

Chapter 9: Disruption: April – July 1941

9.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the *Horseshoe Route* from late April until late July 1941 during the period when there were problems between Cairo, Basra and Bahrein due to the rebellion in Iraq in late April and early May and fighting in Syria in June. The flights between Cairo and Basra were initially suspended and then a shuttle service was introduced [CIW].

9.2 Last through flights between Durban and Sydney

At the end of April 1941, as there was an uprising in Iraq, the stop at Lake Habbaniya was no longer available. The last through flights were *WS 80* which called at Habbaniya on 30th April and *NE 81* which called on 1st May. These flying boats evacuated the women and children who were at the Habbaniya rest-house. The 6 men of the *BOAC* ground staff were captured several days later [HM].

In this chapter, tables showing services in opposite directions are paired off so that they show similar dates for the stages to / from Cairo or its break in service.

WS 80				NE 81			
Sydney	dep	22 Ap	Camilla	Durban	dep	26 Ap	Corinna
Townsville	o'n	22-23 Ap	Camilla	Mozambique	o'n	26-27 Ap	Corinna
Darwin	o'n	23-24 Ap	Camilla	Kisumu	o'n	27-28 Ap	Corinna
Sourabaya	o'n	24-25 Ap	Camilla	Khartoum	o'n	28-29 Ap	Corinna
Singapore	arr	25 Ap	Camilla	Cairo	o'n	29-30 Ap	Corinna
Singapore	dep	26 Ap	Cassiopeia	Tiberias	o'n	30/4-1/5	Corinna
Bangkok	o'n	26-27 Ap	Cassiopeia	Basra	o'n	1-2 May	Corinna
Calcutta	o'n	27-28 Ap	Cassiopeia	Karachi	arr	2 May	Corinna
Karachi	o'n	28-29 Ap	Cassiopeia	Karachi	dep	4 May	Clifton
Basra	o'n	29-30 Ap	Cassiopeia	Calcutta	o'n	4-5 May	Clifton
Cairo	o'n	30/4-1/5	Cassiopeia	Rangoon	o'n	5-6 May	Clifton
Khartoum	o'n	1-2 May	Cassiopeia	Singapore	o'n	6-7 May	Clifton
Kisumu	o'n	2-3 May	Cassiopeia	Sourabaya	o'n	7-8 May	Clifton
Mozambique	o'n	3-4 May	Cassiopeia	Darwin	o'n	8-9 May	Clifton
Vaalbank	o'n	4-5 May	Cassiopeia	Townsville	o'n	9-10 May	Clifton
Durban	arr	5 May	Cassiopeia	Sydney	arr	10 May	Clifton

Clifton on *NE 81* left Karachi on 3rd May, but had to return. It left again on 4th May.

Mail on both *WS 79* and *WS 80* was delivered in London on 10th June [SN]. The *Athlone Castle* left Cape Town on 20th May and arrived in Liverpool on 7th June [CW] and may have carried this mail.

Figure 9.1 shows a registered Tamil cover postmarked in Malacca on 22nd April, in Singapore on 23rd April and in Calcutta on 28th April which fits with *WS 80* that left Singapore on 26th April and arrived in Calcutta on 27th April. It has a receiving mark in Kilasavalpatti in south India on 2nd May together with a Madras censor stamp (*D 2*). Tamil covers from Malaya to India are relatively common suggesting that there was a significant number of Tamil workers in Malaya.

The cover is franked with 82c. The postage rate was 55c (reduced two weeks later to 50c) and the registration fee 15c, but I cannot account for the final 12c.



Figure 9.1: Malaya to India flown on *WS 80*

9.3 No service between Cairo and Basra

The unavailability of the stop at Habbaniya meant that there were no flights between Cairo and Basra on services *WS 81 - 84* and *NE 82 - 84*. Services continued between Sydney and Basra and between Durban and Cairo. Non-connecting services are shown in the same table where they form a pair. The termination of a service is shown as *end* and the start of the non-connecting service as *nc*.

Mail that was sent UK – Cape Town on the *Ajax* on 29th March – 25th April was flown from Durban to Cairo, likely on *NE 82*. It was then passed to the Egyptian Post Office and sent by sea to Bombay [Win5]. A cover sent on this service that has an arrival mark in Neemuch, 500 miles from Bombay on 17th June is shown in [CIW]. We discuss this in Section 9.6.

WS 81

Sydney	dep	25 Ap	Cameronian	
Townsville	o'n	25-26Ap	Cameronian	
Darwin	o'n	26-27Ap	Cameronian	
Sourabaya	o'n	27-28Ap	Cameronian	
Singapore	arr	28 Ap	Cameronian	
Singapore	dep	29 Ap	Camilla	
Bangkok	o'n	29-30Ap	Camilla	
Calcutta	o'n	30/4-1/5	Camilla	
Karachi	o'n	1-2 May	Camilla	
Bahrein	arr	2 May	Camilla	end
Cairo	dep	5 May	Corsair	nc
Khartoum	o'n	5-6 May	Corsair	
Port Bell	o'n	6-7 May	Corsair	
Mozambique	o'n	7-8 May	Corsair	
Vaalbank	o'n	8-9 May	Corsair	
Durban	arr	9 May	Corsair	

NE 82

Durban	dep	30 Ap	Caledonia	
Mozambique	o'n	30/4-1/5	Caledonia	
Kisumu	o'n	1-2 May	Caledonia	
Khartoum	o'n	2-3 May	Caledonia	
Cairo	arr	3 May	Caledonia	end
Basra	dep	5 May	Corinna	nc
Karachi	o'n	5-6 May	Corinna	
Calcutta	o'n	6-7 May	Corinna	
Rangoon	o'n	7-8 May	Corinna	
Singapore	o'n	8-9 May	Corinna	No UK mail
Sourabaya	o'n	9-10My	Corinna	
Darwin	o'n	10-11My	Corinna	
Townsville	o'n	11-12My	Corinna	
Sydney	arr	12 May	Corinna	

Corinna flew on a positioning flight from Karachi to Basra on 4th May.

Camilla flew from Bahrein to Karachi on 4th May and then Karachi to Basra on 5th and back on 6th May.

The mail which closed in Singapore on 28th April to be sent on *WS 81* did not arrive in London until 30th July [SN]. It may have been flown to Bahrein and then flown back to Karachi on 4th May. It is then likely to have been sent to London by sea from Bombay.

Both *The Straits Times* and *The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser* reported on 9th May [SN]:

“The Postal Department advises that no air mails from the United Kingdom etc. were received by the east-bound British Overseas Airways Corporation flyingboat which arrived in Singapore yesterday afternoon.”

The reason why is clear from the table for *NE 82*.

On 5th May, *The Straits Times* announced that air mail would not be sent for destinations beyond Karachi. On 7th August, it reported that the mail that closed in Singapore on 2nd May (*WS 82*) was not delivered in London until 2nd August [SN].

The cover in Figure 9.2 is postmarked in India on 5th May, has a Karachi censor mark and was redirected in Edinburgh on 4th August and would have been sent on *WS 82*. This may have been flown to Basra and held up there or it may then have been returned to India and sent from there by surface.

WS 82

Sydney	dep	29 Ap	Carpentaria	
Townsville	o'n	29-30Ap	Carpentaria	
Darwin	o'n	30/4-1/5	Carpentaria	
Sourabaya	o'n	1-2 May	Carpentaria	
Singapore	arr	2 May	Carpentaria	
Singapore	dep	4 May	Cameronian	MT
Bangkok	o'n	4-5 May	Cameronian	
Calcutta	o'n	5-6 May	Cameronian	
Karachi	o'n	6-7 May	Cameronian	
Basra	arr	7 May	Cameronian	end
Cairo	dep	8 May	Cambria	nc
Khartoum	o'n	8-9 May	Cambria	
Kisumu	o'n	9-10 My	Cambria	
Mozambique	o'n	10-11My	Cambria	
Vaalbank	o'n	11-12My	Cambria	
Durban	arr	12 My	Cambria	

NE 83

Durban	dep	3 May	Circe	
Mozambique	o'n	3-4 May	Circe	
Kisumu	o'n	4-6 May	Circe	
Khartoum	o'n	6-7 May	Circe	
Cairo	arr	7 May	Circe	end
Basra	dep	8 May	Cameronian	nc
Karachi	o'n	8-10 My	Cameronian	
Calcutta	o'n	10-11My	Cameronian	
Rangoon	o'n	11-12My	Cameronian	
Singapore	o'n	12-13My	Cameronian	
Sourabaya	o'n	13-14My	Cameronian	
Darwin	o'n	14-15My	Cameronian	
Townsville	o'n	15-16My	Cameronian	
Sydney	arr	16 May	Cameronian	

WS 82 was the first flight of *Cambria* after its use in the Crete evacuation 22nd April – 5th May. A cover sent from Turkey to USA with routing instructions: ‘*Par Avion via Baghdad Sydney San Francisco*’ was postmarked in Istanbul on 28th April with the only transit mark being at Baghdad on

3rd May 1941. The intended route would be by *Taurus Express* to Baghdad followed by *Horseshoe* Mail to Sydney and then via New Zealand by *FAM 19*. If it was sent by surface to Basra, it may have then been flown on *NE 82* or *NE 83*. Alternatively, it could have been stuck in Baghdad for some time.



Figure 9.2: Postmarked in India on 5th May 1941, redirected in Edinburgh on 4th August.

WS 83				NE 84			
Sydney	dep	2 May	Corio	Durban	dep	7 May	Castor
Townsville	o'n	2-3 May	Corio	Beira	o'n	7-8 May	Castor
Darwin	o'n	3-4 May	Corio	Mombasa	o'n	8-9 May	Castor
Sourabaya	o'n	4-5 May	Corio	Juba	o'n	9-10 My	Castor
Singapore	arr	5 May	Corio	Khartoum	o'n	10-11My	Castor
Singapore	dep	6 May	Carpentaria	Cairo	arr	11 May	Castor
Bangkok	o'n	6-7 May	Carpentaria	Basra	dep	10 May	Carpentaria
Calcutta	o'n	7-8 May	Carpentaria	Sharjah	o'n	10-11My	Carpentaria
Karachi	o'n	8-9 May	Carpentaria	Karachi	arr	11 My	Carpentaria
Sharjah	o'n	9-10 May	Carpentaria	Karachi	dep	13 My	Camilla
Basra	arr	10 May	Carpentaria	Calcutta	o'n	13-14My	Camilla
Cairo	dep	11 May	Carpentaria	Rangoon	o'n	14-15My	Camilla
Khartoum	o'n	11-12 May	Caledonia	Singapore	arr	15 My	Camilla
Kisumu	o'n	12-13 May	Caledonia	Singapore	dep	16 May	Coriolanus
Mozambique	o'n	13-14 May	Caledonia	Sourabaya	o'n	16-17My	Coriolanus
Vaalbank	o'n	14-15 May	Caledonia	Darwin	o'n	17-18My	Coriolanus
Durban	arr	15 May	Caledonia	Townsville	o'n	18-19My	Coriolanus
				Sydney	arr	19 May	Coriolanus
XWS 83				R			
Cairo	dep	14 May	Coorong	Karachi	dep	14 My	Corio
Khartoum	o'n	14-15 My	Coorong	Calcutta	o'n	14-15 My	Corio
Port Bell	o'n	15-16 May	Coorong	Rangoon	o'n	15-16 My	Corio
Kisumu	o'n	16-17 May	Coorong	Singapore	o'n	16-17 My	Corio
Mozambique	o'n	17-18 May	Coorong	Sourabaya	o'n	17-18 My	Corio
Vaalbank	o'n	18-19 May	Coorong	Darwin	o'n	18-19 My	Corio
Durban	arr	19 May	Coorong	Townsville	o'n	19 -20 My	Corio
				Sydney	arr	20 May	Corio

XWS 83 was the first service with *Coorong* after its use in the Crete evacuation 22nd April – 5th May.

The UK continued to send mail to South Africa for connection with the *Horseshoe Route* with the view that the break in the service was temporary [OMB41].

The suspension of the *Horseshoe Route* service from Australia to South Africa and the UK was announced by the Australian and New Zealand Post Offices on 5th May and reported in the newspapers reports [Tro, EP]. The *Evening Post* reported on 5th May that the air mail service between India and Egypt was suspended while *The Argus* of Melbourne reported on 6th May that mail for the UK and South Africa would be sent via the Cape of Good Hope or Panama and that:

“Because of a break in the route between Basra and Palestine, airmails for the Middle East, Egypt, Sudan and Kenya would be sent by the Empire service to India, and from there by steamer.

Airmails already in transit to those countries and the United Kingdom and South Africa would be sent from India by steamer also.”

In New Zealand, the *Mail Notice* in the *Evening Post* of 9th May, stated [EP]:

“Air service between India and Egypt temporarily suspended; correspondence over this section will be dispatched by sea.”

A report in *The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser* on 12th May 1941 stated that the Singapore – Karachi service had been reduced from twice to once weekly [SN]. The Sydney – Singapore service remained twice a week and so only alternate services continued. Air mail was to be sent to the Middle East and Africa by surface from India while air mail for the UK was not accepted.

The *Australian Post Office Notice* of 12th May had the statement:

“... the section of the Empire Air Service beyond Basra has been suspended until further notice. The despatch of air mails to all places except United Kingdom and South Africa, however, will be continued. Mail matter on hand for United Kingdom and South Africa is being despatched by sea. Such mails now in transit will be forwarded by sea from India.”

The first service that terminated at Karachi was *NE 85* on 17th May while the first service that terminated at Singapore was *WS 86* on 16th May.

9.4 Mail by sea from Durban 6th – 8th May

Because of the cancellation of the service through Iraq, mail in both directions was sent by sea. The *Dorset* left Liverpool on 5th April with the 15th March and 3rd April London dispatches [Win7, CIW] and arrived in Cape Town on 1st May [CW]. Its mail for Ceylon, Burma, India, Iraq, Iran and the Persian Gulf was sent by sea on the *Karagola* leaving Durban on 7th May and arriving in Bombay on 30th May. Its mail for Malaya, Hong Kong, Philippines, Indo-China, Thailand and Dutch East Indies was sent on the *Autolycus* which left Durban on 8th May and arrived in Penang on 24th May and Singapore on the 29th while its mail for Australia and New Zealand was sent on the *Glennifer* which left Durban on 6th May and arrived in Fremantle, Australia on 23rd May [Win4, Win7, CW]. No UK mail for destinations beyond Cairo was therefore sent from Durban on *NE 84*.

The cover in Figure 9.3 was postmarked 31st March 1941 in Inverness and was censored and backstamped on 2nd June in Calcutta. The London dispatch of 3rd April was sent on the *Dorset* and so this cover was likely sent from Durban on the *Karagola* arriving in Bombay on 30th May. That gives it 3 days to get from Bombay to Calcutta by rail.

Surprisingly, it was censored in Calcutta rather than on arrival in Bombay, but the sea route is supported by the flying boat dates not fitting with the 2nd June backstamp. *NE 88* left Durban on 21st May and arrived in Calcutta on 28th May and it seems too a long time between that arrival and the backstamp. *NE 89* did not go beyond Karachi.



Figure 9.3: Postmarked 31st March 1941 in Inverness, censored and backstamped 2nd June in Calcutta.

9.5 Introduction of Shuttle Service between Cairo, Tiberias and Basra

According to the *Civil Aviation Intelligence Summary (CAIS 101)* of 21st May, a non-stop service between Tiberias and either Kuwait or Basra was started on 18th May [Win]. However, the *BOAC* aircraft movement charts indicate that the service between Cairo and Basra was re-started a few days earlier [BA]. (Tiberias – Basra with *NE 85* on 15th May and Basra – Tiberias with *WS 85* on the night of 16th – 17th May.) It is not clear whether Kuwait was ever used.

CAIS 101 also reported that flying boats had to be modified:

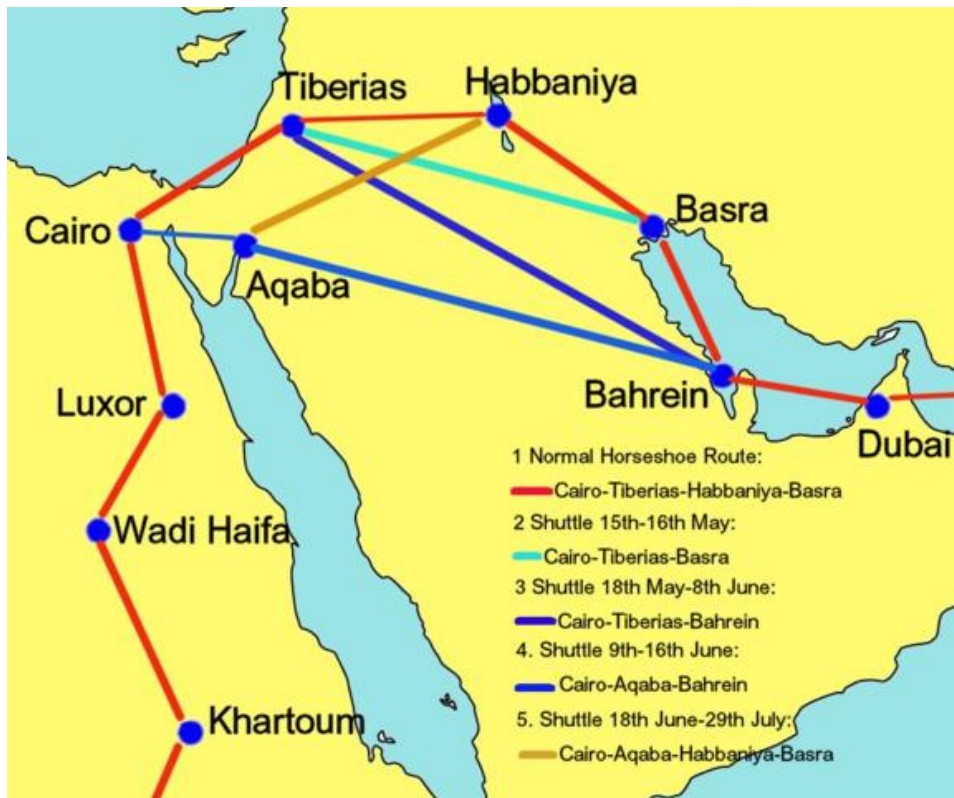
‘to enable them to fly this stage non-stop’

and that:

‘The frequency of the Basra – Singapore service has been reduced to once weekly while a number of flying boats on this service are being modified.’

(It was actually the service between Karachi and Singapore that was reduced in frequency.) Four flying boats (*Cassiopeia*, *Ceres*, *Cameronian*, *Corinthian*) initially flew the shuttle service with two further flying boats (*Cleopatra* and *Coriolanus*) being added in the second half of July. They had been modified with extra tanks so that they had a longer range.

Even when the tables show that there was a through connection, that does not mean that all mail was carried on the shuttle as the capacity on the Cairo – Basra leg was reduced from 6,000 kg to 2,000 kg per week [Wil] and priority mail took preference with other mail being dumped and having to wait for a later connection.



According to *OMB 89* on 24th May [OMB41], the accommodation on the shuttle was only 1760 lb per week while the weekly demand was 2200 lb per week. To combat the reduced capacity on the shuttle and there only being one flight a week between Karachi and Singapore, some airmail from the UK for Australia and New Zealand was sent by air to USA via Lisbon for surface transit across the Pacific on 22nd (440lbs) and 25th May and on 1st June [OMB41]. These are the only dates mentioned in [OMB41], but a letter from the *Department of Civil Aviation* to the *GPO* on 16th July [EAS] states that it was no longer necessary to divert 200 kg of airmail via USA as the service from Durban to Sydney was to be twice weekly from 17th July. That suggests that the diversion of some airmail via USA lasted longer than described in [OMB41].

Some air mail was also sent by sea to and from India. The shuttle, which was non-stop between Tiberias and Basra, is shown in the table as *sh*.

WS 84				NE 85			
Sydney	dep	6 May	Canopus	Durban	dep	11 May	Cassiopeia
Townsville	o'n	6-7 May	Canopus	Mozambique	o'n	11-12 May	Cassiopeia
Darwin	o'n	7-8 May	Canopus	Kisumu	o'n	12-13 May	Cassiopeia
Sourabaya	o'n	8-9 May	Canopus	Khartoum	o'n	13-14 May	Cassiopeia
Singapore	arr	9 May	Canopus	Cairo	o'n	14-15 May	Cassiopeia sh
Singapore	dep	11 May	Corio	Basra	arr	15 May	Cassiopeia sh
Bangkok	o'n	11-12 May	Corio	Basra	dep	16 May	Carpentaria
Calcutta	o'n	12-13 May	Corio	Sharjah	o'n	16-17 May	Carpentaria
Karachi	arr	13 May	Corio	Karachi	arr	17 May	Carpentaria end
Karachi	dep	14 May	Carpentaria	Singapore	dep	19 May	Camilla nc
Basra	arr	14 May	Carpentaria end	Sourabaya	o'n	19-20 May	Camilla
Cairo	dep	15 May	Circe nc	Darwin	o'n	20-21 May	Camilla
Khartoum	o'n	15-16 May	Circe	Townsville	o'n	21-22 May	Camilla
Kisumu	o'n	16-17 May	Circe	Sydney	arr	22 May	Camilla
Mozambique	o'n	17-18 May	Circe				
Vaalbank	o'n	18-19 May	Circe				
Durban	arr	19 May	Circe				

**First use of Cassiopeia on the shuttle.
 First time there was no service between Karachi and Singapore.**

The mail on *WS 84* arrived in Basra on 14th May and connected with the first shuttle that left there on 16th May. We have allocated that shuttle to table *WS 85* as it connected with *WS 85* at Cairo. In *WS 85* and *NE 85*, *Cassiopeia* flew between Cairo and Basra and there was a change of aircraft at Basra.

WS 85				NE 86			
Sydney	dep	9 May	Coriolanus	Durban	dep	14 May	Corsair
Townsville	o'n	9-10 May	Coriolanus	Mozambique	o'n	14-15 May	Corsair
Darwin	o'n	10-11 May	Coriolanus	Kisumu	o'n	15-16 May	Corsair
Sourabaya	o'n	11-12 May	Coriolanus	Khartoum	o'n	16-17 My	Corsair
Singapore	arr	12 May	Coriolanus	Cairo	arr	17 May	Corsair
Singapore	dep	13 May	Canopus	Cairo	dep	18 May	Cassiopeia sh
Bangkok	o'n	13-14 May	Canopus	Bahrein	arr	18 May	Cassiopeia sh
Calcutta	o'n	14-15 May	Canopus	Bahrein	dep	19 May	Canopus
Karachi	arr	15 May	Canopus end	Sharjah	o'n	19-20 My	Canopus
Basra	dep	16 May	Cassiopeia sh	Karachi	arr	20 My	Canopus end
Tiberias		17 May	Cassiopeia sh	Karachi	dep	20 My	Carpentaria nc
Cairo	arr	17 May	Cassiopeia sh	Raj Samand	o'n	20-21 My	Carpentaria
Cairo	dep	18 May	Castor	Calcutta	o'n	21-22 My	Carpentaria
Khartoum	o'n	18-19 May	Castor	Rangoon	o'n	22-23My	Carpentaria
Kisumu	o'n	19-20 May	Castor	Singapore	arr	23 My	Carpentaria
Mozambique	o'n	20-21 May	Castor	Singapore	dep	24 May	Clifton
Vaalbank	o'n	21-22 May	Castor	Sourabaya	o'n	24-25 My	Clifton
Durban	arr	22 May	Castor	Darwin	o'n	25-26 My	Clifton
				Townsville	o'n	26-27 My	Clifton
				Sydney	arr	27 May	Clifton

The *BOAC* aircraft movement charts show *Cassiopeia* on *WS 85* being delayed by mechanical trouble and then leaving Basra at 20.31 in the evening of 16th May, being at Tiberias at 2.40 a.m. and arriving in Cairo at 6.33 a.m. on the morning of 17th May. I believe that these are GMT times rather than local ones.

9.6 Shuttle now between Cairo, Tiberias and Bahrein

From *NE 86* and *WS 86* onwards, *Cassiopeia* flew the shuttle service to or from Bahrein where there was an overnight stop and there was no longer a stop in Basra.

[CIW] shows a South African cover with a Durban postmark on 6th May that has a Karachi censor mark and was backstamped in Meerut, India on 23rd May. Although mail was sent by sea from Durban to Bombay on 7th – 30th May, the arrival date in India indicates that this cover was flown. Flight *NE 84* left Durban on 7th May, but only went as far as Cairo and so this cover was likely off-loaded there and sent on the *NE 86* shuttle on 18th May arriving in Karachi on 20th May. Then sent from Karachi to Meerut by train.

On the other hand, the cover in Figure 9.4 is postmarked in Wellington on 5th May 1941, but did not arrive in Palestine until 30th June. It was opened by the censors in Wellington (*no 31*) and, perhaps because the addressee had a German sounding name, was deemed to be worthy of further examination as it has censor marks *C* and *33* on the back showing that it was passed to another New Zealand censor for consideration. This attention by the New Zealand censors would likely mean that it missed the Trans Tasman flight of 8th May and the next flight was 15th May which would connect with *WS 87* that arrived in Karachi on 22nd May. The Kiryat Bialik receiving mark is on 30th June. It was opened and passed by the censors in Bombay (*C 18*) indicating that it was sent by sea on part of its route. A possible explanation for the length of time taken (56 days) was that the censors decided that, because of its contents, it should not go by air, but by sea, and that Bombay was the port of arrival in India. Alternatively, it was sent by air to India, but because of the situation in Iraq was sent by sea from Bombay to Egypt.



Figure 9.4: New Zealand to Palestine, postmarked 5th May 1941 with faint internal receiving mark in Kiryat Bialik on 30th June 1941. 56 days transit.

The *BOAC* aircraft movement charts label the flight that left Karachi on 18th May as *WS 86* rather than as a continuation of *WS 85*.

WS 86					NE 87				
Sydney	dep	13 May	Coocoe		Durban	dep	17 May	Corinthian	
Townsville	o'n	13-14 May	Coocoe		Mozambique	o'n	17-18 May	Corinthian	
Darwin	o'n	14-15 May	Coocoe		Kisumu	o'n	18-19 May	Corinthian	
Sourabaya	o'n	15-16 May	Coocoe		Khartoum	o'n	19-20 My	Corinthian	
Singapore	arr	16 May	Coocoe	end	Cairo	arr	20 May	Corinthian	
Karachi	dep	18 May	Canopus	nc	Cairo	dep	23 May	Cassiopeia	sh
Bahrein	arr	18 May	Canopus		Bahrein	arr	23 May	Cassiopeia	sh
Bahrein	dep	19 May	Cassiopeia	sh	Bahrein	dep	24 May	Canopus	
Cairo	arr	19 May	Cassiopeia	sh	Karachi	arr	24 My	Canopus	end
Cairo	dep	22 May	Corsair		Singapore	dep	26 May	Carpentaria	nc
Khartoum	o'n	22-23 May	Corsair		Sourabaya	o'n	26-27 My	Carpentaria	
Port Bell	o'n	23-24 May	Corsair		Darwin	o'n	27-28 My	Carpentaria	
Mozambique	o'n	24-25 May	Corsair		Townsville	o'n	28-29 My	Carpentaria	
Vaalbank	o'n	25-26 May	Corsair		Sydney	arr	29 May	Carpentaria	
Durban	arr	26 May	Corsair						

First time there was no service from Singapore to Karachi

It is interesting to note that although the suspension of the service beyond Karachi had been reported by the Australian Post Office on 5th May, by the time air mail sent on that date had reached Karachi, the shuttle service had been introduced. A cover postmarked in Melbourne on 7th May was backstamped in Cairo on 20th May. It would have been flown to Karachi on *WS 85* and from there to Cairo on *WS 86* [Wat1] and so some mail made good progress at this time.

9.7 *KLM (Koninklijke Luchtvaart Maatschappij) Service*

The *KLM* service between Lydda (Palestine) and Singapore had been used to carry ‘Troop mail’ when the *BOAC/Qantas* service was over-stretched as described in Chapter 8. *KLM* were in lengthy negotiations with the British authorities to carry British and Australian mail more regularly, but it was not until the reduction in the *BOAC/Qantas* service between Karachi and Singapore in May 1941 that real progress was made and *KLM* were asked to cooperate in carrying mail [AH]. According to the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 26th May, *KLM* was awarded a contract to carry “at least six loads of troop mail” from Lydda to Singapore [Tro]. Although the contract appears to be temporary, it was extended and continued until the *Horseshoe Route* was broken in February 1942. At Singapore, the mail for Australia and New Zealand was transferred to the *Qantas* service between Singapore and Sydney.

The cover in Figure 9.5 is postmarked 20th May 1941 at *NZ FPO 1*, from a member of NZ forces in Egypt. It may have been sent by *KLM* service *LB 45* from Lydda on 29th May arriving in Singapore on 1st June [AH] and flown from there to Sydney on *NE 89* on 2nd – 5th June. The cover is franked with New Zealand stamps which could be used on *NZEF* mail from Egypt from 1st May 1941 [Sta].

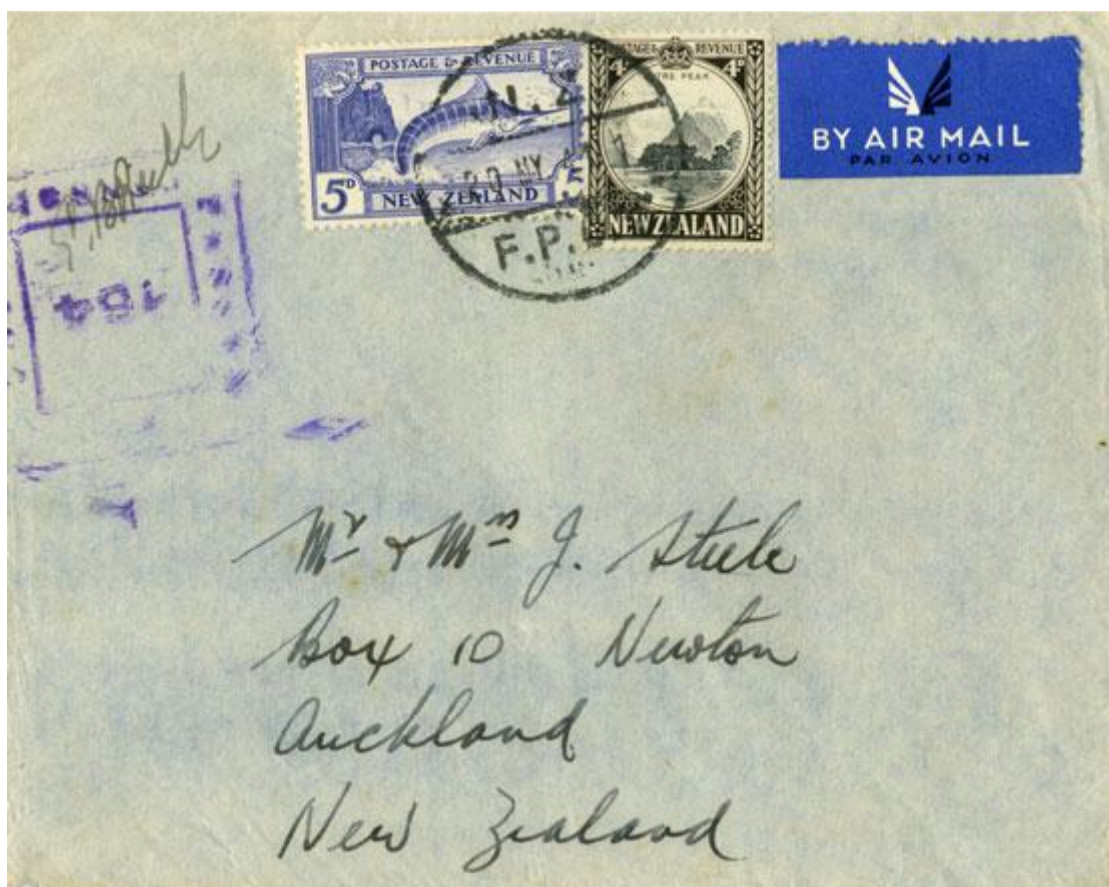


Figure 9.5: From NZ forces in Egypt, likely flown Lydda – Singapore by *KLM*.

The forces cover in Figure 9.6 is postmarked on 3rd June 1941 and may have been flown by *KLM*.



Figure 9.6: Postmarked Egypt on 3rd May 1941. No *BOAC* service between Cairo and Basra

Between 8th and 29th May, *KLM* flew directly between Lydda and Bahrein thereby avoiding Baghdad and Basra.

The Straits Times reported on 18th June that from 19th June 1941, *KLM* were to increase their service from Singapore to Bandung to twice a week to cope with the increased demand. The mail was still being carried between Singapore and Sydney by *Qantas*. At the request of the *RAF*, the terminal was changed from Lydda to Amman for the 7 services in each direction between 12th June and 7th July, [AH]. The mail was carried between Cairo and Lydda (or Amman) by surface.

9.8 Mail from Cairo to Bombay by Sea

According to a letter from *BOAC* to the *GPO* on 17th July 1941, the mail sent from UK on the *Ajax*, *City of Calcutta* and *Clan McArthur* was flown to Cairo, but was then passed to the *Egyptian Post Office* and sent by sea from Port Said to Bombay [Win5].

Mail sent UK – Cape Town on the *Ajax* on 29th March – 25th April was likely flown from Durban on *NE 82* arriving in Cairo on 3rd May. Mail sent UK – Cape Town on the *City of Calcutta* on 11th April – 11th May and the *Clan Macarthur* on 16th April – 14th May was likely flown on *NE 87* and *NE 88* arriving in Cairo on 20th and 24th May respectively. Despite this three week gap between the arrival of *NE 82* and *NE 88*, it appears that mail from all three ships was sent on the same ship from

Port Said. A possibility is the *Somerville* which sailed Port Said (30th May) – Suez (4th June) – Bombay (15th June) [CW].

The evidence is from two covers. The first is postmarked in London on 20th March and is to Neemuch in India, It was likely sent on the *Ajax* and has a Bombay censor mark, but it was not backstamped in Neemuch (500 miles from Bombay) until 17th June while a cover to Batavia that was postmarked in London on 7th April, and was likely sent on either the *City of Calcutta* or the *Clan Macarthur*, has a Dutch East Indies ‘*Censuur*’ mark dated 23rd June [CIW].

Both covers therefore likely arrived in Bombay around 15th June. After arriving in Bombay, the second cover was likely sent to Calcutta by rail as a telegram from New Delhi states that [Win6, CIW]:

‘air mails for east will be forwarded by surface route to Calcutta for onward air carriage if aircraft capacity permits otherwise surface carriage’.

It would then be flown from Calcutta to Batavia on 19th – 21st June on *NE 94*.

9.9 Restoration of air mail service between Singapore and Durban

The Straits Times announced that the air mail service to the Middle East would be resumed with the mail that closed in Singapore on 19th May, i.e. flight *WS 87*. According to [SN], that mail was not delivered in London until 13th August which suggests that it was held up for some time in Bahrein due to lack of capacity on the shuttle or sent from Bombay by sea.

The restoration of the air mail service was announced by the *Australian Post Office* on 14th May and reported on 15th May 1941 in the Melbourne *Argus* [Tro]. It also reported that:

“Postal communication with Jugoslavia and the Greek mainland has been suspended except for harmless personal letters sent through Thomas Cook and Sons or the Red Cross.”

WS 87				NE 88			
Sydney	dep	16 May	Clifton	Durban	dep	21 May	Cleopatra
Townsville	o'n	16-17 May	Clifton	Mozambique	o'n	21-22 May	Cleopatra
Darwin	o'n	17-18 May	Clifton	Kisumu	o'n	22-23 May	Cleopatra
Sourabaya	o'n	18-19 May	Clifton	Khartoum	o'n	23-24 My	Cleopatra
Singapore	arr	19 May	Clifton	Cairo	arr	24 May	Cleopatra
Singapore	dep	20 May	Cooece	Cairo	dep	26 May	Cassiopeia sh
Bangkok	o'n	20-21 May	Cooece	Bahrein	arr	26 May	Cassiopeia sh
Calcutta	o'n	21-22 May	Cooece	Bahrein	dep	27 May	Canopus
Karachi	arr	22 May	Cooece	Karachi	o'n	27-28 May	Canopus
Karachi	dep	23 May	Canopus	Calcutta	o'n	28-29 May	Canopus
Bahrein	arr	23 May	Canopus	Rangoon	o'n	29-30 May	Canopus
Bahrein	dep	24 May	Cassiopeia sh	Singapore	arr	30 My	Canopus UK mail
Cairo	arr	24 May	Cassiopeia sh	Singapore	dep	31 May	Cameronian
Cairo	dep	25 May	Cleopatra	Sourabaya	o'n	31/5-1/6	Cameronian
Khartoum	arr	25 May	Cleopatra	Darwin	o'n	1-3 Jun	Cameronian
Khartoum	dep	26 May	Coorong	Townsville	o'n	3-4 Jun	Cameronian
Kisumu	o'n	26-27 May	Coorong	Sydney	arr	4 Jun	Cameronian
Mozambique	o'n	27-28 May	Coorong				
Vaalbank	o'n	28-29 May	Coorong				
Durban	arr	29 May	Coorong				
				XNE 88			
				Durban	dep	22 May	Coorong
				Mozambique	o'n	22-23 May	Coorong
				Kisumu	o'n	23-24 May	Coorong
				Port Bell	o'n	24-25 May	Coorong
				Khartoum	arr	25 My	Coorong
				Khartoum	dep	26 My	Corinthian
				Cairo	arr	26 May	Corinthian

Because of the reduction in the service between Karachi and Singapore, and because *NE 86* missed the Karachi connection, *NE 88* was the first delivery of mail by flying boat beyond Karachi since *NE 81* although mails on the *Autolytus* and the *Gleniffer* that had carried the mail from Durban as

alternatives to *NE 84* had arrived respectively in Singapore on 29th May and in Fremantle on 23rd May. The UK mail that arrived in Singapore on *NE 88* may have been the 18th and 19th March London dispatches sent on the *Phrontos* and *Inventor*.

WS 88					NE 89				
Sydney	dep	20 May	Corinna		Durban	dep	24 May	Caledonia	
Townsville	o'n	20-21 May	Corinna		Mozambique	o'n	24-25 May	Caledonia	
Darwin	o'n	21-22 May	Corinna		Kisumu	o'n	25-26 May	Caledonia	
Sourabaya	o'n	22-23 May	Corinna		Khartoum	o'n	26-27 My	Caledonia	
Singapore	arr	23 May	Corinna	end	Cairo	arr	27 May	Caledonia	
Karachi	dep	26 May	Canopus	nc	Cairo	dep	31 May	Cassiopeia	sh
Bahrein	arr	26 May	Canopus		Bahrein	arr	31 May	Cassiopeia	sh
Bahrein	dep	27 May	Cassiopeia	sh	Bahrein	dep	1 Jun	Cooee	
Cairo	arr	27 May	Cassiopeia	sh	Karachi	arr	1 Jun	Cooee	end
Cairo	dep	29 May	Caledonia		Singapore	dep	2 Jun	Canopus	nc
Khartoum	o'n	29-30 May	Caledonia		Sourabaya	o'n	2-3 Jun	Canopus	
Kisumu	o'n	30-31 May	Caledonia		Darwin	o'n	3-4 Jun	Canopus	
Mozambique	o'n	31/5-1/6	Caledonia		Townsville	o'n	4-5 Jun	Canopus	
Vaalbank	o'n	1-2 June	Caledonia		Sydney	arr	5 Jun	Canopus	
Durban	arr	2 June	Caledonia						

This shuttle is not shown in [AH].

The weight of mail dispatched from London on the *Horseshoe Route* was not given after *OMB 89* on 24th May.

WS 89					NE 90				
Sydney	dep	23 May	Cameronian		Durban	dep	28 May	Circe	
Townsville	o'n	23-24 May	Cameronian		Mozambique	o'n	28-29 May	Circe	
Darwin	o'n	24-25 May	Cameronian		Kisumu	o'n	29-30 May	Circe	
Sourabaya	o'n	25-26 May	Cameronian		Khartoum	o'n	30-31 My	Circe	
Singapore	arr	26 May	Cameronian		Cairo	arr	31 May	Circe	
Singapore	dep	27 May	Corinna		Cairo	dep	3 Jun	Cassiopeia	sh
Bangkok	o'n	27-28 May	Corinna		Bahrein	arr	3 Jun	Cassiopeia	sh
Calcutta	o'n	28-29 May	Corinna		Bahrein	dep	5 Jun	Corinna	
Karachi	arr	29 May	Corinna		Karachi	arr	5 Jun	Corinna	
Karachi	dep	30 May	Cooee		Karachi	dep	6 Jun	Cooee	
Bahrein	arr	30 May	Cooee		Calcutta	o'n	6-7 Jun	Cooee	
Bahrein	dep	1 June	Cassiopeia	sh	Rangoon	o'n	7-8 Jun	Cooee	
Cairo	arr	1 June	Cassiopeia	sh	Singapore	arr	8 Jun	Cooee	No UK mail
Cairo	dep	1 June	Circe	nc	Singapore	dep	9 Jun	Coriolanus	
Khartoum	o'n	1-2 Jun	Circe		Sourabaya	o'n	9-10 Jun	Coriolanus	
Kisumu	o'n	2-3 Jun	Circe		Darwin	o'n	10-11 Jun	Coriolanus	
Mozambique	o'n	3-4 Jun	Circe		Townsville	o'n	11-12 Jun	Coriolanus	
Vaalbank	o'n	4-5 Jun	Circe		Sydney	arr	12 Jun	Coriolanus	
Durban	arr	5 Jun	Circe						

According to [SN], the Singapore airmail of 2nd, 24th and 26th May was delivered in London on 2nd August. If these dates are correct, that suggests that the mail of 2nd May had not been sent on *WS 82* as air mail was not being sent for destinations beyond Karachi as reported in *The Straits Times* of 5th May. It was then sent with the Singapore mail on *WS 89*. Although it was again likely to have been delayed before being sent on the shuttle, the mail on *WS 89* was delivered in London before the mail on *WS 87*.

The cover in Figure 9.7 is postmarked in Gaya on 23rd May 1941 and likely sent to Allahabad by rail. It was then likely flown from Allahabad to Karachi on *WS 89* on 29th May, but as it was opened and passed by the censor in Bombay, it was likely sent from there by sea. The manuscript on the front states that it was received 83 days later in England on 14th August. According to the Singapore press [SN], the mail that closed in Singapore on 19th May (*WS 87*) was delivered in London on 13th August while the mail on *WS 89* was delivered on 2nd August.



Figure 9.7: Postmarked 23rd May 1941 in Gaya with Bombay censor mark. Manuscript on front stating that it was received 83 days later in England on 14th August.



Figure 9.8: Postmarked London on 2nd April, censor mark in Batavia on 24th June.

The cover in Figure 9.8 is postmarked in London on 2nd April 1941 and is addressed to Batavia. It would have been delayed by being censored in the UK and it has a Dutch East Indies 'Censuur' datestamp on 24th June. The 5th and 7th April dispatches were sent to Cape Town on the *Adrastus* and the *Clan Cameron* and had arrived in South Africa in time to be flown on *NE 88*, *NE 90* or *NE 91* that arrived in Batavia on 31st May, 9th June or 13th June, but must have arrived there on *NE 94* on 21st June.

It may have been held up for some time in Durban or Cairo or, if on *NE 90*, sent from Calcutta to Singapore by sea as a letter from *Australia House* to the *Dominions Office* complains that [Win8]:
 ‘328 kilogrammes of Australian mail were off-loaded at Calcutta on 6th June from flying boat and despatched to Singapore by sea for onward carriage by air to Australia’.
 The Singapore press reported that no UK mail was received there on *NE 90* and so it seems that it was not only Australian mail that was sent by sea from Calcutta.

Due to the disruption in the air mail between India and the UK, some people elected to send their air mail via Australia, New Zealand and by air across the Pacific to USA. The air mail rate was 49½ annas plus 3½ annas surface rate giving a total of 53 annas.

The cover in Figure 9.9 is postmarked in Dalhousie in North India on 1st June with routing instructions: *India – Auckland – England*. It is franked with 3 rupees, 4 annas and 12 pies which is equivalent to 53 annas. It has a Calcutta censor mark and so either flown from India (Gwalior?) on *NE 90* and off-loaded at Calcutta on 6th June or sent Dalhousie to Calcutta by rail. Then sent to Singapore by sea before being flown to Sydney. Then flown trans Tasman, transPacific and transatlantic to UK. A similar cover franked with 53 annas was postmarked in India on 24th May and redirected in Scotland on 21st July.



Figure 9.9: Postmarked Dalhousie in North India on 1st June with routing instructions: India – Auckland – England. Likely flown from India (Gwalior?) on *NE 90*.

XNE 90				
Durban	dep	30 May	Castor	
Mozambique	o'n	30-31 May	Castor	
Kisumu	o'n	31/5-1/6	Castor	
Khartoum	o'n	1-2 Jun	Castor	
Cairo	arr	2 Jun	Castor	end
Singapore	dep	10 Jun	Cocee	nc
Sourabaya	o'n	10-11 Jun	Cocee	
Darwin	o'n	11-12 Jun	Cocee	
Townsville	o'n	12-13 Jun	Cocee	
Sydney	arr	13 Jun	Cocee	

At this time the transit times between India and the UK were long. As well as the problems of capacity on the shuttle, the time for the sea journey from the UK to Cape Town averaged about 50 days [EAS]. The ships often had to travel in convoys.

WS 90					NE 91				
Sydney	dep	27 May	Camilla		Durban	dep	31 May	Ceres	
Townsville	o'n	27-28 May	Camilla		Mozambique	o'n	31/5-1/6	Ceres	
Darwin	o'n	28-30 May	Camilla		Kisumu	o'n	1-2 Jun	Ceres	
Sourabaya	o'n	30-31 May	Camilla		Khartoum	o'n	2-3 Jun	Ceres	
Singapore	arr	31 May	Camilla	end	Cairo	arr	3 June	Ceres	
Karachi	dep	3 June	Corinna	nc	Cairo	dep	8 Jun	Ceres	sh
Bahrein	arr	3 June	Corinna		Bahrein	arr	8 Jun	Ceres	sh
Bahrein	dep	5 June	Cassiopeia	sh	Bahrein	dep	9 Jun	Corinna	
Tiberias	o'n	5-6 Jun	Cassiopeia	sh	Karachi	o'n	9-10 Jun	Corinna	
Cairo	arr	6 June	Cassiopeia	sh	Calcutta	o'n	10-11 Jun	Corinna	
Cairo	dep	5 Jun	Castor	nc	Rangoon	o'n	11-12 Jun	Corinna	
Juba	o'n	5-6 Jun	Castor		Singapore	arr	12 Jun	Corinna	
Kisumu	o'n	6-7 Jun	Castor		Singapore	dep	13 Jun	Clifton	No UK mail
Mozambique	o'n	7-8 Jun	Castor		Sourabaya	o'n	13-14 Jun	Clifton	
Vaalbank	o'n	8-9 Jun	Castor		Darwin	o'n	14-15 Jun	Clifton	
Durban	arr	9 Jun	Castor		Townsville	o'n	15-16 Jun	Clifton	
					Sydney	arr	16 Jun	Clifton	

First use of *Ceres* on the shuttle.

9.10 Further mail from Durban by sea

There were further dispatches of UK mail from Durban by sea in late May and early June. The dispatches of mail from London on 22nd March and 16th April were carried on the *Clan MacGillavray* to Cape Town on 18th April – 23rd May while the dispatch on 19th April was carried on the *City of Exeter* on 26th April – 21st May. The mail from both ships was taken by sea from Durban to Bombay on the *City of Ripon* on 26th May – 11th June for onward carriage by air [Win4, Win7, CW]. After arrival in India it is likely to have been taken to Calcutta by train [Win6] and flown on *NE 94*.

The dispatch from London on 21st April was carried to Cape Town on the *Rochester Castle* on 26th April – 24th May. Mail for Ceylon was carried from Durban to Colombo on the *City of Exeter* from 30th May to 14th June, mail for Australia and New Zealand on the *Halizones* leaving Durban on 2nd June and arriving in Melbourne on 24th June while all other mail was carried to Bombay on the *Clan Murdoch* on 29 May – 13 June [Win4].

The cover in Figure 9.10 is postmarked in Manchester on 16th April and is addressed to Batavia. It was censored in the UK and has a *Censuur* datestamp on 23rd June. Likely sent on either the dispatch of 19th April or of 21st April and so would arrive in Bombay on either the *City of Ripon* on 11th June or *Clan Murdoch* on 13th June. Both mails were then sent by rail to Calcutta before being flown from there to Batavia on *NE 94*.

The dispatch from London on 24th April was carried to Cape Town on the *Imperial Star* on 26th April – 24th May. Mail for Australia and New Zealand was carried on the *Halizones* while all other mail was flown from Durban [Win4].



Figure 9.10: Postmarked Manchester on 16th April, censor mark in Batavia on 23rd June.

9.11 Tiberias replaced by Aqaba

Although the fighting in Iraq was over by 3rd June, there was now fighting in Syria leading to the stop at Tiberias being replaced by Aqaba. A motor yacht, *Imperia*, was stationed at Aqaba as a depot ship [HM]. According to [Wil], Aqaba was substituted for Tiberias from 9th June to 31st July. That would make the first use of Aqaba on *WS 91* on 10th June and *NE 92* on 11th June, although [AH] shows it as being on *NE 91* on 8th June. The *BOAC* aircraft movement charts have 'via *Aqaba*' in pencil alongside *NE 92*. Hence, from 9th June with *WS 91* and *NE 92*, the Cairo – Tiberias – Bahrein shuttle was replaced by a Cairo – Aqaba – Bahrein shuttle.

WS 91				NE 92			
Sydney	dep	30 May	Coriolanus	Durban	dep	4 Jun	Corsair
Townsville	o'n	30-31 May	Coriolanus	Mozambique	o'n	4-5 Jun	Corsair
Darwin	o'n	31/5-1/6	Coriolanus	Kisumu	o'n	5-6 Jun	Corsair
Sourabaya	o'n	1-2 Jun	Coriolanus	Khartoum	o'n	6-7 Jun	Corsair
Singapore	arr	2 Jun	Coriolanus	Cairo	arr	7 Jun	Corsair
Singapore	dep	3 Jun	Camilla	Cairo	dep	11 Jun	Corinthian sh
Bangkok	o'n	3-4 Jun	Camilla	Bahrein	arr	11 Jun	Corinthian sh
Calcutta	o'n	4-5 Jun	Camilla	Bahrein	dep	12 Jun	Camilla
Karachi	arr	5 Jun	Camilla	Karachi	arr	12 Jun	Camilla end
Karachi	dep	8 Jun	Corinna	Singapore	dep	16 Jun	Corinna nc
Sharjah	o'n	8-9 Jun	Corinna	Sourabaya	o'n	16-17 Jun	Corinna
Bahrein	arr	9 Jun	Corinna	Darwin	o'n	17-18 Jun	Corinna
Bahrein	dep	10 June	Ceres sh	Townsville	o'n	18-19 Jun	Corinna
Cairo	arr	10 June	Ceres sh	Sydney	arr	19 Jun	Corinna
Cairo	dep	8 Jun	Cassiopeia nc				
Khartoum	o'n	8-9 Jun	Cassiopeia				
Kisumu	o'n	9-10 Jun	Cassiopeia				
Mozambique	o'n	10-11 Jun	Cassiopeia				
Vaalbank	o'n	11-12 Jun	Cassiopeia				
Durban	arr	12 June	Cassiopeia				

First use of *Aqaba* on Bahrein - Cairo shuttle?

First use of *Corinthian* on the shuttle.

First use of *Aqaba* on Cairo – Bahrein shuttle?

The cover in Figure 9.11 has a Dar es Salaam postmark 1st June and is addressed to Bombay where it was backstamped on 19th June and opened by the censors. It was flown Dar es Salaam – Cairo on either *NE 91* on 1st – 3rd June or *NE 92* on 5th – 7th June and delayed there before being flown to Karachi on *NE 94* arriving on 17th June. [CIW] shows a South African cover postmarked in Durban on 3rd June and backstamped in Calcutta on 19th June where it was opened by the censors. It was redirected to Meerut where it was backstamped 21st June and likely flown Durban – Cairo on *NE 92* on 4th – 7th June and delayed there before being flown to Calcutta on *NE 94* arriving on 18th June.



Figure 9.11: Postmarked Dar es Salaam on 1st June, Bombay datestamp on 19th June.

A registered cover postmarked in Mombasa on 7th June has a Bombay delivery datestamp at 10.30 am on 18th June. It would be flown from Mombasa on *NE 93* on 8th June and must have continued to Karachi on *NE 93* as its delivery in Bombay is too early for it to have been flown on *NE 94*. It therefore overtook the above cover from Dar es Salaam.

WS 92				NE 93			
Sydney	dep	3 June	Corio	Durban	dep	7 June	Coorong
Townsville	o'n	3-4 Jun	Corio	Mozambique	o'n	7-8 Jun	Coorong
Darwin	o'n	4-5 Jun	Corio	Kisumu	o'n	8-9 Jun	Coorong
Sourabaya	o'n	5-6 Jun	Corio	Khartoum	o'n	9-10 Jun	Coorong
Singapore	arr	6 Jun	Corio	Cairo	arr	10 June	Coorong
Karachi	dep	11 Jun	Camilla	Cairo	dep	12 June	Ceres sh
Bahrein	arr	11 Jun	Camilla	Bahrein	arr	12 June	Ceres sh
Bahrein	dep	12 June	Corinthian	Bahrein	dep	14 Jun	Corio
Cairo	arr	12 June	Corinthian	Karachi	arr	14 Jun	Corio end
Cairo	dep	12 Jun	Corsair				
Juba	o'n	12-13 Jun	Corsair				
Kisumu	o'n	13-14 Jun	Corsair				
Mozambique	o'n	14-15 Jun	Corsair				
Vaalbank	o'n	15-16 Jun	Corsair				
Durban	arr	16 June	Corsair				

The *BOAC* aircraft movement charts have ‘*via Tib*’ in pencil alongside the shuttle flight of *Ceres* on *NE 94*, but that seems to have been a one-off.

WS 93

Sydney	dep	6 June	Clifton
Townsville	o’n	6-7 Jun	Clifton
Darwin	o’n	7-8 Jun	Clifton
Sourabaya	o’n	8-9 Jun	Clifton
Singapore	arr	9 Jun	Clifton
Singapore	dep	10 Jun	Corio
Bangkok	o’n	10-11 Jun	Corio
Calcutta	o’n	11-12 Jun	Corio
Karachi	o’n	12-13 Jun	Corio
Bahrein	arr	13 Jun	Corio
Bahrein	dep	14 June	Ceres sh
Cairo	arr	14 June	Ceres sh
Cairo	dep	15 June	Caledonia
Khartoum	o’n	15-16 Jun	Caledonia
Kisumu	o’n	16-17 Jun	Caledonia
Mozambique	o’n	17-18 Jun	Caledonia
Vaalbank	o’n	18-19 Jun	Caledonia
Durban	arr	19 June	Caledonia

NE 94

Durban	dep	11 June	Caledonia
Mozambique	o’n	11-12 Jun	Caledonia
Kisumu	o’n	12-13 Jun	Caledonia
Khartoum	o’n	13-14 Jun	Caledonia
Cairo	arr	14 June	Caledonia
Cairo	dep	15 June & 16 Jun	Corinthian sh & Ceres sh
Bahrein	arr	15 June & 16 Jun	Corinthian sh & Ceres sh
Bahrein	dep	17 Jun	Corio
Karachi	arr	17 Jun	Corio
Karachi	dep	18 Jun	Camilla
Calcutta	o’n	18-19 Jun	Camilla
Rangoon	o’n	19-20 Jun	Camilla
Singapore	arr	20 Jun	Camilla UK mail
Singapore	dep	21 Jun	Canopus
Sourabaya	o’n	21-22 Jun	Canopus
Darwin	o’n	22-23 Jun	Canopus
Townsville	o’n	23-24 Jun	Canopus
Sydney	arr	24 Jun	Canopus

NE 94 carried the first UK air mail to arrive in Singapore for three weeks and so it is not surprising that the Singapore Press reported that it carried a heavy mail from the UK. Covers in this chapter with very different departure dates and itineraries all seem to have been flown on *NE 94*.

On 5th June 1941, *The Straits Times* reported that due to the restricted load capacity, the service to East and South Africa and Britain had again been suspended although the once weekly service to India, Persian Gulf, Palestine, Egypt and Sudan was continuing. The report in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 7th June was that because of the shortage of aircraft, air mail from Australia for the UK and South Africa was being sent by sea from India and that further air mail for UK and South Africa would be sent by sea:

“until through conveyance by air from Australia to Durban was restored...”

On 3rd June, New Zealand Chief Postmasters were telegraphed not to accept air mail for the UK and East and South Africa “owing to restricted load capacity beyond Sudan”. They were told on 25th June, that normal services were resumed [Sta2]. I assume that the phrase “beyond Sudan” was from a UK rather than a New Zealand perspective.

A cover postmarked and censored in Bandoeng on 30th May and addressed to South Africa has a Singapore transit on 12th June where it was again dealt with by the censors. It has a Stellenbosch receiver on 14th July and so is likely to have been sent by sea either from Singapore or India. Another cover is postmarked in India on 10th June with a Calcutta censor mark that was redirected in Britain on 4th September.

A cover postmarked in Newcastle, New South Wales on 6th June 1941 has a London redirection datestamp on 5th August. It may have been flown on *WS 94* from Sydney to Karachi on 10th – 15th June and then sent from Bombay by sea or sent all the way by sea. Proud shows an unnamed ship sailing South Africa – UK on 4th July – 3rd August which could have carried this mail [Pr].

9.12 Re-introduction of Stops at Habbaniya and Basra

Starting with *NE 95* and *XWS 94*, the overnight stop in Bahrein was replaced by one in Basra. That suggests a change in route due to the re-introduction of the stop at Lake Habbaniya on these flights. This is supported by *CAIS 106* of 25 June which states that due to fighting in Syria, Tiberius had been replaced and the route was now Cairo – Aqaba – Lake Habbaniya – Basra [Win]. The *BOAC* aircraft movement charts have ‘*via Hab*’ in pencil against the flight of *Corinthian* on *NE 95* [BA].

A cover postmarked in Dar es Salaam on 11th June has a Bombay delivery datestamp on 21st June. It would have been flown on *NE 94* to Cairo and then on the *Corio NE 95* shuttle.

WS 94				NE 95				
Sydney	dep	10 June	Carpentaria	Durban	dep	14 Jun	Circe	
Townsville	o'n	10-11 June	Carpentaria	Mozambique	o'n	14-15 June	Circe	
Darwin	o'n	11-12 June	Carpentaria	Kisumu	o'n	15-16 June	Circe	
Sourabaya	o'n	12-13 June	Carpentaria	Khartoum	o'n	16-17 June	Circe	
Singapore	arr	13 Jun	Carpentaria	end	Cairo	arr	17 Jun	Circe
Karachi	dep	15 Jun	Corio	nc	Cairo	dep	18 Jun &	Corinthian sh
Bahrein	arr	15 Jun	Corio				20 Jun	& Ceres sh
Bahrein	dep	16 June	Corinthian	sh	Basra	arr	18 Jun &	Corinthian sh
Cairo	arr	16 June	Corinthian	sh			20 Jun	& Ceres sh
Cairo	dep	19 Jun	Coorong		Basra	dep	19 Jun &	Corio &
Khartoum	o'n	19-20 Jun	Coorong				21 Jun	Carpentaria
Kisumu	o'n	20-21 Jun	Coorong		Karachi	arr	19 Jun &	Corio & end
Mozambique	o'n	21-22 Jun	Coorong				21 Jun	Carpentaria
Vaalbank	o'n	22-23 Jun	Coorong		Singapore	dep	23 Jun	Camilla nc
Durban	arr	23 June	Coorong		Sourabaya	o'n	23-24 June	Camilla
					Darwin	o'n	24-25 June	Camilla
					Townsville	o'n	25-26 June	Camilla
					Sydney		26 Jun	Camilla

XWS 94				XNE 95			
Karachi	dep	18 Jun	Corio	Cairo	dep	20 Jun	Corinthian sh
Basra	arr	18 Jun	Corio	Basra	arr	20 Jun	Corinthian sh
Basra	dep	19 June	Corinthian sh	Basra	dep	21 Jun	Corio
Cairo	arr	19 June	Corinthian sh	Karachi	arr	21 Jun	Corio

A cover postmarked in Aberdeen on 24th April was backstamped 66 days later on 29th June in Bangalore. The London dispatch of 28th April was sent to Cape Town on the *City of Singapore* on 29th April – 5th June [Pr]. It may then have been flown on *NE 94* or *NE 95* and held up in Cairo before being flown on *NE 96* and off-loaded in Karachi on 24th June.

WS 95				NE 96			
Sydney	dep	13 June	Canopus	Durban	dep	18 June	Castor
Townsville	o'n	13-14 Jun	Canopus	Mozambique	o'n	18-19 Jun	Castor
Darwin	o'n	14-15 Jun	Canopus	Kisumu	o'n	19-20 Jun	Castor
Sourabaya	o'n	15-16 Jun	Canopus	Khartoum	o'n	20-21 Jun	Castor
Singapore	arr	16 Jun	Canopus	Cairo	arr	21 June	Castor
Singapore	dep	17 Jun	Carpentaria	Cairo	dep	22 June &	Ceres & sh
Bangkok	o'n	17-18 Jun	Carpentaria			23 Jun	Corinthian sh
Calcutta	o'n	18-19 Jun	Carpentaria	Basra	arr	22 June &	Ceres & sh
Karachi	arr	19 Jun	Carpentaria			23 Jun	Corinthian sh
Karachi	dep	20 Jun	Carpentaria & Corio	Basra	dep	24 Jun	Carpentaria
Basra	arr	20 Jun	Carpentaria & Corio	Karachi	arr	24 Jun	Carpentaria
Basra	dep	21 June	Ceres & Corinthian sh	Karachi	dep	25 Jun	Corio
Cairo	arr	21 June	Ceres & Corinthian sh	Calcutta	o'n	25-26 Jun	Corio
Cairo	dep	22 June	Circe	Rangoon	o'n	26-27Jun	Corio
Khartoum	o'n	22-23 Jun	Circe	Singapore	arr	27 Jun	Corio
							No UK mail
Kisumu	o'n	23-24 Jun	Circe	Singapore	dep	28 Jun	Cooe
Mozambique	o'n	24-25 Jun	Circe	Sourabaya	o'n	28-29Jun	Cooe
Vaalbank	o'n	25-26 Jun	Circe	Darwin	o'n	29-30 Jun	Cooe
Durban	arr	26 June	Circe	Townsville	o'n	30/6-1/7	Cooe
				Sydney	arr	1 Jul	Cooe

A cover postmarked in New Zealand on 10th June 1941 was addressed to a soldier in Egypt. The next trans-Tasman flight was on 14th June and so it would be flown from Sydney on *WS 96*. It was returned to New Zealand with an Egyptian datestamp of 3rd July and so was on the shuttle for *WS 96, 97* or *98*.

A cover postmarked in Bedford on 26th April is addressed to Batavia and is censored in the UK and in Batavia where the '*Censuur*' mark is dated 2nd July, four days after the arrival of *NE 96*. Likely flown from Durban on *NE 93* or *NE 94*, but then held up in Cairo before being flown on the shuttle to Karachi on *NE 95, XNE 95* or *NE 96* and then on to Batavia on *NE 96*. Alternatively, it was sent by surface from Cairo to Amman and flown from there by *KLM* on 26th June, arriving in Batavia on 30th June as the Singapore press stated that no UK mail arrived there on *NE 96*.

A cover postmarked in Staffordshire on 30th April was backstamped in Bombay on 27th June.

WS 96

Sydney	dep	17 June	Cameronian
Townsville	o'n	17-18 Jun	Cameronian
Darwin	o'n	18-19 Jun	Cameronian
Sourabaya	o'n	19-20 Jun	Cameronian
Singapore	arr	20 Jun	Cameronian end
Karachi	dep	22 Jun	Carpentaria nc
Basra	arr	22 Jun	Carpentaria
Basra	dep	23 June& 25 June	Ceres & sh Corinthian sh
Cairo	arr	23 June& 25 June	Ceres & sh Corinthian sh
Cairo	dep	26 June	Castor
Khartoum	o'n	26-27 Jun	Castor
Kisumu	o'n	27-28 Jun	Castor
Mozambique	o'n	28-29 Jun	Castor
Vaalbank	o'n	29-30 Jun	Castor
Durban	arr	30 June	Castor

NE 97

Durban	dep	21 June	Cassiopeia
Mozambique	o'n	21-22 Jun	Cassiopeia
Kisumu	o'n	22-23 Jun	Cassiopeia
Khartoum	o'n	23-24 Jun	Cassiopeia
Cairo	arr	24 June	Cassiopeia
Cairo	dep	27 June	Corinthian sh
Basra	arr	27 June	Corinthian sh
Basra	dep	28 Jun	Carpentaria
Karachi	arr	28 Jun	Carpentaria end
Singapore	dep	30 Jun	Corio nc
Sourabaya	o'n	30/6-1/7	Corio
Darwin	o'n	1-2 Jul	Corio
Townsville	o'n	2-3 Jul	Corio
Sydney	arr	3 Jul	Corio

XNE 97

Durban	dep	22 June	Corsair
Mozambique	o'n	22-23 Jun	Corsair
Kisumu	o'n	23-24 Jun	Corsair
Khartoum	o'n	24-25 Jun	Corsair
Cairo	arr	25 June	Corsair

WS 97

Sydney	dep	20 June	Coocce
Townsville	o'n	20-21 Jun	Coocce
Darwin	o'n	21-22 Jun	Coocce
Sourabaya	o'n	22-23 Jun	Coocce
Singapore	arr	23 Jun	Coocce
Singapore	dep	24 Jun	Cameronian
Bangkok	o'n	24-25 Jun	Cameronian
Calcutta	o'n	25-26 Jun	Cameronian
Karachi	arr	26 Jun	Cameronian
Karachi	dep	27 Jun	Carpentaria
Basra	arr	27 Jun	Carpentaria
Basra	dep	28 June	Corinthian sh
Cairo	arr	28 June	Corinthian sh
Cairo	dep	29 June	Corsair
Khartoum	o'n	29-30 Jun	Corsair
Kisumu	o'n	30/6-1/7	Corsair
Mozambique	arr	1 Jul	Corsair
Mozambique	dep	3 Jul	Coorong
Durban	arr	3 Jul	Coorong

NE 98

Durban	dep	25 June	Caledonia
Mozambique	o'n	25-26 Jun	Caledonia
Kisumu	o'n	26-27 Jun	Caledonia
Khartoum	o'n	27-28 Jun	Caledonia
Cairo	arr	28 June	Caledonia
Cairo	dep	29 June	Corinthian sh
Basra	o'n	29-30 June	Corinthian sh
Karachi	arr	30 Jun	Corinthian
Karachi	dep	1 Jul	Carpentaria
Calcutta	o'n	1-3 Jul	Carpentaria
Rangoon	o'n	3-4 Jul	Carpentaria
Singapore	arr	4 Jul	Carpentaria UK mail
Singapore	dep	5 Jul	Corinna
Sourabaya	o'n	5-6 Jul	Corinna
Darwin	o'n	6-7 Jul	Corinna
Townsville	o'n	7-8 Jul	Corinna
Sydney	arr	8 Jul	Corinna

The cover in Figure 9.12 is postmarked in Suffolk on 2nd May and addressed to Rawalpindi where it has an arrival mark at 8 a.m. on 28th June. It was likely sent on the dispatch of 3rd May, perhaps on the *Magician* which arrived in Cape Town on 13th June. It was censored and its airmail etiquette cancelled in Karachi where it likely arrived on *NE 96* on 24th June before being sent on by surface.



Figure 9.12: Postmarked 2nd May in Suffolk. Received in Rawalpindi on 28th June, 57 days later.

A registered double weight cover postmarked in UK on 25th April which would be delayed as it was opened for Customs examination was redirected in Remuera (Auckland), New Zealand on 10th July. A Trans Tasman flight was scheduled for 7th July and so likely arrived in Sydney on *NE 96* on 1st July.

A cover postmarked in London on 9th May is addressed to Bombay where it has a datestamp on 2nd July. The London dispatch of 9th May was possibly sent on the *City of Wellington* and then went on *NE 97* or *NE 98*.

WS 98

Sydney	dep	24 June	Clifton	
Townsville	o'n	24-25 Jun	Clifton	
Darwin	o'n	25-26 Jun	Clifton	
Sourabaya	o'n	26-27 Jun	Clifton	
Singapore	arr	27 Jun	Clifton	end
Karachi	dep	29 Jun	Cameronian	nc
Basra	o'n	29/6-1/7	Cameronian	sh
Cairo	arr	1 July	Cameronian	sh
Cairo	dep	3 Jul	Caledonia	
Khartoum	o'n	3-4 Jul	Caledonia	
Kisumu	o'n	4-5 Jul	Caledonia	
Mozambique	o'n	5-6 Jul	Caledonia	
Vaalbank	o'n	6-7 Jul	Caledonia	
Durban	arr	7 Jul	Caledonia	

NE 99

Durban	dep	28 June	Cambria	
Mozambique	o'n	28-29 Jun	Cambria	
Kisumu	o'n	29-30 Jun	Cambria	
Khartoum	o'n	30/6-1/7	Cambria	
Cairo	arr	1 Jul	Cambria	
Cairo	dep	4 Jul	Cameronian	sh
Basra	arr	4 Jul	Cameronian	sh
Basra	dep	5 Jul	Corinthian	
Karachi	arr	5 Jul	Corinthian	end
Singapore	dep	7 Jul	Carpentaria	nc
Sourabaya	o'n	7-8 Jul	Carpentaria	
Darwin	o'n	8-9 Jul	Carpentaria	
Townsville	o'n	9-10 Jul	Carpentaria	
Sydney	arr	10 Jul	Carpentaria	

First use of *Cameronian* on the shuttle.

On 25th June, the *Hobart Mercury* reported the *Deputy Director of Posts and Telegraphs* stating that the service between Singapore and Durban was to be resumed. He stressed that the air mails to the *A.I.F.* in the Middle East had not been affected by the suspension.

The resumption of the service was reported in the Singapore press on 27th June. That suggests that mail for the UK was not sent from Singapore on *WS 91, 93, 95* and *97*. There was no Singapore – Karachi service on the intervening services *WS 90, 92, 94, 96* and *98*.

The Straits Times of 30th June reported that the air mail service to Durban was again in operation. A cover postmarked and censored in Bandoeng on 30th May has a Singapore transit on 12th June where it was again dealt with by the censors and a Stellenbosch receiver on 14th July and so was perhaps held in Singapore until the airmail service was resumed and then sent on *WS 99*.

WS 99				NE 100			
Sydney	dep	27 June	Corinna	Durban	dep	2 Jul	Coorong
Townsville	o'n	27-28 Jun	Corinna	Mozambique	arr	2 Jul	Coorong
Darwin	o'n	28-29 Jun	Corinna	Mozambique	dep	3 Jul	Corsair
Sourabaya	o'n	29-30 Jun	Corinna	Kisumu	o'n	3-6 Jul	Corsair
Singapore	arr	30 Jun	Corinna	Khartoum	o'n	6-7 Jul	Corsair
Singapore	dep	1 Jul	Clifton	Cairo	arr	7 Jul	Corsair
Bangkok	o'n	1-2 Jul	Clifton	Cairo	dep	6 Jul	Cameronian
Calcutta	o'n	2-3 Jul	Clifton	Basra	arr	6 Jul	Cameronian
Karachi	arr	3 Jul	Clifton	Basra	dep	7 Jul	Clifton
Karachi	dep	4 Jul	Corinthian	Karachi	arr	7 Jul	Clifton
Basra	arr	4 Jul	Corinthian	Karachi	dep	8 Jul	Corinthian
Basra	dep	5 Jul	Cameronian sh	Calcutta	o'n	8-9 Jul	Corinthian
Cairo	arr	5 Jul	Cameronian sh	Rangoon	o'n	9-10 Jul	Corinthian
Cairo	dep	6 Jul	Cambria	Singapore	arr	10 Jul	Corinthian
Khartoum	o'n	6-7 Jul	Cambria	Singapore	dep	11 Jul	Canopus
Kisumu	o'n	7-8 Jul	Cambria	Sourabaya	o'n	11-12 Jul	Canopus
Mozambique	o'n	8-9 Jul	Cambria	Darwin	o'n	12-13 Jul	Canopus
Vaalbank	o'n	9-10 Jul	Cambria	Townsville	o'n	13-14 Jul	Canopus
Durban	arr	10 Jul	Cambria	Sydney	arr	14 Jul	Canopus

The cover in Figure 9.13 would be flown trans-Tasman on 26th June and then on *WS 99*. It has an unusual *Air Service Suspended* cachet.



Figure 9.13: Postmarked in New Zealand on 20th June 1941. Likely flown on *WS 99*.

A registered air mail cover addressed to Philadelphia and postmarked in Ain Shams, Egypt on 3rd July 1941 has a Cairo transit later that day. It would likely be flown from Cairo on 6th July arriving in Durban on 10th July. It has a New York transit on 9th August and so would have gone by sea from Cape Town perhaps to Trinidad and flown from there.

The cover in Figure 9.14 is postmarked on 5th July 1941 and likely flown by *KLM* from Amman on 7th July arriving in Singapore on 10th July [AH]. (This was the last use of Amman before *KLM* reverted to using Lydda as their terminus.) The cover would be flown by *Qantas* on *NE 100* from Singapore to Darwin on 11th – 12th July. From Darwin it would be flown to Adelaide by *Guinea*

Airways and then to Melbourne by *Australia National Airways*, arriving on 14th July. Manuscript on the front states that it was received in Sandringham, a suburb of Melbourne, on 14th July.

WS 100

Sydney	dep	1 Jul	Coriolanus	
Townsville	o'n	1-2 Jul	Coriolanus	
Darwin	o'n	2-3 Jul	Coriolanus	
Sourabaya	o'n	3-4 Jul	Coriolanus	
Singapore	arr	4 Jul	Coriolanus	end
Karachi	dep	6 Jul	Clifton	nc
Basra	arr	7 Jul	Clifton	
Basra	dep	10 Jul	Cameronian	sh
Cairo	arr	10 Jul	Cameronian	sh
Cairo	dep	10 Jul	Corsair	nc
Khartoum	o'n	10-11 Jul	Corsair	
Kisumu	o'n	11-12 Jul	Corsair	
Mozambique	o'n	12-13 Jul	Corsair	
Vaalbank	o'n	13-14 Jul	Corsair	
Durban	arr	14 Jul	Corsair	

NE 101

Durban	dep	5 Jul	Castor	
Mozambique	o'n	5-6 Jul	Castor	
Kisumu	o'n	6-7 Jul	Castor	
Khartoum	o'n	7-8 Jul	Castor	
Cairo	arr	8 Jul	Castor	
Cairo	dep	11 Jul	Cameronian	sh
Basra	arr	11 Jul	Cameronian	sh
Basra	dep	12 Jul	Clifton	
Karachi	arr	12 Jul	Clifton	end
Singapore	dep	14 Jul	Corinthian	nc
Sourabaya	o'n	14-15 Jul	Corinthian	
Darwin	o'n	15-16 Jul	Corinthian	
Townsville	o'n	16-17 Jul	Corinthian	
Sydney	arr	17 Jul	Corinthian	

WS 101

Sydney	dep	4 Jul	Canopus	
Townsville	o'n	4-5 Jul	Canopus	
Darwin	o'n	5-6 Jul	Canopus	
Sourabaya	o'n	6-7 Jul	Canopus	
Singapore	arr	7 Jul	Canopus	
Singapore	dep	8 Jul	Coriolanus	
Bangkok	o'n	8-9 Jul	Coriolanus	
Calcutta	o'n	9-10 Jul	Coriolanus	
Karachi	arr	10 Jul	Coriolanus	
Karachi	dep	11 Jul	Clifton	
Basra	arr	11 Jul	Clifton	
Basra	dep	12 Jul	Cameronian	sh
Cairo	arr	12 Jul	Cameronian	sh
Cairo	dep	13 Jul	Castor	
Khartoum	o'n	13-14 Jul	Castor	
Kisumu	o'n	14-15 Jul	Castor	
Mozambique	o'n	15-16 Jul	Castor	
Durban	arr	16 Jul	Castor	

NE 102

Durban	dep	9 Jul	Coorong	
Mozambique	o'n	9-10 Jul	Coorong	
Kisumu	o'n	10-11 Jul	Coorong	
Khartoum	o'n	11-12 Jul	Coorong	
Cairo	arr	12 Jul	Coorong	
Cairo	dep	13 Jul	Cameronian	sh
Basra	arr	13 Jul	Cameronian	sh
Basra	dep	15 Jul	Coriolanus	
Karachi	arr	15 Jul	Coriolanus	
Karachi	dep	17 Jul	Clifton	
Calcutta	o'n	17-18 Jul	Clifton	
Rangoon	o'n	18-19 Jul	Clifton	
Singapore	arr	19 Jul	Clifton	UK mail
Singapore	dep	20 Jul	Cooee	
Sourabaya	o'n	20-21 Jul	Cooee	
Darwin	o'n	21-22 Jul	Cooee	
Townsville	o'n	22-23 Jul	Cooee	
Sydney	arr	23 Jul	Cooee	

A cover postmarked in Johore on 4th July and addressed to Travancore has a Calcutta transit on 10th July will have gone by *WS 101*. It has Singapore and Calcutta censor marks, but was not opened.

WS 102

Sydney	dep	8 Jul	Cooee	
Townsville	o'n	8-9 Jul	Cooee	
Darwin	o'n	9-10 Jul	Cooee	
Sourabaya	o'n	10-11 Jul	Cooee	
Singapore	arr	11 Jul	Cooee	end
Karachi	dep	13 Jul	Coriolanus	nc
Basra	arr	13 Jul	Coriolanus	
Basra	dep	14 Jul	Cameronian	sh
Cairo	arr	14 Jul	Cameronian	sh
Cairo	dep	17 Jul	Coorong	
Khartoum	o'n	17-18 Jul	Coorong	
Kisumu	o'n	18-19 Jul	Coorong	
Mozambique	o'n	19-20 Jul	Coorong	
Durban	arr	20 Jul	Coorong	

NE 103

Durban	dep	12 Jul	Circe	
Mozambique	o'n	12-13 Jul	Circe	
Kisumu	o'n	13-14 Jul	Circe	
Khartoum	o'n	14-15 Jul	Circe	
Cairo	arr	15 Jul	Circe	
Cairo	dep	18 Jul	Cameronian	sh
Basra	arr	18 Jul	Cameronian	sh
Basra	dep	19 Jul	Coriolanus	
Karachi	arr	19 Jul	Coriolanus	end
Singapore	dep	21 Jul	Clifton	nc
Sourabaya	o'n	21-22 Jul	Clifton	
Darwin	o'n	22-23 Jul	Clifton	
Townsville	o'n	23-24 Jul	Clifton	
Sydney	arr	24 Jul	Clifton	

The cover in Figure 9.15 is postmarked on 7th July in Wellington and was redirected in Glasgow 88 days later on 3rd October. It may have been flown on *WS 103* which arrived in Durban on 24th July. According to Proud [Pr], the next ship left South Africa on 1st August, but did not arrive in UK until 1st October which fits with the redirection date. The *Empress of Asia* left Cape Town on 2nd August and arrived in Liverpool on 29th September [CW] and so may have been the ship.

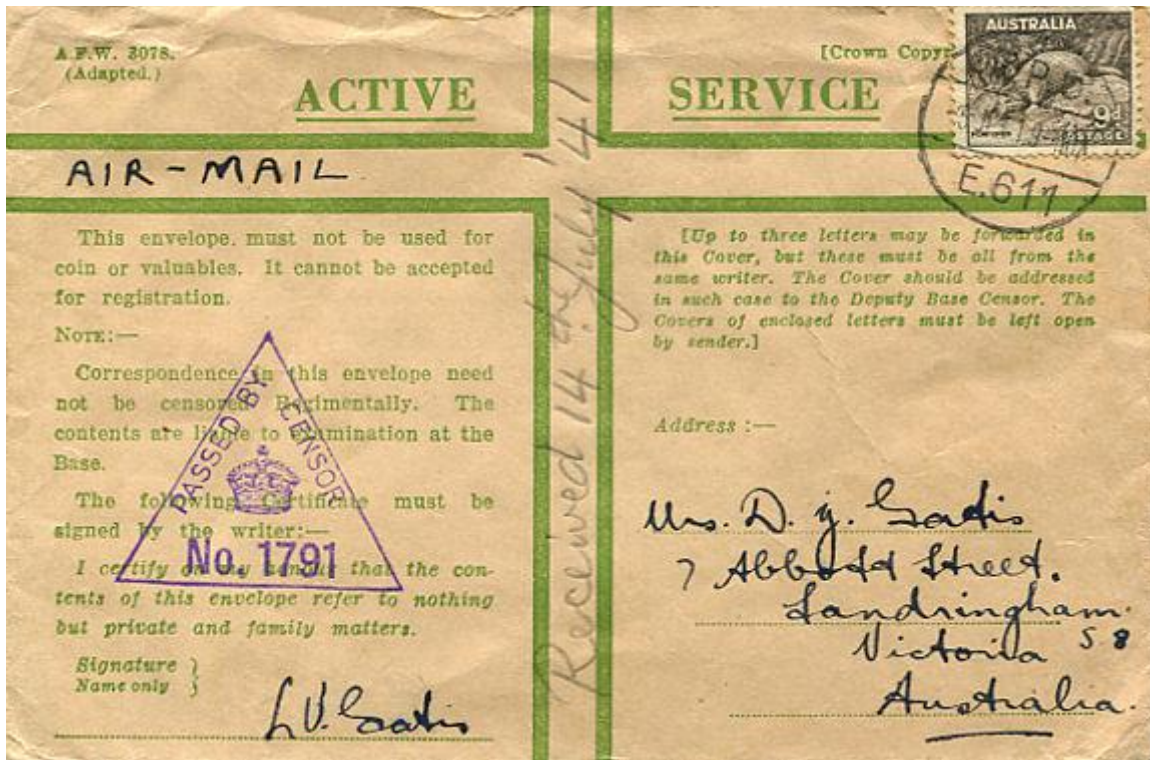


Figure 9.14: Postmarked at FPO E611 (Palestine) on 5th July 1941, received in Melbourne on 14th July.

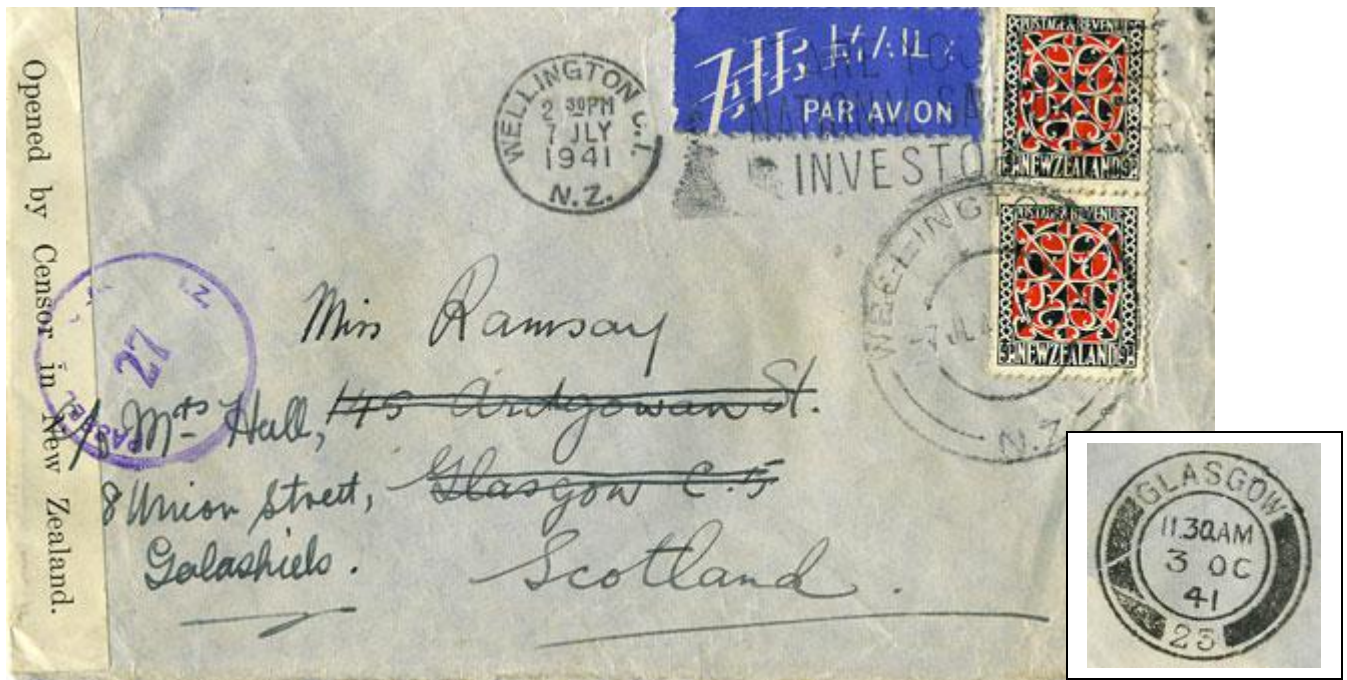


Figure 9.15: Postmarked 7th July in Wellington, redirected in Glasgow 88 days later on 3rd October.

A cover postmarked in Kirkee near Bombay on 11th July 1941 with a *Base Postal Depot* transit mark on 13th July might be expected to have been flown from Karachi to Basra on *WS 103* on 18th July. However, it has a *C-Base Post Office* and an *FPO No 41* backstamp on 15th August and so was delayed significantly. Perhaps it was sent by sea.

A cover postmarked in Shanghai on 14th July 1941 was addressed to Wellington in New Zealand. It has a Hong Kong transit on 19th July and *Recd Aug 2nd* in manuscript on the front and would have

been flown from Hong Kong to Rangoon by *CNAC*, Rangoon – Sydney on *NE 104* 24th – 29th July and then Sydney to Auckland on 31st July.

WS 103

Sydney	dep	11 Jul	Corio	
Townsville	o'n	11-12 Jul	Corio	
Darwin	o'n	12-13 Jul	Corio	
Sourabaya	o'n	13-14 Jul	Corio	
Singapore	o'n	14-15 Jul	Corio	
Bangkok	o'n	15-16 Jul	Corio	
Calcutta	o'n	16-17 Jul	Corio	
Karachi	arr	17 Jul	Corio	
Karachi	dep	18 Jul	Coriolanus	
Basra	arr	18 Jul	Coriolanus	
Basra	dep	19 Jul	Cameronian	sh
Cairo	arr	19 Jul	Cameronian	sh
Cairo	dep	21 Jul	Circe	
Khartoum	o'n	21-22 Jul	Circe	
Kisumu	o'n	22-23 Jul	Circe	
Mozambique	o'n	23-24 Jul	Circe	
Durban	arr	24 Jul	Circe	

XNE 103

Durban	dep	15 Jul	Cleopatra
Mozambique	o'n	15-16 Jul	Cleopatra
Kisumu	o'n	16-17 Jul	Cleopatra
Khartoum	o'n	17-18 Jul	Cleopatra
Cairo	arr	18 Jul	Cleopatra

WS 104

Sydney	dep	15 Jul	Camilla	
Townsville	o'n	15-16 Jul	Camilla	
Darwin	o'n	16-17 Jul	Camilla	
Sourabaya	o'n	17-18 Jul	Camilla	
Singapore	arr	18 Jul	Camilla	end
Karachi	dep	20 Jul	Coriolanus	nc
Basra	arr	20 Jul	Coriolanus	
Basra	dep	21 Jul & 23 Jul	Coriolanus & Cameronian	sh sh
Cairo	arr	21 Jul & 23 Jul	Coriolanus & Cameronian	sh sh
Cairo	dep	24 Jul	Coriolanus	
Khartoum	o'n	24-25 Jul	Coriolanus	
Kisumu	o'n	25-26 Jul	Coriolanus	
Mozambique	o'n	26-27 Jul	Coriolanus	
Durban	arr	27 Jul	Coriolanus	

NE 104

Durban	dep	16 Jul	Caledonia	
Mozambique	o'n	16-17 Jul	Caledonia	
Kisumu	o'n	17-18 Jul	Caledonia	
Juba	o'n	18-19 Jul	Caledonia	
Khartoum	o'n	19-20 Jul	Caledonia	
Cairo	arr	20 Jul	Caledonia	
Cairo	dep	21 Jul	Cleopatra	sh
Basra	o'n	21-22 Jul	Cleopatra	sh
Karachi	o'n	22-23 Jul	Cleopatra	
Calcutta	o'n	23-24 Jul	Cleopatra	
Bangkok	o'n	24-25 Jul	Cleopatra	
Singapore	arr	25 Jul	Cleopatra	No UK mail
Singapore	dep	26 Jul	Camilla	
Sourabaya	o'n	26-27 Jul	Camilla	
Darwin	o'n	27-28 Jul	Camilla	
Townsville	o'n	28-29 Jul	Camilla	
Sydney	arr	29 Jul	Camilla	

9.13 Restoration of twice weekly flights between Singapore and Karachi

WS 105

Sydney	dep	17 Jul	Carpentaria	
Townsville	o'n	17-18 Jul	Carpentaria	
Darwin	o'n	18-19 Jul	Carpentaria	
Sourabaya	o'n	19-20 Jul	Carpentaria	
Singapore	o'n	20-21 Jul	Carpentaria	
Bangkok	o'n	21-22 Jul	Carpentaria	
Calcutta	o'n	22-23 Jul	Carpentaria	
Karachi	o'n	23-25 Jul	Carpentaria	
Basra	arr	25 Jul	Carpentaria	
Basra	dep	26 Jul	Cameronian	sh
Cairo	arr	26 Jul	Cameronian	sh
Cairo	dep	27 Jul	Cambria	
Khartoum	o'n	27-28 Jul	Cambria	
Kisumu	o'n	28-29 Jul	Cambria	
Mozambique	o'n	29-30 Jul	Cambria	
Durban	arr	30 Jul	Cambria	

NE 105

Durban	dep	19 Jul	Cambria	
Mozambique	o'n	19-20 Jul	Cambria	
Kisumu	o'n	20-21 Jul	Cambria	
Juba	o'n	21-22 Jul	Cambria	
Khartoum	o'n	22-23 Jul	Cambria	
Wadi Halfa	o'n	23-24 Jul	Cambria	
Cairo	arr	24 Jul	Cambria	
Cairo	dep	25 Jul	Cameronian	sh
Basra	arr	25 Jul	Cameronian	sh
Basra	dep	26 Jul	Carpentaria	
Karachi	arr	26 Jul	Carpentaria	
Karachi	dep	27 Jul	Corio	
Calcutta	o'n	27-28 Jul	Corio	
Bangkok	o'n	28-29 Jul	Corio	
Singapore	arr	29 Jul	Corio	UK mail
Singapore	dep	30 Jul	Cleopatra	
Sourabaya	o'n	30-31 Jul	Cleopatra	
Darwin	o'n	31/7-1/8	Cleopatra	
Townsville	o'n	1-2 Aug	Cleopatra	
Sydney	arr	2 Aug	Cleopatra	

The resumption of a twice weekly service was announced in Australia on 18th July and reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 19th July 1941 [Tro]. The timetable had been changed to provide a connection with the *KLM* service from Singapore to the Middle East so that it could “carry any excess loadings”.

According to *CAIS 110* of 23rd July 1941, the twice weekly service was resumed on 17th July. Flights now left Sydney on Monday and Thursday and arrived in Durban two weeks later on Sunday and Wednesday respectively. In the other direction, flights left Durban on Saturday and Wednesday and arrived in Sydney on Friday and Tuesday [Win].

According to *The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser* of 2nd October 1941, the Singapore air mail that closed on 19th and 24th July (i.e. the mail flown on *WS 105* and *WS 106*) did not arrive in Britain until 28th September [SN]. The *Clan Murdoch* and *City of Exeter* left Cape Town on 7th and 8th August respectively and arrived in the Clyde on 25th September having sailed via Halifax in Nova Scotia. One of them may therefore have carried this mail.

A cover to Batavia postmarked in Leicester on 27th May was likely sent on the London dispatch of 3rd June. It was censored in the UK and has a Batavia ‘*Censuur*’ datestamp on 31st July. Likely sent on the *Afrika* on 8th June – 15th July and then flown Durban – Batavia on *NE 105* on 19th – 30th July.



Figure 9.16 : Postmarked 7th July in Wellington, redirected in Glasgow 88 days later on 3rd October.

The cover in Figure 9.16 was postmarked in Oxford on 3rd June 1941 and is addressed to Quetta and has a Quetta (*I2*) censor mark. It does not have a receiving backstamp, but has ‘Recd 7/8/41’ in manuscript on the back. Sent on the dispatch of 7th June on the *Ulysses* to Cape Town on 12th June – 23rd July. Due to its late arrival, it was sent on *NE 108* on 30th July and arrived in Karachi on 5th July.

Another cover is to Australia and postmarked in Hong Kong on 21st July 1941 and routed via Rangoon. It would have been flown from Hong Kong to Rangoon by the weekly *CNAC* service via Kweilio, Kweiyang, Kunming in China and Lashio in Burma. It has a Melbourne transit on 2nd August and so would have been flown from Rangoon on 29th July on *NE 105* and offloaded in Darwin on 31st July and flown from there to Melbourne by internal Australian services.

The shuttle service by *Cameronian* continued with the last flight being on the 29th July.

WS 106				NE 106			
Sydney	dep	21 Jul	Canopus	Durban	dep	23 Jul	Corsair
Townsville	o'n	21-22 Jul	Canopus	Mozambique	o'n	23-24 Jul	Corsair
Darwin	o'n	22-23 Jul	Canopus	Kisumu	o'n	24-25 Jul	Corsair
Sourabaya	o'n	23-24 Jul	Canopus	Khartoum	o'n	25-26 Jul	Corsair
Singapore	o'n	24-25 Jul	Canopus	Cairo	arr	26 Jul	Corsair
Bangkok	o'n	25-26 Jul	Canopus	Cairo	dep	28 Jul	Cameronian sh
Calcutta	o'n	26-27 Jul	Canopus	Basra	arr	28 Jul	Cameronian sh
Karachi	o'n	27-28 Jul	Canopus	Basra	dep	29 Jul	Canopus
Basra	arr	28 Jul	Canopus	Karachi	arr	29 Jul	Canopus
Basra	dep	29 Jul	Cameronian sh	Karachi	dep	30 Jul	Carpentaria
Cairo	o'n	29-31 Jul	Cameronian sh	Calcutta	o'n	30-31 Jul	Carpentaria
Khartoum	o'n	31/7-1/8	Cameronian	Bangkok	o'n	31/7-1/8	Carpentaria
Kisumu	o'n	1-2 Aug	Cameronian	Singapore	o'n	1-2 Aug	Carpentaria UK mail
Mozambique	o'n	2-3 Aug	Cameronian	Sourabaya	o'n	2-3 Aug	Carpentaria
Durban	arr	3 Aug	Cameronian	Darwin	o'n	3-4 Aug	Carpentaria
				Townsville	o'n	4-5 Aug	Carpentaria
				Sydney	arr	5 Aug	Carpentaria

The cover in Figure 9.17 is postmarked on 15th July in New Zealand. A manuscript on back says that it was received on 15th September, 62 days later. Hence it was posted later and arrived earlier than the 7th July cover in Figure 9.15. It may have been flown on *WS 106* but, according to [SN], that mail did not arrive in London until 28th September. As the shuttle was still in operation with reduced loads, it may have been off-loaded in Basra and then flown on *WS 107* whose mail, according to the Singapore Press [SN] was delivered in London on 13th September.



Figure 9.17: Postmarked 15th July in New Zealand. Received on 15th September, 62 days later.

The *Honour Active Service* cover in Figure 9.18 is postmarked on 27th July at *FPO 17* which the vendor said was at Sidi Hanish, near Sidi Baranni. It is franked with 8As, the military rate for Indian Army forces and is backstamped at Jutogh in northern India on 2nd August. May have been flown on *NE 106* from Cairo or by *KLM* from Lydda to Allahabad on 28th – 30th July or on *NE 107* on 31st July – 1st August. Remarkably fast delivery.

9.14 Dates for Singapore – London

Due to non-connections and the shuttle service having reduced capacity, it is difficult to interpret the information on London arrival dates and to allocate the ships that carried the mail. Except for *WS 103*, the dates for London delivery is taken from the Singapore press and refer to dispatches from Singapore.

Flight No	Mail close at Singapore	Arrive Durban	Ship: Cape Town – UK	London Delivery
WS 81	28 April	nc	From India by sea?	30 July
WS 82	2 May	nc	?Strathnaver 27 Jun – 29 Jul (Clyde)	2 Aug
WS 83 – 86	5 – 16 May	Air mail not accepted for UK in Singapore		
WS 87	19 May	29 May	From India by sea?	13 Aug
WS 89	26 May	5 June	?Strathnaver 27 Jun – 29 Jul (Clyde)	2 Aug
WS 90 – 98	31 May – 27 Jun	Air mail not accepted for UK in Singapore		
WS 99	30 Jun	10 Jul	??	??
WS 101	7 Jul	16 Jul	??	??
WS 103	15 Jul	24 Jul	* Empress of Asia 2 Aug – 29 Sep	By 3 Oct
WS 105	20 Jul	30 Jul	* City of Exeter 8 th Aug – 25 th Sep	28 Sep
WS 106	24 Jul	3 Aug	(Clyde)	



Figure 9.18: Indian Army honour cover from Egypt to India, 27th July – 2nd August.

9.15 Dates for London Dispatches

This table gives the London dispatches and the ship to South Africa. Although possible connecting flights from Durban are given, it is not clear what happened after arrival in Cairo due to the pressure on the shuttle flights. Occasions where mail was sent by sea from Durban or Cairo are identified. From *NE 85*, there was a shuttle service from Cairo to Bahrein and from *NE 95* to Basra, but the capacity was limited. The information about mail sent by sea from Durban or Cairo is taken from letters and memos in the Royal Mail Archive [Win4, Win5, Win7, CIW].

Summary of London dispatches				
London dispatch	Ships UK – Cape Town	Flight No	Leave Durban	
18 Mar 577lbs	Phrontis 28 Mar – 4 May [Pr]	NE 85	11 May	End Karachi
19 Mar 552lbs	Inventor 23 Mar – 23 Apr	NE 82	30 Apr	End Cairo
26 Mar 1219lbs	Ajax 29 Mar – 25 Apr	NE 82 to Cairo 30 Apr – 3 May, to Bombay by sea		
15 Mar 2053lbs 3 Apr 2413lbs	Dorset 5 Apr – 1 May	Mail sent from Durban by sea: to Bombay: <i>Karagola</i> 7 – 30 May to Singapore: <i>Autolycus</i> 8 – 29 May to Australia: <i>Glennifer</i> 6 – 23 May		
5 Apr 1103lbs	Adrastus 13 Apr – 14 May	NE 88	21 May	To Sydney
7 Apr 350lbs	Clan Cameron 10 Apr – 10 May	NE 86	14 May	End Karachi
10 Apr 1174lbs	City of Calcutta 11 Apr – 11 May	NE 87 to Cairo 17 – 20 May, to Bombay by sea		
11 Apr 604lbs	Clan Macarthur 16 Apr – 14 May			
22 Mar 1123lbs 16 Apr 924lbs	Clan Macgillivray 18 Apr – 23 May	Mail sent from Durban by sea to Bombay on <i>City of Ripon</i> 26 May – 11 June		
19 Apr 501lbs	City of Exeter 26 Apr – 21 May	NE 90 28 May No UK mail at Singapore to Melbourne: <i>Halizones</i> 2 – 24 June		
18 Apr 820lbs	Imperial Star 26 Apr – 24 May			
21 Apr 332lbs 24 Apr 1096lbs	Rochester Castle 26 Apr – 24 May	Mail sent from Durban by sea: to Colombo: <i>City of Exeter</i> 30 May – 14 June to Bombay: <i>Clan Murdoch</i> 29 May – 13 June to Melbourne: <i>Halizones</i> 2 – 24 June		
28 Apr 1187lbs	City of Singapore 29 Apr – 5 Jun (Durban)	NE 94	11 Jun	To Sydney
29 Apr 446lbs	Malancha 2 May – 2 Jun	NE 93	7 Jun	End Karachi
30 Apr 495lbs	City of Kimberley 2 May – 4 Jun	NE 94	11 Jun	To Sydney
3 May 1338lbs	*Magician 7 May – 13 Jun	NE 96	18 Jun	To Sydney No UK mail at Singapore
9 May 2101lbs	*City of Wellington 12 May – 16 Jun	NE 97	21 Jun	End Karachi
		NE 98	25 Jun	To Sydney
13 May 969lbs	Glenaffaric 29 May – 28 Jun	NE 100	2 Jul	End Cairo
15 May 902lbs				
23 May 2070lbs	Clan Mactaggart 29 May – 29 Jun	NE 101	5 Jul	End Karachi
28 May	*Duchess of Bedford 31 May – 24 Jun			
29 May	Umtali 1 – 26 Jun [Pr]	NE 102	9 Jul	To Sydney
3 Jun 12 Jun	*Afrika 8 Jun – 15 Jul Boringia 15 Jun – 15 Jul	NE 105	19 Jul	To Sydney
7 Jun	Ulysses 12 Jun – 23 Jul	NE 108	30 Jul	To Sydney
10 Jun 17 Jun	Umgeni 20 Jun – 18 Jul ??	NE 106	23 Jul	To Sydney

The weight of the London dispatch was not given after 23rd May.

A cover to Batavia postmarked in Leicester on 27th May has a ‘*Censuur*’ mark dated 31st July, the day after *NE 105* arrived in Batavia. It may have been held up by being censored in the UK and so went on the dispatch of 3rd June which possibly went on the *Afrika*. Another cover to Batavia postmarked in Accrington on 11th June has a ‘*Censuur*’ mark dated 4th August, two days after *NE 106* arrived in Batavia. It may have been held up by being censored in the UK and so went on the dispatch of 17th June. A cover postmarked in the UK on 12th June, censored in Karachi and redirected in Gujranwala on 4th August would have been sent on the dispatch of 17th June and flown on *NE 106*.