	Corsair
							end
							nc
							MT

NE 159 terminated at Calcutta although two later services went through to Sydney. *Coriolanus* on *WS 161* was at Darwin for some time before it flew to Broome although a flight with the same number flew Calcutta – Durban on 6th – 14th February. The cover in Figure 6.11 is likely to have been flown on that service from Cairo to Durban.



Figure 12.5: Postmarked Sydney 22nd Jan 1942 and addressed to Durban, flown on *WS 160*.



Figure 12.6: Postmarked Calcutta 2nd Feb 1942, likely flown on *WS 160*.

NE 160 and NE161 were the last two through services from Durban to Sydney. The movement charts do not show all stages, but in both cases show that the flying boat that left Cairo was the same one that arrived in Sydney and so there was a through connection.

NE 160			NE 161				
Durban	dep	28 Jan	Camilla	Durban	dep	31 Jan	Cleopatra
Beira	o'n	28-29 Jan	Camilla	Mozambique	o'n	31/1-1/2	Cleopatra
Mozambique	o'n	29/12-3/2	Camilla	Port Bell	o'n	1-2 Feb	Cleopatra
Kisumu	o'n	3-4 Feb	Camilla	Malakal	o'n	2-3 Feb	Cleopatra
Khartoum	o'n	4-5 Feb	Camilla	Khartoum	o'n	3-4 Feb	Cleopatra
Cairo	o'n	5-6 Feb	Camilla	Cairo	arr	4 Feb	Cleopatra
Basra	o'n	6-7 Feb	Camilla	Cairo	dep	5 Feb	Clifton
Karachi	o'n	7-8 Feb	Camilla	Basra	o'n	5-6 Feb	Clifton
Calcutta	o'n	8-10 Feb	Camilla	Bahrein	o'n	6-7 Feb	Clifton
??	o'n	10-?? Feb	Camilla	Karachi	o'n	7-8 Feb	Clifton
??	o'n	??	Camilla	Calcutta	o'n	8-10 Feb	Clifton
Batavia	o'n	12-16 Feb	Camilla	Akyab	o'n	10-?? Feb	Clifton
Tjilatjap	o'n	16-?? Feb	Camilla	??	o'n	??	Clifton
Broome	o'n	??	Camilla	Batavia	o'n	12-?? Feb	Clifton
Darwin	o'n	??-20 Feb	Camilla	Tjilatjap	o'n	??	Clifton
Townsville	o'n	20-21 Feb	Camilla	Broome	o'n	??	Clifton
Sydney	arr	21 Feb	Camilla	Darwin	o'n	??-22 Feb	Clifton
				Townsville	o'n	22-23 Feb	Clifton
				Sydney	arr	23 Feb	Clifton

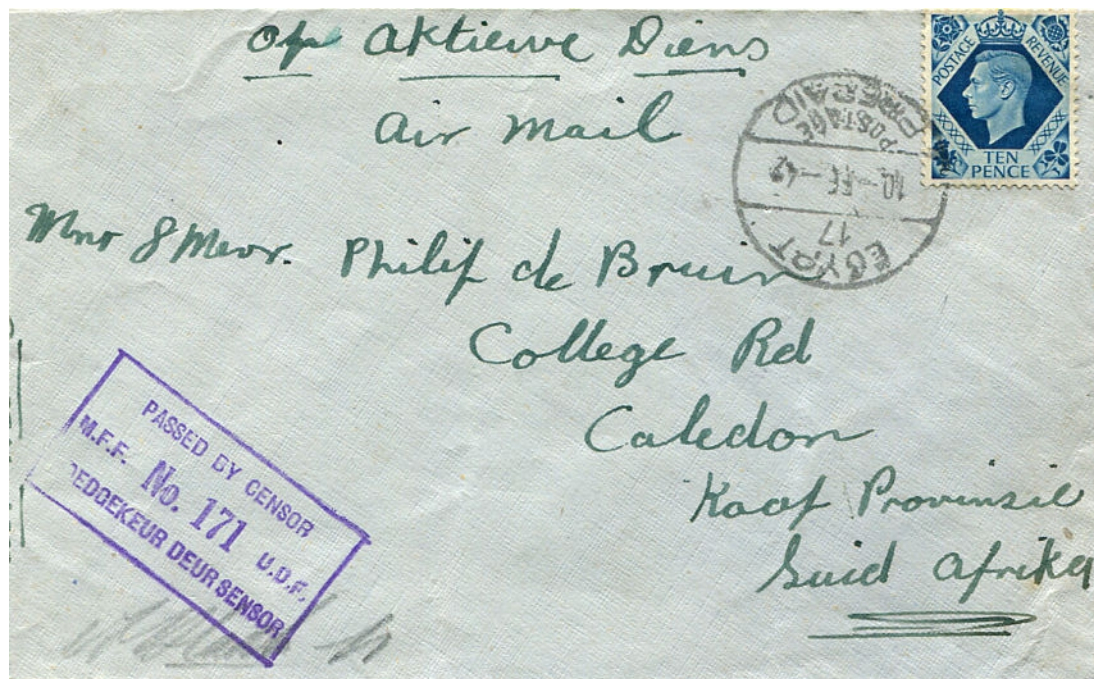


Figure 12.7: Postmarked in Heliopolis on 10th February, likely flown to Durban on WS 161.

Slightly different information on NE 160 and NE 161 is given by Graham [Gra], where he identifies the flights by pilots (they may have changed flying boats in Batavia):

- Captain Tapp flew Calcutta – Akyab on 9th; Akyab – Port Blair on 10th; Port Blair – Sibolga on 11th February; Sibolga – Batavia on 12th February; reached Broome on 18th and Darwin on 21st February.
- Captain Gurney flew Calcutta – Port Blair on 9th, left Port Blair on 10th.

Gunn describes how Captain Tapp had engine trouble in Port Blair and had to abandon take off and left the following morning at 9 a.m. for Sibolga where they spent the night before flying the next day to Batavia. Watt describes both flying boats leaving Calcutta on 10th February and identifies the engine problem with *Camilla* [Wat3]. According to Gunn [Gun], Captain Ambrose (in *Clifton*?) flew the last *Qantas* service out of Batavia to Tjilatjap on 19th February.

According to Bennett Bremner [Ben], *Camilla* on *NE 160* had arrived in Darwin on 18th February and was there when Darwin was attacked by bombers on 19th February. It was near a burning ammunition ship and two *Qantas* captains, Hussey and Crowther, went out by launch and flew *Camilla* to Groote Eylandt for safety, returning to Darwin later that day [Ben, Gra, Gun] (20th February [HM]) so that it could continue service *NE 160* to Sydney on 20th February [Gun, HM].

Putting the (sometimes conflicting) information from the different sources together, the following is an estimate of the dates for the last two flights. I have assumed that they did not leave Calcutta until 10th February.

NE 160 estimated				NE 161 estimated			
Durban	dep	28 Jan	Camilla	Durban	dep	31 Jan	Cleopatra
Beira	o'n	28-29 Jan	Camilla	Mozambique	o'n	31/1-1/2	Cleopatra
Mozambique	o'n	29/12-3/2	Camilla	Port Bell	o'n	1-2 Feb	Cleopatra
Kisumu	o'n	3-4 Feb	Camilla	Malakal	o'n	2-3 Feb	Cleopatra MT
Khartoum	o'n	4-5 Feb	Camilla	Khartoum	o'n	3-4 Feb	Cleopatra
Cairo	o'n	5-6 Feb	Camilla	Cairo	arr	4 Feb	Cleopatra
Basra	o'n	6-7 Feb	Camilla	Cairo	dep	5 Feb	Clifton
Karachi	o'n	7-8 Feb	Camilla	Basra	o'n	5-6 Feb	Clifton
Calcutta	o'n	8-10 Feb	Camilla	Bahrein	o'n	6-7 Feb	Clifton
Akyab	o'n	10-11 Feb	Camilla	Karachi	o'n	7-8 Feb	Clifton
Port Blair	o'n	11-12 Feb	Camilla	Calcutta	o'n	8-10 Feb	Clifton
Sibolga	o'n	12-13 Feb	Camilla	Port Blair	o'n	10-11 Feb	Clifton
Batavia	o'n	13-16 Feb	Camilla	Sibolga	o'n	11-12 Feb	Clifton
Tjilatjap	o'n	16-17 Feb	Camilla	Batavia	o'n	12-19 Feb	Clifton
Broome	o'n	17-18 Feb	Camilla	Tjilatjap	o'n	19-20 Feb	Clifton
Darwin	o'n	18-20 Feb	Camilla	Broome	o'n	20-21 Feb	Clifton
Townsville	o'n	20-21 Feb	Camilla	Darwin	o'n	21-22 Feb	Clifton
Sydney	arr	21 Feb	Camilla	Townsville	o'n	22-23 Feb	Clifton
				Sydney	arr	23 Feb	Clifton

The connections at Cape Town with corresponding Sydney – Durban flights are shown in the table below. The ships are taken from Proud unless marked with an asterisk and the dates from Convoyweb unless otherwise stated.

Flights from Sydney 25 th December 1941– 26 th January, 1942					
Trans-Tasman	Flight No	Leave Sydney	Arrive Durban	Ship: Cape Town – UK	London Delivery
24 Dec	WS 151	25 Dec	9 Jan	City of Hong Kong 15 th Jan – 16 th Feb	
	WS 152	29 Dec	11 Jan	Clan Murray 19 th Jan (Durban) – 15 th Mar	
31 Dec	WS 153	1 Jan	17 Jan	?? Erria 30 th Jan – 8 th Mar	By 28 th Feb
	WS 154	5 Jan	19 Jan	*City of Capetown 31 st Jan – 24 th Feb	
7 Jan	WS 155	9 Jan	24 Jan		
	WS 156	12 Jan	28 Jan	Umgeni 4 th Feb – 15 th Mar	
14 Jan	WS 157	16 Jan	30 Jan	?? 5 th Feb – 8 th Mar	
	WS 158	19 Jan	6 Feb	?? 10 th Feb – 14 th Mar	
21 Jan	WS 159	22 Jan	8 Feb	Clan Lamont 16 th Feb – 10 th Mar	
	WS 160	26 Jan	12 Feb	?? 22 nd Feb – 25 th Mar	

Flights from Calcutta 6 th – 22 nd February, 1942					
	WS 161	6 Feb	14 Feb	Cape Clear 23 rd Feb – 30 th Mar	
	WS 162	12 Feb	20 Feb	City of Exeter 9 th Mar – 12 th Apr	By 19 th Apr
	WS 163	18 Feb	25 Feb		
	WS 164	21 Feb	28 Feb		
	WS 165	22 Feb	2 Mar		

The cover in Figure 12.8 to the UK has a Karachi censor mark and was postmarked in Ahmeunagar near Bombay on 10th January 1942. It states in manuscript on the back that it was received on 28th February. *WS 153* flew Karachi – Durban on 12th – 17th January, but it was more likely flown on *WS 154* on 14th – 19th January. There is no fit with the ships listed by Proud, but the *City of Capetown* left Cape Town on 31st January 1942 and arrived in Liverpool on 24th February and that would fit [CW].

The last through *KLM* flight from Bandung was on 8th February and arrived in Lydda on 12th February while there was a flight from Lydda to Bandung on 6th – 10th February [AH]. A cover postmarked in Sourabaya on 4th February, addressed to the UK and possibly flown on the last flight from Bandung is shown in [Ver]. On arrival in Lydda, it would be sent by rail to Cairo and then sent on the *Horseshoe Route*, likely on *WS 162* on 16th – 20th February. It was backstamped in London on 19th April 1942. According to [AH], *KLM* flew twice from Singapore to Palembang on the night of 14th - 15th February evacuating 36 women and children.



Figure 12.8: Postmarked India, 10th January 1942, received in UK 28th February in manuscript.

A cover postmarked in Auckland on 12th January was addressed to a sergeant in the NZAF, c/o the NZ High Commission in London from where it was redirected to Northumberland. Likely flown trans Tasman on 14th January and then on *WS 157*. It has a *Field Post Office 546* backstamp on 18th March 1942.