

# AIR CRASH MAIL OF IMPERIAL AIRWAYS AND PREDECESSOR AIRLINES

Kendall C. Sanford



“Scipio” – Mirabella Bay, Crete – 22 August 1936

The Stuart Rossiter Trust Fund



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CERCLE AÉROPHILATÉLIQUE  
FRANÇAIS

19, Rue Victor Hugo 78230 LE PECQ

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*Ken Sanford*

**Kendall C. Sanford**

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2003**

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**Cover illustration: "Scipio" crash at Mirabella Bay, Crete, Greece, 22 August 1936**

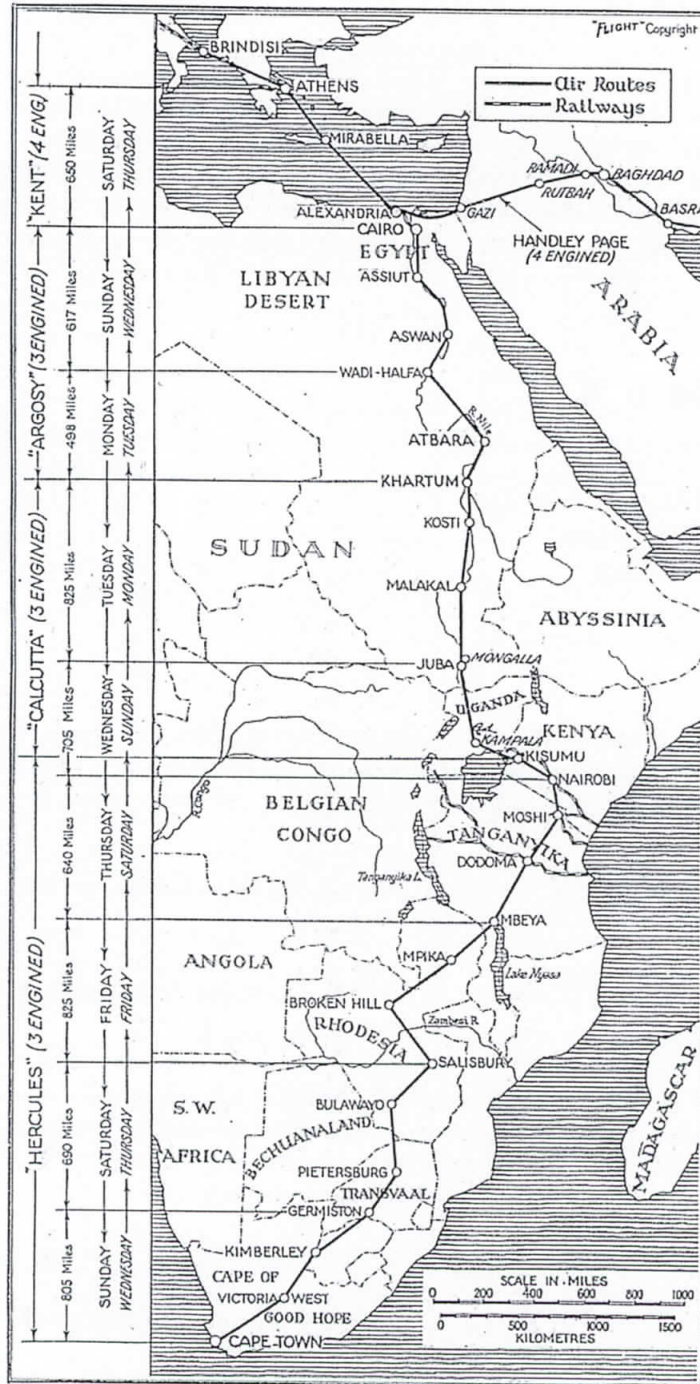
**Back cover illustration: Courtesy of British Airways Archive & Museum Collection**

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Dedicated to those valiant airmen who  
gave their lives in service to their country,  
connecting the British Empire by air

## London—Cape Town

On Wednesday, Jan. 20, the first load of mails left Croydon for Cape Town and intermediate stations by Imperial Airways service. Our two maps show the route which will be followed, the stages for each day and the types of aircraft used on each section





## STUART ROSSITER TRUST FUND

Registered Charity England & Wales Number 292076

A Charitable Trust supporting research and publication relating to the history of communication through postal systems of the world.

The story of how people have communicated with one another through the ages and across all the countries in the world is fundamental to a greater understanding of all types of history, particularly economic and social history.

Political and military history often affected the way in which postal systems were set up and the reasons for which they were set up. Speed in communicating information of all types was critical for business and commerce, and important for family purposes. The importance of post offices developing and controlling telegraph and telephone systems is often overlooked, yet these services affected and changed the nature of and need for postal communications.

While postal history is concerned with the role of postal services to carry written or printed messages through the post, the study of the subject involves far more than just a study of stamps and postmarks, which while important, are merely part of the mechanics that helped the postal systems to work. Thus it is important to recognise that postal history contemplates a period well before the issue of the Penny Black in 1840 and a period up to today's date.

The means by which mail was carried from one place to another, the cost of transmission of letters, the difficulties faced en route in wartime or by shipwreck, or in developing or as yet unexplored countries in past centuries or in times of pestilence, are all vital parts of the jigsaw of human life and activity which is worthy of study. Indeed, changes in the British postal system currently contemplated because of regulation within the European Community will be the subject of study in the future. The impact of computer-driven communication on postal systems will probably be as profound as the reforms and development of postal systems which took place in the nineteenth century, particularly in 1840 and 1875.

Stuart Rossiter was a leading postal historian of his day, and wanted by the setting up of this charity with the money from his estate, research to be devoted as much to the rapidly changing affairs of contemporary times as to those of the past. Stuart was a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society; Chief Editor of the Blue Guides, as well as writing for example the classical Blue Guide to Greece; and was Editor of *The London Philatelist*. All these things brought together an interest in research and the publication of the useful results of such research.

The Trust intends to support research and publication projects by grant from 2004. Persons wishing to engage on a project within the objects of the Charity, and who need the financial support that the Charity can give to approved projects and who would benefit from the experience of the Trustees in helping people to get scripts fit for publication to an academic standard with the help of referees, should get in touch with the Corresponding Trustee, whose name and address is below, so that more details can be given.

The Charity can help with the costs of research, such as photocopying from archives distant to the researcher, as well as publication costs. Applicants can be students seeking a higher degree at University, amateurs or professionals - provided the research is original, is approved and likely to lead to publication for the benefit of a wider public and adds to the stock of publicly available material. The Charity cannot support collecting but recognises that collections may have material, information and research resources that need to be recorded in support of the objects of the Charity.

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Persons who wish to support Stuart Rossiter's objectives financially by making a charitable gift or legacy of any amount should communicate with the Corresponding Trustee.

The Trustees are: Robert Johnson (Corresponding Trustee), 65 Manor Park, Redland, Bristol  
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Author	Title	Published	Price
Osborn, Geoffrey GM	<i>Naval Officer's Letters</i>	1995	£15.00
Detailed study of 133 pages from author's naval collection, meticulously researched as to who, to whom, what, when and how. A: 3.41; B: 3.81; C: 7.09; D: 7.73; E: 3.90			
Phipps, John	<i>The Stamps &amp; Posts of Albania &amp; Epirus</i>	1966	£25.00
235 pages, illustrated with maps. A detailed study of the subject resulting in the formation of a Study Circle. A: 4.84; B: 5.61; C: 11.21; D: 12.31; E: 5.30			
Firebrace, John	<i>Nineteenth Century Wars in Egypt &amp; the Sudan</i>	1997	£40.00
Joint publication with Cavendish Auctions. 217 pages, illustrated with maps. Detailed accounts from award-winning collection with introductory chapters. A: 4.84; B: 5.05; C: 9.95; D: 10.91; E: 4.90			
Jay, Barrie	<i>Early Forces Mail</i>	1997	£20.00
1995 SRT Memorial Lecture subject. 57 pages, illustrated with 5 pages in colour. Accounts of 17 <sup>th</sup> and 18 <sup>th</sup> century wars in Europe from letters written by those who were there. A: 1.98; B: 2.69; C: 4.73; D: 5.11; E: 2.50			
Presgrave, A.D.	<i>The Travelling Post Offices of South Australia</i>	1998	£25.00
131 pages, illustrated with maps. The story of the inception of mail by train in South Australia with the associated postal markings. With addenda and up-date. A: 3.01; B: 3.61; C: 6.71; D: 7.31; E: 3.50			
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220 pages, illustrated. A study of the complicated subject of British India postal stationery. A: 3.41; B: 4.17; C: 7.97; D: 8.71; E: 3.90			
Feldman, Hugh	<i>Receiving Houses of London</i>	1998	£65.00
(2 hardback vols. in slipcase) Joint publication with Postal History Society. Illustrated, with maps. Monumental Study of the London Receiving Houses. Rowland Hill award 1999. <i>TSS London 2000</i> Gold medal. Heavy books, request a quote for postage			
Goodwyn, Charles	<i>Royal Reform As reflected in the Royal Philatelic Collection</i>	1999	£35.00
1999 SRT Lecture subject. 120 pages, illustrated with 24 colour plates. The Treasury essays, Mulready envelopes etc. leading to the world's first postage stamp. A: 3.01; B: 3.77; C: 7.07; D: 7.71; E: 3.50			
Mark, Graham	<i>GB censorship in World War I : 1914-1919</i>	2000	£25.00
290 pages, illustrated. Detailed study of censorship covering every aspect any enthusiast would wish to know about. A: 4.84; B: 5.85; C: 11.75; D: 12.91; E: 5.70			



Ward, D. (Malta Study Circle) *The Air Mails of Malta* 2000 £7.50  
Third version of MSC Study paper No.29 in 44 illustrated pages. A: 1.46; B: 2.13; C: 3.47; D: 3.71; E: 1.90

Bofarull, Salvador *Mail by Pigeon through History* 2001 £25.00  
A: 3.70; B: 4.41; C: 8.51; D: 9.31; E: 4.10

Tett, David *A Postal History of the Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees in East Asia during the Second World War. Volume 1: Singapore & Malaya 1942-1945*  
387 pages *The Changi Connection* 2002 £35.00  
Hardbound A: 7.39; B: 8.35; C: 16.86; D: 18.91; E: 8.10

[Available from the author at: PO Box 34, Wheathampstead, Hertfordshire AL4 8LN.]

### The Rossiter Trust Postal History Journals

Rossiter Postal History Journal No.1 2000 £15.00  
Illustrated articles from Brian Asquith on Airmails to China; Geoff Lovejoy's study of the Factory Inspectorate in England; Phil Kenton detailing the mails carried on the Panama railway and Cornelis Muys on Westphalia and the Grand Duchy of Berg. A: 3.01; B: 3.45; C: 6.35; D: 6.91; E: 3.30

Rossiter Postal History Journal No.2 2001 £10.00  
Illustrated articles from Rod Moreton on the Victoria Goldfields; Ian Baillie detailing the development of Registered mail in pre-Soviet Russia and Hans Smith on early mail from Constantinople. A:3.01; B: 3.61; C: 6.71; D: 7.31; E: 3.50

Rossiter Postal History Journal No.3 2002 £10.00  
Illustrated articles from Brian McCloy on the Railways of Finland; Geoff Oxley on Cross channel & North sea mails 1793-1815 and Richard Stroud and the impact of the first six months of the Boer War on the Orange Free State. A: 2.50; B: 3.13; C: 5.63; D: 6.11; E: 2.90

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>SECTION</b>	<b>PAGE(S)</b>
Introduction	v & vi
Definition of a Crash Cover	vii
Credits	viii
Chronological Listings of Crashes & Interruptions	1 - 190
Identification of Covers Without Clear Postmarks	Appendix "A"
Imperial Airways & Predecessors Aircraft That Crashed or Were Interrupted	Appendix "B"
Imperial Airways & Predecessors Pilots Involved in Crashes or Interruptions	Appendix "C"
Bibliography	Appendix "D"
Pricing Guide	Issued as a separate supplement

Kendall C. Sanford

The author is retired from the Airline Industry after forty years, and has been an aerophilatelist for most of that time. He has specialized in the crash mails of Pan American World Airways and Imperial Airways for over twenty five years. His collections in these two areas have won gold medals in national level exhibitions with international participation, in the USA, Great Britain and Switzerland.

He is a Past President of the American Air Mail Society and has served as a member of that Society's Board of Directors for over fifteen years. The author has been a member of the British Aerophilatelic Federation (BAeF)(formerly the British Air Mail Society and the Aerophilatelic Club, London) for over forty years. He has given displays of his Pan American and Imperial Airways crash mail collections to all the Regional Groups of the BAeF, as well as aerophilatelic societies in many other countries. He also served on the Board of Directors of the International Federation of Aerophilatelic Societies (FISA) for many years. Ken is a member of all the aerophilatelic societies in English speaking countries.

The author is also a member of the Wreck & Crash Mail Society, and serves as the Associate Editor of that Society's Air Crash Study Group. After retiring from the International Air Transport Association (IATA) in 1997, he has continued to live in Geneva, Switzerland with his wife Gloria. Since retiring from IATA, Ken has spent a good part of his time doing research for this book.



## AIR CRASH MAIL OF IMPERIAL AIRWAYS & PREDECESSOR AIRLINES

### INTRODUCTION

Imperial Airways was Britain's first international airline. It was formed by the British Government in 1923 as Imperial Air Transport Company. This was an amalgamation of four independent airline companies, Handley Page Transport, The Instone Air Line Ltd., Daimler Airway and British Marine Air Navigation Co. Ltd. The new airline's name was changed to Imperial Airways on 1 April 1924. Its first service, to Paris, began on 26 April 1924. The new airline had a total of fifteen aircraft. Actually, the first cross channel services were operated by Aircraft Transport and Travel Ltd. (AT & T), which was formed in 1918. AT & T went into liquidation in December 1921, and the assets acquired by the Daimler Airway. The known crashes of the predecessor airlines have been included.

Also included are the known crashes of Indian Trans-Continental Airways (ITCA), which was jointly owned by Imperial Airways and the Indian Government, with 51% by Imperial and 49% by the Government. ITCA's aircraft were leased from Imperial Airways.

Imperial Airways carried air mail, passengers and cargo between Britain and its major colonies. Imperial was an important pioneer in the development of international air mail services. It operated many different aircraft types to many countries, some with severe climatic and weather conditions. Mr. L.A. Wyndham, in his book "The Airposts of South Africa", published in 1936, graphically describe the problems encountered by Imperial Airways in Africa, as follows:

"The problems confronting this project [the start of airline services in Africa] were enormous. Apart from the efficient ground organization, wireless and meteorological services necessary, the physical features of the African Continent provided almost every conceivable type of obstacle to the operation of aircraft—desert, swamp, jungle and mountain; while the atmospheric and climatic phenomena associated with such physical features—dust storms, dense fogs, tropical thunderstorms and gales, excessive heat, aridity, etc. —all gave rise to particular problems that had to be solved before the "Dark Continent" surrendered to complete aerial conquest twelve years after its first aerial survey."

Therefore, Imperial Airways had its share of crashes. Many of the crashes were of flying boats. Thus much of the damage to the mail was caused by water rather than fire and other crash damage.

The difficulties of flying in Africa are made clear by Harry Klein in his classic book on the development of aviation in South Africa, "Winged Courier":

"Mainly by reason of inherent climatic difficulties the Africa route did not as readily submit to conquest as did other world routes. The variations of temperature between ground level and the upper air imposed severe strain on the engines then available, and flying conditions in Central Africa were peculiarly liable to violent storms and atmospheric upheavals. Ground services were primitive, mostly non-existent, and the threat of death and disaster that faced aviators in the event of a forced landing in the dense tropical forests and immense stretches of bush country, which afforded no natural landing grounds, presented a strong psychological hazard."



## AIR CRASH MAIL OF IMPERIAL AIRWAYS & PREDECESSOR AIRLINES

References to cachet varieties and post office explanations are from "Courrier Récupéré/Recovered Mail" by Henri Nierinck<sup>4</sup>. However, some of the cachets, labels and other postal markings are unlisted by Nierinck. The numbering is based upon this standard reference for airline crashes, and whenever the incident has been listed in that book, the Nierinck numbers are shown in parenthesis. The first two digits represent the year, the next two digits are the month, and the last two digits are the day, e.g. 190922 is the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September 1919. All known crashes and interruptions have been included, even though no surviving mail is known. It is always possible that a collector will be able to identify a cover from such a crash or interruption. If anyone finds additional cachet varieties or markings, or covers which could possibly be from crashes and interruptions where mail was not previously known, they are asked to send clear photocopies or computer scans to the author. No mail is known or has been recorded from the crashes for the period from 1919 to 1929. This is primarily because of the fact that the post offices in Great Britain and Europe seldom applied special markings to damaged covers.

A number of incidents involving crashes or damage to Imperial Airways aircraft, have been omitted from this book. These are ones where the aircraft was not being operated in scheduled service, or the aircraft was being refueled or was caught in a storm at its moorings and had no passengers or mail onboard. Some examples are:

### **261214 – Imperial Airways – Supermarine Sea Eagle – G-EBGS – Guernsey Harbor, Great Britain**

The aircraft was moored in the harbour, a gale came up, the aircraft was struck by a ship and sunk. There were no crew members or mail on board.

### **311205 – Imperial Airways – "City of Karachi" – De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-AARY – Dodoma, Tanganyika**

Imperial operated an experimental flight from Great Britain to South Africa, prior to the regular service in January 1932. The flight had to make a forced landing at Dodoma due to bad weather. The Captain was H. W. C. Alger and Mr. H.G. Brackley, Air Superintendent of Imperial, was a Copilot and passenger. The flight reached Cape Town on the 21<sup>st</sup> of December. Some souvenir covers were being carried. This could not be verified and according to Peter Wingent, the "City of Karachi" was not there on that date.

### **320818 – Imperial Airways – "Helena" – Handley Page HP 42 Heracles Class – G-AAXF – Le Bourget Airport, Paris, France**

The aircraft caught fire on landing. This was a ferry (positioning) flight.

### **390619 (Nierinck 390619) – Imperial Airways – "Connemara" – Short S.30 'C' Class – G-AFCW – Hythe, Great Britain**

The aircraft caught fire when being refueled from a barge. Five people escaped and one was trapped. Within half an hour, the flying boat was burnt out and sank. The aircraft was being refueled and therefore was not on a scheduled flight.

### **400106 – Imperial Airways – "Ettrick" Armstrong Whitworth AW27 Ensign – G-ADSX – Le Bourget Airport, Paris, France**

According to A.S. Jackson<sup>9</sup> & A.J. Jackson<sup>13</sup>, the aircraft was strafed by the Germans and was thus destroyed. The aircraft was parked on the tarmac and was not in scheduled service.

## AIR CRASH MAIL OF IMPERIAL AIRWAYS & PREDECESSOR AIRLINES

### WHAT IS AN AIR CRASH COVER?

What is an air crash cover? There have been conflicting definitions written by different people over the years. Some aircraft have mishaps which result in delay or damage to the aircraft, but which cannot really be considered a crash, and the mail they are carrying is undamaged. Other aircraft have crashes, bad landings, fires, etc. where the mail may be damaged, but sometimes it is not. Such mail sometimes receives special markings by postal authorities, but sometimes it does not. For the purposes of this monograph, I have decided to closely follow the definition promulgated by the American Air Mail Society a few years ago. It is broken down into two slightly different situations, as follows:

**Crash** – Incomplete flight due to aircraft accident resulting in damage to or destruction of the aircraft, with mails (if not lost or destroyed) forwarded by other aircraft or other means (sometimes referred to as “recovered mail” or “salvaged mail”).

**Interrupted Flight** – A flight which is interrupted or delayed enroute, resulting in an unscheduled or forced landing, usually due to adverse weather conditions or an aircraft mechanical problem. Flight continued later by the same aircraft, or to expedite mail, another aircraft.

Collectable mail from crashes or interrupted flights is that which is capable of identification by postmark(s) and routing, physical damage, special cachets, labels or official memoranda.

**Old Definition** – An Air Crash or Interrupted Flight Cover is one from a flight that crashes or has a mishap which damages the aircraft, to the extent that it cannot fly until repairs are made, or the aircraft has an interruption, delay or diversion which causes the mail to be damaged or delayed.

Readers are requested to notify the author of any corrections, additional covers or cachet varieties, or any other information which may be pertinent. Updates will be issued from time to time. It is also planned to issue a CD-ROM edition of this book. If you would like to be notified of future updates, or the availability of the CD-ROM edition, contact the author at the following address:

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## AIR CRASH MAIL OF IMPERIAL AIRWAYS & PREDECESSOR AIRLINES

### CREDITS

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Larry Williamson, retired from British Airways, and the Archivist for the Croydon Airport Society. Larry spent many hours and made numerous trips around the Greater London area to assist me in my research. He was especially helpful with gaining access to Imperial Airways files in the British Airways Archives & Museum Collection.

Phil Munson, who sat with me for days in the Croydon Library and the British Library Newspaper Collection, going through the microfilm copies of the Times of London, and copies of "Flight" and "The Aeroplane" to find articles on Imperial Airways crashes. A very tedious job indeed.

Henri Nierinck, who let me use his numbering system, and loaned me the originals of the cachet varieties I didn't have in my own collection.

British Airways Archives & Museum Collection, Heathrow Airport, London, for various files, photos and postcard reproductions of posters.

And finally, to Roger Jackson for copies of the majority of aircraft photos which have been used in the book. He maintains the A. J. Jackson Collection of Historic Aircraft Photographs, formed by his father, who authored a number of books on British aircraft. See items 13 & 14 in the Bibliography. As he holds the copyrights on these photos, none of the photos used in this book are to be transferred to third parties without prior permission. Further details on the A.J. Jackson Collection, are available from:

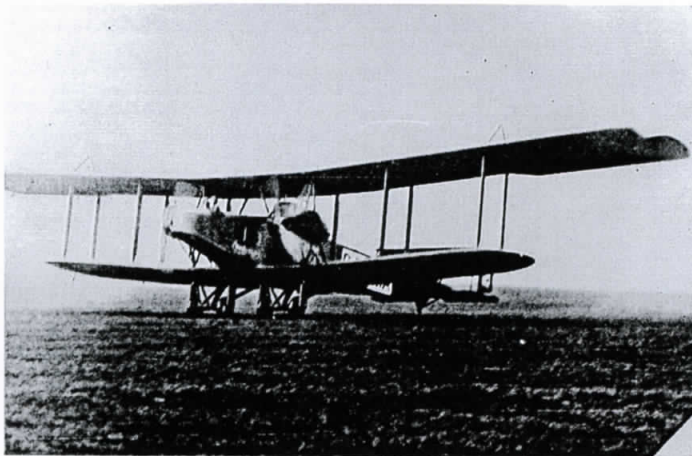
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Email: [archive@ajjcollection.co.uk](mailto:archive@ajjcollection.co.uk)  
Internet Website: <http://www.ajjcollection.co.uk>

190922 – Handley Page Transport – Handley Page 12 – G-EAMA – Marden, South of Maidstone, Great Britain

Captain R. H. McIntosh

The aircraft made a forced landing due to a faulty fuel pump. It was repaired and continued its flight the next day. No mail is known.



**Handley Page HP12 – G-EAMA**



**Captain R. H. McIntosh**

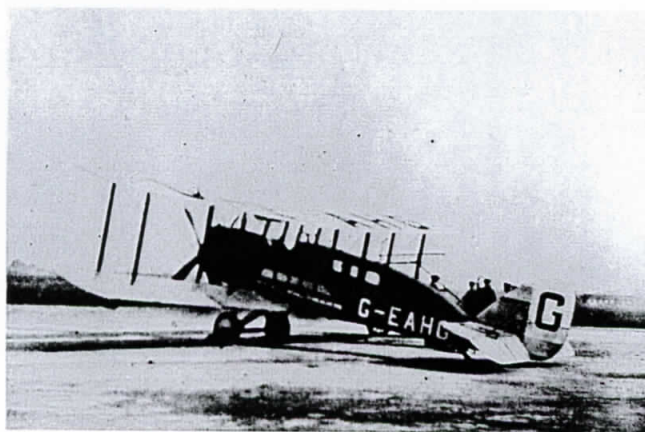
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191030 – Aircraft Transport and Travel Ltd. – De Havilland DH.4A – (G-EAHG) – English Channel – Paris-London route

Captain Jerry Shaw

The pilot left Paris with one passenger on a day of poor visibility. He lost all sense of direction over the Channel, the petrol was running low and there was still no sight of the English coast. He climbed into the clouds, hoping to get above them. However, he stalled and spun down through the clouds, levelled out over the water and alighted smoothly. He was able to rescue his passenger and the mail bag, which were hoisted aboard a ship, the “Harlech”, which was nearby.

No covers are known in collectors’ hands.



**De Havilland DH4A**

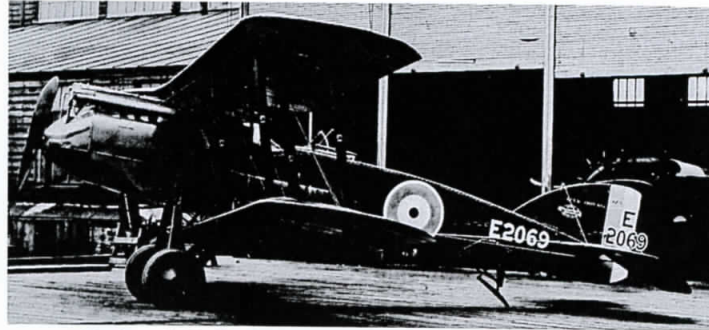


200217 – Handley Page Transport – Bristol F.2B – H1019 – Waddon, Surrey, Great Britain

Captain E. F. Jones

The aircraft took off from the Waddon Aerodrome and, at about 100 feet, it commenced turning to the left. After completing a turn of about 270 degrees, the nose dropped and the machine dived almost vertically to the ground, and was wrecked. The pilot and the passenger, a Mr. R.W. Badger, were both injured.

No mail is known in collectors' hands.



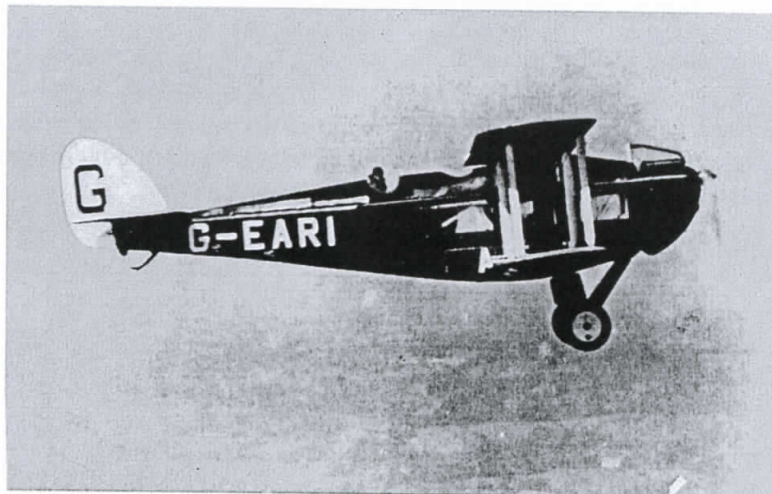
**Bristol F.2B Puma – Same type as H1019**

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200816 – Air Transport & Travel Ltd. – De Havilland DH.18 – G-EARI – Croydon Aerodrome, Great Britain – London-Paris route

Captain Cy Holmes

When taking off, an engine failed and the aircraft crashed into a Croydon garden. The aircraft fell sideways and the door jammed, but the passengers escaped through the roof. It is not known if the aircraft was carrying mail, and no covers are known in collectors' hands.

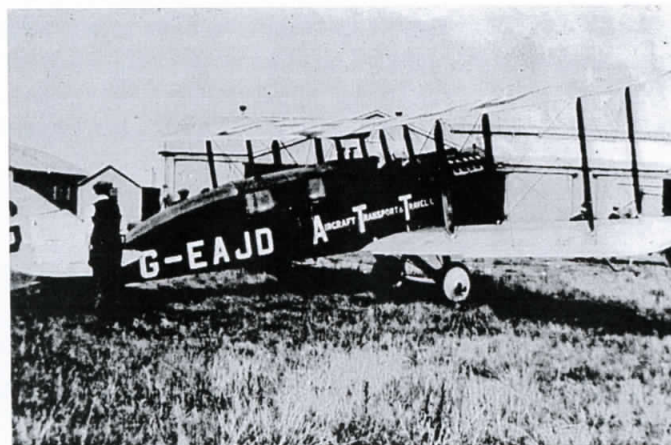


**De Havilland DH.18**

200822 – Air Transport & Travel Ltd. – G-EAJD – De Havilland DH.4A – Eltham, Great Britain

Pilot unknown

Proud<sup>32</sup> reported a crash near Eltham, and mail was recovered. No other details are available.



**De Havilland DH.4A**

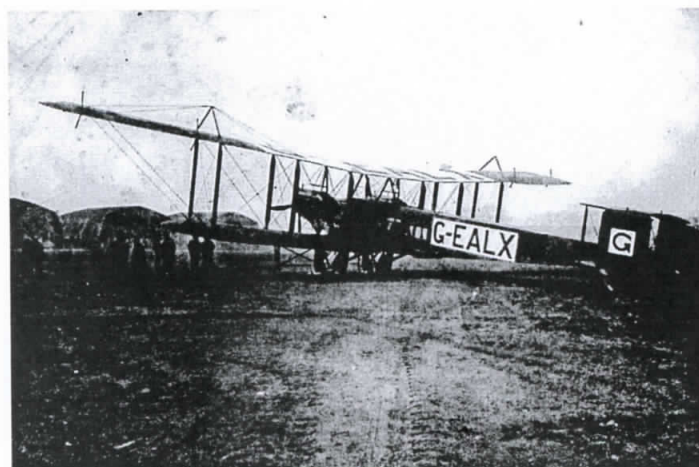
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201005 – Handley Page Transport – Handley Page 12 – G-EALX – Pere Lachaise Cemetery, France – London-Paris route

Captain Stanley Gordon McNaught-Davies

A photo of the crashed aircraft is shown in “Pictorial History of BOAC and Imperial Airways”<sup>3</sup>. The crash was caused by engine failure when taking off.

No mail is known.



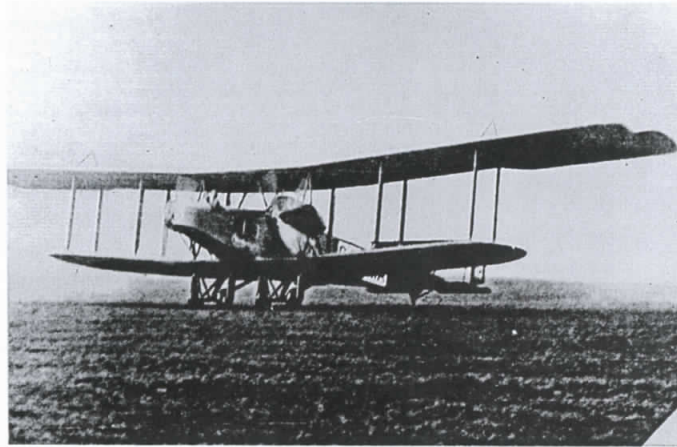
**Handley Page 12**

201214 – Handley Page Transport – Handley Page 12 – G-EAMA – Golders Green, London, Great Britain – London-Paris route

Captain Robert Bager & Mechanic J. H. Williams

The aircraft had just taken off from the Cricklewood Aerodrome enroute to Paris. The weather was rather misty and the machine was observed to be flying very low. It crashed into a tree, came into contact with the back wall of a house, and fell in flames in the back garden. The pilot, mechanic and two passengers were killed. The remaining four passengers jumped clear of the aircraft just before it reached the ground.

The Times of 15 December, reported that the flight was carrying mail, but no mail is known in collectors' hands.



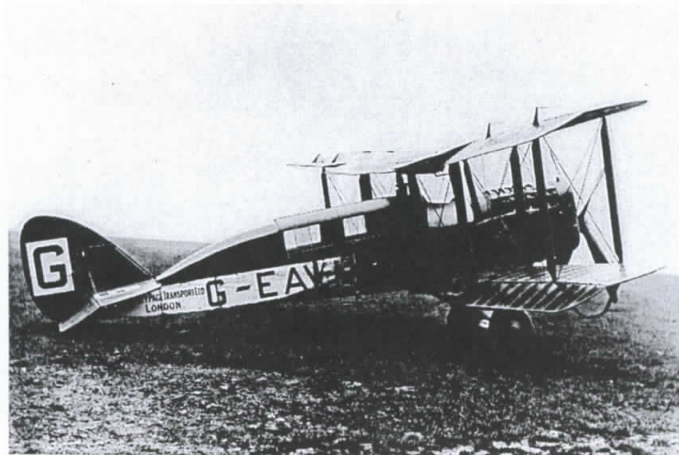
**Handley Page 12 – G-EAMA**

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210400 – Handley Page Transport – De Havilland DH.4A – G-EAVL – Location unknown

Pilot unknown

The aircraft crashed, but no other details are available and no mail is known



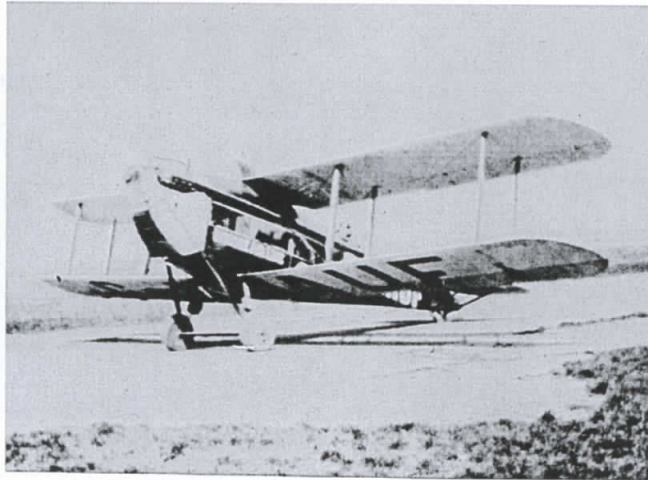
**De Havilland DH.4A – G-EAVL**



210513 – Instone Air Line – "City of Paris" – De Havilland DH.18 – G-EAUF – Argueil, France – Paris-London route

Captain H. W. Chataway

The pilot was attempting to make a forced landing and the aircraft ended up on its back, completely wrecked near the edge of a large field 1.5km north of Argueil. It had been well guarded by the French and it had not been interfered with. Marks on the ground and the nature of the country indicate that the pilot stalled the machine in attempting to land across a sunken road with insufficient flying speed. The pilot stated that his left wing dropped and he could not get it up again. From marks on the ground, the wing had apparently not touched the ground until the undercarriage collapsed, after which the machine turned over onto its back. The flight was carrying eight passengers, cargo and mail, but no mail is known in collectors' hands.



**De Havilland DH.18 – "City of Paris"**

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210818 – Instone Air Line Ltd. – "City of Newcastle" – B.A.T. FK26 – G-EAPK – Le Bourget Airport, Paris, France

Captain H. W. Chattaway

The pilot landed the aircraft across the wind and on touching the ground it drifted sideways. After running for about 30 yards, the undercarriage collapsed throwing the machine onto its nose. The fuselage and lower planes were damaged but the pilot and four passengers escaped injury. An item in "The Aeroplane" of 31 August 1921 mentioned that there was no dismay at Instone Airlines over the crash, as the machine had for some time, been in urgent need of retirement. No mail is known.



**B.A.T. FK26 – "City of Newcastle"**



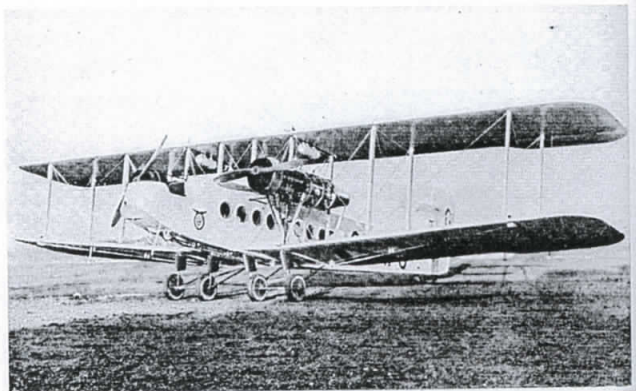
211021 – Handley Page Transport – “Newcastle” – Handley Page W.8 – G-EAPJ – Croydon Aerodrome  
– London-Paris route

Captain H. H. Perry

The aircraft was the first flight by Handley Page Transport from Croydon Airport. After veering sharply to the left in a strong south-easterly wind, the aircraft was forced down in a field near Purley. After this false start, it managed to take off again and the seven passengers arrived safely in Paris.

No mail is known in collectors' hands.

23. The original Handley Page W.8 of 1919, G-EAPJ.



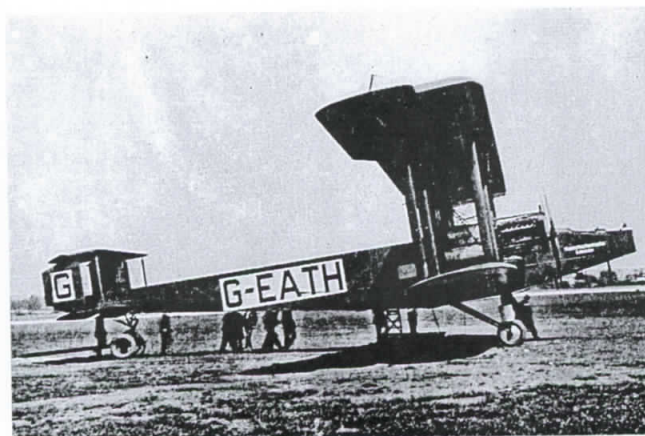
Captain H.H. Perry - 211021

211109 – Handley Page Transport – Handley Page 0/10 – G-EATH – Mersham, Kent, Great Britain –  
Paris-London route

Captain R. H. McIntosh & Mechanic Mr. Prendergast

The flight left Paris Le Bourget aerodrome at 1100 hours and passed over Lymgne Aerodrome about 2½ hours later, flying at a low altitude. Shortly afterwards, the port engine gear case and propeller tore off, and the aircraft went into a steep left hand turn. After regaining control, the pilot selected a large field in which to land, but in turning to avoid a wire fence, which he had not seen until the last moment, the starboard undercarriage and bottom wing struck the ground and were broken. None of the occupants were injured.

No mail is known in the hands of collectors.



Handley Page 0/10

211230 – Handley Page Transport – Handley Page 0/400 – G-EATM – Berck Plage, France – Paris-London route

Captain A. S. Wilcockson

The pilot took off from Le Bourget at 11:20 a.m., and was assured by the French meteorological office that the wind on the route nowhere exceeded 15 mph. When near Berck, one of the engines suffered from overheating, so he made a forced landing on the beach to rectify the matter. Another pilot, flying in another 0/400, decided to land alongside to render assistance. When he was within a few feet of the ground, he saw that the other aircraft had blown right over onto one wing-tip, and then onto the other one, which was smashed. So he opened up both engines and went up again, and continued on to Croydon.

No mail is known in collectors' hands.



**Handley Page 0/400**

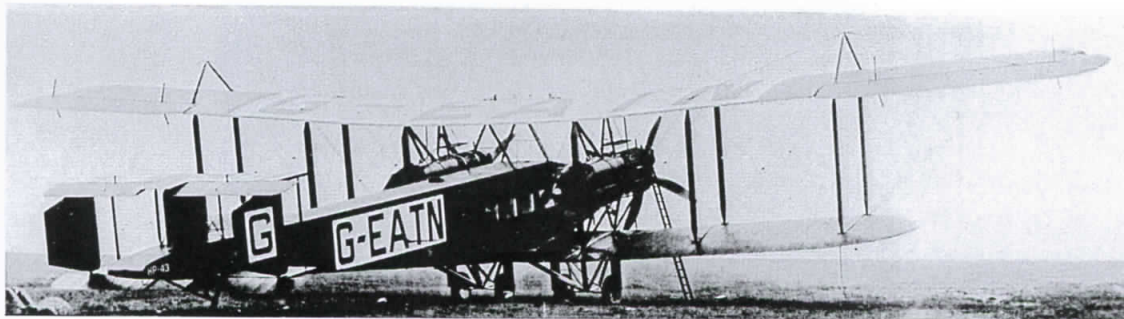
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220114 – Handley Page Transport – Handley Page 0/10 – G-EATN – Senlis, near Le Bourget Airport, France

Captain R. H. McIntosh & Wireless Operator S. A. Freddy Dismore

Enroute from London to Paris, the pilot encountered fog and he landed at Beauvais Aerodrome, forty miles north of Paris. The pilot phoned Le Bourget and was advised that the weather had improved slightly, so he decided to take off and proceed to Paris. When letting down through the fog, the aircraft hit the ground, bounced, and touched again, bounced along for a hundred yards and then came to rest almost vertically on its nose. The two passengers were flung against the forward bulkhead, relatively unhurt. Mr. Dismore, despite three cracked ribs, managed to extricate Captain McIntosh, who had fractured most of the metatarsal bones of both feet and had a torn ligament in one knee.

No mail is known in collectors' hands.



**Handley Page 0/10**



220407 – Daimler Airway – De Havilland DH.18A – G-EAWO – Thieuloy-St. Antoine, France – Paris-London route

Captain Robin E. Duke & Steward Hesterman

The aircraft took off from Croydon Aerodrome, enroute to Paris. The same morning, a Farman Goliath of Grands Express Aeriens, left from Le Bourget, Paris. The two aircraft collided head-on over Thieuloy-St. Antoine, eighteen miles north of Beauvais. Both pilots had been following a railway line to find their way, as the clouds were low and visibility was poor. The pilots and all the passengers of both aircraft were killed. This was the first commercial mid-air collision. Mr. Hesterman was one of the world's first airline stewards. The accident highlighted the need for proper organization of the cross-Channel routes, and at Croydon, all the pilots held an emergency meeting to discuss this at the Handley Page Office.

No mail is known in the hands of collectors.



**De Havilland DH.18A**

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220511 – Instone Air Line – De Havilland DH.34 – probably G-EBBR “City of Glasgow” – Croydon Aerodrome, Great Britain – Paris-London route

Captain G. Bradley

The pilot made a good landing, but immediately after he touched the ground, one wheel came off and the aircraft immediately stood on its nose. The aircraft suffered slight damage. The pilot was not hurt, and there were no passengers on board.

No mail is known.



**De Havilland DH.34 - “City of Glasgow”**



220523 – Daimler Airway – De Havilland DH.34 – G-EBBQ – Croydon Aerodrome, Great Britain – Paris-London route

Captain A. L. “Scruffy” Robinson

On landing at Croydon, the aircraft collided with another Daimler DH.34 – G-EBBU, which was landing after a pilot training flight. BU was badly damaged. No mail is known in collectors’ hands.



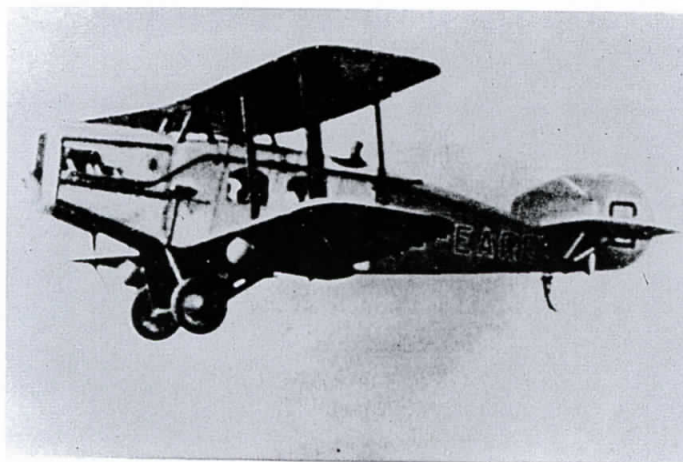
**De Havilland DH.34**

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220610 (Nierinck 220610) – Instone Air Line Ltd. – Westland Limousine II – G-EARF – Nieuwerkerken, Belgium, London-Brussels route

Captain E. F. Jones

The aircraft left London at 5:30 p.m. with three passengers onboard, and it crashed at Nieuwerkerken. No other details available and no mail is known



**Westland Limousine II**

220623 – Instone Air Line Ltd. – “City of Antwerp” – Vickers Type 61 Vulcan – G-EBBL – Tonbridge, Kent, Great Britain – Brussels-London route

Captain R. E. Keys

When over Tonbridge at an altitude of about 2,000 feet, the engine suddenly and completely failed. In attempting a forced landing, the pilot overshot the field he had selected and the aircraft ran into a line of trees. The machine was considerably damaged, but the pilot was uninjured.

No mail is known in the hands of collectors.

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220812 – Instone Air Line Ltd. – “City of Antwerp” – Vickers Type 61 Vulcan – G-EBBL – Woldingham, Surrey, Great Britain – Brussels-London route

Pilot Mr. G. Bradley

The aircraft, with five passengers, was flying near the ground in very bad weather, when the engine abruptly ceased to fire. The pilot immediately turned back towards the Woldingham Golf Links, but was obliged to land in an adjoining field. The aircraft struck a hedge and was badly damaged. None of the occupants were injured.

No mail is known.



Vickers Type 61 Vulcan – “City of Antwerp”

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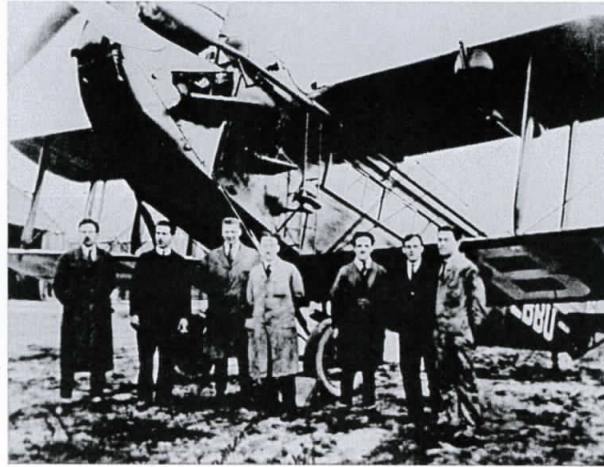


221103 – Daimler Airway – De Havilland DH 34 – G-EBBU – Harrow, Great Britain – Manchester-Croydon route

Captain H. S. Roberson & Co-pilot H. W. Owen

Flying in thick fog northwest of London, and after circling around for some time trying to find Stag Lane or Hendon, the pilot attempted to land somewhere. As he was about to touch down, he saw some high trees ahead and swung the aircraft around to avoid head-on collision. The starboard wings struck a tree and the aircraft was wrecked. There were eight passengers onboard, none of whom were injured.

No mail is known in collectors' hands.



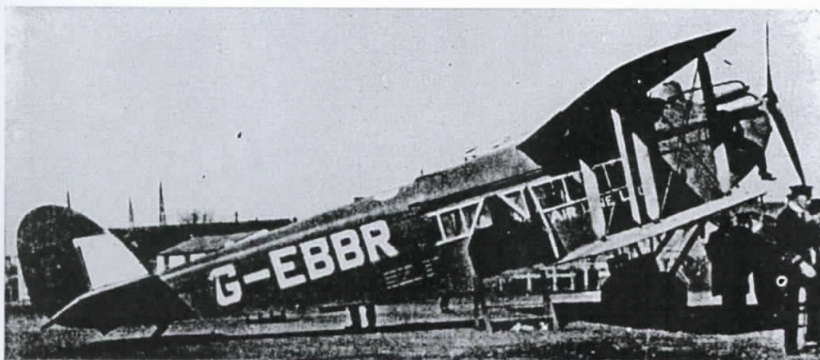
**De Havilland DH 34 – G-EBBU**

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230217 – Instone Air Line Ltd. – “City of Glasgow” – De Havilland DH.34 – G-EBBR – Whyteleafe, Surrey, Great Britain

Captain Charles F. Wolley Dod

Heavy rain was falling and the hills were enveloped in thick mist. The pilot decided to land and brought the aircraft down onto a sloping field; it ran across the field and hit a tree. The propeller and aircraft nose were smashed, but the pilot and his three German passengers escaped injury. No mail is known in collectors' hands.



**De Havilland DH.34 – “City of Glasgow”**



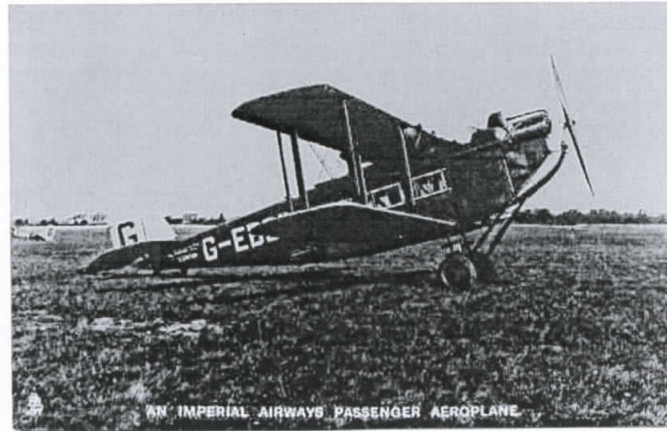
**Captain Charles F. Wolley  
Dod**



230317 (Nierinck 230317) – Daimler Airway – De Havilland DH 34 (registration unknown) – Berck Plage, France – Great Britain–France route

Pilot unknown

Henri Nierinck<sup>4</sup> reported that mail was recovered from the crash of a British plane and was embarked on a French plane. This mail bore no special cachet and it arrived at Paris the same day. No other information is available.



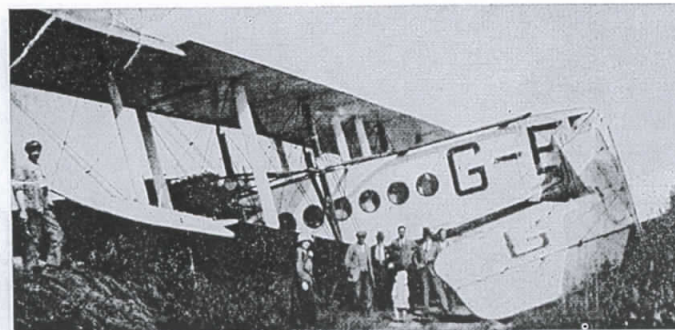
**De Havilland DH 34**

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230710 – Handley Page Transport – “Duchess of York” (previously named “Newcastle” - see 211021) – Handley Page W.8 – G-EAPJ – Poix, France – London-Paris route

Captain A. S. Wilcockson & Flight Engineer A. P. Hunt

Near Poix, a leaking fuel tank starved the port engine of fuel, necessitating a quick downwind forced landing. The aircraft fell into a sunken road. It was a complete write-off, the fuselage being broken in the middle. None of the passengers were injured and Wilcockson and Hunt were only slightly hurt.



7. The end of the original Handley Page W.8 G-EAPJ (Captain Wilcockson and Flight Engineer A. P. Hunt).

**Handley Page W.8 “Duchess of York” – G-EAPJ**

230827 – Daimler Airway – De Havilland DH.34 – G-EBBQ – near Rotterdam, Netherlands

Captain G. E. Pratt

The pilot attempted to take off out of wind, which caused the aeroplane to swing badly on the ground, and although he engine was throttled down again, the machine failed to pull up before running into a hedge. The aircraft was badly damaged but the pilot and his three passengers escaped injury.

No mail is known.



**De Havilland DH.34 – G-EBBQ**

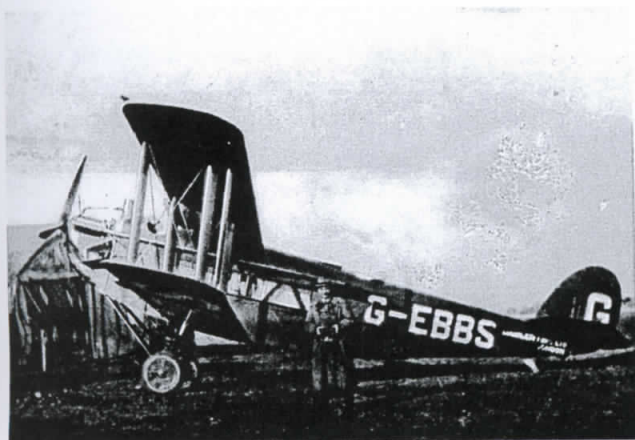
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230914 (Nierinck 230914) – Daimler Airway – De Havilland DH.34 – G-EBBS – Ivinghoe, Buckinghamshire, Great Britain – London-Manchester route

Pilots G. E. Pratt & A. L. “Scruffy” Robinson

The aircraft had departed from Croydon and encountered a heavy rainstorm. Whilst attempting a forced landing in a field, the aircraft stalled and crashed. The pilots and three passengers were killed.

No mail is known in collectors’ hands.



**De Havilland DH.34 – G-EBBS**

231130 – British Marine Air Navigation Co. – Supermarine Sea Eagle – G-EBFK – Southampton, Great Britain

Captain F. J. Bailey & Mechanic Mr. Brown

While flying at a very low height in dead calm and slight surface misty weather, the aircraft struck the water, breaking the fore part of the hull. The accident appeared to be either due to the misjudgement of height owing to the glassy sea, or to the pilot being struck on the head by a bird. The pilot and mechanic, who were the only occupants, were slightly injured.

No mail is known



**Supermarine Sea Eagle**

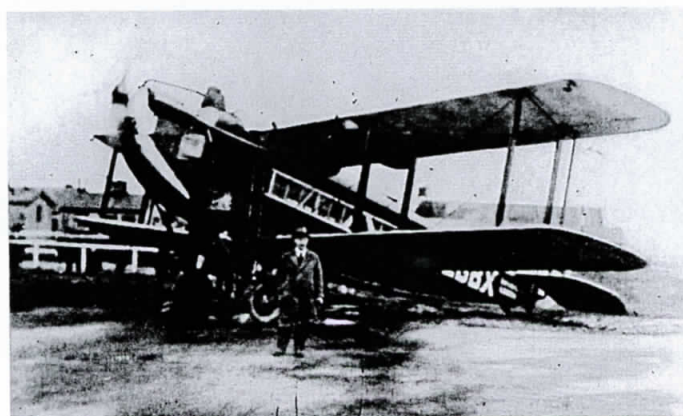
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231205 – Daimler Airway – De Havilland DH.34 – G-EBBX – near Ostend, Belgium – London-Amsterdam route

Captain A. L. “Scruffy” Robinson

On arrival in the area of the Amsterdam Airport, the pilot found the Airport and all of Holland enshrouded in fog. Although he was right over the Airport, he couldn't see it. He then proceeded down the Belgian Coast and landed on the shore near Ostend in two feet of water. The aircraft turned over and Captain Robinson was released by the navigator.

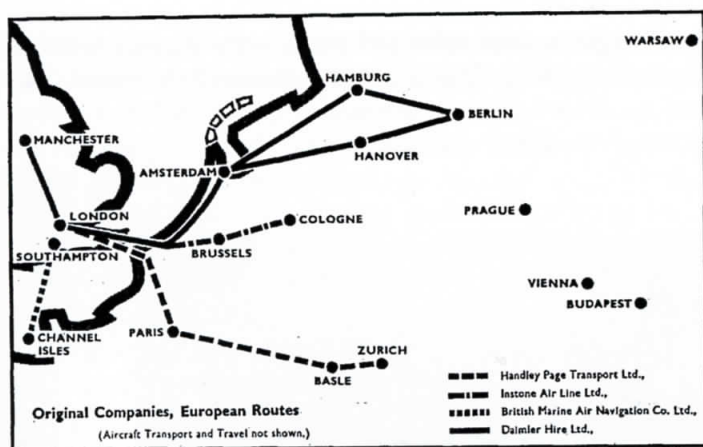
There was some delay in handling the mail over to the Belgian Postal Authorities, because at periods of high tide, the machine was partly under water. The mail was handed over at 1415 the next day. No mail is known in collectors' hands



**De Havilland DH.34**



Handley Page Transport, The Instone Air Line Ltd., Daimler Airway and British Marine Air Navigation Co. Ltd. were amalgamated into a new airline – Imperial Airways on 1 April 1924. Its first service, to Paris, began on 26 April 1924



240527 (Nierinck 240525) – Imperial Airways – “City of Glasgow” – De Havilland DH-34 – G-EBBR – Ostend, Belgium – Cologne-London route

Captain A. L. “Scruffy” Robinson

After takeoff from Ostend, the aircraft was too low, became caught on a fence and crashed into a cemetery. The pilot was able to jump clear of the aircraft, which was completely destroyed by fire.

No mail is known in collectors’ hands.



“City of Glasgow” – De Havilland DH-34

240923 – Imperial Airways – De Havilland DH-34 – G-EBCX – Croydon, Great Britain – London-Cologne route

Captain G. P. Olley

The aircraft took off and after reaching about 50 feet altitude, the engines failed and it crashed. The pilot and all five passengers survived. No mail is known in the hands of collectors.



CAPTAIN OLLEY. (Photo: Central Press.)

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SERIES 2.

Imperial Airways Ticket



Captain David Arthur Stewart

The year 1924 ended on a very tragic note, with the worst crash that Britain had yet seen. Shortly after taking off from Croydon Airport just after noon, the plane had difficulty gaining altitude. The pilot turned, probably attempting to return to the aerodrome, but the aircraft went into a spin, dove to the ground in the village of Purley and crashed. The aircraft was totally destroyed by fire. Purley is next to Croydon. Seven passengers and the pilot were killed. At the inquest, it was established that the pilot had difficulty in getting the plane off the rising ground against a strong wind. Another Imperial pilot, Franklyn Barnard, former Chief Pilot for Instone, put forward his strong opinion that the problem lay in the layout of the aerodrome, which made take-off difficult when the wind was from the southwest, and the aircraft had to take-off virtually uphill. As a result of this crash, additional land on the west of the Aerodrome was utilized and the entire layout was redesigned. This was reported as the greatest catastrophe in the history of civil aviation up until that time.

No mail is known

### CROYDON AIRPLANE DISASTER.

EYE-WITNESSES' STORIES OF 'BLAZING MACHINE.

"LIKE A TERRIFIC FURNACE."

GREATEST CATASTROPHE IN HISTORY OF CIVIL AVIATION



Captain David Arthur Stewart

### POOR PLANE BLAMED FOR AIR SMASH

*Pilot Asserts Ship Was in  
Bad Condition on Paris  
Flight*

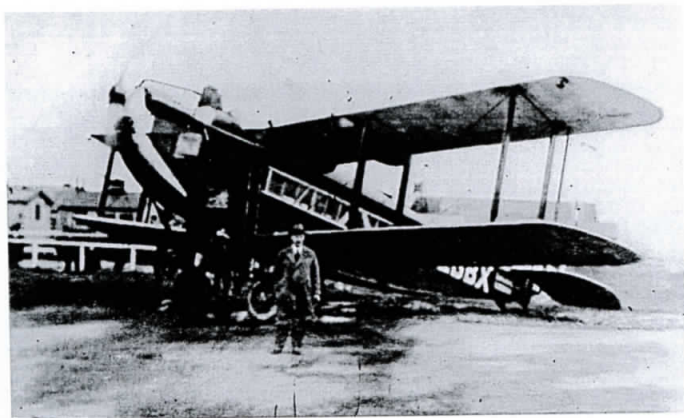
[BY CABLE—EXCLUSIVE DISPATCH]  
LONDON, Jan. 28.—Startling evidence about the condition of the plane on the London-Paris airway which crashed Christmas Eve, killing eight persons, was given at the official inquiry by Capt. Hinchcliffe, the pilot who had been flying the plane before Capt. Stewart, the pilot killed in the crash, and who refused to take it out on the fatal trip because of its condition.

Capt. Hinchcliffe said he flew the plane from London to Amsterdam on December 18 and found the engine rough and the oil pressure low. He reported this on his arrival in Amsterdam, and mechanics told him after lunch the plane had been repaired and was fit for service. He started back to London, but serious oil trouble developed and he returned to Amsterdam, where more work was done, and on December 19, started again, but returned because the engine was behaving badly.

Finally he flew to London on December 23, where, although the engine was still rough, the power was good. On December 24, he was told to take it to Paris and refused, partly because of the condition of the plane and partly because he was tired and cold. Capt. Stewart replaced him. He warned Capt. Stewart of the condition of the engine.

Capt. Hinchcliffe said he would not have flown the machine that day to Paris with a full load, but might have been willing to take off with half a load. Capt. Hinchcliffe also said that the mechanic in Amsterdam found some white metal in the filter, which would indicate that a bearing had run.





De Havilland DH-34B – G-EBBX

## CROYDON AIRPLANE DISASTER.

EYE-WITNESSES STORIES OF BLAZING MACHINE.

“LIKE A TERRIFIC FURNACE.”

GREATEST CATASTROPHE IN HISTORY OF CIVIL AVIATION

The Christmas Eve Airplane Disaster on Castle Hill, South Croydon, in which the pilot and seven passengers were burnt to death through one of the cross-Channel machines of the Imperial Airways Ltd. crashing and bursting into flames, cast a gloom over the whole of London and the suburbs.

It is the most terrible catastrophe in the history of civil aviation. The whole tragedy happened with such dramatic suddenness that only a few people saw the ill-fated machine drop like a wounded bird, strike the earth with terrific force and within a few seconds became a mass of roaring flames.

## CROYDON AIR SMASH INQUEST.

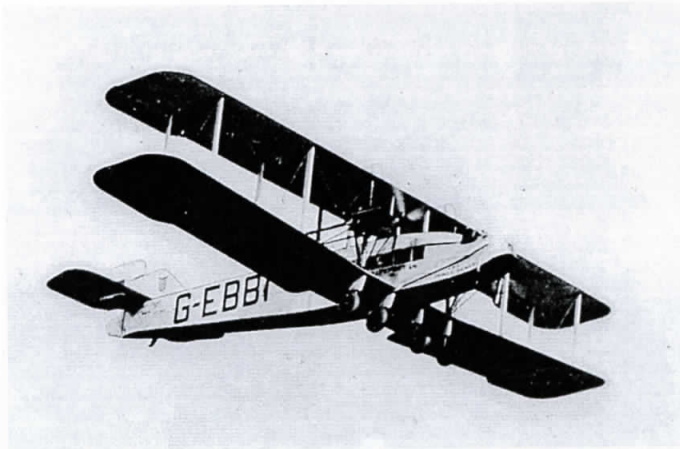


Captain Barnard, the pilot, demonstrating how the smash occurred with a model aeroplane. Mrs. Stewart (left), the pilot's widow, and (right) Mr. Mervyn Henry, a witness who gave important evidence.

250303 – Imperial Airways – “Prince Henry” – Handley Page W.8b – G-EBBI – Lympne, Kent, Great Britain – London-Paris route

Captain W. Rogers

The aircraft was blown over after landing, due to stormy weather. The pilot was not injured. The aircraft was flown back to Croydon on the 7<sup>th</sup> of March. No mail is known.



Handley Page W.8b – “Prince Henry”

250524 – Imperial Airways – aircraft unknown – Pegwell Bay (between Sandwich and Ramsgate), Great Britain – Cologne-London route

Captain D. H. Drew

On a cargo flight from Cologne to Croydon, the pilot experienced engine trouble and made a forced landing on the mud flats near Pegwell Bay. The pilot then telephoned the RAF Aerodrome at Manston and a fatigue party from the camp removed the aircraft out of reach of the rising tide. Crowds of people who saw the machine flocked to the spot. There were no passengers. It is not known if the flight was carrying mail, and no covers are known in collectors' hands.

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For combined air fees and postage, Parcel Air Mail rates, and full particulars, see AIR MAIL LEAFLET obtainable free of charge from any Post Office

**Pages From Imperial Airways Airmail Etiquette Booklet**



250701 – Imperial Airways – “City of London” – Vickers Vimy Commercial – G-EASI – near Le Bourget Airport, Paris, France

Captain Waters

The pilot had to make a forced landing in a farmer’s field, which caused crop damage of £1,100. No other details are available.

---

250823 – Imperial Airways – “City of London” – Vickers Vimy Commercial – G-EASI – Capel le Ferne (near Folkstone), Great Britain – London-Cologne route

Pilot unknown

The pilot had to make a forced landing on a cliff close to the pub “The Valiant Sailor”. No other details are available.



Arrivée du “City of London” à Croydon.

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### Vickers Vimy Commercial – “City of London”

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260101 – Imperial Airways – Handley Page – (registration unknown) – Ostend, Belgium

Pilot unknown

The aircraft propeller hit a duck and the pilot had to make a forced landing. It was carrying gold! It is not known if it was carrying mail. No other details are available.

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Telephone:—Victoria 8242.

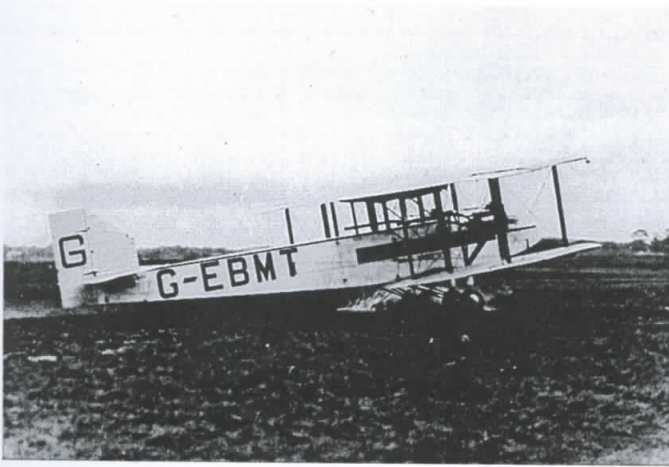
### Page From Airmail Etiquette Booklet



260417 – Imperial Airways – “City of Ottawa” – Handley Page W.10 – G-EBMT – Beauvais, France – Great Britain-France route

Captain Franklyn I. Barnard

The pilot encountered a thunderstorm. A bolt of lightning struck the lower wing, burning through the fabric, scorching one of the main spars, fusing the bonding, and damaging the adjacent aileron. With the compass out of action and one engine misfiring because of a depolarized magneto, he managed to land safely at Lypne, to the relief of his fourteen passengers and Imperial Captain A. S. Wilcockson, who was also onboard. No mail is known.



**Handley Page W.10 – “City of Ottawa”**



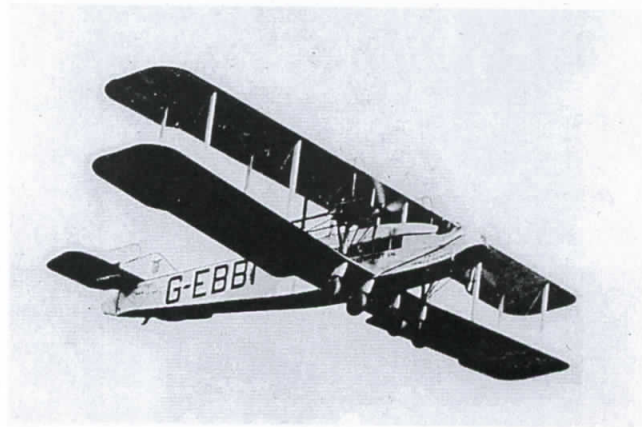
**Captain Franklyn I. Barnard**

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260619 – Imperial Airways – “Prince Henry” – Handley Page HP W8b – G-EBBI – Dover, Kent, Great Britain – Amsterdam-London route

Captain Herbert J. Horsey & Mechanic Mr. C. Pearson

Whilst enroute from Amsterdam with eight passengers, an engine failed over the English Channel, when flying at 1,000 feet underneath a cloud layer. With the other engine at full throttle requiring heavy foot pressure to keep the aircraft straight, the pilot just managed to reach the coast. He could not clear the cliff tops, he just scraped into a valley and touched down in a field. The aircraft swung violently around, collapsing the undercarriage and damaging the wings and fuselage, but nobody was hurt. No mail is known in collectors' hands.

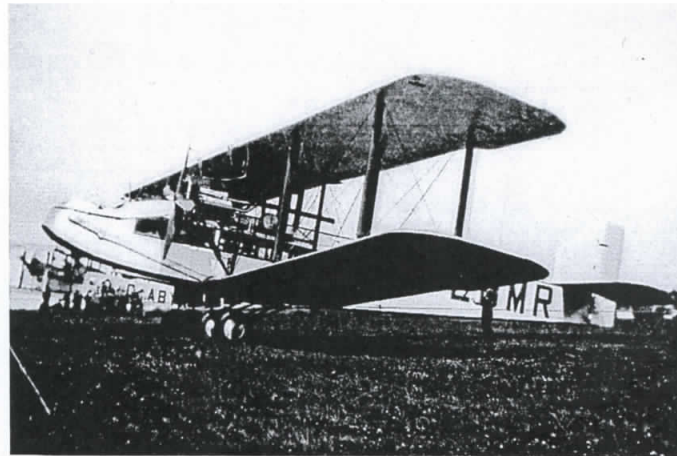


**Handley Page HP W8b – “Prince Henry”**

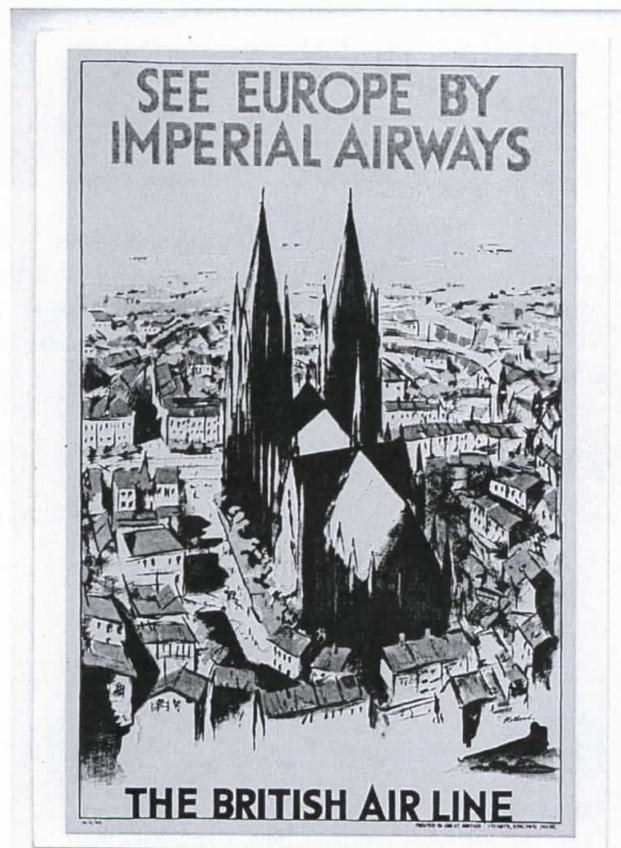
261010 – Imperial Airways – “City of Pretoria” – Handley Page W.10 – G-EBMR – Petegem (near Deinze), Belgium – Brussels-London route

Captain A. L. “Scruffy” Robinson & First Officer Pilot Warner

The aircraft left Brussels at 9:16 a.m. bound for Croydon. Due to a broken oil tube, the pilot had to make a forced landing in woods and the aircraft came to grief in a ditch. It was badly damaged, but there were no injuries to the pilot and passengers. The passengers were taken by car to Ostend, whence they proceeded to Dover by boat. No mail is known.



Handley Page W.10 – “City of Pretoria”



Postcard reproduction of a poster



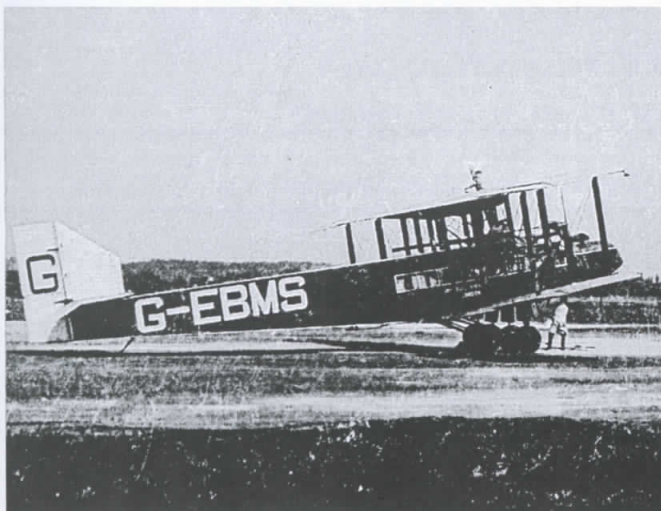
261021 (Nierinck 261021) – Imperial Airways – “City of London” – Handley Page W.10 – G-EBMS – English Channel – Great Britain-France route

Captain S. A. Freddy Dismore & Engineer C. Pearson

Enroute from Croydon to Paris about 18 miles from the English coast, an engine stopped. Because of low clouds and strong winds, the pilot was unable to maintain altitude. He tried to make it to the French coast on one engine, but was unable to make it and was forced to land on the sea. The pilot sent out an SOS/“Mayday” distress call and informed Croydon of the problem. The pilot made an excellent “tail-up” landing on the water. Even though its wings were broken, the aircraft stayed afloat because of the wood in its frame. The crew and ten passengers climbed out of the cabin through the emergency opening in the roof. Gradually the aircraft began to sink at the nose, the rising water forcing the occupants up along the fuselage near the tail. A fishing trawler, the “Invicta”, took off the ten passengers, all thoroughly wet, but calm. The mail and some of the valuable cargo were also salvaged, but the aircraft sank about half an hour after the passenger were taken off.

“The Aeroplane” of 27 October 1926 reported that it was known that the HP W.8, W.8b & W.10 were all unable to maintain altitude on one engine, with a full load.

The mail was salvaged, but no cachets or special markings were applied.



Handley Page W.10 – “City of London”



Captain S. A. Freddy Dismore



Page From Airmail Etiquette Booklet

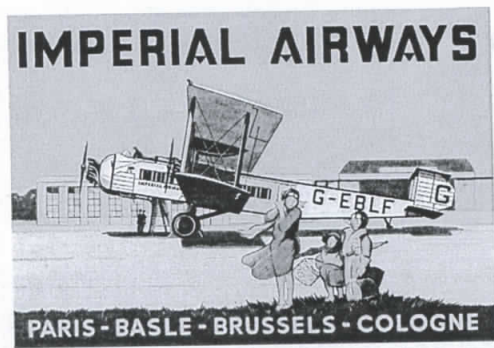


261208 – Imperial Airways – Armstrong Whitworth A.W. Argosy I – probably G-EBLF – Pluckley, Great Britain – Paris–London route

Captain O. P. Jones

The aircraft was on a flight from Paris to London with twelve passengers. When over Cranbrook, a tappet rod in one engine broke. The guiding principle with three engined aircraft was that if one engine goes dead, a landing must be made at the nearest convenient aerodrome. The pilot promptly made for Lympne, but as the oil pressure on another engine appeared to be low, and he was near the old aerodrome at Pluckley, he made a forced landing there.

The passengers continued their journey by train. No mail is known in collectors' hands.



### Armstrong Whitworth A.W. Argosy I

261209 – Imperial Airways – “City of Cairo” – De Havilland DH 66 Hercules class – G-EBMW – Beauvais, France – London-Paris route

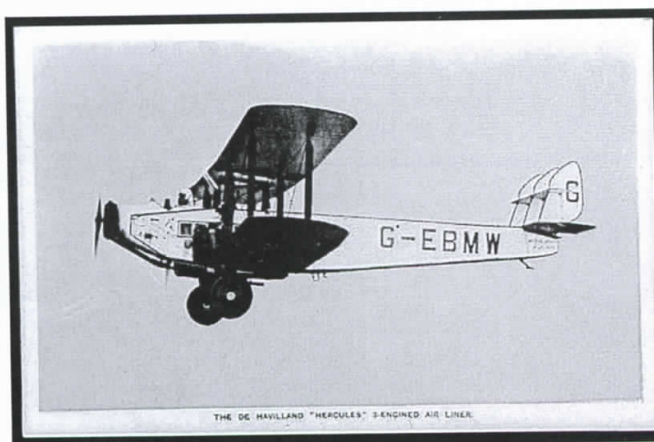
Captain Franklyn I. Barnard

The flight left for Paris with nine passengers, but due to some problem with the aircraft, the pilot turned back and landed at Lympne. He later continued but due to thick fog in Paris, the pilot made a forced landing at Beauvais. The aircraft left the next day via St. Inlevert (for customs) and then returned to Croydon.



12. ABOVE: Captain Franklyn Barnard (died 1927)

**Captain Franklyn I. Barnard**



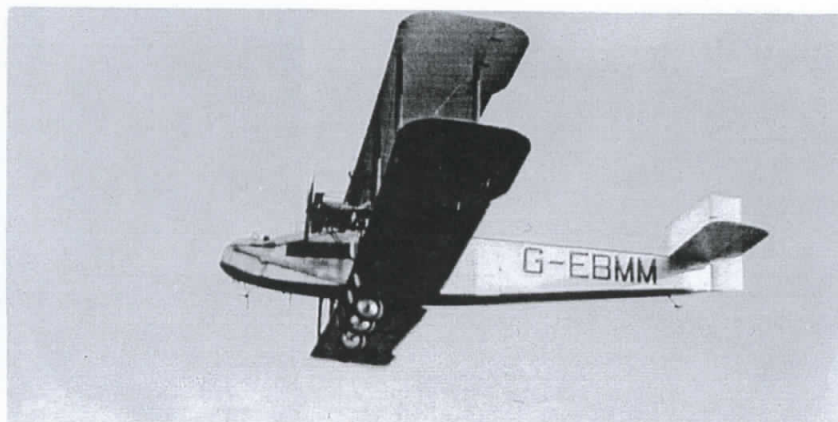
**De Havilland DH 66 Hercules class  
“City of Cairo”**

261224 – Imperial Airways – “City of Melbourne” – Handley Page W.10 – G-EBMM – Ostend, Belgium & Lypne, Great Britain – Cologne-London route

Captain A. B. H. “Jimmy” Youell

An engine manifold burst on one of the engines, and the engine caught on fire. The pilot had to make a forced landing. Repairs were made and the aircraft took off for Croydon. The same thing happened again and the pilot sent out a “Mayday”. He somehow managed to keep going and he made a forced landing at Lypne.

No mail is known.



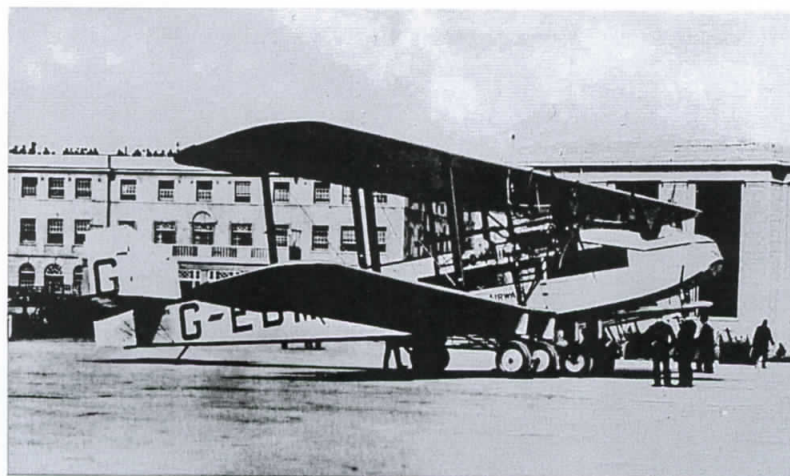
**Handley Page W.10 – “City of Melbourne”**

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270101 – Imperial Airways – Handley Page W.10 – (registration unknown) – France

Captain R. H. McIntosh

The pilot had to make a forced landing because of bad weather. No other details are available, and no mail is known.



**Handley Page W.10**

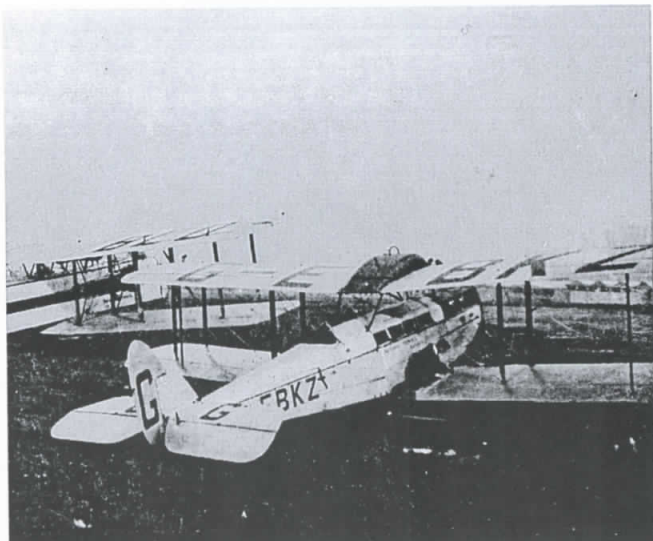


270203 – Imperial Airways – De Havilland DH 50 – G-EBKZ – Montebourg, France – Southampton – Cherbourg route

Captain W.G.R. “Ray” Hinchcliffe

The flight was carrying a passenger, Mr. Byron to catch a ship at Cherbourg. The pilot had to make a forced landing at Montebourg, about 15 miles south of Cherbourg. The pilot telephoned to Cherbourg for assistance. Mr. Byron was taken to Cherbourg by car. The pilot was arrested at Cherbourg for landing without a permit. The pilot flew back from Cherbourg to Croydon on the 4<sup>th</sup> of February.

No mail is known.



De Havilland DH 50



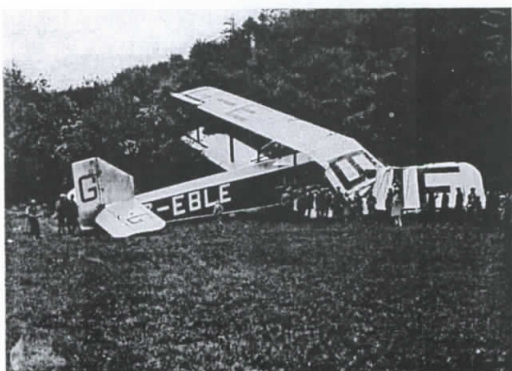
Captain W.G.R. “Ray” Hinchcliffe

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270627 – Imperial Airways – “City of New York” – Handley Page W.9 – G-EBLE – Cudham near Westerham & Biggin Hill, Great Britain – Paris-London route

Captain F. F. Minchin

The aircraft ran out of fuel and crashed on a farm at Cudham, Kent. None of the nine passengers were injured. No mail is known in collectors’ hands.



“City of New York” – Handley Page W.9

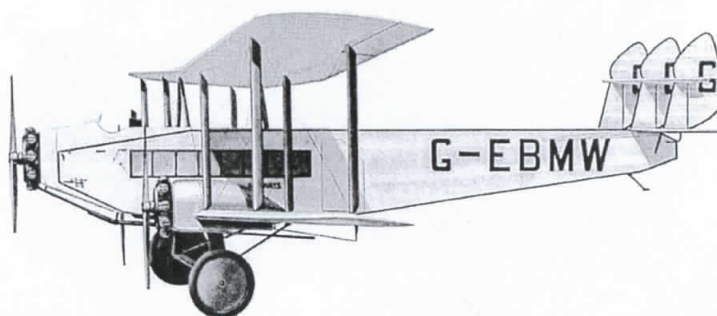


271229 – Imperial Airways – “City of Cairo” – De Havilland DH 66 Hercules class – G-EBMW – In desert 200 miles west of Baghdad.

Captain F. Dudley Travers

According to A.S. Jackson<sup>9</sup> and Wingent<sup>10</sup>, the aircraft encountered strong head winds, ran out of fuel and had to make a forced landing in the desert. The pilot radioed the closest Imperial Airways station and asked that a car be sent with petrol. A car was sent but failed to find the aircraft. Two days later, another Hercules spotted the lost airliner fifty miles south of the reported position, and landed. The four passengers and mail were transferred to the second aircraft and they reached Baghdad the same day. After fuel was flown in, the “City of Cairo” was also able to reach Baghdad that night (the 31<sup>st</sup>).

No mail is known in the hands of collectors.



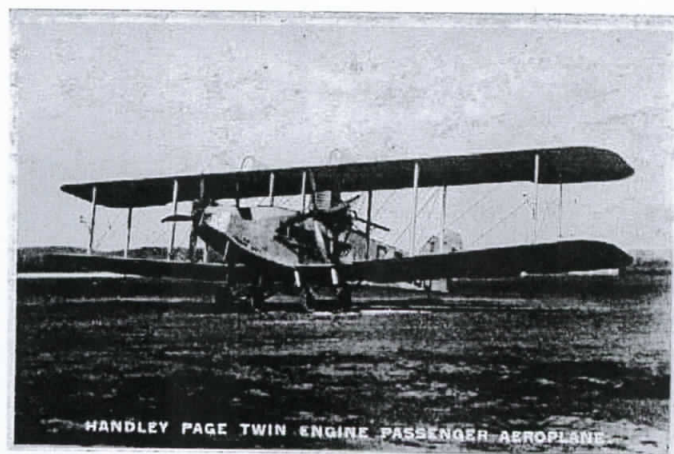
**De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – “City of Cairo”**

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280215 – Imperial Airways – “Princess Mary” – Handley Page W.8b – G-EBBG – Berck Plage, near Abbeville, France – Paris-Croydon route

Captain Herbert J. Horsey

Due to bad weather, the pilot made a forced landing on the beach. When trying to take-off, the aircraft was blown onto its nose and was damaged beyond repair. The pilot and passengers were not hurt. No mail is known in collectors’ hands.



**Handley Page W.8b – G-EBBG – “Princess Mary”**

281023 – Imperial Airways – De Havilland DH 50 – G-EBKZ – Plymouth, Devon, Great Britain

Captain Gordon P. Olley

When taking off from a small field at Roborough, the aircraft stalled on takeoff, overran the aerodrome and crashed on a road. No other details are available, and no mail is known.



De Havilland DH 50 – Captain Gordon P. Olley on right

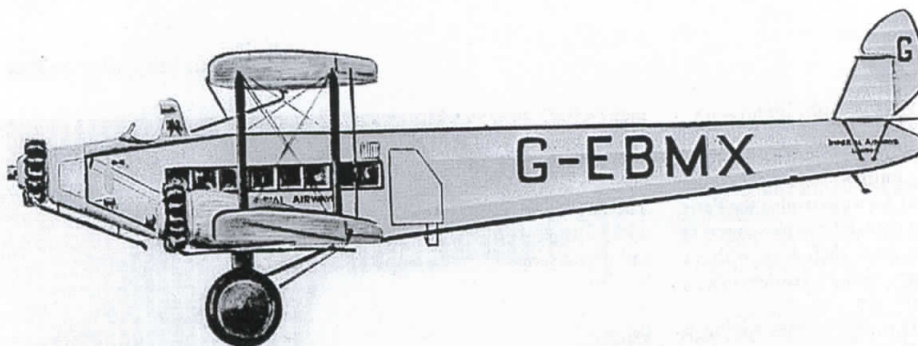
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290430 – Imperial Airways – “City of Delhi” – De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-EBMX – Baghdad, Iraq

Captain unknown

According to Wingent<sup>10</sup>, when landing at Baghdad, the aircraft tore a wing on barbed wire, and when taxiing for take-off, it broke a tailskid and damaged the fuselage on a protruding plate covering a submerged petrol tank. A replacement aircraft was sent from Basra.

No mail is known in collectors' hands.



De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-EBMX – “City of Delhi”

290617 (Nierinck 290617) – Imperial Airways – “City of Ottawa” – Handley Page W.10 – G-EBMT – off Dungeness, Great Britain – Great Britain-France-Switzerland route

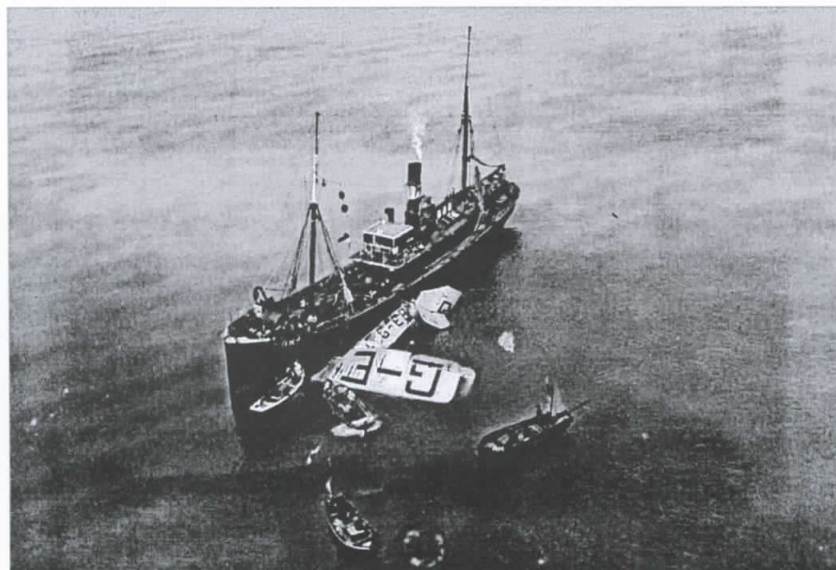
Captain R. P. D. Brailly & Mechanic N. Robert Barnett

When crossing the English Channel, an engine failed and the pilot decided to turn around and go back. However, he soon realized that he could not make the coast, and he advised Croydon by wireless that he had decided to attempt a landing on the sea close to a ship. He was about 200 feet above the sea. He was unable to maintain altitude and the aircraft pancaked onto the sea with great impact, about three miles from Dungeness. The trawler “Gaby” was nearby and saw the accident. It was able to rescue seven passengers. Four passengers died in the accident from drowning. The survivors and the aircraft were taken to Dungeness.

The aircraft was carrying 200 kilos of mail. It is unknown how much was recovered, but some covers are known in collectors’ hands.



**Handley Page W.10 – “City of Ottawa”**



**Salvaging the Aircraft**



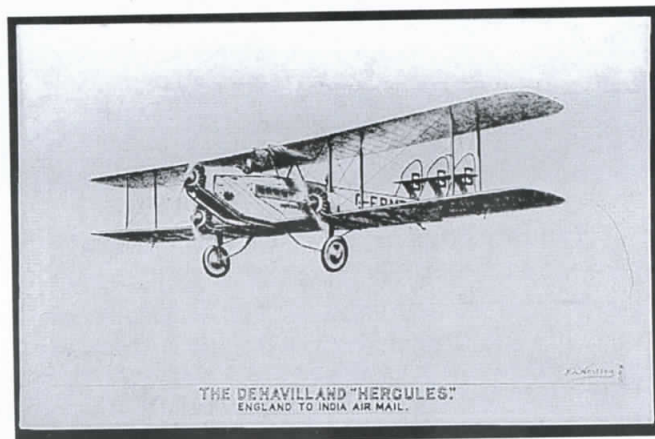
290906 (Nierinck 290907) – Imperial Airways – “City of Jerusalem” – De Havilland DH 66 – G-EBMZ – Jask, Persia (Iran) – Great Britain–India route

Captain Albert Edward Woodbridge, Mechanic J. Court, Wireless Operator H. Bourne & Flight Engineer H. C. Amor

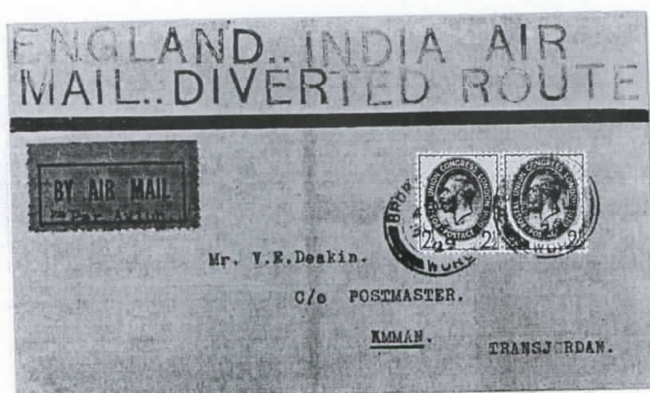
The Captain had planned the flight to arrive at Jask before nightfall. However, the flight arrived after dark. The airport had no landing lights, so the aircraft had wingtip flares to provide light for landing. However, the Captain misjudged his height above the flare path, with the result that the aircraft stalled and crashed to the ground, wrecking the undercarriage and port planes. When the aircraft hit the ground, the petrol from the damaged tanks was ignited by the burning wing-tip flare. The pilot, the engineer and one passenger died in the fire. There are conflicting reports about mail being recovered. Nierinck advises that a small part of the German mail was recovered. The newspaper “News of the World” of 8 September 1929, reported that all the mail, about 25,000 pieces, was destroyed. According to Wingent, the “Lloyd’s Weekly Casualty Reports” states that some mail was salvaged and forwarded to Karachi by the next service.

The Aeroplane of 11 September 1929 stated “The Postmaster General announces that as a result of the accident on the outward-bound Indian mail which left this country on August 31 has been totally destroyed.”

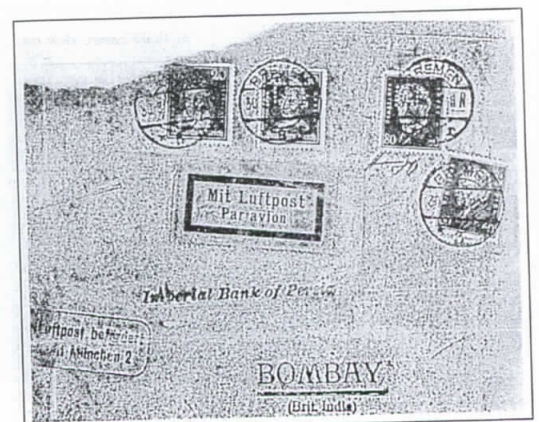
Shown is a cover from England to Transjordan that was carried on the flight and off-loaded before the crash. Proud<sup>32</sup> reports the following amounts of mail being salvaged: 1 bag Gaza to Karachi, 1 bag Cairo to Karachi, 1 bag Brussels to Karachi, 1 bag Basel to Karachi and a small amount of “partially burnt matter”. One cover is known from the actual crash, which was from Persia to Bombay, India.



De Havilland DH 66 – “City of Jerusalem”



Cover Off-loaded from the Flight Before the Crash



Only Known Cover From the Crash



Newspaper Records of the Disaster to the India Air Mail on the occasion of the Flight when the Operations of the Service were officially extended to places beyond India e.g. Hong Kong: Australia: New Zealand &c. Sept. 1929.

# AIR LINER CRASHES IN FLAMES.

## PILOT, PASSENGER, AND MECHANIC KILLED.

## MAIL DESTROYED.

"Daily Express" Correspondent.

KARACHI, Sunday, Sept. 8.

THE GREAT disaster befell the England-India Air Mail machine from Croydon which was due to arrive here to-day. It crashed in flames at Jask, in Persia, late on Friday night, and the pilot, the only passenger, and a mechanic were killed, while another mechanic and the wireless operator were seriously injured.

The airplane, a triple screw D. H. Hercules, was approaching the aerodrome at Jask, which is 575 miles from Karachi, and the last stopping place for the India air liners on the outward journey. It was after dark, and the landing flood lights had been turned on.

### WING IN FLAMES.

The airplane was approaching, when the aerodrome staff were horrified to see that the tip of one of its wings was in flames. The fire spread with terrible rapidity, and although the pilot made every effort to effect a landing, the machine crashed, a mass of blazing wreckage. It was little short of a miracle that any members of its crew were saved.

The men killed were—  
Captain A. E. Woodbridge, of West-cliff-on-Sea (pilot).

Mr. V. C. Bell, of Watlington, Oxfordshire (passenger).  
Mr. John J. Court, of Whitstable (mechanic).

The injured men were Mr. H. Bourne and Mr. H. C. Amor.

It is understood that the airplane was carrying 25,000 mail packages, all of which were destroyed.

Captain Woodbridge was a most competent pilot. He did excellent work during the war, and was the officer who shot down the dreaded airman, Richtofen. Mr. Bell was a member of the Indian Forestry Commission, and had been home on leave.

It is reported here to-day that the injured men are making good progress at Jask. It is feared that it will not be possible to ascertain the exact cause of the accident.

# AIR MAIL LINER DISASTER

## Evening Times Echo - Sat. 7/9/29 Dramatic Scene At Night Landing

## 3 BURNED TO DEATH

## British Mails to India Destroyed By Fire

SIMLA, Saturday.

THREE people were killed and others injured when the England-India air mail plane crashed at Jask, Persia. The machine burst into flames on striking the ground, and was completely destroyed.

### ATTEMPTED TO LAND.

It is said that the tragedy occurred when the machine attempted to land.

Pilot A. E. Woodbridge, his mechanic and a passenger were burned to death and two other members of the crew injured. The mails were lost in the fire. Inquiries in London to-day revealed that the plane was due to arrive at Karachi this afternoon.

The mail left Croydon on Saturday morning last, the machine being a triple-screw D.H. Hercules—City of Jerusalem. The Indian air mail is run in three sections, and with three different types of machines. The first stage of the flight, from Croydon to the Mediterranean, is made in triple-screw Armstrong-Siddeley air liners. The Mediterranean section, being over water, triple-screw short Jupiter all-metal flying boats are used.

### ACROSS DESERT.

The type of machine which crashed is used from Cairo across the desert to Karachi.

It is understood that the machine was carrying about 25,000 mail packages, weighing something like five or six hundredweights.

It was exactly five months ago to-day that the England-India weekly air mail was inaugurated by the Imperial Airways. The first outward flight to Karachi on April 7 was made by the City of Jerusalem, and since then an almost uninterrupted service has been maintained.

### 16,000 LETTERS.

The second mail carried 16,000 letters over the 5,000 miles route. During the first three months of the service, over five tons of mails were carried, and there has been a steady increase since that time.

Throughout the long flight, the air liners are in constant radio communication with the ground. Each plane is equipped with the latest Marconi apparatus.—Reuter.

### OFFICIAL VERSION

The following official statement was issued:—

"Imperial Airways regret to announce that, after landing at Jask on Friday afternoon, one of their aeroplanes caught fire and was totally destroyed.

"As a result, the pilot, Captain A. E. Woodbridge, lost his life, and others sustained burns, but it is believed they are not serious. The mail was destroyed."

Later it was announced:—

"Imperial Airways regret that further information just received states that a passenger, Mr. V. G. Bell, and a member of Imperial Airways staff, Mr. J. Court, are also dead."

"Two members of the crew of the machine, Mr. H. Bourne, wireless operator, and Mr. H. C. Amor, flight engineer, were burned, but not seriously, and are progressing favourably."

Captain A. E. Woodbridge is the airman who, during the war, brought down Baron Richtofen, the German ace.

Mr. Bell, a member of the Indian Forestry Commission, was on his way to the Federated Malay States. Watlington, Oxfordshire, was his home town.

*The cards sent by myself to Hong Kong by this flight have of course failed to reach there.*

### EFFECT IN INDIA.

CALCUTTA, Sept. 7.

Inquiries to-day among business and newspaper circles in Calcutta tend to suggest that the air mail disaster is regarded with perturbation as regards its effect on the future of the service from England.

Up till now there has been an increasing tendency to use the air mail for the conveyance of urgent business correspondence. Already the railway delays at this end, after the mail has left the aeroplanes, have been causing annoyance, but on all sides tributes have been paid to the regularity with which the air service has been run hitherto.—Reuter.



# AIR MAIL DISASTER.

## THREE LIVES LOST IN A NIGHT LANDING.

### 'Plane in Flames.'

(Special Cablegram to the "News of the World.")

Within a few hours flying distance of Karachi, the Indian terminus on the England to India air mail route, the Imperial Airways air-liner City of Jerusalem met with disaster.

The machine, a triple-screw D.H. Hercules, while attempting a night landing at Jask, crashed with the loss of three lives.

The victims were the pilot,

**Capt. A. E. Woodbridge**, of Westcliff-on-Sea,

**Mr. V. G. Bell**, of Watlington, Oxfordshire, a passenger,

and

**Mr. J. Cart**, a member of the Imperial Airways staff.

Two other members of the crew, Mr. H. Bourne, wireless operator, and Mr. H. C. Amor, flight engineer, were also burned, but not seriously, while the mail, believed to be about 25,000 packages, was destroyed.

The liner, which left Croydon over a week ago, was on the last lap of its journey, and Mr. Bell, who was on his way to the Federated Malay States, is reported to have been the only passenger on the final stage from Cairo to Karachi.

When landing, the City of Jerusalem had flares on the wing tips, and one of the structures caught fire.

The machine immediately became a blazing inferno, and escape for some of the occupants was rendered impossible.

It was exactly five months ago yesterday that the England to India air mail was inaugurated by the Imperial Airways. The first outward flight to Karachi on April 7 was made by the City of Jerusalem, and since then an almost uninterrupted service has been maintained.

### SELL BY AIR!

For quickness and efficiency send quotations and samples by AIR. Particulars from any Post Office or direct from:-



### IMPERIAL AIRWAYS LTD.,

Airways House,  
Charles Street,  
Haymarket, S.W.1.  
Telephone:-Regent 7861.

After July-London Air Terminus,  
Victoria Station (Continental  
Departures), S.W.1.  
Telephone:-Victoria 8842.

291026 (Nierinck 291026) – Imperial Airways

“City of Alexandria” – Short S.8 Calcutta – G-EBVG – Mersa Matruh, Egypt – Europe–Asia route

Captain Stocks

“City of Athens” – Short S.8 Calcutta – G-EBVH

Captain F. J. Bailey

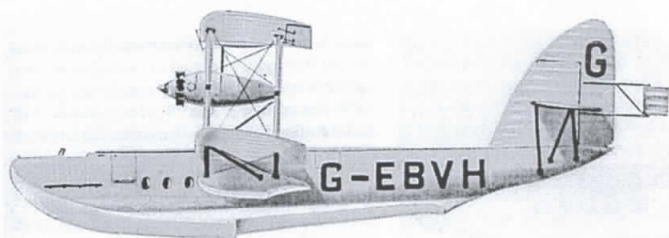
Mersa Matruh was a refueling stop on the Mediterranean. Upon landing in the harbor, a wingtip struck a buoy. The aircraft was damaged, so the passengers and mail were transferred to another aircraft, the “City of Athens”. Due to lack of wind on take-off, the City of Athens had difficulty lifting off the water. It hit a reef, ripped open the bottom of the hull, and settled on some rocks. It was also reported that instead of going into the main channel for takeoff, the pilot mistakenly went into the breakwater, where the water was too shallow and the aircraft could not clear the submerged rocks. The pilot and passengers escaped unhurt.

The mail was recovered and carried onward by the “City of Baghdad”. “The Times” of London reported that the mail arriving in Bombay on the 7<sup>th</sup> was soaked and some packets were so stuck together that they could not be sorted nor their addresses deciphered until they had been exposed to the sun for some time, after which they were covered with extra wrappers and delivered.

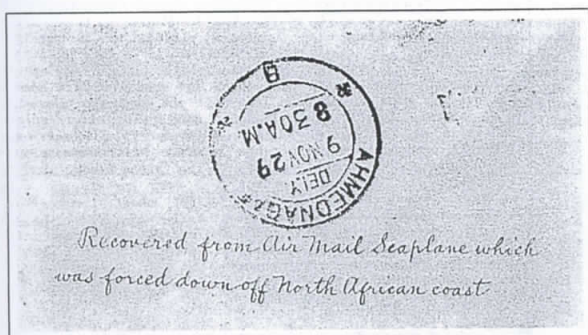
Only a few covers have been recorded from this crash



Short S.8 Calcutta – “City of Alexandria”



Short S.8 Calcutta – “City of Athens”



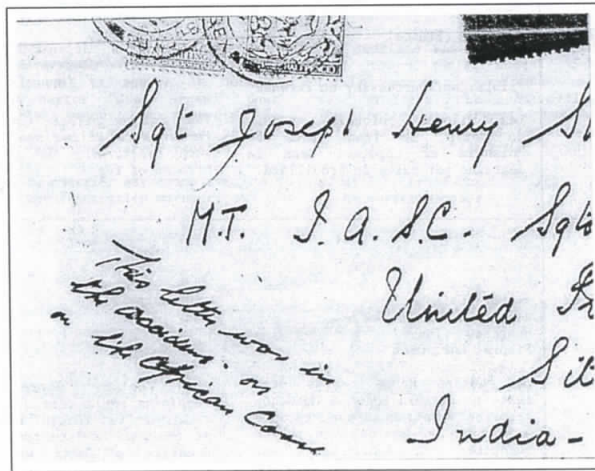
Type ‘a’ – Manuscript



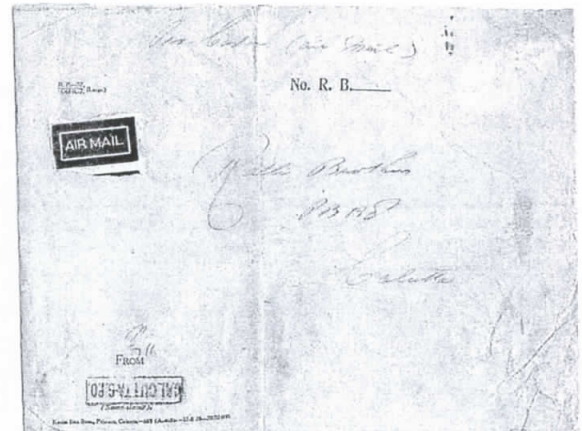
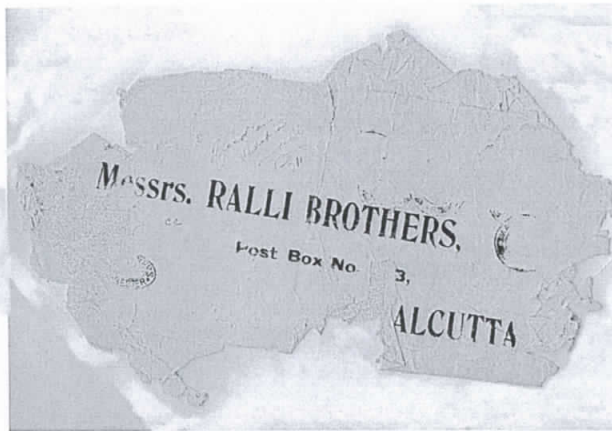
Type ‘b’ – Cachet – Purple



291026 (Nierinck 291026) – Imperial Airways – “City of Alexandria” – Short S.8 Calcutta – G-EBVG & “City of Athens” – Short S.8 Calcutta – G-EBVH – Mersa Matruh, Egypt (continued)



Type 'c' – Manuscript



Cover from England to India with Ambulance Cover – Type “d”



Postcard reproduction of a poster

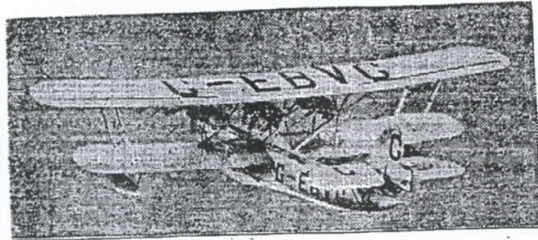
Captain L. Spence Birt, Flight Engineer F. T. Pembroke & Wireless Operator S. J. Stone

After leaving Ostia enroute to Genoa, the aircraft encountered engine problems and strong winds and was forced to land on the sea about ten miles from La Spezia. A gale was blowing and the sea was quite rough. In response to an SOS from the flying boat, an Italian ship, the “Famiglia” took the aircraft under tow with a 250-foot cable. The ship then began to make toward the shore at slow speed in order to avoid breaking the cable. The crew of the flying boat helped by keeping her engines running. But after fifteen minutes, because of the rough seas, the cable broke and the aircraft eventually capsized and sank. The three crew members and four passengers died.

Most of the mail was lost. Nierinck reports one cover, to India, backstamped November 7<sup>th</sup>. However as the flight was operating in the opposite direction, it is not likely that the cover is from this crash. Wingent reports that all the mail was lost. Proud<sup>30</sup> reports that mails from India (Karachi 20.10.29), Iraq 22.10.29, Gaza & Alexandria 23.10.29, were lost.

Collins<sup>35</sup> quotes a notice issued by the General Post Office, London, as follows:

“That the Postmaster General regrets as a result of the wreck of the City of Rome in the Gulf of Genoa last Saturday the whole of the Indian airmail which left Karachi Oct. 20, Basra and Baghdad, Oct. 22, Gaza and Alexandria Oct. 23, is believed to have been destroyed.”



SISTER SEAPLANE TO THE ILL-FATED CITY OF ROME.



CAPTAIN L. S. BIRT, pilot of the City of Rome.

### BRILLIANT YOUNG PILOT. PASSENGER AN OFFICIAL AT CROYDON.

Captain L. S. Birt, although only twenty-seven years of age, was a pilot of great experience in the handling of flying boats. Since 1924 he had been an R.A.F. flying boat instructor, and before joining Imperial Airways in March last, when the India service was started, he had been specially engaged in testing flying boats for the Air Ministry.

Mr. Turney, one of the missing passengers, was a Customs officer stationed at the Imperial Airways airport at Croydon.

He had been to Athens on holiday and was returning to resume work at the airport, where he had been stationed for ten years. Mr. Turney was well known among all the officials at Croydon, and was very popular.

26 OCTOBER, 1929.

### ROMANCE OF DEAD PILOT.

TO HAVE BEEN MARRIED IN NEW YEAR.

### SEAPLANE VICTIMS.

The following are the names and addresses of the crew and passengers who perished in the wreck of the seaplane City of Rome—

Captain L. S. Birt, the pilot, Rosemeath, Canterbury-road, Herno Bay.

Flight Engineer F. T. Pembroke, Holly Cottage, Ferndown, Bournemouth.

Wireless Officer S. J. Stone, who lived with his wife at Genoa.

Mr. H. Turney, Westow, Gleneldon-road, Streatham.

Mr. Ritchie, Brookside, Uplime, Lyme Regis.

Mr. H. K. Robinson, Forest Officer in the Punjab, Rawal Pindi, India.

Miss M. Bromford, Darjeeling, India.

It is stated that Mr. Ritchie was a member of the Imperial Airways staff who was coming home, his time having expired.

Captain Birt, the pilot, was to have been married in the New Year to Miss Vera Abrams, daughter of Lieutenant Abrams, R.N., of Portsmouth.

### FORESTRY OFFICER.

Mr. Henry King Robinson, one of the passengers, was an Indian forestry officer who was in the Indian Civil Service before the war. He resigned through severe fever, and went to Canada as forestry officer for the Dominion Government.

On the outbreak of war he enlisted and came to France with the first Jamaican forces as a gunner, and saw service with them throughout the war.

He then returned to Canada, and a few years afterwards his health was sufficiently good to enable him to resume his appointment in the Indian forestry service.

He married in Canada Miss Symes, a member of an old Crediton (Devon) family; and had two children. He was returning on leave from India to visit his wife and children.

Miss Bromford was a sister of Lieutenant Colonel Bromford of the Medical College Hospital, Calcutta. She was an experienced nurse, and was returning from a holiday which she had spent with her parents, who live at Abbotsbad. They were formerly missionaries in India, but have now retired.

The personal effects of Captain Woodbridge, pilot of the Indian mail airplane City of Jerusalem, which crashed and was burned at Jask, Persia, on September 6, were packed in the City of Rome.

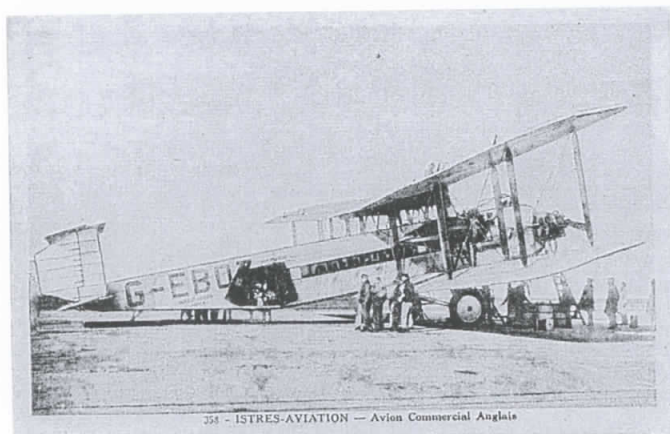
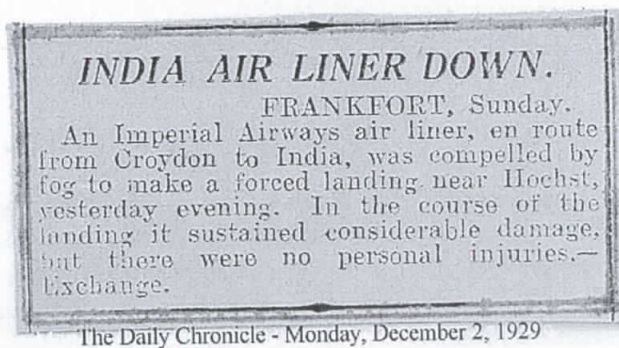


291201 (Nierinck 291201) – Imperial Airways – “City of Wellington” – Armstrong Whitworth A.W. Argosy I – G-EBOZ – Hochst, Germany – Great Britain–India route

Captain J.S. Sheppard

The aircraft left Croydon on 30 November. Due to fog, it made a forced landing in a field near Hochst (near Frankfurt), struck an obstacle and badly damaged the under-carriage. The 38 bags of mail (about 40,000 letters) was recovered and sent on by train to Athens, then onward by air, arriving at Karachi on 10 December. There were no passengers onboard and the crew members were not injured. The mail was undamaged and thus no special markings were applied.

One cover is known, as shown



Armstrong Whitworth A.W. Argosy I – “City of Wellington”



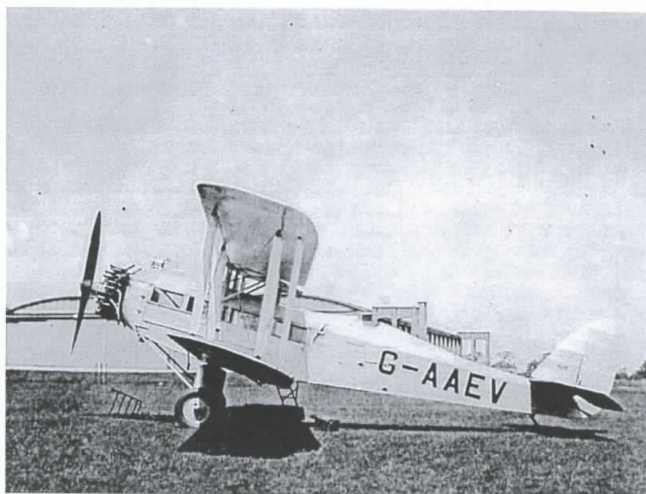
Page From Airmail Etiquette Booklet

300119 – Imperial Airways – “Youth of Britain” – De Havilland DH61 Giant Moth – G-AAEV – Broken Hill, Northern Rhodesia

Captain Charles F. Wolley Dod

When landing, the aircraft turned over and broke up. The pilot escaped unhurt, but a passenger and two mechanics, who were onboard, were slightly injured.

No other details are available, and no mail is known.



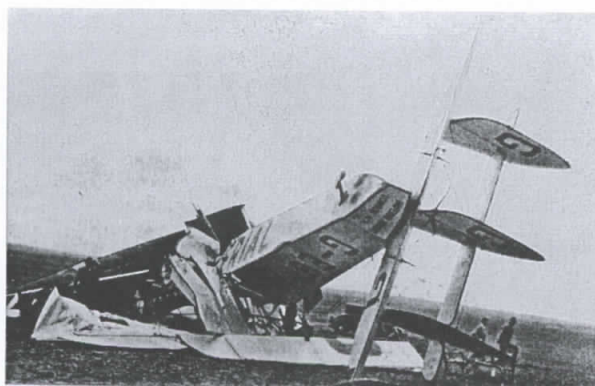
**De Havilland DH61 Giant Moth – “Youth of Britain”**

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300214 (Nierinck 300215) – Imperial Airways “City of Teheran” – De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-EBNA – Gaza, Palestine – Europe-India route

Captain S. J. Wheeler, Wireless Operators Ellis & Mick Smart

The aircraft had engine trouble and had to turn back. It had to make a forced landing after dark. The pilot misjudged his altitude and the aircraft struck a slightly raised mound of earth 119 yards outside the aerodrome boundary, and the aircraft was damaged beyond repair. The pilot and passengers escaped unhurt. No mail is known.



**De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – “City of Teheran”**



300729 – Imperial Airways – “City of Basra” – De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-AAJH – near Heliopolis, Egypt

Roger P. Mollard & Wireless Operator Mr. Hatchett

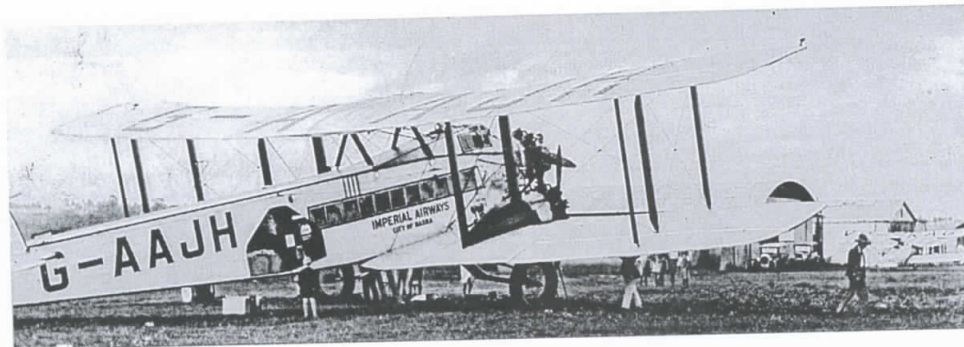
The following is from “Lloyd’s Weekly Casualty Reports”, 22 August 1930 edition:

“Imperial Airways Aeroplane City of Basra, in service from Cairo to India, left Heliopolis Aerodrome at 7:15 a.m. on July 29 with cargo and mail. Approximately 7 minutes from Heliopolis the starboard engine failed and the pilot decided to return to the aerodrome, but realizing that he could not reach the aerodrome on two engines, decided to land in the desert. On landing 10 miles from the aerodrome, east of Almaza, the Aeroplane crashed. The cargo and mail were all safe and the crew were not injured. The machine was dismantled and removed from the desert to the Imperial Airways’ aerodrome at Heliopolis.”

Investigation indicated three possible reasons for the crash:

- (a) The accident was due to the pilot's error of judgement when he was attempting to execute a forced landing under extremely difficult circumstances.
- (b) The aircraft was forced to descend owing to a starboard engine defect which could not be determined after the accident.
- (c) Under the prevailing conditions it is reasonable to assume that the pilot could not fly on two engines without losing height.

No mail is known in collectors’ hands.



De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – “City of Basra”

301011 – Imperial Airways “City of Cairo” – De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-EBMW – in desert near Baghdad, Iraq

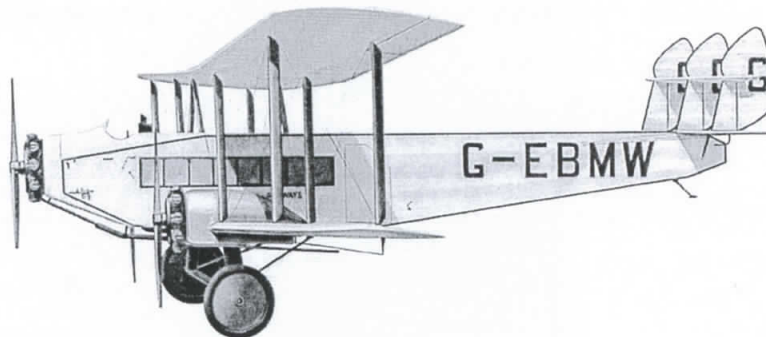
Pilot unknown

The following is from “Lloyd’s Weekly Casualty Reports” of 17 October 1930:

“Baghdad, Oct. 13 – The Indian Air Mail liner, which left here last Friday (Oct. 10) made a forced landing in the desert and a second machine, dispatched to its assistance, failed to locate it and was also obliged to come down away from its base. R.A.F. aeroplanes, which were sent to search for the missing machines during the weekend, finally located them both and enabled the necessary repairs to be effected. The mails have been forwarded to Cairo. – Reuter.”

Wingent<sup>11</sup> advises that Lloyd’s List reported that departure from Baghdad was at 0232 on October 11<sup>th</sup>.

No mail is known from this mishap.



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In *Imperial Airways and the First British Airlines 1919–40*, the author A.S. Jackson<sup>9</sup>, in describing the difficulties of flying in desert regions East of Cairo, quotes the following:

Someone whose only identification is the letters J.O.P.E. wrote a ballad about this route. He described the sight of the blackened wreckage of an aircraft whose pilot had lost his way in bad weather. The last verse went as follows:

We have placed at your disposal all the acts we learnt in war,  
And for nine pence you can purchase if you’re wise,  
The same efficient service of the man who yesterday  
Chased the black-crossed birds of war from out your skies.  
The letters that they carry from Cairo to the East  
Bear little slips of paper coloured blue,  
And the loss of crew and pilot doesn’t matter in the least  
If the mail bags see the desert journey through.



Page from Airmail Etiquette Booklet

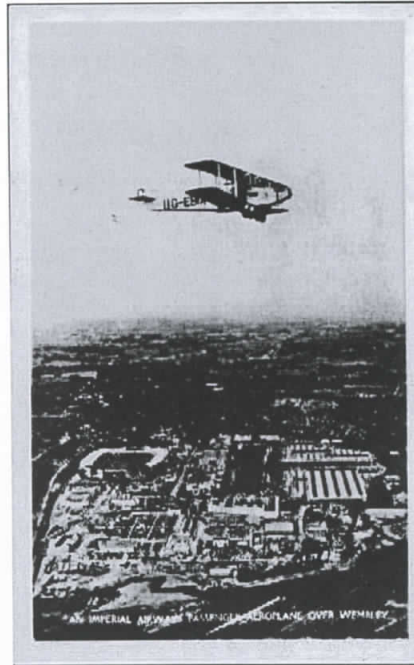


301030 (Nierinck 301030) – Imperial Airways – “City of Washington” – Handley Page W.8 Hamilton – G-EBIX – Neufchatel, France

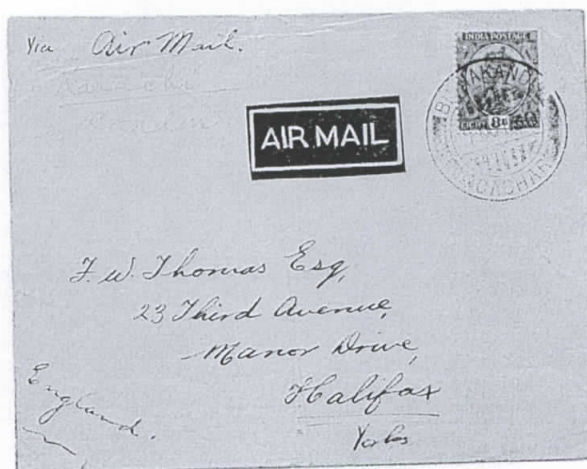
Captain John Joseph “Paddy” Flynn, Engineer A. C. James & Flight Engineer F. H. Mason

One of the engines stopped, and the pilot tried to find a place to land. He encountered fog, the aircraft was about 100 feet above the ground, it was caught by a gust of wind and crashed into a hillside. The aircraft was completely destroyed, the Captain was critically injured and had to have a leg amputated. Flight Engineer Mason and three passengers were killed, and one passenger was injured.

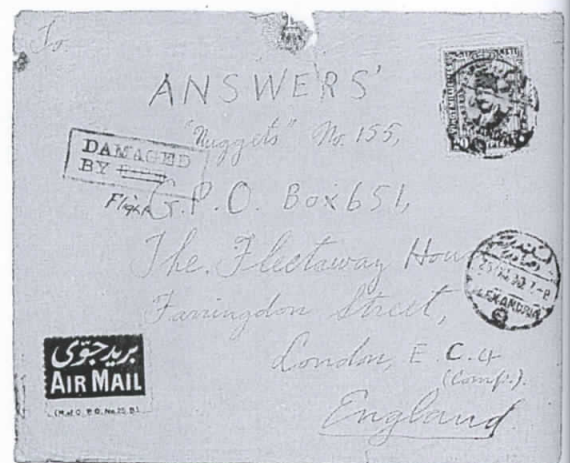
Only a few covers are known from this crash, and cachets were not applied to most of the recovered covers. One cover has been recorded with a double line “DAMAGED/BY FIRE” with the word “FIRE” crossed out, as shown.



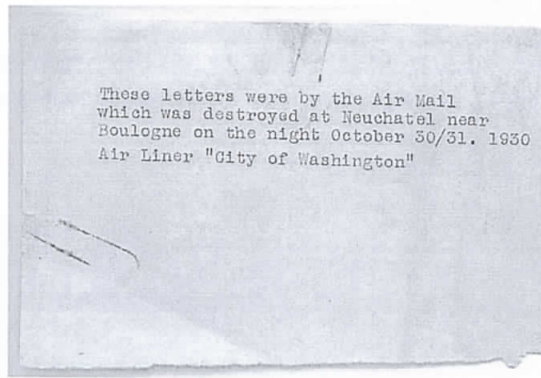
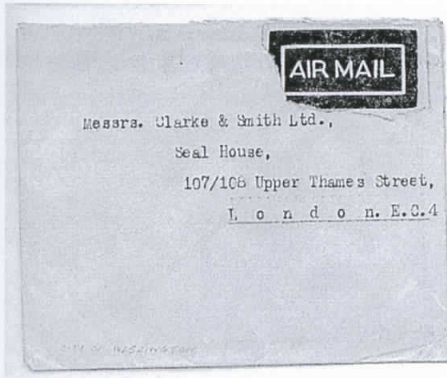
Handley Page W.8 Hamilton – G-EBIX – “City of Washington”



Type ‘a’ – No Cachet



Type ‘b’ Cachet - Purple



**Typed Explanation Which Accompanied This Cover, along with four similar covers addressed to the same company – Type ‘c’ - Black**

**“FLYING IS ENDED FOR ME.”**  
**PILOT’S WISTFUL REMARK AFTER LOSING A LEG.**  
**CRASH CAUSE THEORY.**  
**WING TIP HIT GROUND, THEN NOSE DIVE.**

**BOULOGNE, Friday.**  
 THE three men injured in the Imperial Airways air liner City of Washington are resting as comfortably as can be expected, it was stated to-day at the hospital in Boulogne.

The air-liner (as reported in last night’s “Evening Standard”) crashed at Neufchatel, between Le Touquet and Boulogne. Three of the occupants were killed and the other three were injured.

The dead are: Mr. James Street (an American passenger), aged 42, of Mount Pleasant-avenue, Newark, New Jersey; Mr. A. C. James, aged 28, ground staff engineer of Imperial Airways, of Forest-avenue, Fishponds, Bristol; and Mr. F. H. Mason, aged 29 (mechanic of the plane), of Croydon and Shurdington-road, Cheltenham.

The injured are:  
 Capt. John Joseph Flynn, the pilot, of



**MR. F. B. TOMKINS.**  
 Waddon Park-avenue, Croydon. Both his legs were fractured, and the left leg had to be amputated. It was stated to-day that his general condition was better.

Mr. F. B. Tomkins, a passenger, employed by A. V. Roe and Co. Ltd., airplane-makers, of Manchester, and who lives at Cliffield, Cheshire. He had both legs fractured, and his left leg was amputated. To-day it was stated that he was better.

Mr. Harry Bolsover, who lives in Manchester, and is also employed by A. V. Roe and Co., is stated to be in a serious condition. He had an arm and a leg broken.

The pilot, Mr. Flynn, is resting more easily in the bright little room, looking out on to some gardens, where he was taken when brought to the nursing home, and it is stated that he has had a good night. He gave way to a moment of depression, quickly mastered, when he learned that it had been necessary to amputate his left leg.

“Then flying is finished for me,” he said wistfully.

Mr. Tomkins, whose courageous efforts to bring help to his companions left him in such a state of exhaustion, and who has also lost a leg, is going on as well as can be expected, and it is thought that of the three he will be the first to recover.

Mr. Bolsover is in a very weak condition. The greatest care will be needed, and the doctor in attendance does not conceal his anxiety.

**OFFICIAL STATEMENT.**  
 An official statement issued at Boulogne by the Special Police Commissariat says that the indirect cause of the disaster was the failure of one of the engines, which forced the pilot to seek a landing-place. The right wing struck the ground and caused the plane to veer round and plunge head foremost into the earth.

The Central News says that officials of Imperial Airways have arrived from England to investigate the accident, and are working in collaboration with the gendarmes.

The machine has been badly wrecked, and a portion of the fuselage is the only part intact.

The City of Washington had been a reserve plane for the Paris-service. It was one of the fastest planes in commission, and was a favourite with pilots. It was built about seven years ago, with three engines—one in the nose—but it had recently undergone reconstruction, during which the engine in the nose was removed.

**HEROIC PASSENGER.**  
 All the people who were called to the scene of the crash are full of admiration for the heroism of Mr. Tomkins, who crawled nearly a mile with a broken leg across fields to obtain assistance for his companions. The doctor who amputated the leg says that “Mr. Tomkins sacrificed his leg for the sake of his comrades. He must have fainted on the way to obtain help, and he was barely conscious when he gasped out the news of the disaster.”

A farm servant, who was the first to see Mr. Tomkins crawling along the ground, said that he suddenly rolled over, and seemed to be dead. He spoke a few words, and then villagers and gendarmes rushed to the spot indicated, and carried the injured and dead into the village.

A farmer and his son who had been working in a field near where the airplane crashed, telephoned to Boulogne for assistance, and ambulances began to arrive shortly afterwards.

For a long time the mother of Mr. James, the ground engineer, refused to believe that her son had been killed. There came the official confirmation of the police message, and Mrs. James collapsed. Mr. James was returning from Egypt to marry a Bristol girl who was awaiting him at Croydon.

The girl, Miss Edith Breedy, of Marlton-road, St. George, Bristol, had come to London specially to greet him. They had known each other since childhood.

Overwhelmed with grief, Miss Breedy is now with friends of Mr. James at Ealing, W.

Mr. Philip James, an elder brother, said to-day that he had a strange fear all day yesterday of a disaster in the air, and he had a dread that he would never see his brother alive again.

**THREE KILLED**  
**IN**  
**AIR LINER CRASH**  
**FOG DISASTER TO**  
**ENGLISH PLANE**  
**GRAVE CONDITION OF**  
**SURVIVORS**  
**PASSENGER’S LONG**  
**CRAWL FOR AID**

The Imperial Airways liner, City of Washington, bound from Paris to London, crashed to the south of Boulogne at one o’clock yesterday afternoon during a fog.

Three persons were killed and three injured. Their names are:

**DEAD:**  
 Mr. Street, an American, secretary of the G. W. Cairnrick Co., of 24, Mount Pleasant Avenue, Newark, N.J.  
 Mr. A. C. James, a ground engineer of Imperial Airways, of 40, Forest-avenue, Fishponds, Bristol, who was coming home on leave.  
 Mr. F. H. Mason, the mechanic, whose home address is 2, Roslyn-villas, Cheltenham.

**INJURED:**  
 Mr. H. Bolsover, of Manchester.  
 Mr. F. J. Tompkins, of Manchester.  
 Mr. J. J. Flynn, of Croydon, the pilot.

The survivors are now in hospital at Boulogne. They are unconscious, and their condition is said to be very serious.

One of the passengers, whose leg was injured, crawled for about a mile to summon help, but collapsed by the roadside. As a result of his heroism his leg had to be amputated.

The crash is said to have been due to the fact that one of the engines failed. The pilot went on slowly in the dense fog with the other engine searching for a suitable spot where he could land.

Then unfortunately a sudden gust caught the plane and drove it down on to a small hill. The liner was wrecked, but did not catch fire. A watch found in the debris had stopped at 12.30.

Imperial Airways, in a statement issued last evening, says:  
 A consulting engineer and officials of the company have left for the scene of the accident.



310318 (Nierinck 310318) – Imperial Airways – “City of Khartoum” Short S.8 Calcutta – G-AASJ – between Juba and Khartoum

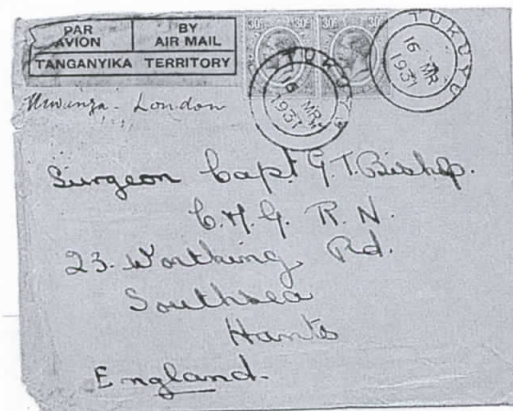
Captain unknown

On a first flight, the plane crashed. Mail was recovered and it shows traces of water damage. Also listed by Wingent<sup>10</sup> as a crash on the 19<sup>th</sup>, but there was no delay to the mail.

Two covers are known, as shown.



Short S.8 Calcutta – G-AASJ



As the mail was not damaged, no cachets were applied

310328 – Imperial Airways – “City of Birmingham” – Armstrong Whitworth A.W. Argosy I – G-EBLO  
– Khartoum, Sudan

Captain unknown

Colley <sup>17</sup> reported that on the fourth southbound flight, the aircraft damaged its undercarriage at Khartoum, involving a delay of three days. The date is confirmed by the “East African Standard”.

No mail is known.



Armstrong Whitworth A.W. Argosy I – “City of Birmingham”

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Imperial Airways Brochure



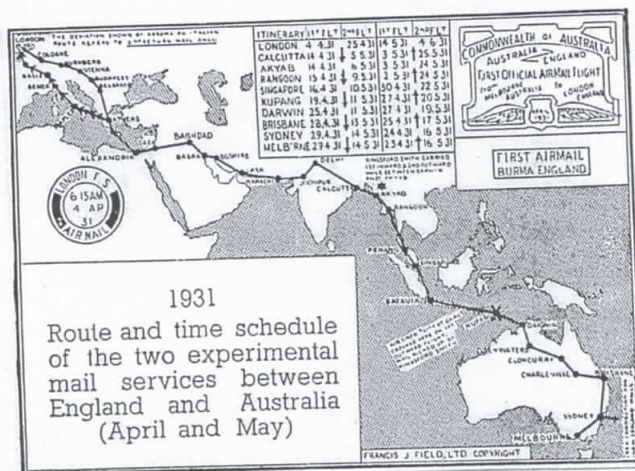
310419 (Nierinck 310419) – Imperial Airways – “City of Cairo” – De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-EBMW – Koepang, Netherlands East Indies

Captain H.W.C. “Jimmy” Alger, First Officer Roger P. Mollard, Wireless Operator K. Sang & Engineer W. L. Garner

The aircraft was on the first of two experimental extension flights by Imperial from Karachi to Australia. Shortly after leaving Batavia, the pilots encountered extremely strong headwinds, which reduced their ground speed to something like 70 mph. This created an acute fuel shortage and one of the pilots discovered an oil leak. This made a landing imperative and urgent. Near Koepang, on Timor Island, they saw what they thought was a smooth grassy area—a good place for an emergency landing—and prepared to put the aircraft down. Too late on the approach, they discovered that the grassy area was, in reality, rough ground strewn with boulders, concealed by five-foot high tiger grass. The aircraft was a write-off, smashed to pieces by the rocks. Apart from shock and a few bruises, no one was injured and the mail was undamaged.

The mailbags were placed in safe keeping with the Dutch postal officials. Upon hearing of the crash, Imperial’s Headquarters in London chartered Australian National Airways to pick up the mail and the crew and fly them to Darwin. The well known pilots Charles Kingsford-Smith and G.U. “Scotty” Allan flew up from Australia in the “Southern Cross”, picked up the mail and First Officer Mollard, and took them to Darwin, Australia, where the mail was handed over to Qantas for the rest of the trip to Brisbane, Sydney & Melbourne.

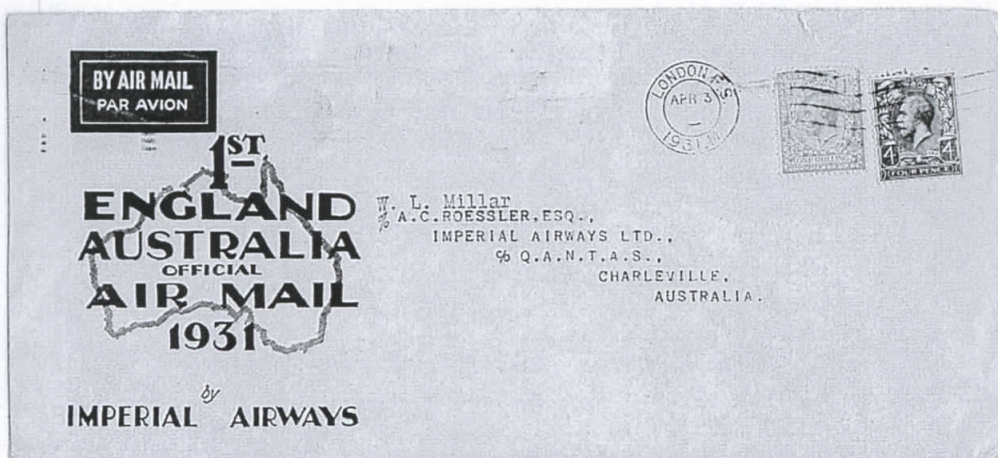
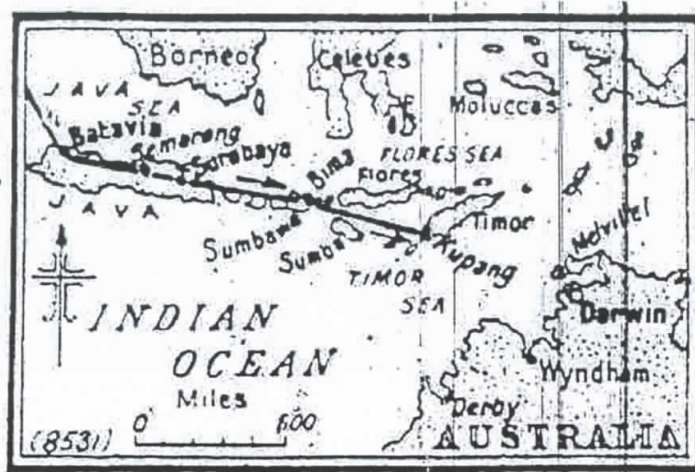
The aircraft was carrying about 15,000 pieces of mail from Europe, 500 from Burma, 400 from Singapore, and approximately 2,000 pieces which had been picked up at other intermediate stops.



Special Air Mail Envelopes to Promote the England-Australia-England Service



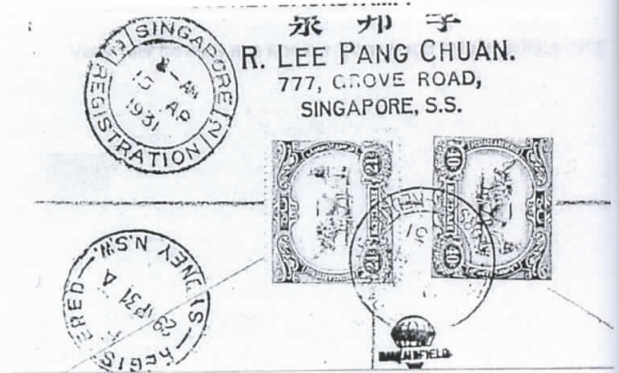
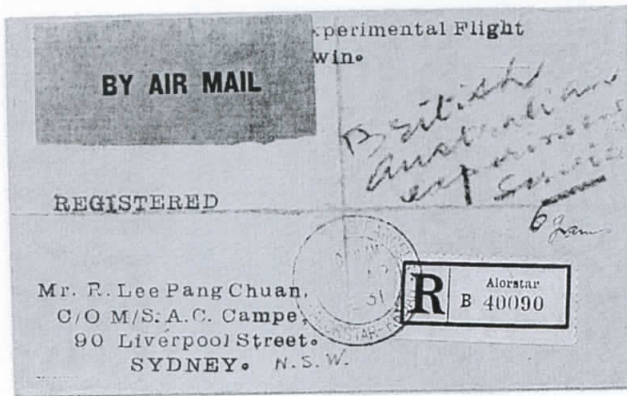
The air liner City of Cairo after it had crashed at Kupang, Timor, when carrying the first air mail from England to Australia. Nobody was hurt.



Official Imperial Airways Cover From England to Australia – Type ‘a’

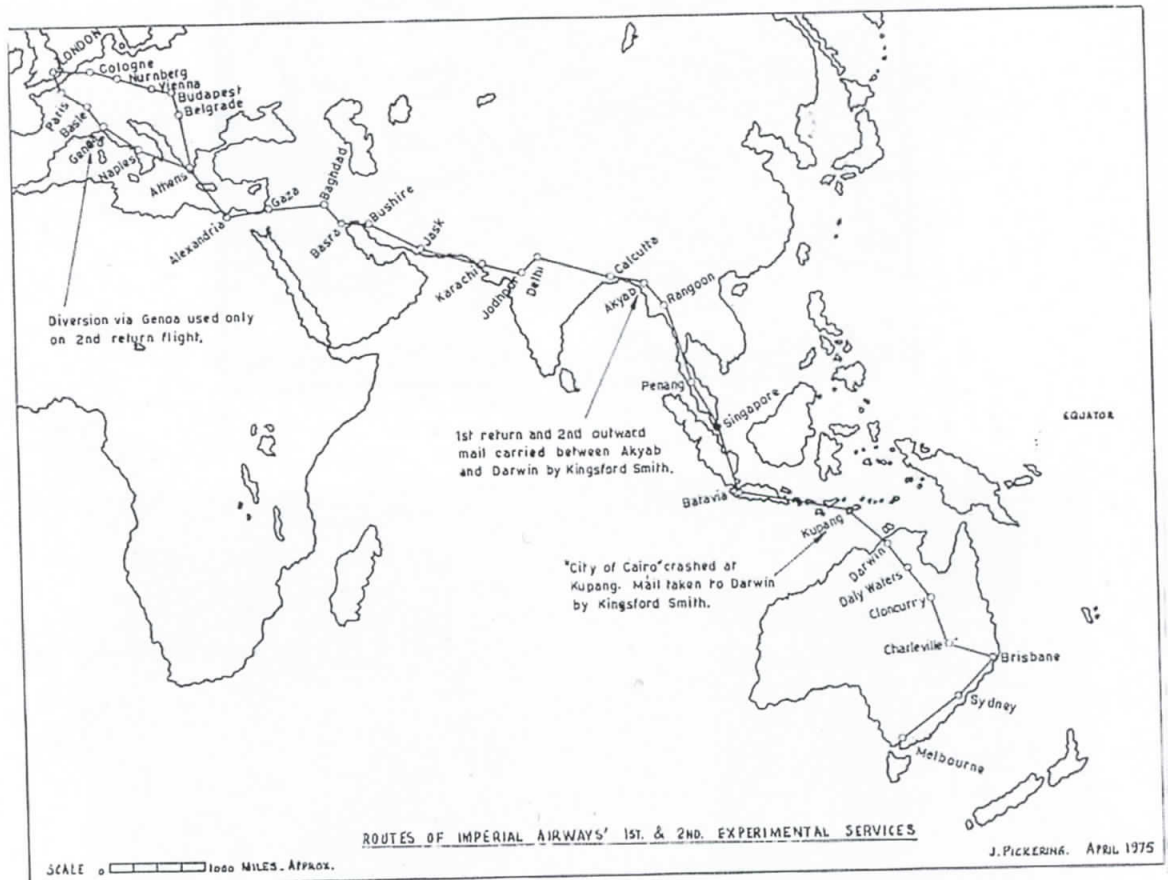


310419 (Nierinck 310419) – Imperial Airways – “City of Cairo” – De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-EBMW – Koepang, Netherlands East Indies (continued)



Cover From Intermediate Leg – Alorstar to Sydney

Intermediate Legs – Type ‘b’



Routes of 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Experimental Services from England to Australia

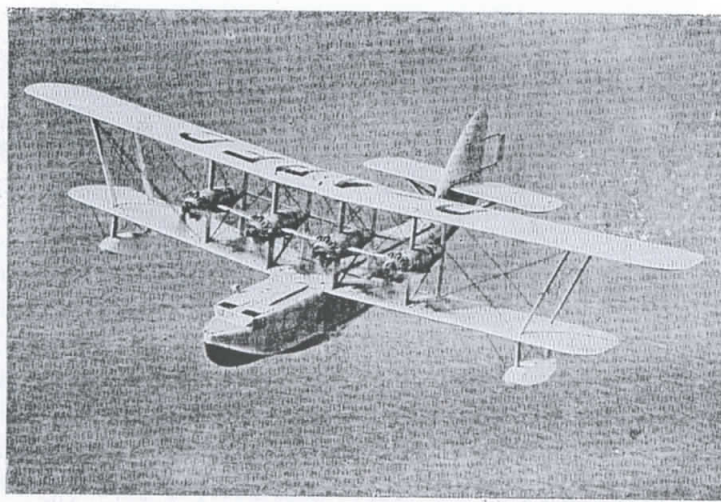
310524 (Nierinck 310524) – Imperial Airways – “Satyrus” – Short S.17 Kent Scipio Class – G-ABFC – Candia, Crete, Greece

Captain Stocks

The Imperial flying boat “Satyrus”, made a forced landing at Candia and damaged a wingtip float. A passenger said “We were due to land at Candia and we came down just outside the harbour. The sea was very rough, and we bumped three times on the waves, one of the wing floats being damaged. The pilot immediately throttled up, and we flew round to Mirabella, and there we made a perfect landing.” “Scipio” carried the mail on to Corfu on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

After this incident, the landing place was moved to Mirabella Bay.

Some authors have incorrectly attributed this incident to “Scipio”, which is understandable because “Scipio” was the rescue aircraft and “Satyrus” was a “Scipio Class” aircraft. Very few covers have been recorded, one of which is shown.



Short S.17 Kent Scipio Class – G-ABFC – “Satyrus”



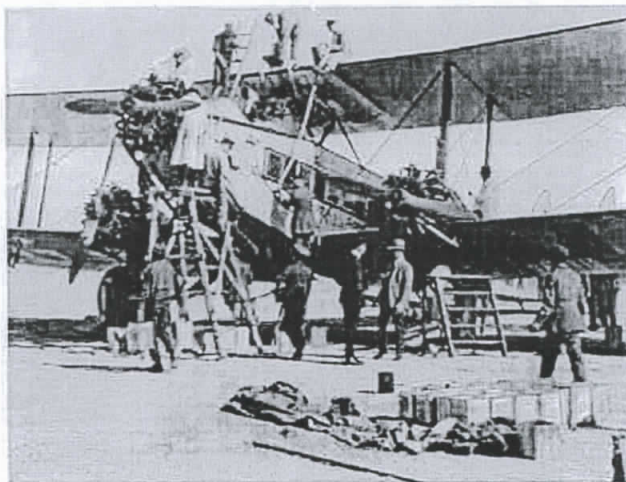


310610 – Imperial Airways – “City of Delhi” – De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-EBMX – Bushire, Persia – Great Britain-India route

Captain Roger P. Mollard

When flying between Lingeh and Bushire, engine failure caused the Captain to make an emergency landing on a salt pan some twelve miles from Lingeh. Probably because of iron in the hills around them, they were unable to contact Lingeh by radio. The Captain left the co-pilot in charge and walked for five hours to Lingeh to get help. The Imperial Airways agent brought bedding, food and drinks back to the aircraft on donkeys. The next day, the engine was repaired and the aircraft flew on the Basra.

No mail is known in collectors' hands.



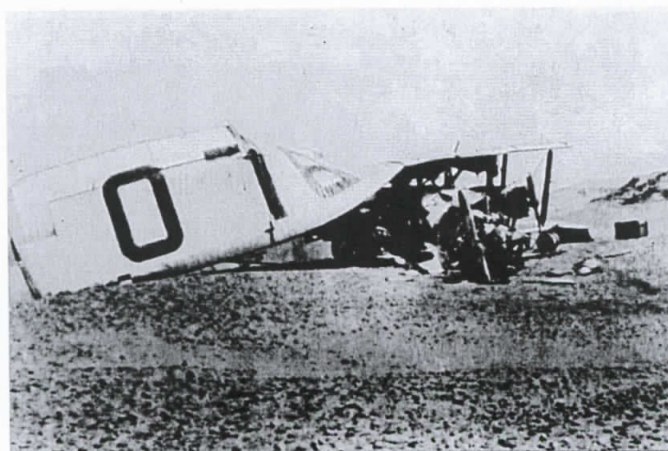
**De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-EBMX – “City of Delhi”**

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310616 (Nierinck 310616) – Imperial Airways – “City of Birmingham” – Armstrong Whitworth A.W. Argosy I – G-EBLO – Aswan, Egypt

Captain R. O. O “Root” Taylor & Wireless Operator Phillpot

The aircraft descended for landing too quickly and hit a hill, overturned and was destroyed. The mail was recovered, but no covers are known in collectors' hands.

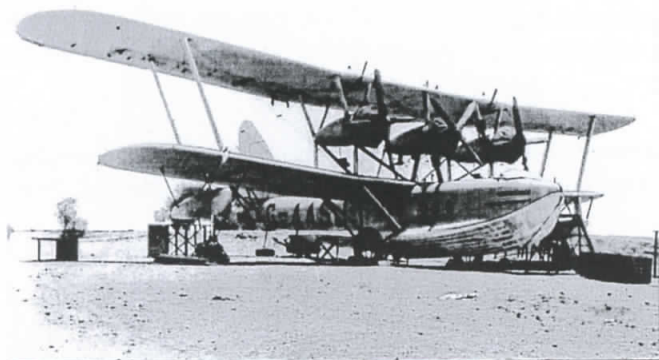


**Armstrong Whitworth A.W. Argosy I – “City of Birmingham”**

310704 (Nierinck 310704) – Imperial Airways – “City of Khartoum” – Short S.8 Calcutta – G-AASJ – Kibanga Port, Uganda

Captain unknown

Enroute to Kisumu, the plane made a forced landing at Kibanga Port, 15 miles from Entebbe. The mail was carried onward by road to Kisumu and it was flown on a charter flight by Wilson Airways to Nairobi. Mail can be recognized by a Kisumu transit postmark and a Nairobi receipt postmark on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July. According to Colley<sup>17</sup>, surviving examples are scarce.

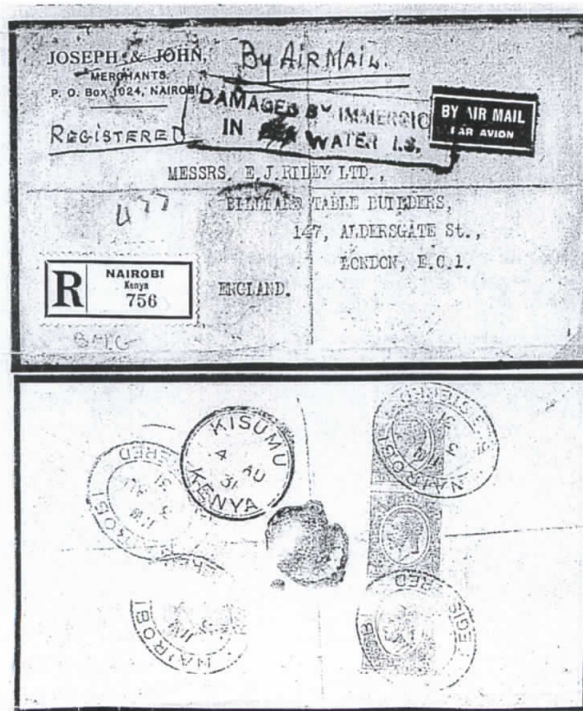


Short S.8 Calcutta – G-AASJ – “City of Khartoum”

310804 – Imperial Airways – Aircraft unknown – Somewhere near Kisumu, Kenya – Africa-Great Britain route

Captain unknown

A cover from Nairobi, Kenya to London, as shown below, has water damage and received the damage cachet at the London Post Office. However, there is no record of a crash or incident on or around this date. Peter Wingent and Bill Colley suggest that one of the mail bags may have fallen into the water at one of the stops.



Type “a” Cachet – Black



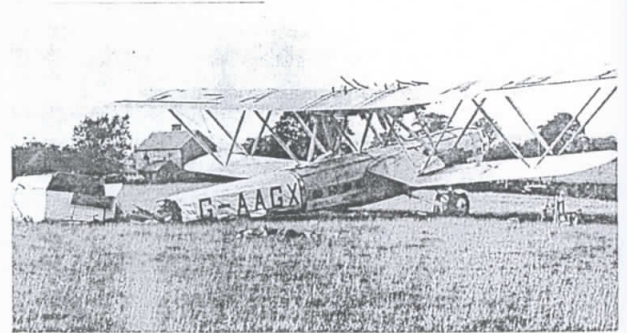
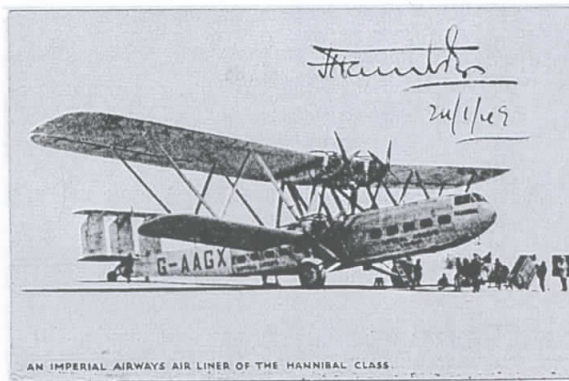
310808 (Nierinck 310808) – Imperial Airways – “Hannibal” – Handley Page HP42 – G-AAGX – Tudeley, near Tonbridge, Great Britain – London-Paris route

Captain S.A. Freddy Dismore, First Officer E.R.B. White

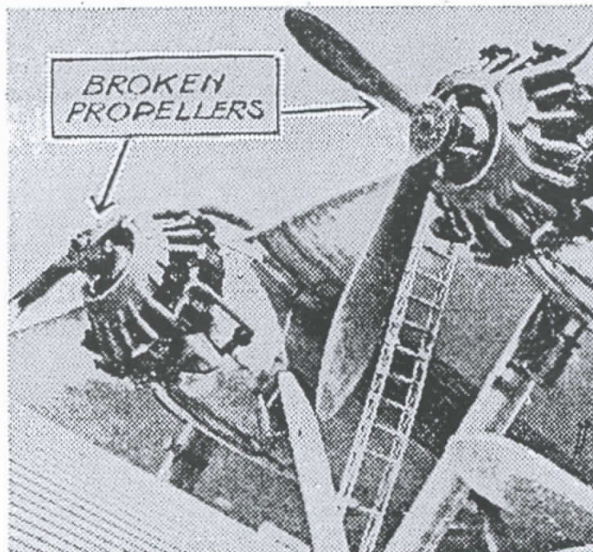
The aircraft was enroute to Paris, when a broken cowling fastener hit a propeller, which in turn broke two others. The pilot shut off all the engines and began to glide down to the ground. He had to make a small gliding turn in order to avoid going too low over a cottage, and he attempted to land in a small field. The lower wing struck a telegraph pole at the side of the road, it broke off and was carried along into the field. In spite of the circumstances, the pilot made a masterly forced landing. As the aircraft ran along the ground, the tail struck a tree stump, and the rear part of the fuselage was ripped away. The rudder and elevators were left fifty feet behind, but the aircraft was brought to rest in a very short space in a meadow. The eighteen passengers, unaware of the severe damage that had been done to their vehicle, stepped out uninjured.

The aircraft was later dismantled and transported back to Croydon for repair and rebuilding on lorries specially constructed by Handley Page for carrying large wing structures.

No mail is known in collectors' hands.



Handley Page HP42 – “Hannibal”



Captain S.A. Freddy Dismore

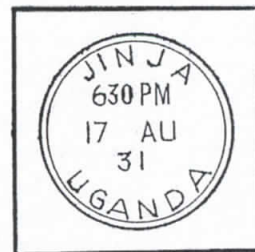
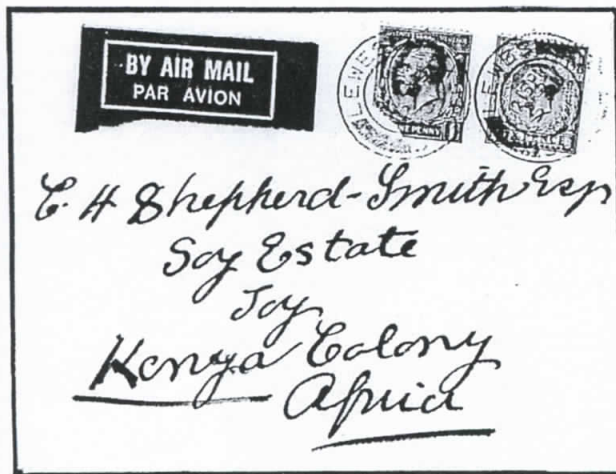
310816 (Nierinck 310816) – Imperial Airways – “City of Alexandria” – Short S.8 Calcutta – G-EBVG – Jinja, Uganda

Pilot unknown

Enroute from Great Britain to South Africa, the plane encountered engine trouble and made a forced landing at Jinja and was unable to continue. Mail was given to the Jinja Post Office, where it was backstamped 17.8.31, and then forwarded by train.



Short S.8 Calcutta – “City of Alexandria”



The Only Recorded Cover from This Crash



310822 – Imperial Airways – “City of Karachi” – De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-AARY – near Linge, Persia – Egypt-India route

Captain Roger P. Mollard

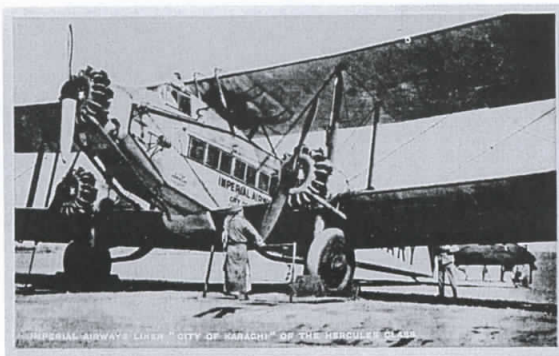
According to Wingent <sup>11</sup>, “Lloyd’s Weekly Casualty Reports” of 28 August reported:

Karachi, Aug. 22 – The City of Karachi has been forced to land near Linge, on the Persian Gulf, 100 miles west of Bandar Abbas. All onboard are safe.

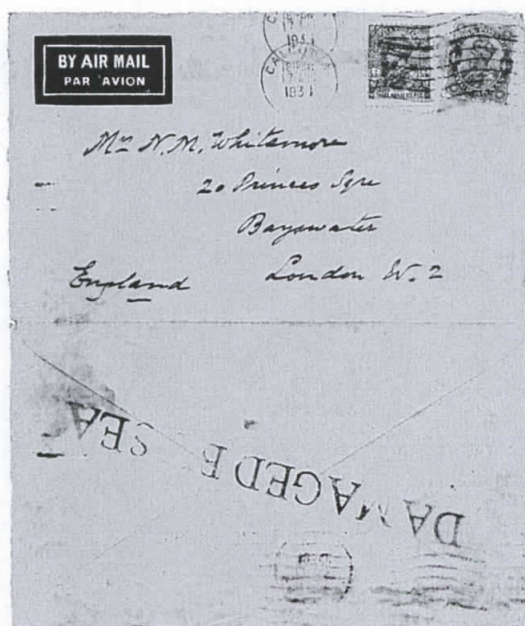
London, Aug. 26 – The air liner City of Baghdad took the passengers and mails of the air liner City of Karachi, which made a forced landing, owing to engine trouble, at Linge on Aug. 22, and proceeded to Cairo. The City of Karachi has proceeded to Basra.

Captain Mollard left the other Captain and the passengers and walked for five hours to Linge to obtain help. After dark, he returned with the Imperial agent and bedding and food being carried on donkeys. The passengers spent the night beneath the wings of the aircraft. The next day, the engine was repaired and the aircraft was flown off the salt pan and continued to Basra.

One cover is known from Calcutta, India to London, as shown, which is more than likely from this incident.



De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-AARY – “City of Karachi”

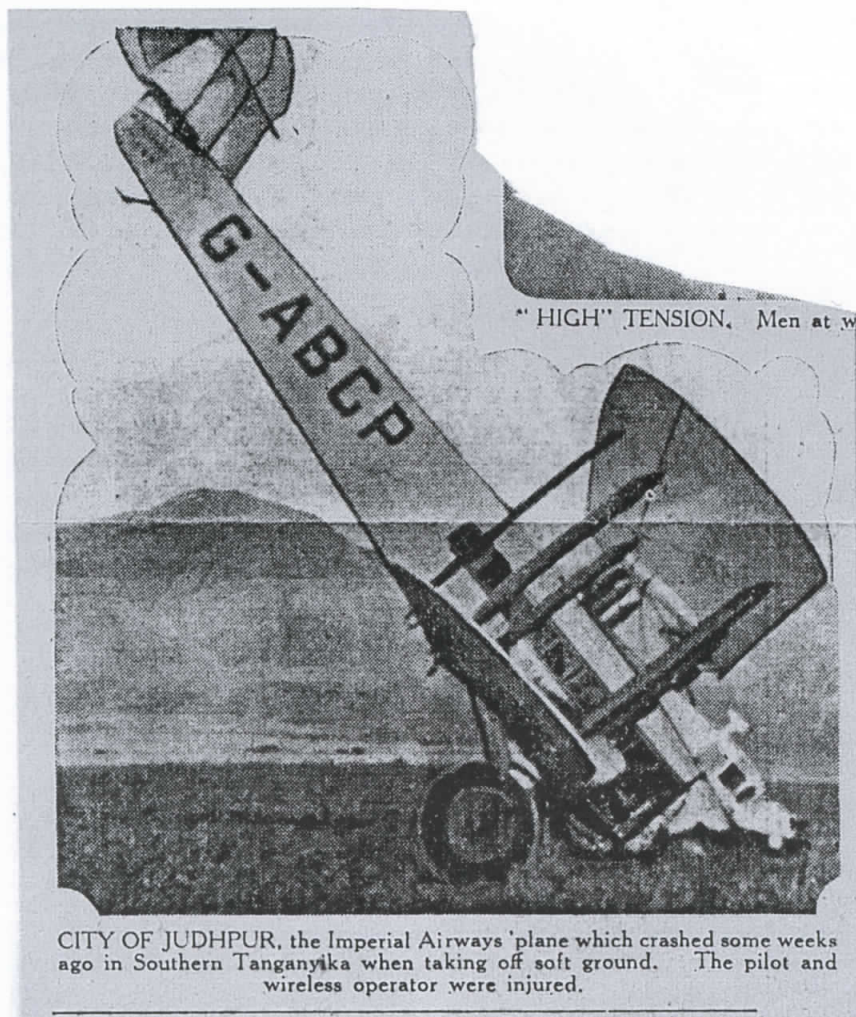


Type “a” Cachet - Violet

320106 – Imperial Airways – “City of Jodhpur” – De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-ABCP – Mbeya, Tanganyika

Captain J. B. Donald & Wireless Operator Mr. Andrews

The pilots were unaccustomed to the take-off altitude of 6,000 feet above sea level, and had inadequate airspeed for liftoff. The aircraft ended up on its nose and was damaged, but no other details are known. No mail is known.



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Bookings for passengers to Palestine, Iraq, Persia and India, full particulars from any Travel Agency or from Imperial Airways, Airway Terminus, Victoria, S.W.1.  
Telephone: VICTORIA 2111 (open day and night)

**BY IMPERIAL AIRWAYS**

**TO CAPE TOWN  
IN 12 DAYS  
By IMPERIAL AIRWAYS**  
Air Mail Leaves London and Cape Town Every Wednesday  
Bookings for passengers to Egypt, Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, Uganda, Kenya Colony, Tanganyika Territory, Northern and Southern Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa, and full particulars of this service from any Travel Agency or from  
**IMPERIAL AIRWAYS**  
Airway Terminus, Victoria Station, S.W.1  
Telephone: VICTORIA 2111 (open day & night)

Pages From Airmail Etiquette Booklets



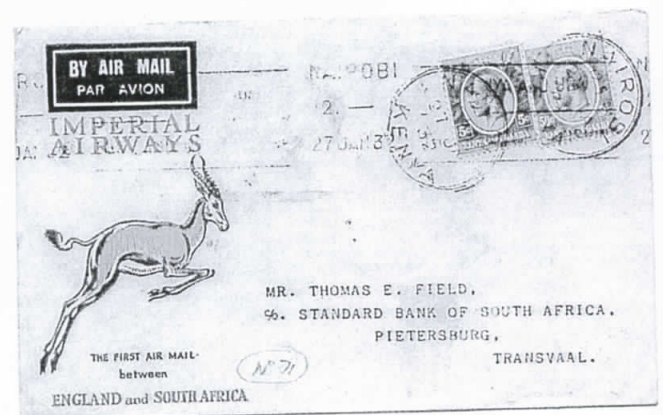
320129A (Nierinck 320129A) – Imperial Airways – “City of Baghdad” – De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-EBMY – Mbeya, Tanganyika – Great Britain-South Africa route

Captain J. S. Sheppard

The aircraft was operating the first regular southbound service from Great Britain to South Africa. Due to poor radio communications, the pilot was not aware that the airfield at Mbeya was very soggy due to heavy rain. The aircraft landed but was not able to take off again with the full load. The passengers and mail were taken by car to Mbalezi, which was about 10 miles away. The aircraft was ferried to Mbalezi and it picked up the passengers and mail. The weather got steadily worse (it was a so-called Black Rhodesian Storm) and an attempt to land at Mpika, Northern Rhodesia was not possible. The aircraft diverted to Lake Shiwa Ngandu, 50 miles away, where a forced landing was made on the front lawn of the country manor of Stewart Gore-Brown, a retired British officer. On the next day, it was necessary to use native labor to cut a runway to allow take-off. The aircraft was able to take-off at 10:00 a.m. on the 30<sup>th</sup> and it landed at Broken Hill. As the “City of Baghdad” was used to search for the lost “City of Delhi”, the mail was carried onward by a Puss Moth of Rhodesian Aviation Co., Ltd., and arrived in Salisbury on the 31<sup>st</sup>. The covers have the special first flight cachets, and some of them were special Imperial Airways envelopes. However, no delay markings were applied.




De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – “City of Baghdad”



Covers From Intermediate Points

First Regular Air Mail  
London-Cape Town



**IMPERIAL AIRWAYS LIMITED**  
Airway Terminus · Victoria Station · London · SW1  
20 January, 1932

Dear Sir,


This letter has been sent to you by the first regular service of the third Empire air route to be opened by Imperial Airways, namely that between London and Cape Town and vice versa.

You have probably had many an occasion to use the weekly air mail to East Africa and you will have had opportunity to test the great saving of time which can be effected by its use, not only in the transport of mails and of freight but of passengers, and now with the extension of this great aerial route of 8,000 miles throughout the length of Africa this saving will be made more evident.


At the present time all of us who belong to the British Commonwealth of Nations are passing through an anxious time and it is essential for the well being of all, that the pound sterling be supported by 'Buying British'. May I therefore take this opportunity of reminding you that every penny spent on Imperial Airways travel, or on the transport by it of mails and of freight is as helpful in the support of the currency as money spent on the purchase of Empire goods.

I hope that you will consider the occasion of sufficient importance to warrant your keeping this letter and its envelope as a souvenir and a reminder of this historic occasion and of the value of aerial transport and in particular of the Empire air mail.

Yours faithfully,  
IMPERIAL AIRWAYS LIMITED




Managing Director



EERSTE GEREËLDE LUGPOS LONDEN-KAAPSTAD


**BY AIR MAIL**  
PAR AVION

**IMPERIAL AIRWAYS**



SERVICE  
between  
ENGLAND  
and  
SOUTH-AFRICA  
EERSTE GEREËLDE LUGPOS  
LONDEN-KAAPSTAD

*Peel Electric Engg Co Ltd*  
*Box 5953*  
*Johannesburg*  
*South Africa*

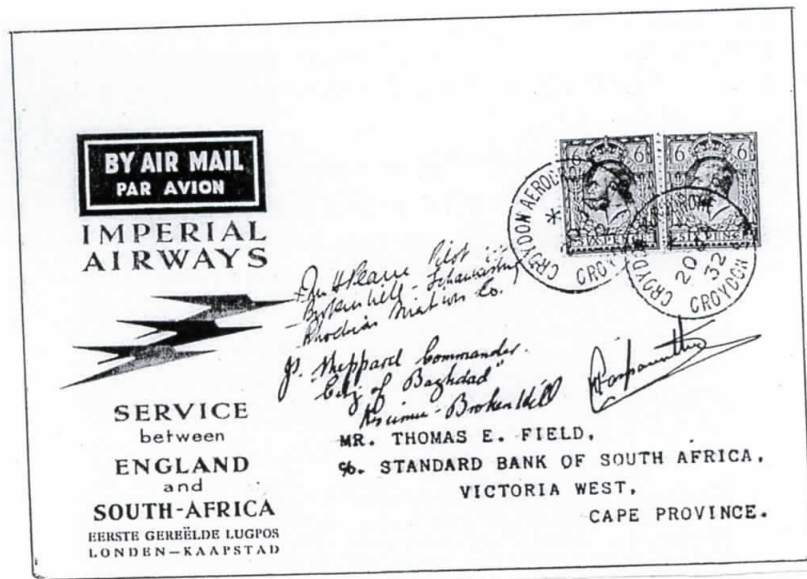


ABOVE:  
Imperial Airways' publicity letter which the company sent to commercial houses to advertise the opening of their regular air service to South Africa.

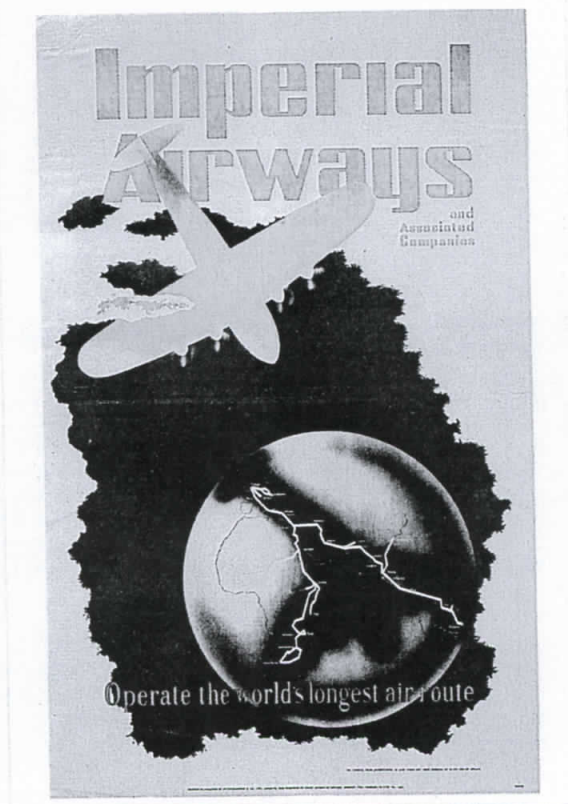
LEFT:  
Cover, in which the letter was enclosed, dated 20th Jan. 1932. Hudson's Place, 20th Jan. 1932. Backstamped Jo'burg. 1st Feb. Flown by AS 47.



320129A (Nierinck 320129A) – Imperial Airways – “City of Baghdad” – De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-EBMY – Mbeya, Tanganyika (continued)



Cover Autographed by the Pilots Involved



Postcard reproduction of a poster

320129B (Nierinck 320129) – Imperial Airways – “City of Basra” – De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-AAJH – Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia – South Africa-Great Britain route

Captain H.W.C. “Jimmy” Alger

The aircraft was operating the first regular northbound service from South Africa to Great Britain. When taxiing, a wheel sunk into soft earth where an anthill had recently been removed, and it was damaged. The “City of Delhi” continued the flight north the same day. The flight was carrying a large number of first flight covers to various destinations all the way north to Great Britain. Most have first flight cachets, but no delay markings were applied.

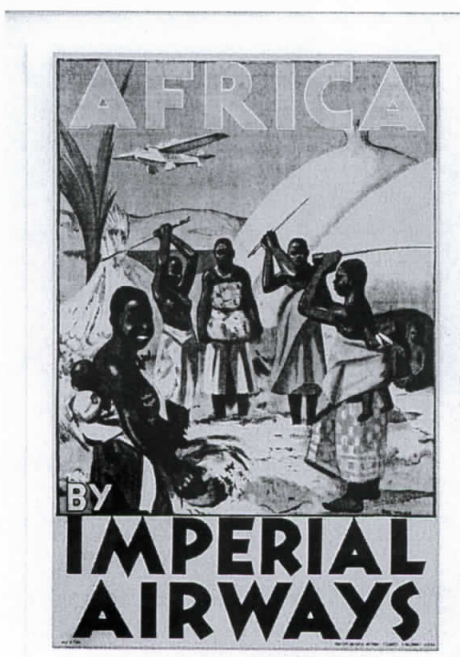


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**“I am convinced that for a regular trans-African service, the aeroplane, even when worked in relays, is not a practicable commercial undertaking.”**

**Leo Walmsley, 1920**

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**Postcard Reproduction of a Poster**



320129C (Nierinck 320129) – Imperial Airways – “City of Delhi” – De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-EBMX – 50 miles from Broken Hill, Northern Rhodesia – South Africa-Great Britain route

Captain John “Jack” Gittins

The “City of Delhi” continued the flight north from Salisbury the same day. The mail from the “City of Basra” mishap had been taken onboard. The aircraft encountered a violent storm (a so-called “black storm”) and had to make a forced landing in a clearing, which turned out to be a swamp. The wheels were stuck fast and the aircraft was unable to take-off. The crew fortunately had emergency rations and water on board. But it appeared that the pilot was a little uncertain of the location of the swamp into which he had landed, and he gave a wrong compass-bearing over the wireless. Search planes had some difficulty in locating the missing machine.

Eventually they were discovered by the “City of Baghdad”, which had gone out from Broken Hill looking for the lost aircraft. Food was dropped by parachute from the air. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of February, a ground party succeeded in cutting its way through the bush to the crew and passengers, guided by smoke from a signal fire. The “City of Delhi” was found stuck up to the axles in the swamp. It necessitated digging a runway, and then dragging the machine bodily out of the swamp. The machine did not suffer drastically. Six days after the aircraft was forced down in the swamp, on the 4<sup>th</sup> of February, the mail was taken by native porters to Broken Hill, and it was carried onward by the “City of Baghdad” when it returned on its next northbound flight. The mail was not damaged and therefore no delay markings were applied. The covers had the special first flight cachets, and some were special envelopes prepared by Imperial Airways.



“City of Delhi” in Swamp – Photos Taken From Search Aircraft “City of Baghdad”

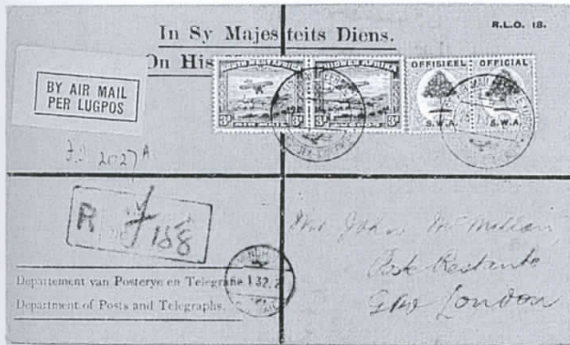
Left photo shows tire tracks of aircraft through the swamp

Right photo shows aircraft at rest

320129C (Nierinck 320129) – Imperial Airways – “City of Delhi” – De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-EBMX – 50 miles from Broken Hill, Northern Rhodesia – South Africa-Great Britain route (continued)



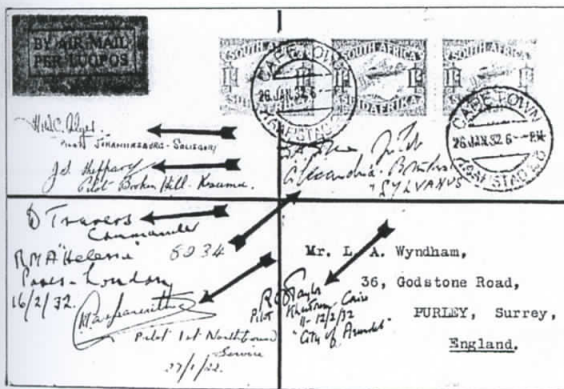
De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – “City of Delhi”



Cover From Southwest Africa



Cover from Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia



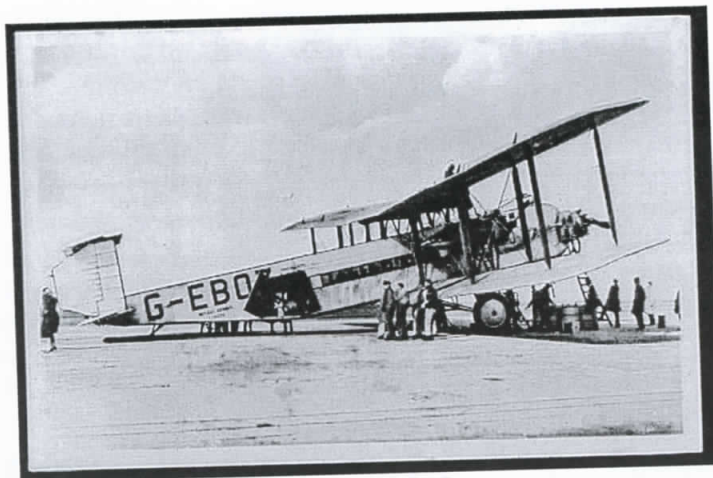
Two Covers Autographed by the Pilots Involved



320309 – Imperial Airways – “City of Arundel” – Armstrong Whitworth A.W. Argosy I – G-EBOZ – south of Wadi Halfa, Sudan – South Africa-Egypt route

Captain unknown

The aircraft was operating a Northbound flight, when a dust storm was encountered. An engine stopped and lost its propeller, and the pilot put the aircraft down near Kareima alongside the Nile River. After several days, A Short Calcutta flying boat arrived with a spare engine. The aircraft was carrying the Central African mails and had left Khartoum the same morning. One postcard is known, as shown.

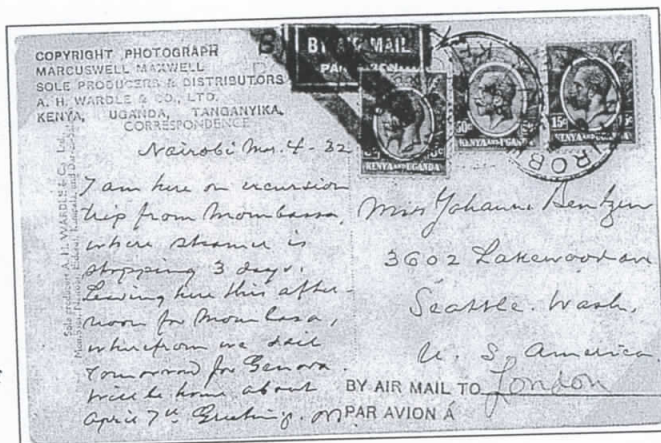


**Camels of Desert  
Sent to Rescue of  
Damaged Airplane**

CAIRO, Egypt, March 10.—(A.P.)—Camels, ancient ships of the desert, came to the rescue of the Cape-to-Cairo air mail plane last night when it was forced down among the rocky hills south of Wadi-Halfa. Camels were loaded with cans of gasoline and rushed to the stranded plane which they were able to carry.

Part of Newspaper Clipping -  
1932

Armstrong Whitworth A.W. Argosy I – “City of Arundel”



**IMPERIAL AIRWAYS**  
PUTS THE WORLD WITHIN YOUR REACH

London to—  
**PARIS** in 3 hrs. 45 mins.  
**BRUSSELS** in 3 hrs. 20 mins.  
**VIENNA** in 8 hrs. 55 mins.  
**ZÜRICH** in 5 hrs. 35 mins. (summer only)  
 (All times liable to alteration)

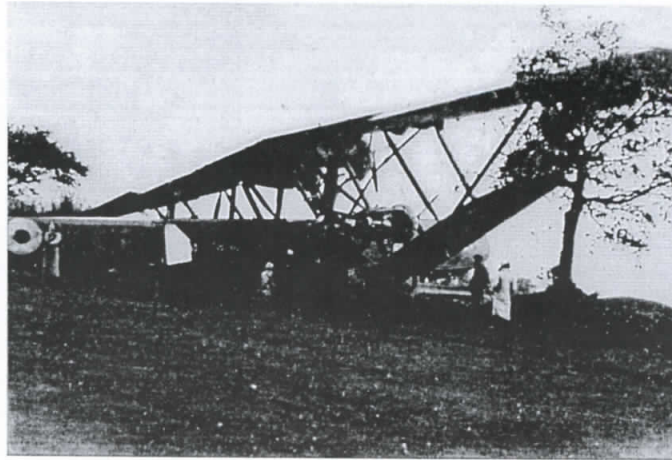
Figure 7R

Page From Airmail Etiquette Booklet

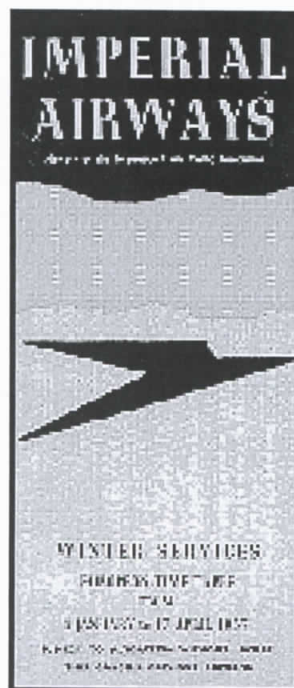
320509 – Imperial Airways – “Horatius” – Handley Page HP 42 Heracles Class – G-AAXD – Tonbridge, Great Britain – London-Paris route

Captain O.P. Jones

The aircraft, bound for Paris with thirteen passengers, was struck by lightning. It blew out the cockpit windows, disabled the wireless aerial, damaged two propellers, tore holes on the top plane and one near the baggage compartment. There were no injuries and after reassuring the passengers, Captain Jones turned around and landed safely back at Croydon Aerodrome. The passengers were transferred to another aircraft. It is not known if mail was being carried, and none is known in collectors' hands.



Handley Page HP 42 Heracles Class – “Horatius” – G-AAXD – After the Crash



Imperial Airways Timetable

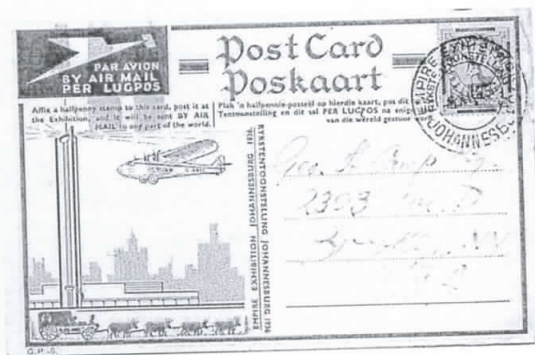


320927 – Imperial Airways – “Atalanta” – Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class – G-ABPI – Ostend, Belgium – Great Britain-Belgium route

Captain Ernest Henry “Tich” Attwood & Flight Engineer C.F. Griffiths

On a flight from Croydon to Brussels, the aircraft had to make an emergency landing at Ostend. It touched down short of the runway, and suffered slight damage. No mail is known.

The name “Atalanta” was transferred to G-ABTI in October 1932, following the crash on a test flight of G-ABPI.



Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class – “Atalanta” & Post Card with G-ABPI in the Design

The following paragraph appeared in “The Times” (London) of October 18, 1932:

“A hippopotamus has attacked and sunk the Northern Rhodesian mail barge from Mongu at a point on the Zambesi river near Sioma. The hippopotamus bit a large piece out of the barge and the terrified native paddlers dived into the water and swam ashore. Two mail bags have been lost.”

So aircraft accidents were not the only reason for lost or damaged mail!!!

*If you are journeying to Africa  
or India—Travel by Air*

Imperial Airways will carry you to your destination quickly and safely. You enjoy comfort if you travel by

**IMPERIAL AIRWAYS**

THE BRITISH AIR LINE

Particulars from any Travel Agency, or direct from  
**IMPERIAL AIRWAYS LTD.**

Airways House, Charles Street, Haymarket, S.W.1. Telephone.—Regent 7361.

After July—London Air Terminus, Victoria Station (Continental Departures), S.W.1. Telephone.—Victoria 8242.

**IF YOU MISS THE ORDINARY MAIL**



*You can still post by air*

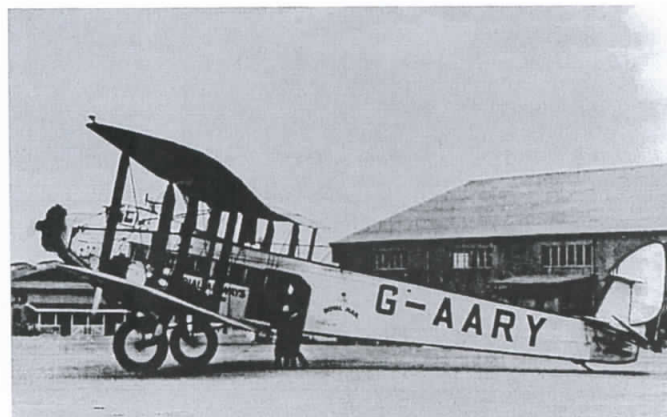
To all parts of the Continent, Greece, Egypt, Iraq, Persia, India, Africa and the East. Particulars from any Post Office.

Pages From Airmail Etiquette Booklets

321231 – Imperial Airways – “City of Karachi” – De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-AARY – Kigwe, Tanganyika, near Dodoma

Captain Ernest Henry “Tich” Attwood

On a northbound flight, the pilot made a forced landing at Kigwe. A propeller and a lower wing were damaged. The passengers and mail were taken by train to Dodoma to be picked up by Captain Caspareuthus in the “City of Baghdad” on Sunday the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1933. No mail is known in collectors’ hands.



De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-AARY – “City of Karachi”



Label From Biscuit Container



## AIR MAIL MAKES A FORCED LANDING.

### Northbound Machine Delayed a Day.

#### SLIGHT DAMAGE..

For the first time for many months Imperial Airways' northbound plane was late in arriving at Nairobi during last week-end. The machine due to arrive at Nairobi on Saturday afternoon did not actually get in until Sunday evening, the delay being caused by a "forced" landing near Dodoma.

The machine, the "City of Karachi", was piloted by Captain E. H. Attwood. When approaching Dodoma at about 10.0 o'clock on Saturday morning, Captain Attwood found that the petrol was not getting through normally to one engine. Rather than continue, with the possibility of having to land at a moment's notice in country which might prove dangerous both to passengers and craft, the pilot decided to find a place immediately where he could get down in safety. This he succeeded in doing close to the railway station at Kidji. The site selected for the voluntary "forced" landing was not entirely clear of bush and stumps. The landing, however, was a good one, although the machine sustained slight damage, which included a broken propeller and the bottom planes being affected.

The passengers and load were immediately taken to Dodoma by train and thereby suffered no discomfort.

#### Relief Machine.

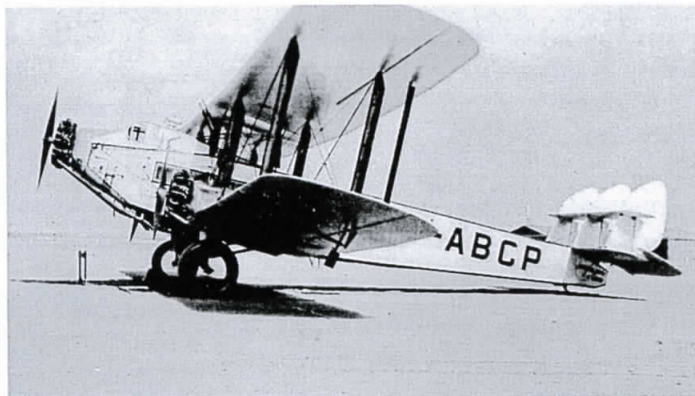
When news of the landing was received in Nairobi, arrangements were made for picking up the passengers and freight and mails. Mr. Caspareutheus, another of Imperial Airways' pilots, flew to Kisumu with Messrs. Wilson Airways on Saturday afternoon. On Sunday morning he flew to Dodoma in a relief machine, the "City of Baghdad". This machine arrived at Nairobi at 6.0 o'clock on Sunday evening and left on the continuation of the journey at 6.30 on Monday morning.

One effect of the slight delay will be that a second machine will leave Nairobi for Kisumu on Sunday morning next which will have a number of seats available for passengers desirous of making this short journey.

330102 (Nierinck 330102) – Imperial Airways – “City of Jodhpur” – De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-ABCP – Rand Airport, Johannesburg, South Africa

Captain & 1<sup>st</sup> officer unknown

A fire developed when a ground starter motor backfired a few minutes before leaving for Cape Town. The flames were extinguished and the mail and passengers were transferred to the Imperial “City of Basra” for the flight to Cape Town. The mail was undamaged and none is known in collectors’ hands.



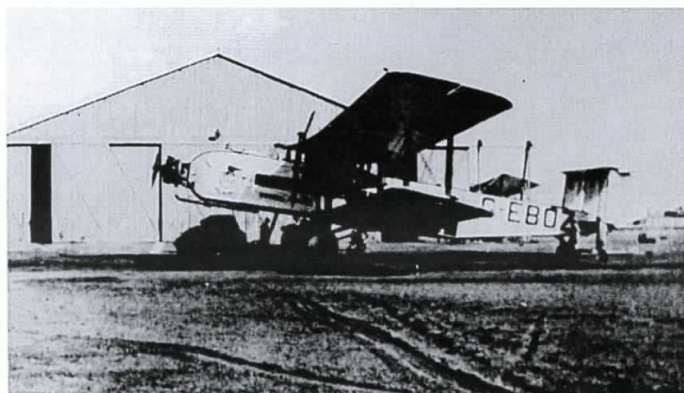
**De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – “City of Jodhpur”**

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330213 – Imperial Airways – “City of Arundel” (previously “City of Wellington”) – Armstrong Whitworth A.W. Argosy I – G-EBOZ – Sarzana, Italy – Cairo-UK route

Pilot & 1<sup>st</sup> officer unknown

The aircraft was unable to land at La Spezia for fuel, and the pilot made a forced landing at Sarzana in thick mud. It took 40 hours to get it out. No other details are available, and no mail is known.



**Armstrong Whitworth A.W. Argosy I – “City of Arundel”**



330304 (Nierinck 330304) – Imperial Airways – “Satyrus” – Short S.17 Kent Scipio Class – G-ABFC – Near Gayduronisi, Cape Sunion, Greece

Captain Vernon G. Wilson

The pilot was attempting to make a non-stop flight from Alexandria to Athens. The aircraft ran out of fuel and made a forced landing on a heavy sea near Gayduronisi (Patrocles Island) off Cape Sunion (Attica), twenty miles short of Piraeus, the port for Athens. A Greek Coastguard patrol boat located the aircraft, which towed the aircraft to Phaleron Bay late in the evening. The mail for Athens (which was mostly transit mail for Central Europe) was taken to the Athens Post Office and was backstamped March 5, 1933. No special cachet was used and covers are very rare.



Short S.17 Kent Scipio Class – “Satyrus”



The Greek Cachet is Simply a “Via Air Mail” Marking

There is a regular Air Service by  
**IMPERIAL AIRWAYS**  
THE BRITISH AIR LINE to ITALY, GREECE, EGYPT, IRAQ, PERSIA, INDIA, EAST & CENTRAL AFRICA and THE EAST  
Particulars from any Post Office, or from  
Airways House, Charles Street, Haymarket, S.W.1. Telephone—Regent 7891.  
After July—London Air Terminus, Victoria Station (Continental Departures), S.W.1. Telephone:—Victoria 3243.

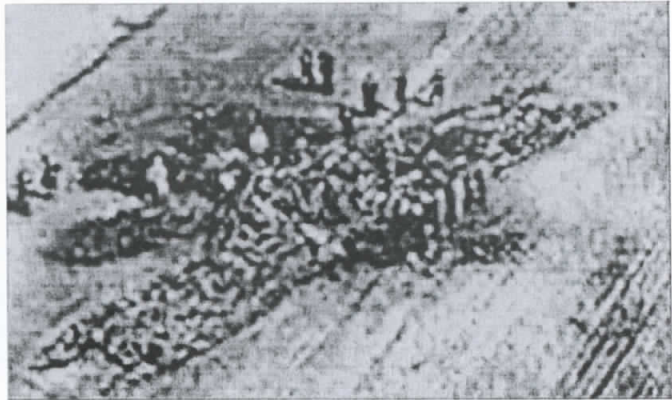
Page From Airmail Etiquette Booklet

330328 (Nierinck 330328) – Imperial Airways – “City of Liverpool” – Armstrong Whitworth Argosy II – G-AACI – Eessen, near Dixmude, Belgium – Cologne–London route

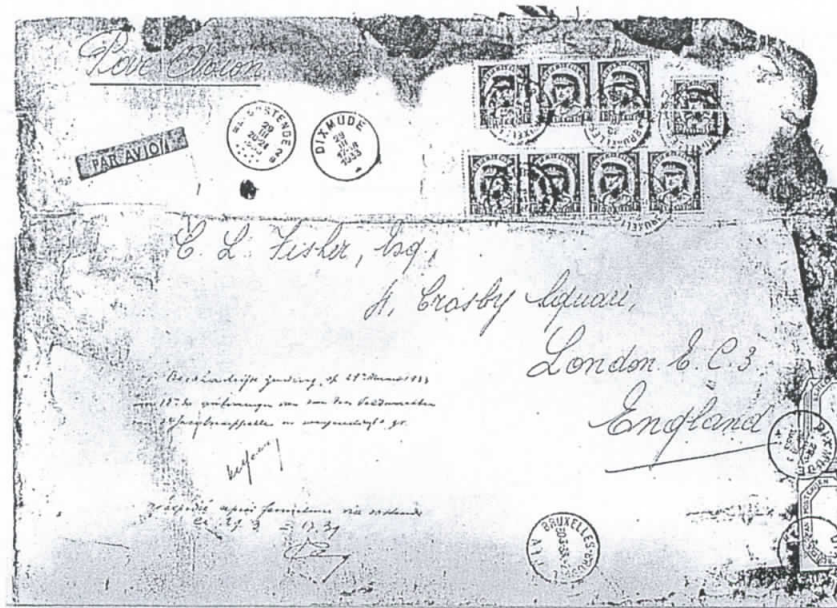
Captain Lionel Louis Leleu, Wireless Operator Stubbs & Flight Engineer W.R. Brown

The flight left Brussels in the early afternoon, enroute for London. When flying over Dixmude, it was seen on fire at an approximate altitude of 2,000 feet, and it crashed a few minutes later. There was a theory that one of the passengers started the fire. This was Mr. Albert Voss, a dentist from Manchester, who was in debt and there were rumors that he might be involved in drug trafficking and smuggling. From contemporary press reports given by witnesses of the crash, smoke was seen coming from the rear of the fuselage over the village of Clerken, followed by a burst of flame, then the aircraft began to lose altitude. As it did so, a body fell from the plane, evidently from the rear door, and plunged earthwards. It was later found to be the body of Mr. Voss. The reason for the fire was never determined. This was considered the worst disaster in the history of British Civil Aviation up until that time.

Baggage, freight and mail were recovered from the fields around the crash. The crew and twelve passengers were killed. One cover is known, as shown.



### Armstrong Whitworth Argosy II – “City of Liverpool” & Burned Out Remains



Translation of the handwritten inscription is: “Damaged sending received March 29, 1933 at 13.30 h. from St. Jacobs cappelle’s rural guard and weighing 60 gr.”



330425 - Delhi Flying Club - De Havilland DH.60G Gipsy Moth - VT-ACO - Erinpura, Rajputana, India

Captain P.D. Sharma

The Delhi Flying Club operated a feeder service between Delhi and Karachi for Imperial Airways. The Gipsy Moth wing struck a vulture and the pilot was forced to make an emergency landing on a dry lake at Sargoth, near Naranpura Railway Station. From there the six bags of mail were taken by train to Jodhpur, where Lord Clydesdale volunteered to fly them to Karachi in the Westland aircraft in which he had recently overflowed Mount Everest. He reached Karachi just too late for the mail to be placed on the Imperial aircraft "Helena", which left at 9:10 a.m. on the 26<sup>th</sup>. Air Orient offered to carry the mail to Baghdad on its flight which was on its way from Saigon. This offer was accepted by the postal authorities, and the six mail bags were transferred to Imperial Airways at Baghdad for onward transmission.

No special markings were applied. One cover has been recorded, as shown below.



De Havilland DH.60G Gipsy Moth  
same type as VT-ACO



## Vulture Hits Aeroplane

Thurs. Apr. 27th 1933

### LORD CLYDESDALE RESCUES MAIL

From Our Own Correspondent

KARACHI, Wednesday.

THE Marquess of Clydesdale, chief pilot of the Houston Mount Everest Air Expedition, came to the rescue of the Government air-mails from Delhi this morning. He was flying one of the Westland aeroplanes—used in the recent flights over Everest—to Karachi, where they will be dismantled and shipped to England.

The mail plane from Delhi had made a forced landing near Erinpura, Rajputana, and the mails were conveyed by train to Jodhpur, from where Lord Clydesdale volunteered to fly them to Karachi.

He reached there just too late for them to be placed in the Imperial Airways machine Helena, which left at 9.10 a.m., but the French Air Orient Line took them in its machine and will hand them over to Imperial Airways at Bagdad.

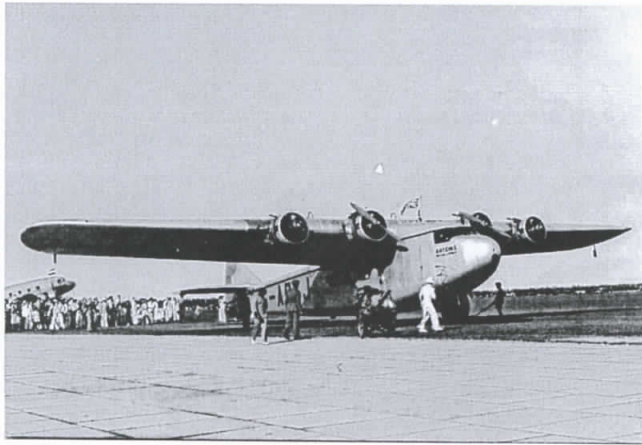
The mail plane from Delhi, according to a Reuter message, was forced down as the result of a vulture hitting one of the wings.

330610 – Imperial Airways – “Artemis” – Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class – G-ABTJ – 90 miles from Mpika, Northern Rhodesia – Great Britain-South Africa route

Captain Ernest Henry “Tich” Attwood

Due to heavy weather and bad visibility, the pilot was forced to make a landing in the bush about 90 miles from Mpika. On landing, a tyre was punctured. Captain Attwood radioed Salisbury and an aircraft of the Rhodesian Air Survey was sent out with petrol. On the following day, the Puss Moth took the passengers to Mpika, where they remained until “Artemis” was ready to proceed. During the next two days, natives were employed to clear a makeshift runway of some 500 yards so the Artemis could take off.

There was no damage to the mail and no covers are known in collectors’ hands.



Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class – “Artemis”

**THE AFRICAN  
AIR MAIL.**

**Northbound Machine  
Delayed.**

**An Hour's Stay  
in Nairobi.**

**FORCED LANDING NEAR  
MPIKA.**

Three days late, the Imperial Airways liner “Artemis” landed on Nairobi aerodrome on Tuesday at 1.20 p.m. A short stop for refuelling, and for the passengers and crews to obtain lunch, and she left within the hour for Kisumu. Here a change over will be made to another machine for the next stage of the trip to London.

The “Artemis,” on account of bad visibility, had to make a landing in the bush some 90 miles from Mpika. Chief Pilot Attwood stated that he had no other alternative, in view of the heavy weather which he met, and because he had lost Mpika. In landing, the starboard tyre was punctured.

Salisbury was communicated with by wireless, a pin point being picked, and a machine from the Rhodesian Air Survey came out with a replacement and petrol. On the following day, this machine, a Puss Moth, took the passengers into Mpika, where they remained until the “Artemis” was ready to proceed.

**Constructing a Runway.**

The next two days were occupied in making a runway of some 500 yards for the Imperial Airways machine to take off. Crowds of natives were employed, under the directions of the officers, and she was able to get off successfully on Monday, reaching Nairobi without further mishap.

Her passengers included Sir Hubert Young, Governor of Nyasaland, who is making a trip to Cairo; Sir Basil Blackett and Sir Philip Reekitt.

The two last named have been on business trips in the south. Sir Basil Blackett, the well known financier, during a visit to Nairobi in January, addressed a luncheon meeting of Nairobi Rotary Club. Sir Philip Reekitt is head of the well-known firm of Reekitt and Sons, Ltd. He was accompanied by Miss Reekitt.

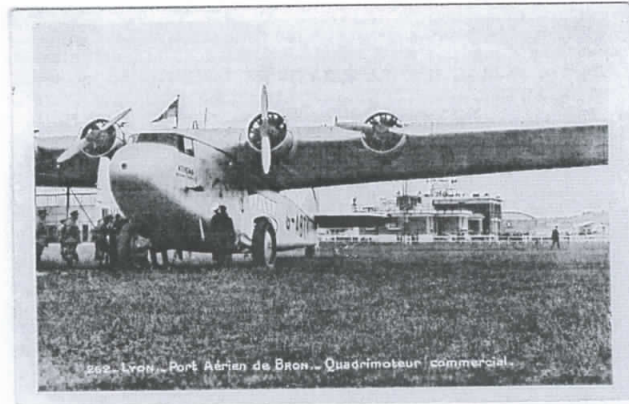
Sir Hubert Young and Sir Basil Blackett were met by Mr. C. C. O'Hagan, A.D.C., and taken to lunch with the Acting Governor, returning to the aerodrome a few minutes before the machine left.



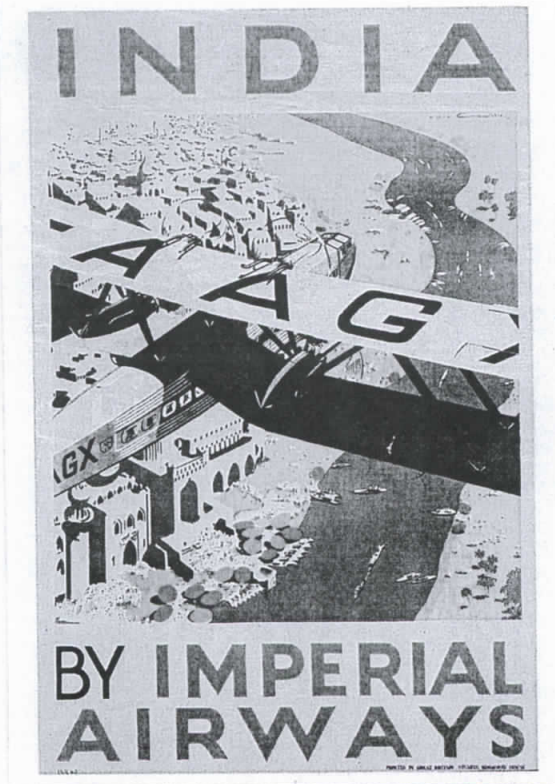
330715 – Indian Trans-Continental Airways – “Athena” – Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class  
– G-ABTK – Asansol, India – Karachi-Calcutta route

Captain unknown

The Times of 17 July reported, “The Imperial Airways liner ‘Athena’ had to descend on Saturday at Asansol, 120 miles short of Calcutta. The air mail was taken on by train and arrived at 7 a.m. yesterday.” After leaving Allahabad, the aircraft encountered strong headwinds, which made it necessary to land at Asansol for fuel. The tail wheel was slightly damaged and “Athena” became bogged down in the wet ground from heavy rain all during the previous night. The aircraft was unable to take off, and the mail was carried onward by rail. No covers are known in collectors’ hands.



Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class – G-ABTK – “Athena”



Postcard Reproduction of a Poster

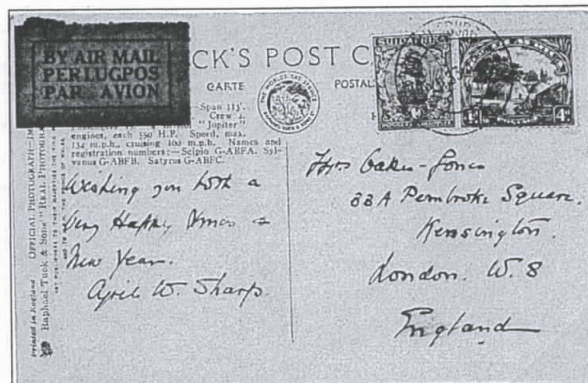
331218 – Imperial Airways – “Horsa” – Handley Page HP42 Hannibal Class – G-AAUC – Khartoum, Sudan – South Africa-Great Britain route

Captain unknown

The northbound “Amalthea” departed Johannesburg on December 13<sup>th</sup>. At Salisbury, on takeoff, one engine failed and the following day, the passengers and mail were transferred to the “Artemis”. Time was made up and the mail and passengers were transferred to the “Horsa”. At Khartoum, on takeoff, “Horsa’s” wing tip struck the southbound “Helena’s” wing, causing enough damage to delay the flight one day for repairs. One card and one cover are known, as shown.



Handley Page HP42 Hannibal Class – “Horsa”



Covers From This Incident – No Special Markings Were Applied



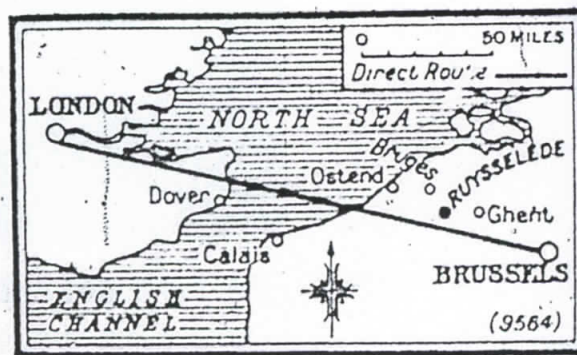
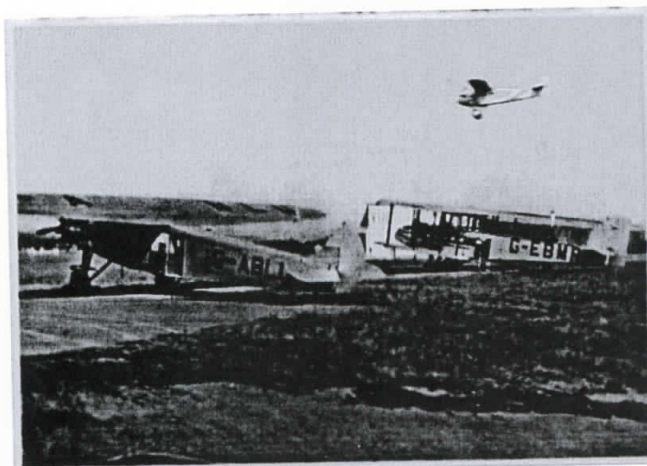
331230 (Nierinck 331230) – Imperial Airways – “Apollo” – Avro Ten – G-ABLU – Ruysselede, Belgium – Cologne-Brussels-London route

Captain John “Jack” Gittins & First Officer H. G. Loch

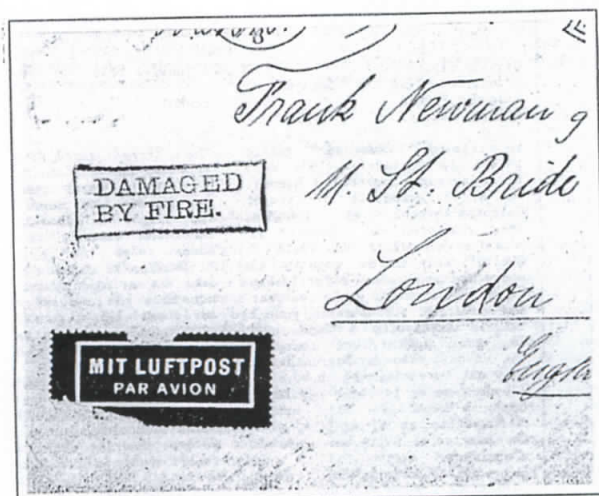
The plane took off from Haren and due to fog, was flying low. When flying over Ruysselede, the aircraft hit a radio station antenna mast, and then the strut of the mast. The aircraft lost a wing and crashed. It then caught fire and was burned out. The pilots and eight passengers were killed.

The greater part of the mail was lost. A small amount of mail was recovered, and a black cachet was applied, as shown.

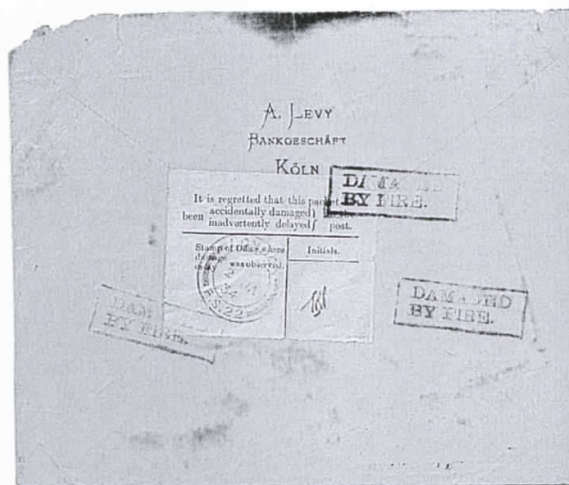
Hopkins<sup>19</sup> reported a cover from Cologne, Germany postmarked 30.12.33, addressed to London. It was considerably stained by burning and showed three strikes of the boxed “DAMAGED/BY FIRE” 13 x 39 mm overall. On the back was a routine “Postmaster’s Apology” label which was date stamped “LONDON 2 JA 34”.



Avro Ten – G-ABLU – “Apollo”



Type “a” Cachet - Black



Type “b” Label

## THREE KILLED

IN

## AIR LINER CRASH

FOG DISASTER TO  
ENGLISH PLANE

### GRAVE CONDITION OF SURVIVORS

#### PASSENGER'S LONG CRAWL FOR AID

The Imperial Airways liner, City of Washington, bound from Paris to London, crashed to the south of Boulogne at one o'clock yesterday afternoon during a fog.

Three persons were killed and three injured. Their names are:

##### DEAD:

Mr. Street, an American, secretary of the G. W. Cearnick Co., of 24, Mount Pleasant Avenue, Newark, N.J.

Mr. A. C. James, a ground engineer of Imperial Airways, of 40, Forest-avenue, Fishponds, Bristol, who was coming home on leave.

Mr. F. H. Mason, the mechanic, whose home address is 2, Rosslyn-villas, Cheltenham.

##### INJURED:

Mr. H. Bolsover, of Manchester.

Mr. F. J. Tompkins, of Manchester.

Mr. J. J. Flynn, of Croydon, the pilot.

The survivors are now in hospital at Boulogne. They are unconscious, and their condition is said to be very serious.

One of the passengers, whose leg was injured, crawled for about a mile

to summon help, but collapsed by the roadside. As a result of his heroism his leg had to be amputated.

The crash is said to have been due to the fact that one of the engines failed. The pilot went on slowly in the dense fog with the other engine searching for a suitable spot where he could land.

Then unfortunately a sudden gust caught the plane and drove it down on to a small hill. The liner was wrecked, but did not catch fire. A watch found in the debris had stopped at 12.30.

Imperial Airways, in a statement issued last evening, says:

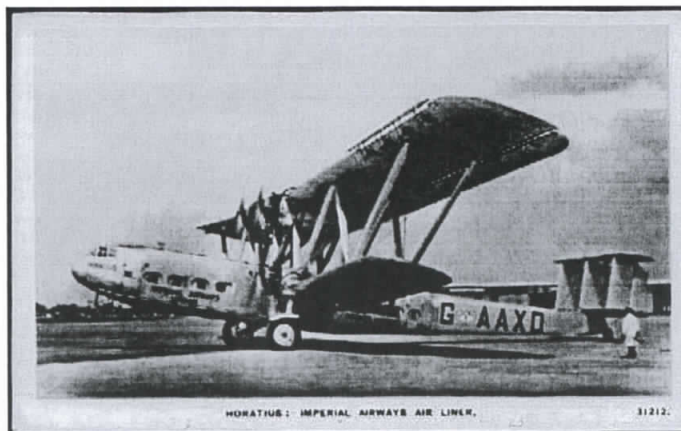
A consulting engineer and officials of the company have left for the scene of the accident.



340101 – Imperial Airways – “Horatius” – Handley Page HP42 Hannibal Class – G-AAXD – Berck, France

Captain L.A. Walters

The aircraft was damaged on the ground. No other details are available.



**Handley Page HP 42 Heracles Class – “Horatius”**

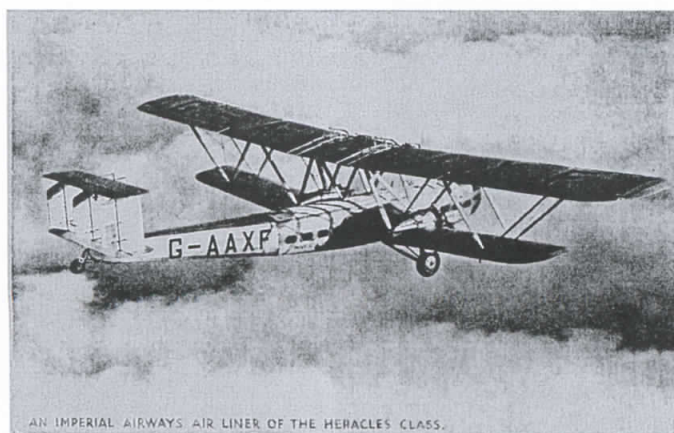
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340309 – Imperial Airways – “Helena” – Handley Page HP42 – G-AAXF – Alexandria, Egypt

Captain & 1<sup>st</sup> officer unknown

“Lloyd’s Weekly Casualty Reports” of 15 March 1934 stated, “London, Mar. 10. – The Imperial Airways plane Helena, *G-AAXF*, which was carrying the outward Indian air mail, damaged her tail when leaving Alexandria on Mar. 9. The mail was transferred to the Hanno, *G-AAUD*, which left for Gaza at 7.10 this morning.”

No mail is known in collectors’ hands.



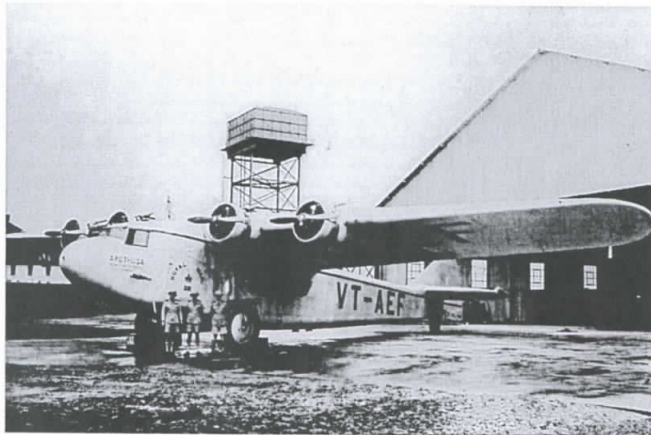
**Handley Page HP42 – “Helena”**

340415 – Indian Trans-Continental Airways – “Arethusa” – Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class – VT-AEF – Kuala Lumpur, Malaya – Malaya-Great Britain route

Captain Roger P. Mollard

When landing at Kuala Lumpur, the aircraft sank up to her axles in soft ground. Although three Imperial Airways aircraft had previously used the airfield and done taxiing tests, the Arethusa's 10-ton weight proved too much for one soggy patch. The large crowd of applauding onlookers were horrified to see the landing run end abruptly with the aircraft lurching up onto its nose, as its wheels imbedded themselves into the mud. It took 9½ hours and the combined efforts of the Kuala Lumpur Fire Brigade, the Malayan Railway and a large number of willing helpers to free the aircraft from the mud. The aircraft was not damaged and it continued on its way the same day.

No mail is known



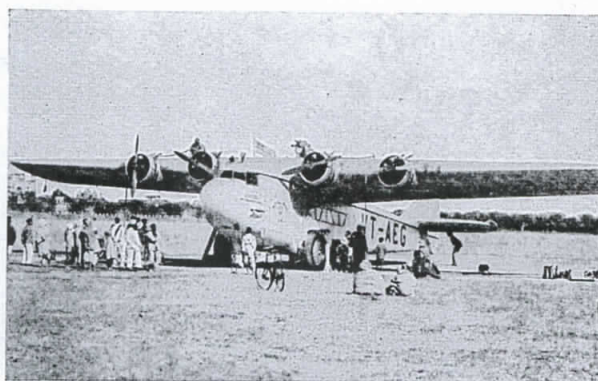
**Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class – “Arethusa”**

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340505 – Indian Trans-Continental Airways – “Aurora” – Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class – VT-AEG – Calcutta, India – Karachi-Calcutta-Singapore route

Captain & 1<sup>ST</sup> officer unknown

Lloyd's Weekly Casualty Reports of 11 May reported that when Aurora was about to depart from Calcutta for Singapore on 5 May, an air bottle exploded and blew away practically the whole of the bottom of the aircraft. The Astraea was summoned from Singapore and made a successful midnight landing at Dum Dum to take over the service on the morning of 7 May. No mail is known



The Armstrong-Whitworth *Aurora*, an eleven-passenger air liner of a type formerly worked by Imperial Airways, seen at Delhi, India.

**Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class – “Aurora”**



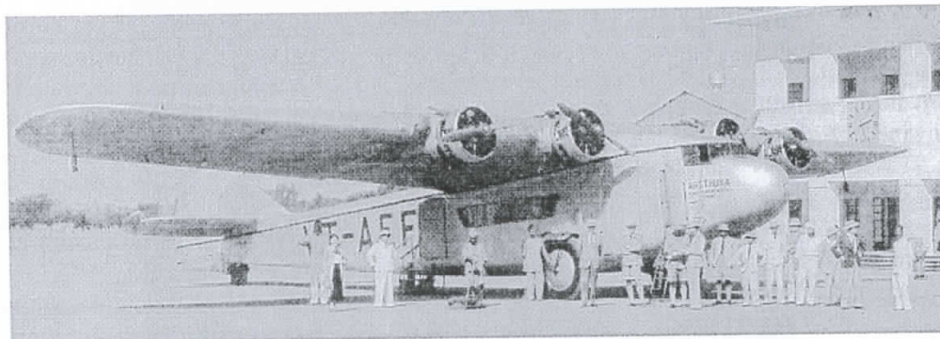
340612 – Indian Trans-Continental Airways – “Arethusa” – Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class – VT-AEF – Jodhpur, India – Singapore-Karachi route

Captain & 1<sup>st</sup> officer unknown

The Times of London of 14 June 1934 reported:

“A Transcontinental Airways liner, westward bound, hit an aerodrome boundary post at JODHPUR while making a landing by night and damaged her fuselage. The Imperial Airways liner *Helena*, which was waiting at Karachi, fetched the mails and passengers from Jodhpur and is to leave Karachi for Basra to-day.”

No mail is known in collectors’ hands.



**Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class – “Arethusa”**

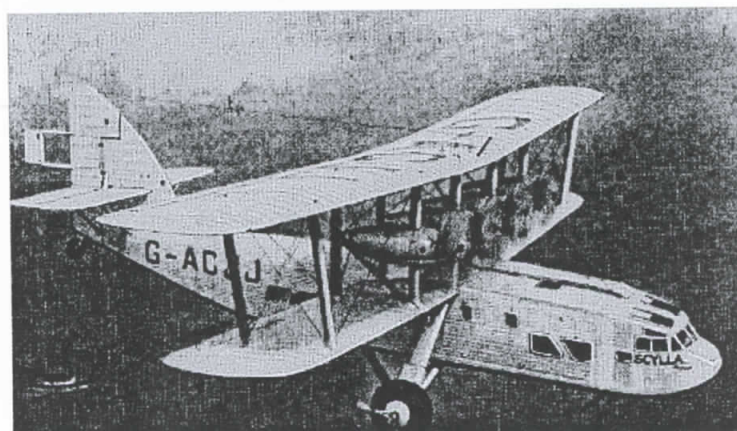
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340803 – Imperial Airways – “Scylla” – Short L17 – G-ACJJ – Le Bourget Airport, Paris, France – London-Paris route

Pilot & 1<sup>st</sup> officer unknown

The aircraft, arriving from Croydon at 10:00 a.m., landed near the north end of the aerodrome and was taxiing towards the terminal building when it suddenly nosed over, apparently owing to an accidental application of the wheel brakes. It came to rest with the nose on the ground and the tail high in the air. No one was injured and the passengers were able to get out through the door of the forward cabin without any difficulty. No other details are available.

The mail was not damaged and no covers are known in collectors’ hands.



**Short L17 – “Scylla”**

350116 – Imperial Airways – “Athena” – Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class – G-ABTK – near Point Stuart, Australia – Great Britain-Australia route

Captain Vernon G. Wilson

Just after midnight on the 16<sup>th</sup> of January, “Athena” had taken off from Koepang in good weather, for the crossing of the Timor Sea to Darwin. It had left Singapore a day behind schedule, and the pilot was attempting to make up time by flying, without rest, through the night. There were no proper facilities for night flying on the route, and it was in fact, prohibited. Half way across the Timor Sea, the aircraft encountered a violent storm of thunder and lightning. It reached the coast after four and a half hours, just before dawn. The Captain was unable to sight the Darwin Airport, so he followed the coast eastward. The direction-finding equipment was out of order because of static and he was afraid to put out the aerials because they would attract fireworks from the lightning. The fuel was getting low, so he decided to make a forced landing. He flew on to the northwestern side of Point Stuart, to a ridge surrounded by a swamp and landed there. “Athena” was soon found by Qantas pilot Captain Hussey, flying from Darwin in a DH-61.

He landed safely alongside “Athena”, checked that the passengers and crew were all right, and then took off for Darwin to bring back fuel. However, he struck a bog at high speed, and the propeller hit the mud, and disintegrated. Some native boys helped to dig out the Qantas aircraft, and 100 gallons of fuel were transferred to “Athena”. “Athena” was able to take-off, taking Captain Hussey along, and it arrived safely in Darwin. The mail was sent onward the following day. No covers are known in collectors’ hands.



The *Athena*, one of Imperial Airways' Armstrong Whitworth Atalanta monoplanes, seen at Karachi.

### Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class – “Athena”



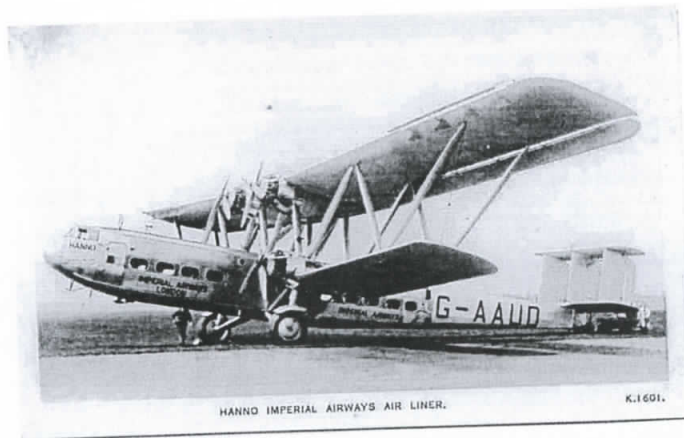
Air Mail Label Booklet Cover



350227 – Imperial Airways – “Hanno” – Handley Page HP42 Hannibal Class – G-AAUD – Rutbah Wells, Iraq

Captain L. W. Menenger

“Lloyd’s Weekly Casualty Reports” of 8 March stated, “London, Mar. 1. – When the Imperial Airways plane “Hanno” was landing at Rutbah on Wednesday (Feb. 27) she struck a ridge and damaged her undercarriage. The Horsa was commissioned to take over the outward Australian mails and left Rutbah early today.” No mail is known in collectors’ hands.



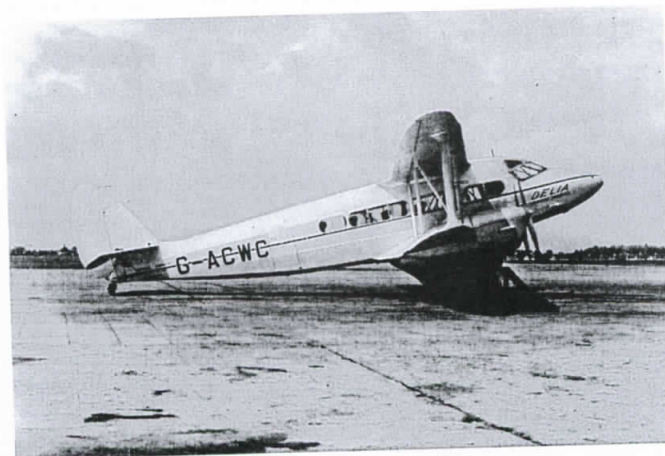
**Handley Page HP42 Hannibal Class – “Hanno”**

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350522 – Imperial Airways – “Delia” – De Havilland DH.86 Diana Class – G-ACWC – Brindisi, Italy

Captain Ferguson

According to Brackley <sup>48</sup>, the aircraft crashed.. No other details are available, and no mail is known.



**De Havilland DH.86 Diana Class – “Delia”**

350713 – Imperial Airways – Aircraft unknown – Bushire, Persia

Pilot & 1<sup>st</sup> officer unknown

Proud<sup>32</sup> reports that the westbound flight leaving Bandoeng on 13 July 1935, crashed near Bushire, destroying the mail. No other details are known, and no covers have been recorded.

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350825 – Imperial Airways – De Havilland DH83 – VO-ABC – St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada

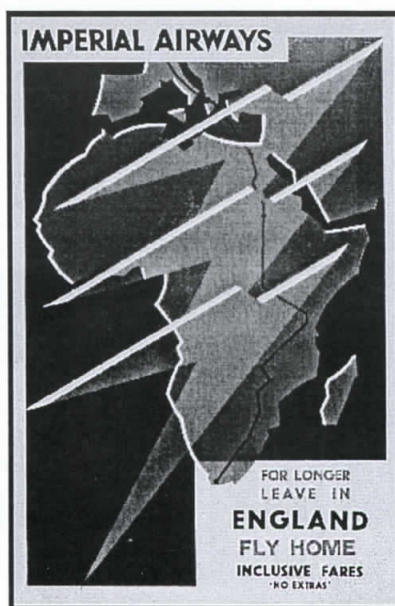
Pilot & 1<sup>st</sup> officer unknown

Imperial was operating a service on behalf of the Newfoundland Government, including the carriage of mail. The aircraft was wrecked in a gale. No other details are known and no mail is known in collectors' hands.



De Havilland DH83 of same type as VO-ABC

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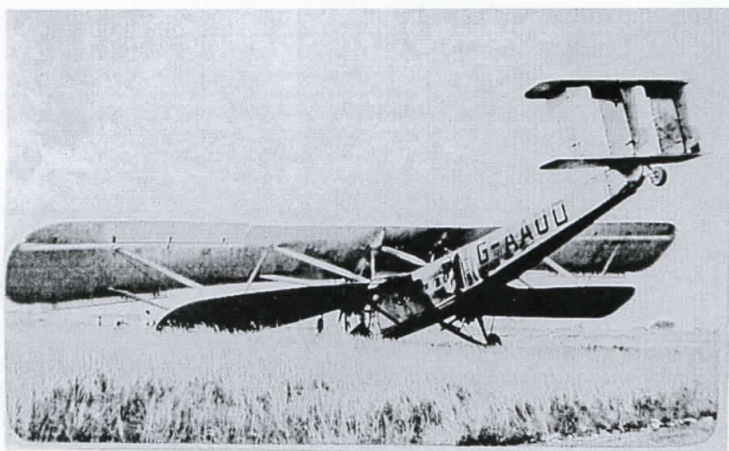


351007 (Nierinck 351006) – Imperial Airways – “Hanno” – Handley Page HP42 Hannibal Class – G-AAUD – Kampala, Uganda – Great Britain-South Africa route

Captain J. T. Percy

Flying south, a lightning strike burst a tyre between Masindi and Kampala. On landing at Kampala, the aircraft over-ran the runway, and ended up pitched onto its nose. The propellers of both upper engines pierced the fuselage. The Captain was thrown out of the cockpit. Both pilots suffered concussions, but none of the passengers were injured.

“Atalanta” flew up from Kisumu to carry the passengers and mail to points south of Nairobi. Wilson Airways carried the mail for Kisumu and Nairobi. The mail was not damaged and no special markings were applied. Four covers are known, as shown



Handley Page HP42 Hannibal Class – “Hanno”  
photo ex-Vic Groves archive  
courtesy of Dr. Eric R. Coulton

#### AIR LINER WRECKED IN EAST AFRICA

#### PASSENGERS AND CREW UNHURT

The Imperial Airways liner Hanno, flying southward on the London and Capetown service, overturned in landing at Kampala, Uganda, on Monday evening. Our Kampala Correspondent telegraphs that the aeroplane was wrecked and the pilot, Captain J. T. Percy, thrown out of his cockpit, but the passengers and crew were unhurt.

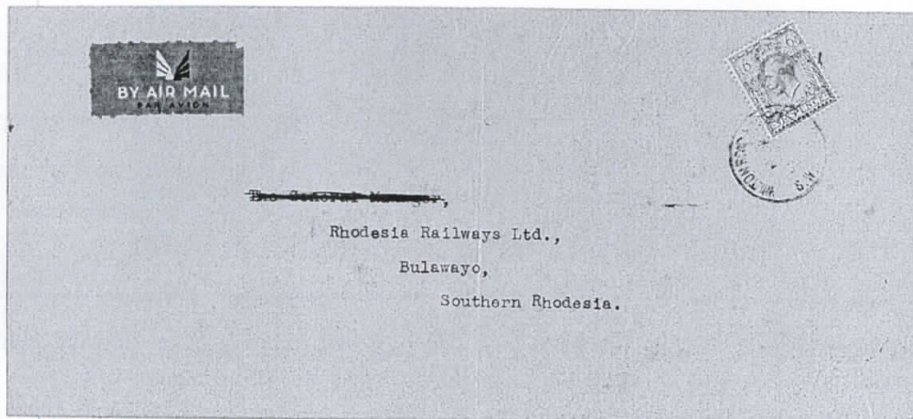
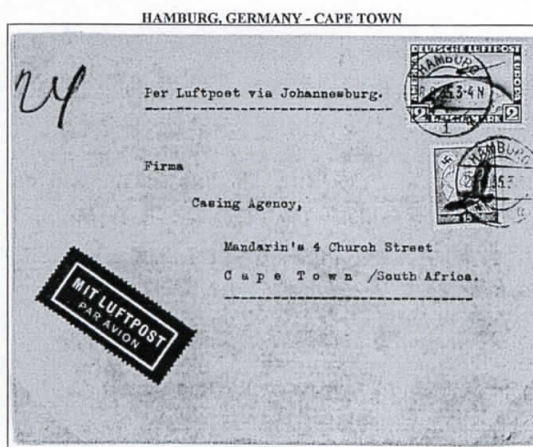
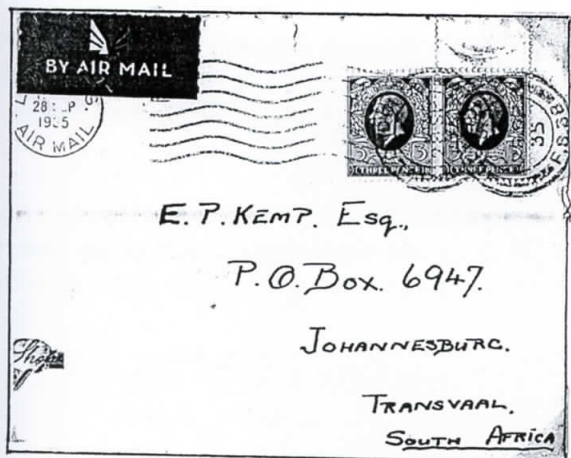
The Hanno is a machine of the Hannibal class. After landing at Kampala, the airport for Entebbe, she should have flown on to Kisumu, where passengers and mails are transferred to an Atalanta type monoplane for the completion of the journey to Capetown. News of the accident was sent to Kisumu, and the machine waiting there was flown to Kampala, 150 miles away, to take over the Hanno's passengers.

The cause of the accident is stated to have been a burst tyre. Imperial Airways in London were unable to confirm a report that the aeroplane had been struck by lightning and the tyre thus damaged in mid-air.

*“The Times”, 8<sup>th</sup> October 1935.*



351007 (Nierinck 351006) – Imperial Airways – “Hanno” – Handley Page HP42 Hannibal Class – G-AAUD – Kampala, Uganda (continued)



"Hanno" after the accident at Entebbe.

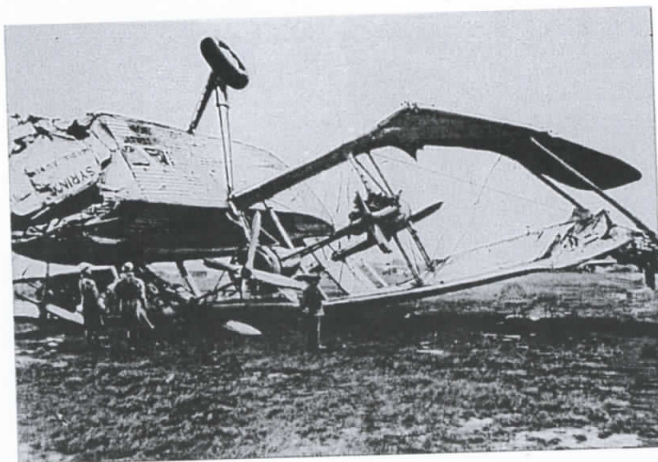


351010 – Imperial Airways – “Syrinx” – Short L17 Scylla Class – G-ACJK – Evere Airport, Brussels, Belgium – London-Brussels route

Captain A. S. Wilcockson & First Officer H.O. Woodhouse

After flying unscathed through a terrific gale, “Syrinx” was hit by a strong gust of wind (estimated at 65 mph) after landing at Evere. The aircraft turned onto its right wing, it crumpled up and stood on its nose. Another gust turned it over onto its back. One of the passengers had a fractured collar bone. No mail is known in collectors’ hands.

In “Croydon Airport 1928-1939 – The Great Days”<sup>45</sup> Captain Wilcockson recalled that the two Short L.17s, *Scylla* and *Syrinx* as being “undoubtedly two of the most unpleasant aircraft from both the passenger and pilot point of view. In bumpy weather they wallowed all over the sky and the controls were heavy and inefficient.”



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351022 – Imperial Airways – “Draco” – De Havilland DH.86 Diana Class – G-ADCM – Zwettl, Austria

Acting Captain N. J. Capper & Radio Operator Mr. W. Carson

After leaving Vienna at 11:45 a.m. on a flight to Budapest, Hungary, the aircraft encountered bad weather and ice formation on the wings. According to the reports, the machine was flying in fog and suddenly encountered a patch of moist icy air. The ground was covered with snow, and what looked like a meadow suitable for landing proved to be a clearing in a forest full of tree stumps. The aircraft was badly damaged. The pilot and radio operator were hurt slightly, and the three passengers escaped injury.

No covers are known in collectors’ hands.



De Havilland DH.86 Diana Class – G-ADCM – “Draco”

351025 (Nierinck 351025) – Imperial Airways – “Britomart” – Boulton & Paul P.71A Boadicea Class – G-AC0Y – Brussels, Belgium

Acting Captain V. A. Dawson & Radio Operator Mr. Scott

The aircraft undershot its landing at Evere Aerodrome and crashed into a field. The seven passengers and crew escaped with minor injuries. No covers are known in collectors' hands.



**Boulton & Paul P.71A Boadicea Class – G-AC0Y – “Britomart”**

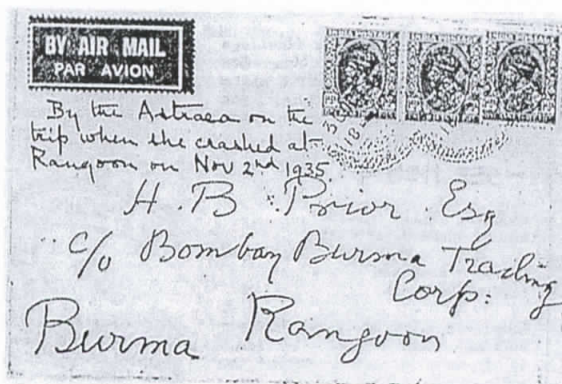
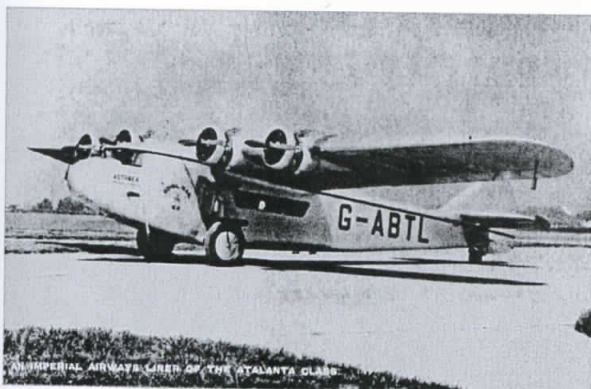
351102 (Nierinck 351102) – Imperial Airways – “Astraea” – Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class – G-ABTL – Rangoon, Burma – Great Britain-Australia route

Captain J. S. Sheppard

On landing, the aircraft skidded on a wet runway and crashed through the boundary fence, slightly damaging the starboard wing tip and the cabin floor. Captain Sheppard was slightly hurt in the leg, but the two passengers were unhurt.

The flight was carrying mail, including letters from Great Britain, South Africa and India. A cover is known with a hand written explanation, as shown. Another cover is known from Cape Town to Rangoon with the following handwritten note:

“Delivered by the Astraea which crashed on landing at Rangoon on Nov 2<sup>nd</sup> 1935”



**Armstrong Whitworth AW XV  
Atalanta Class - “Astraea”**



351103 (Nierinck 351103A) – Imperial Airways – “Atalanta” – Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class – G-ABTI – Kisumu, Kenya – Great Britain-South Africa route

Captain P.C. Ginn & First Officer R.C. Reid

The aircraft had left Juba, on the Nile, and was trying to make up time lost in the southbound service because of bad weather over the Mediterranean. On takeoff from Kisumu in the dark at 4 a.m., it hit some trees and was badly damaged. The pilots each suffered a concussion, First Officer Reid fractured his collarbone, but none of the passengers were injured.

The mail was not damaged, and three covers have been recorded, two of which are shown. The mail and passengers were taken to Nairobi by the “City of Jodhpur”, and a Wilson Airways aircraft.

Hopkins<sup>19</sup> reported a cover date stamped “LONDON 6.45 PM 26 OC 35” on a 6d stamp. The cover was undamaged.

“The East African Standard” page 26, Friday, November 8, 1935.

## Air Liner Wrecked at Kisumu

### CRASH WHEN TAKING OFF IN THE DARKNESS

#### Officers Injured

#### PASSENGERS HAVE TO SCRAMBLE THROUGH CABIN WINDOWS

The Imperial Airways liner, “R.M.A. “Atalanta,” carrying nine passengers, a crew of two, freight and mails, southwards, was totally wrecked when she struck a tree shortly after taking off from Kisumu in the early hours of Sunday morning.

The two members of the crew, Captain Ginn and First Officer Reid, who were thrown through the windscreen when the crash took place, received concussion, and the latter in addition a broken collarbone.

All the passengers had an escape which was described by one as “miraculous.” They had to climb through the windows of the partially smashed cabin, and one slight cut was the only injury sustained in the whole number, among whom were two ladies, Lord Balfour of Burleigh (on a visit to Kenya) and several prominent Johannesburg business men.



#### LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH

##### Fortnight's Visit to East Africa

Lord Balfour of Burleigh, who was one of the nine passengers in the ill-fated “Atalanta” which was completely wrecked at Kisumu early on Sunday morning arrived in Nairobi by air on Sunday afternoon. He is visiting East Africa in his capacity as a director of the Standard Bank of South Africa and during his fortnight's stay hopes to see as much as possible of the territories.

Lord Balfour intends to do most of his travelling in East Africa by air. To-day he will fly to Mombasa and from there will go to Moshi, returning in a few days to Nairobi. Later he will visit Mwanza and his tour will end with a few days' stay at Entebbe from where he hopes to return home by the Imperial Airways machine leaving on November 10.

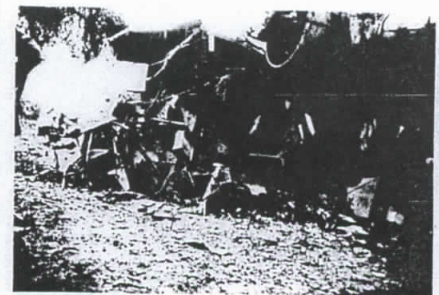
This is Lord Balfour's first visit to East Africa. Five years ago he spent some time in the Union.

#### AIR CRASH ENQUIRY

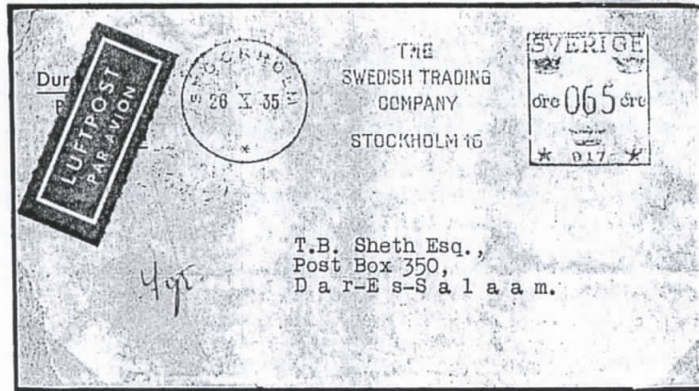
##### Passengers' Mementoes of Their Escape

The “East African Standard” is informed that an enquiry into the Kisumu accident to the Imperial Airways liner, R.M.A. “Atalanta” will be held in the course of a few days.

Some of the passengers, who continued their southward journey carried pieces of the wrecked plane as mementoes of their thrilling experience and fortunate escape.



351103 (Nierinck 351103A) – Imperial Airways – “Atalanta” – Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class – G-ABTI – Kisumu, Kenya (continued)

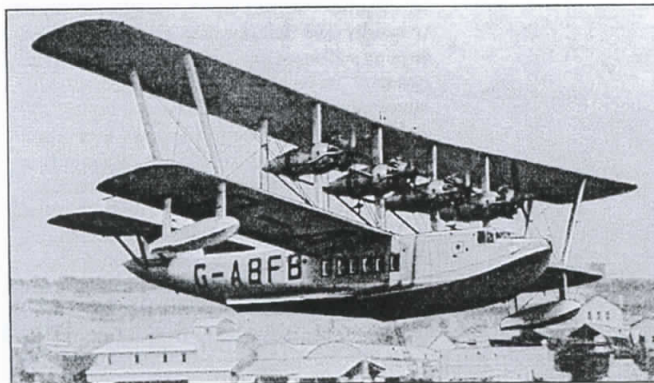


**Two Covers From the “Atalanta” Crash**

351109 (Nierinck 351109) – Imperial Airways – “Sylvanus” – Short S.17 Kent Scipio Class – G-ABFB – Brindisi, Italy

Captain D. H. Drew, Engineer J. McKeag & Engineer J. H. Brammah

The aircraft caught fire when refueling and was totally destroyed. 10 passengers and 3 crew members were onboard. 12 died and one was seriously injured. It is not known if mail was onboard, and no covers are known in collectors’ hands.



**Short S.17 Kent Scipio Class – “Sylvanus”**

DIRECT AIR MAILS TO INDIA and BRITISH EAST AFRICA leave London, every Saturday morning. The countries served and the combined postage and air fees are as follows:—

	First 1-oz.	Each additional 1-oz.		First 1-oz.	Each additional 1-oz.
Egypt & Palestine	3d.	2d.	Sudan	5d.	4d.
Iraq	6d.	4d.	Kenya, Uganda & Tanganyika	7d.	6d.
Persia	7d.	5d.		Belgian Congo (via Sudan)	8d.
India (by air to Karachi)	6d.	5d.			
.. (by air to Delhi)	5d.	7d.			

For gain in time in transit over ordinary routes and full particulars see Air Mail leaflet obtainable free of charge at any Post Office.

**Page From Airmail Etiquette Booklet**

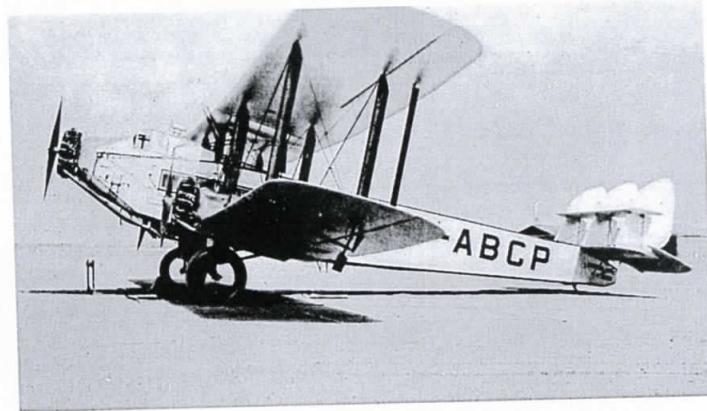


351123 (Nierinck 351123) – Imperial Airways – “City of Jodhpur” – De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – G-ABCP – Entebbe, Uganda

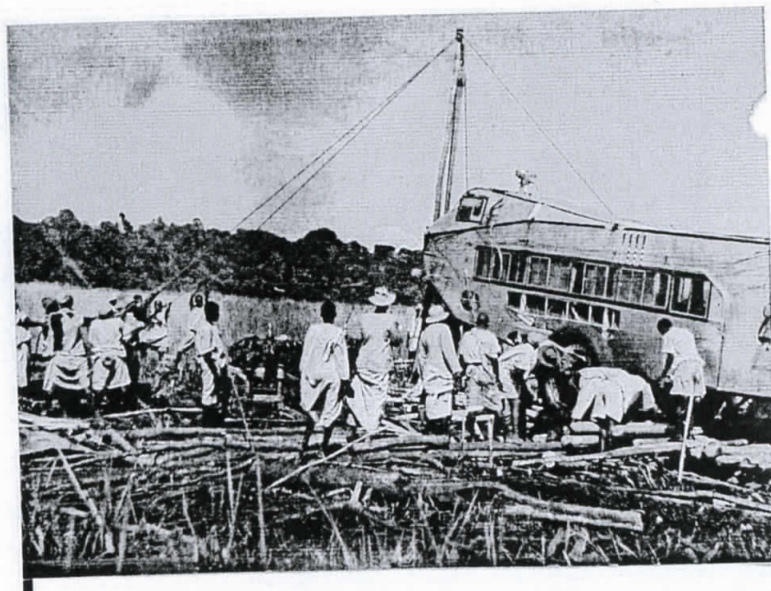
Acting Captain Gareth E. Klein & Wireless Operator T. Morris

The southbound flight, carrying mail only, lost its propeller and made a forced landing in a swamp ten miles northwest of Entebbe. The rescuers had to go in by canoe for three miles, and then had to struggle waist deep through the swamp for two hours.

The mail was recovered and it reached Entebbe at 8:00 p.m. the same day. It was checked and then dispatched by road to Kampala. No special markings were applied, and no covers are known in collectors' hands.



De Havilland DH 66 Hercules – “City of Jodhpur”



After the Forced Landing – photo ex-Vic Groves archive, courtesy of Dr. Eric R. Coulton

351231 (Nierinck 351231) – Imperial Airways – “City of Khartoum” – Short S.8 Calcutta – G-AASJ – Alexandria, Egypt – Great Britain – Asia route

Captain Vernon G. Wilson, Flight Engineer H. C. Amor & Wireless Operator H. K. A. Baker

The aircraft was approaching a flare path for landing at Alexandria Harbour after dark. The aircraft apparently ran out of fuel, as all three engines stopped at a height of about 600 feet, and it dived into the sea. The aircraft sank immediately after hitting the water. Most of the crew and passengers were unable to get out of the aircraft. Captain Wilson and two passengers were the only survivors, as they were able to hold onto a piece of the wreckage for five hours before being picked up by the destroyer HMS Brilliant. The other 3 crew members and 9 passengers died. It was believed that Captain Wilson had been able to escape through a sliding window in the cockpit, and he was an accomplished swimmer.

The subsequent inquiry established that lack of fuel was the cause of the accident. The fuel gauges were known to be inaccurate and the situation was made worse by the incorrect adjustment of the fuel jets in the carburetors, thus increasing consumption by 10%.

Captain Wilson was summarily dismissed by Imperial Airways, along with several other pilots, in 1937, with no reason given. The pilots had apparently been critical of the company in matters of aircraft equipment and flight security.

71 bags (390 kg) of mail were recovered a week after the accident. The Indian mail was spread out to dry on the lawns of the General Post Office at Bombay. After being dried, it was forwarded to the various destinations. The Australian mail was dried in a bakery in Melbourne. Only about 1% of the letters was undeliverable. Many different cachets, labels and mimeograph explanations were used by the various destination post offices to explain the damaged covers.

Hopkins<sup>19</sup> reported the following: “I had ... two covers addressed to Hong Kong. In each case the departure marks have been washed off with the adhesives and there is no clue as to origin, except that one came from somewhere in Kent, and a note enclosed in the other after receipt to say it was posted at Westward Ho!, North Devon. Both have a Hong Kong Officially Sealed label on the back, tied by a date stamp of Victoria, Hong Kong 19 JA 36. Each has the boxed legend “RECEIVED DAMAGED/AT HONG KONG” 59 x 15 mm overall.” Duncan Crewe reports three covers to Hong Kong.

Field<sup>18</sup> reported “71 bags destined for Egypt, Palestine, Iraq, India, Siam, Malaya and Australia was salvaged after almost a week’s immersion and was forwarded by boat.”

## THE SALVED AIR MAIL



### Indian Air Crash Mails

#### City of Khartoum Crash 1935

On 31st Dec. 1935, the Imperial Airways Short Calcutta flying boat G-AASJ "City of Khartoum" sank off Alexandria, with the loss of 12 lives. The ill-fated flying boat carried mail from U.K. on 28th Dec. bound for Egypt, Palestine, Iraq, India, Malaya and Australia. Most of the mail could be salvaged after a week's immersion. The mail for India was spread out on the lawns of the G.P.O. Bombay to dry. No special markings were applied to the salvaged mail.

Three crew members and nine passengers lost their lives. The pilot, Vernon Garry Wilson, was found swimming in the sea five hours later by a rescue boat. 71 bags of mail were salvaged a week later in water-soaked condition.

SOME of the damaged letters salvaged from the City of Khartoum being dried on the lawn of the G. P. O. Bombay.



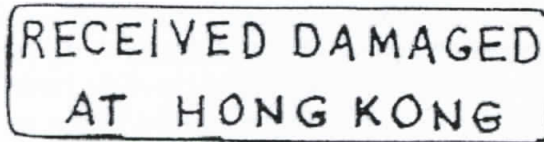
351231 (Nierinck 351231) – Imperial Airways – “City of Khartoum” – Short S.8 Calcutta – G-AASJ – Alexandria, Egypt (continued)



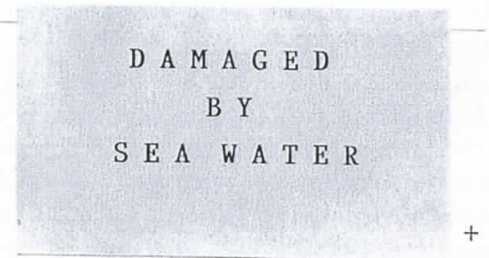
Cover From Denmark to Dutch East Indies



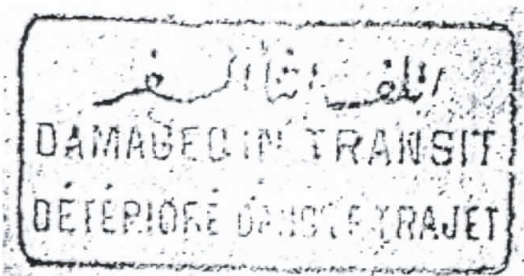
Cover from Italy to Egypt



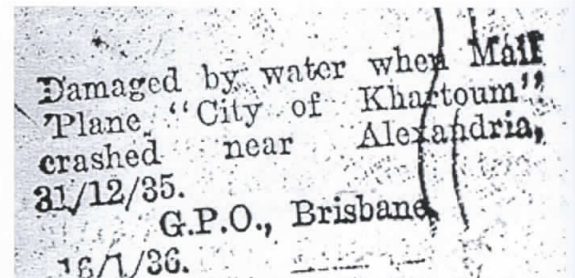
Type “a” – Cachet – Black



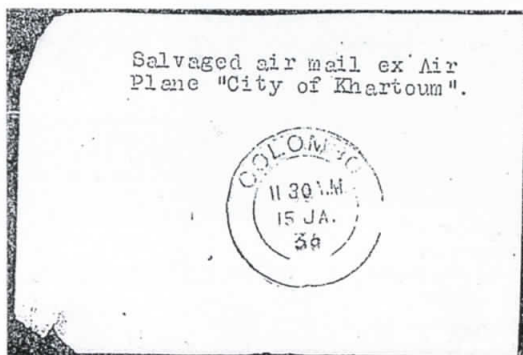
Type “b” – Cachet – Color Unknown – on mail to India (facsimile)



Type “c” – Cachet – Black – on mail to Egypt



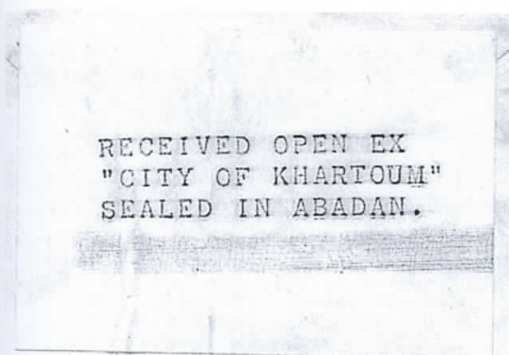
Type “d” – Cachet – Violet – from Brisbane Post Office



Type “e” - Typed Explanation on covers to Colombo, Ceylon



Type “ee” – Similar to Type “e”, but with capital ‘A’ in “Air”



Type “f” – Label on covers to Abadan, Iran


**Air Crash  
Recalled**

HKT 20/1/36  
MAIL REACHES  
HONGKONG

Soaked air mail letters smelling of sea water and bearing evidence of the tragedy of an air disaster in which a liner and twelve lives were lost, were delivered in Hongkong this morning.

A brief official notice from the Post Office of Alexandria states that the mail was salvaged by divers from the air liner, City of Khartoum, which crashed into the sea a mile and a half outside the harbour on December 30 with the loss of 12 lives.

The mail was re-packed and sent to Singapore from which port the Italian liner Victoria brought it yesterday. The local Post Office stated that there was only a small mail for Hongkong, including seven registered letters. All were wet and show signs of their immersion in the sea.



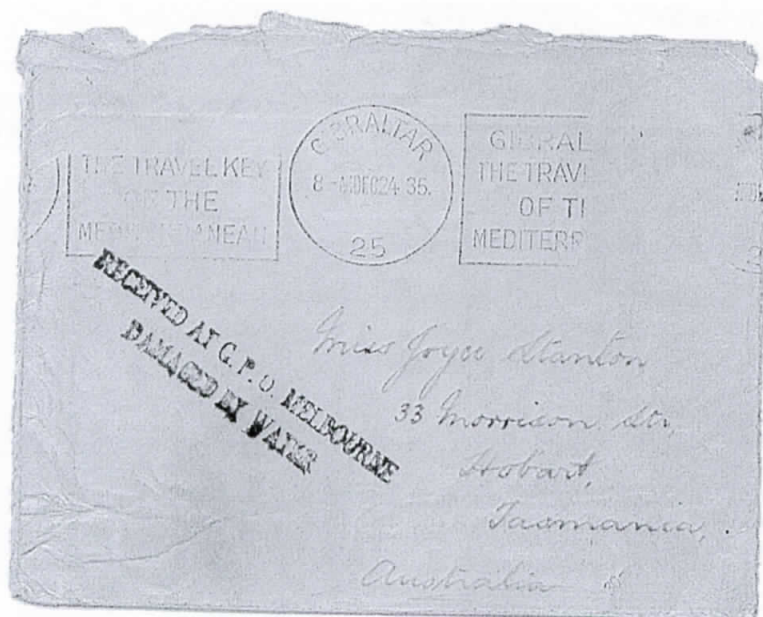
General Post Office,  
SYDNEY.

17th January, 1936.

The enclosed article has been damaged by sea water. It was part of the air mail from the United Kingdom carried by the British Air Liner “City of Khartoum” which was lost in the Mediterranean Sea.

Yours faithfully,  
  
J. S. DUNCAN  
Deputy Director,  
Posts and Telegraphs.

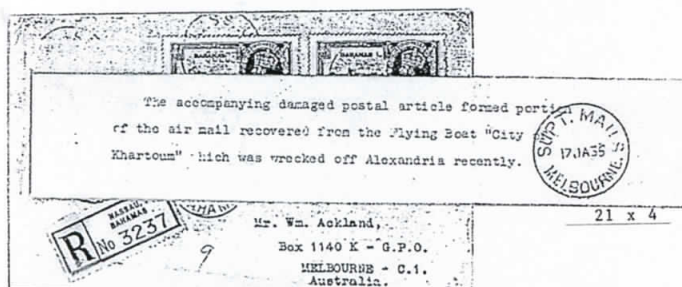
Type “g” – Explanation from Sydney, Australia



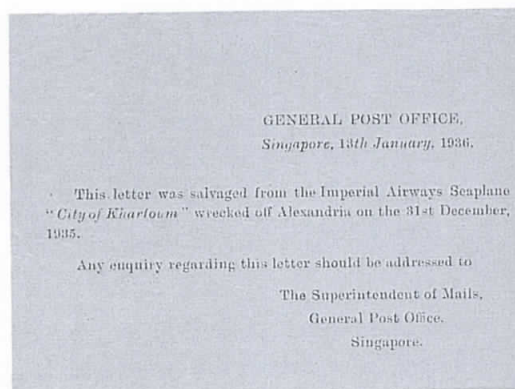
Type “h” – Cachet – Violet – Applied by GPO Melbourne



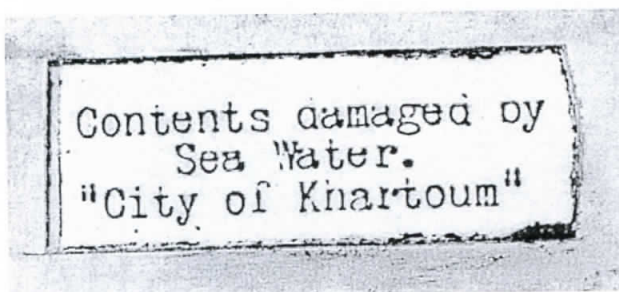
351231 (Nierinck 351231) – Imperial Airways – “City of Khartoum” – Short S.8 Calcutta – G-AASJ – Alexandria, Egypt (continued)



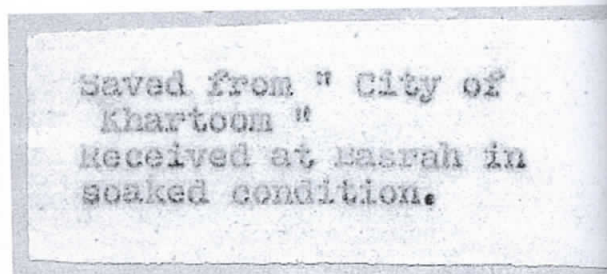
Type “i” – Explanation from Melbourne Post Office



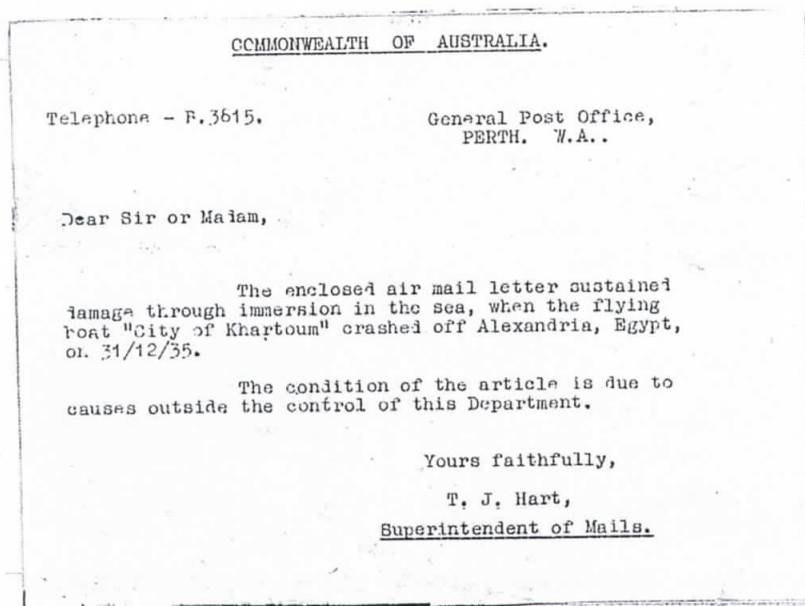
Type “j” – Explanation from GPO Singapore



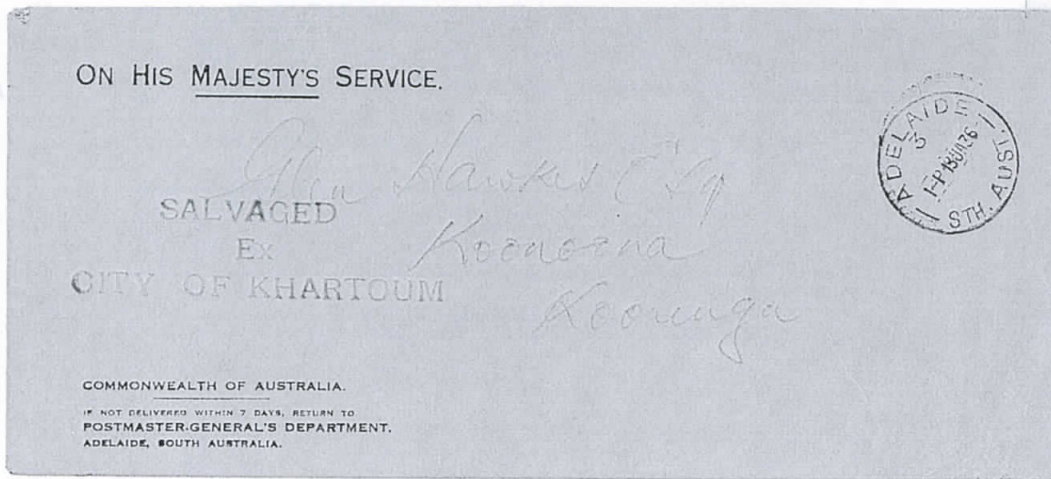
Type “k” – Label – on mail to Palestine



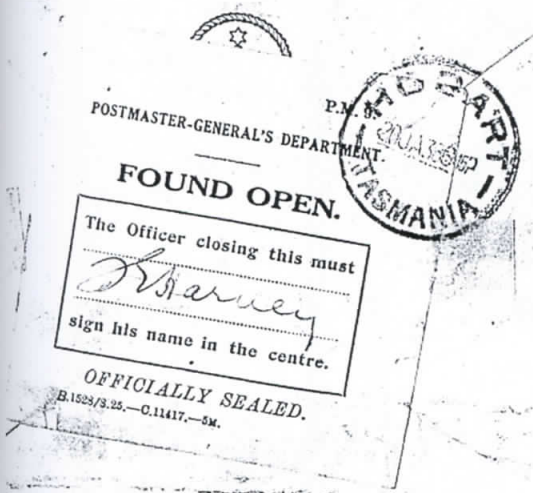
Type “l” – Label – on mail to Basrah, Iraq



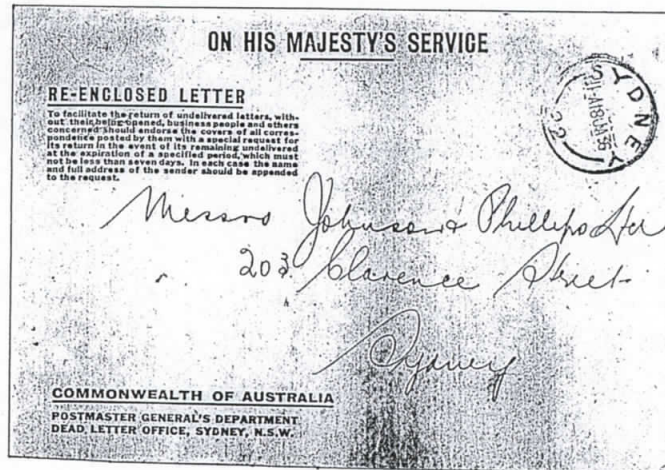
Type “m” – Explanation From GPO Perth, Australia



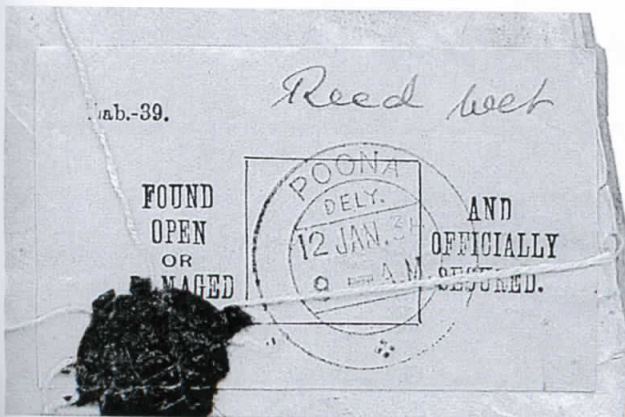
Type “n” – Cachet – Violet – From Adelaide, South Australia



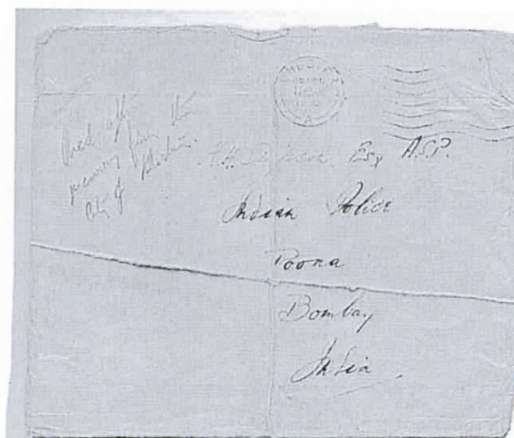
Type “o” – Label – Applied by Hobart, Tasmania, Australia Post Office – The same label was affixed to covers by the Melbourne Post Office



Type “p” – Ambulance Cover from Sydney Dead Letter Office



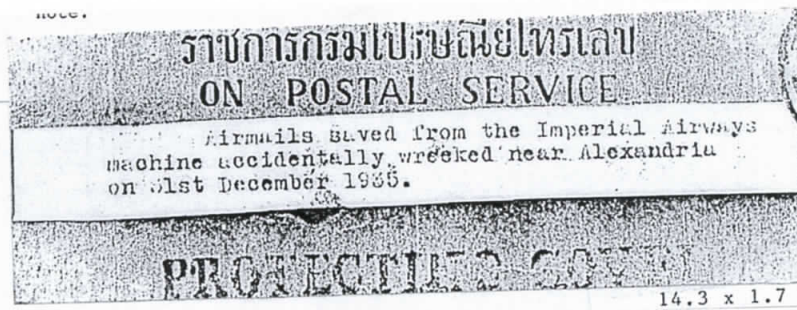
Type “q” – Label from Poona, India



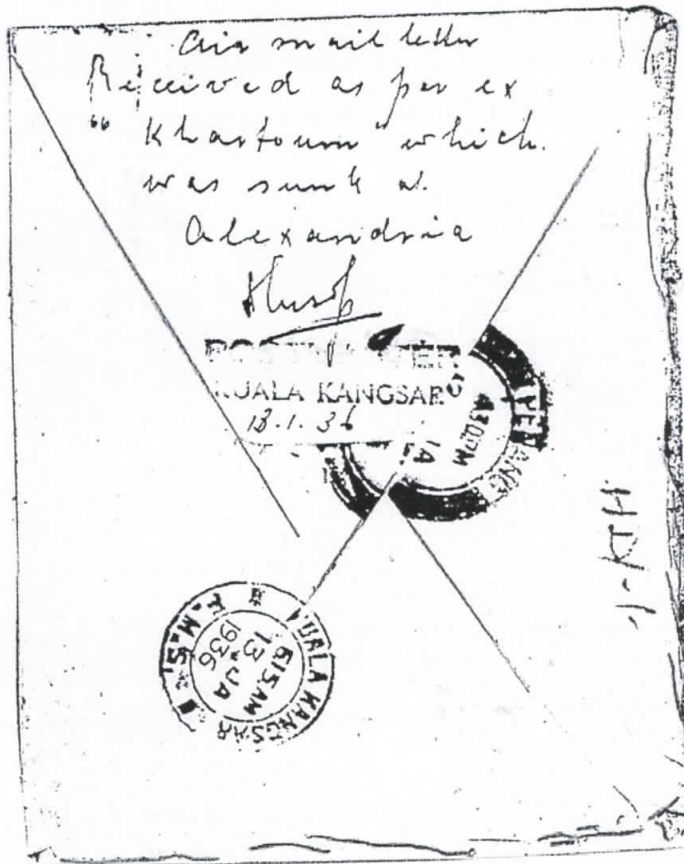
Type “r” – Manuscript from Poona, India



351231 (Nierinck 351231) – Imperial Airways – “City of Khartoum” – Short S.8 Calcutta – G-AASJ – Alexandria, Egypt (continued)



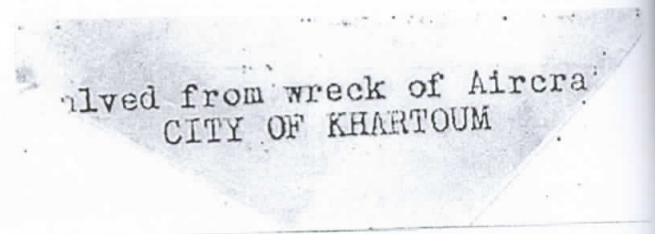
Type “s” – Label from Thailand



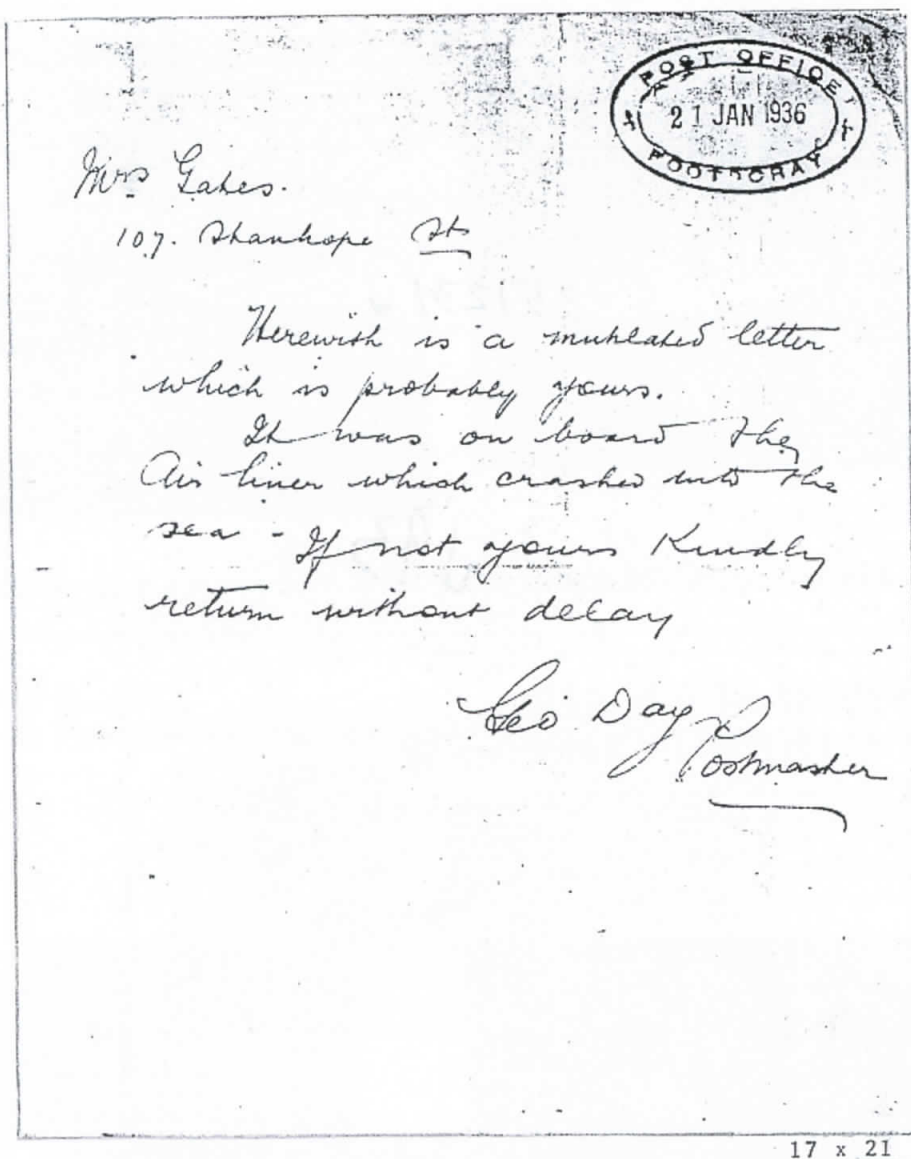
Type “t” – Manuscript on Cover to Malaya



Type “u” – Label From Soerabaja, Dutch East Indies



Type “v” – Typewritten directly on cover at Penang, Malaya

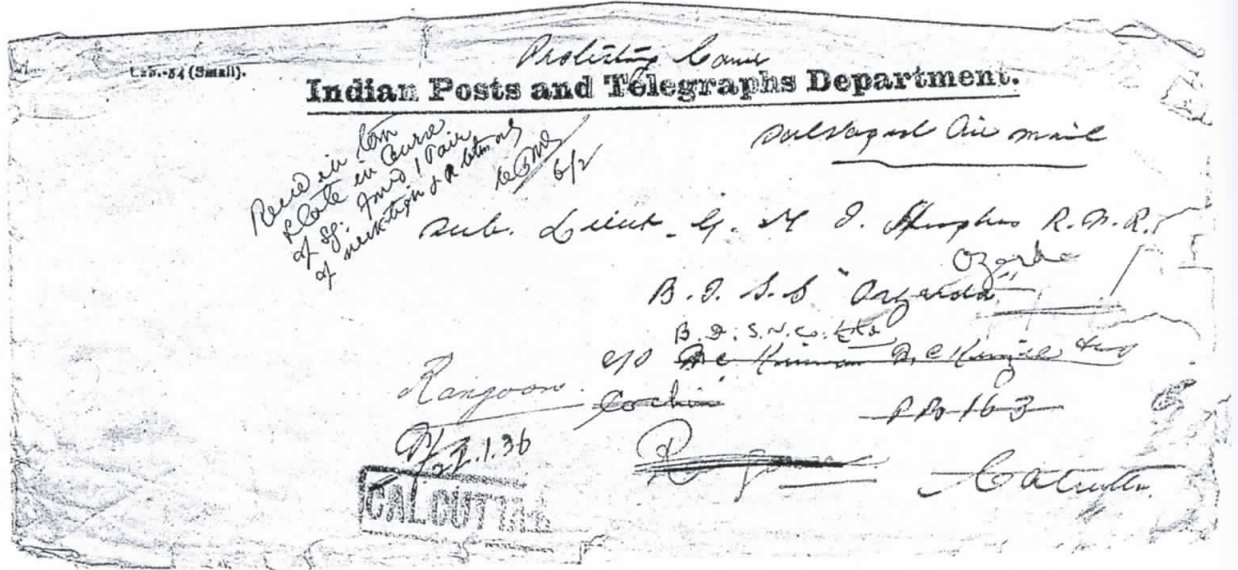


Type “w” – Letter From Postmaster, Footscray, Australia

Type “x” – Mail to Netherlands Indies with a manuscript note – Red – Recorded by Nierinck<sup>4</sup> but no example was shown







Type “y” – Indian Posts & Telegraphs Department Ambulance Cover with manuscript

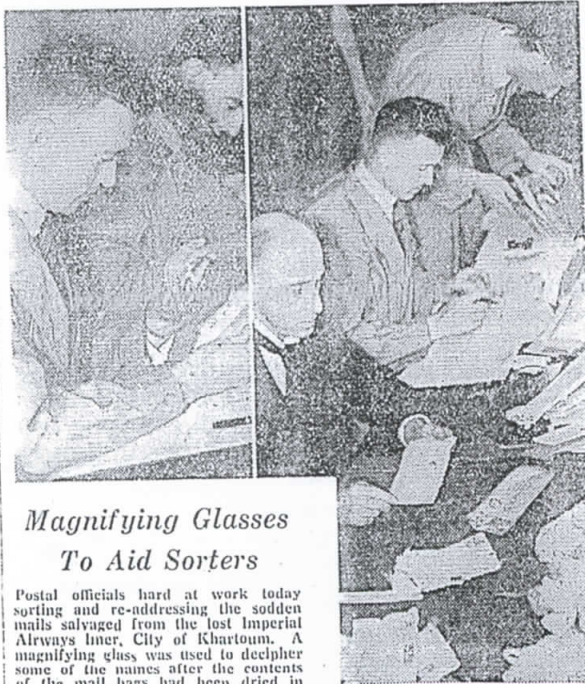
## MAIL FROM SUNK AIR LINER BAKED IN OVEN

Bearing the marks of immersion in 30 fathoms of Mediterranean water and from two days in a pie oven at the G.P.O. cafeteria, more than 2000 letters recovered from the air liner, the City of Khartoum, which crashed on New Year's Eve, were delivered in the city today.

Many of the letters were slightly defaced and charred.

Arriving sodden on Friday, the letters were watched by the special officer during their week-end in the gas oven, and it was found early today that not more than 1 per cent. of the mail could not be delivered.

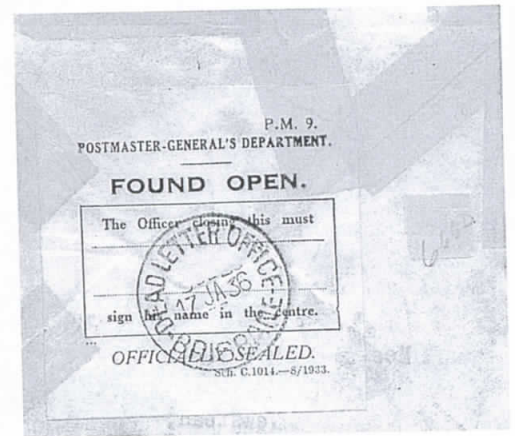
The services of the handwriting expert in the sorting room were not needed. One of the letters addressed to Hotham Heights escaped almost unscathed.



*Magnifying Glasses To Aid Sorters*

Postal officials hard at work today sorting and re-addressing the sodden mails salvaged from the lost Imperial Airways liner, City of Khartoum. A magnifying glass was used to decipher some of the names after the contents of the mail bags had been dried in the G.P.O. cafe ovens.

JANUARY 20, 1936



Type “z” – Label From Brisbane, Australia Dead Letter Office

Captain & 1<sup>st</sup> officer unknown

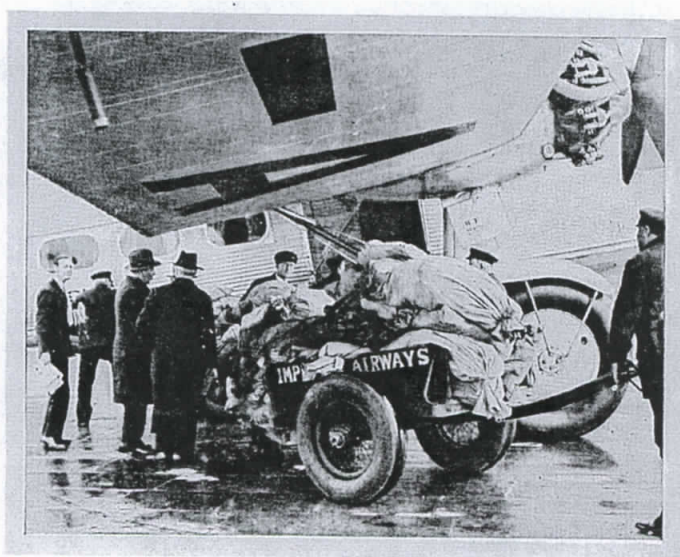
Listed by Munson <sup>3</sup>, A.S. Jackson <sup>9</sup>, A.J. Jackson <sup>13</sup> & Denham <sup>6</sup> as a crash landing. No other information is available, and no mail is known.



Westland Wessex – G-ABEG



There is a  
regular Air  
Service by  
**IMPERIAL AIRWAYS**  
THE BRITISH AIR LINE to ITALY, GREECE, EGYPT, IRAQ,  
PERSIA, INDIA, EAST & CENTRAL AFRICA and THE EAST  
*Particulars from any Post Office, or from*  
Airways House, Charles Street, Haymarket, S.W.1. Telephone:—Regent 7861.  
After July—London Air Terminus, Victoria Station (Continental Departures), S.W.1. Telephone:—Victoria 8242.



[Photo: Photopress.]

LOADING MAILS AT CROYDON.



360210 (Nierinck 360210) – Imperial Airways – “Artemis” – Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta  
Class – G-ABTJ – Pietersburg, South Africa – Great Britain-South Africa route

Captain John Spafford & First Officer G. Beckham

The flight had left London on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February. On take-off from Pietersburg shortly after 8 p.m., with the aid of flares, the aircraft crashed into a group of trees on the edge of the aerodrome. The aerodrome was rain sodden, which hindered the aircraft in gaining sufficient speed and altitude to clear the trees. The aircraft was badly damaged, but there was no loss of life. The Captain and First Officer were badly injured, but the six passengers escaped with minor injuries and shock.

A Dragon Rapide of African Air Transport Company was immediately chartered by Imperial to bring their manager and engineering superintendent to the scene of the accident, and bring the mail to Germiston. However, on the way to Pietersburg, this aircraft ran out of fuel and was forced to land in the veld six miles from the Pietersburg Aerodrome. The mail was not damaged, and it was sent on its way, without any cachet or special markings, to Germiston by train. Therefore, covers are difficult to identify. One cover which was addressed to Durban, South Africa, was backstamped there on the 12<sup>th</sup> of February.

Approximately 10 covers have been recorded.

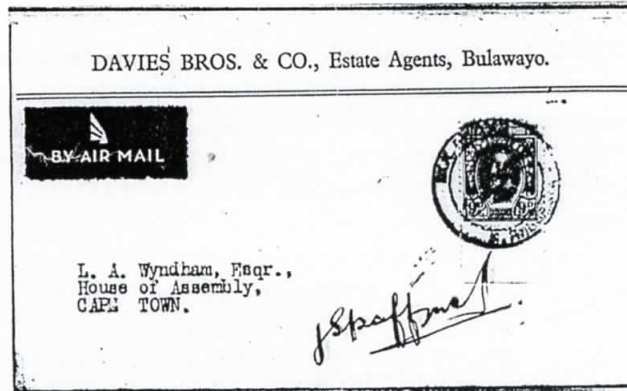
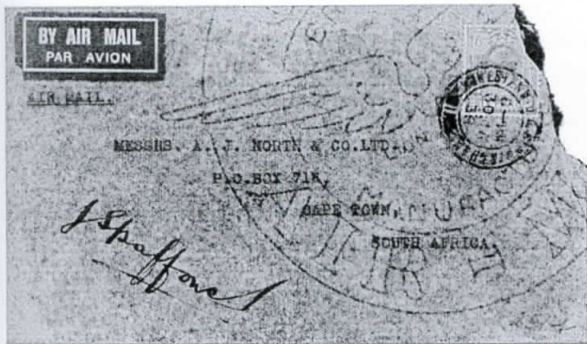


**TAIL REARED HIGH IN THE AIR.**

The wreck of the Imperial Airways liner Artemis, which crashed in the trees near Pietersburg aerodrome last night when taking off in the dark for Johannesburg. The machine, after striking the trees, nose-dived into the ground. Half a page of illustrations of this remarkable accident appears elsewhere in this issue.

Photo from The Johannesburg Star





Most (but not all) Covers Were Autographed By The Captain John Spafford

*Imperial Airways Liner  
Wrecked*

---

*Pilots' Legs Broken And Six  
Passengers Injured*

---

*Machine Ploughs Through Tops Of Trees For 200  
Yards Before Crashing*

---

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

JOHANNESBURG, Feb. 10.

The Imperial Airways liner Artemis, southward bound, crashed in taking off at Pietersburg at about eight o'clock to-night. The two pilots, Captain Stafford and Captain Deekman, are in hospital suffering from broken legs, while the six passengers fortunately escaped with shock and bruises, four being taken to hospital but only two detained. Some of the passengers injured themselves while climbing out of the cabins and jumping to the ground.

The machine had taken off in a northerly direction and in turning over a small plantation to pick up the southerly course to Germiston appeared to lose height.

It ploughed through tops of trees for 200 yards before coming to

earth with its nose in the ground and fell in the air. The machine is stated to be wrecked.

The Imperial Airways issued a statement to-night that the machine, which was due at the Rand Airport to-night, was damaged while taking off at Pietersburg, the passengers sustaining slight shock, while two members of the crew were injured.

A military plane is leaving Roberts Heights early to-morrow morning to convey officials to the scene of the accident to carry out an inspection.

It is hoped to arrange for the mail from London to be brought to Johannesburg this morning.

South African Airways is postponing the departure of the morning planes to Capetown and Durban in order to connect with the arrival of the mail from the north.

A Mishap at Pietersburg

THE Armstrong Whitworth air liner *Artemis*, Southbound on the Imperial Airways service, crashed on Feb. 10 when leaving Pietersburg aerodrome for Johannesburg. Capn. John Spafford broke a leg and Mr. G. N. Beckman, the first officer, broke an arm. Cables state that one passenger was taken to hospital and the other five were not seriously hurt.

The aerodrome was sodden through heavy rains and the *Artemis* had difficulty in getting off. Which is another cause for wonder why nothing has been done about variable-pitch airscrews since Dr. Hele-Shaw's lecture eight years ago on the V. P. screw which he had already patented.

After clearing the boundary fence the machine lost height and its undercarriage tore through the tops of a blue-gum plantation for 100 yds. The machine struck a particularly tall tree, spun round and put its nose into the ground. The control cabin was apparently the worst-damaged part of the machine.

Imperial Airways now have the following aeroplanes of the same class working this section of the route (from Kisumu Southward): *Amalthea* (G-ABTG), *Andromeda* (G-ABTH), *Astraea* (G-ABTI).

The Aeroplane.  
19 · 2 · 36.

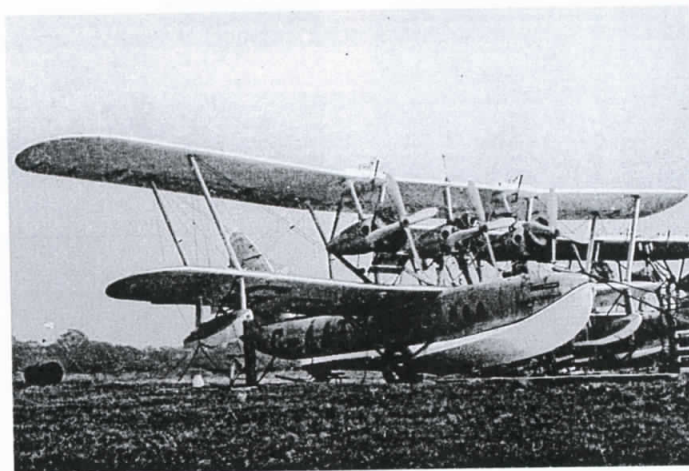
The Natal Mercury.  
11th February 1936.



360324 – Imperial Airways – “City of Swanage” – Short S.8 Calcutta – G-AATZ – in Mediterranean between Alexandria and Athens

Pilot & 1<sup>st</sup> officer unknown

The aircraft force-landed in the sea with engine trouble. After 2½ hours, the problem was rectified and she resumed her flight. No mail is known.



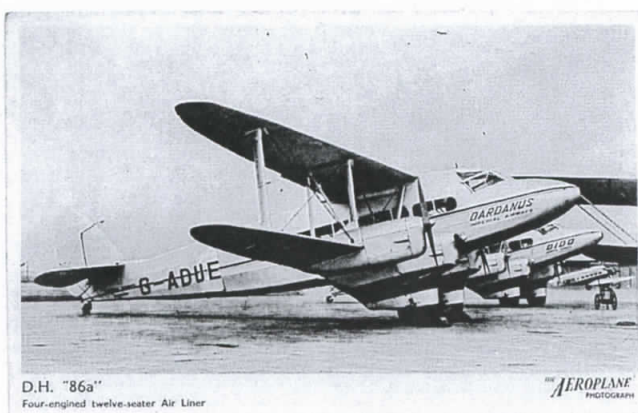
**Short S.8 Calcutta – G-AATZ – “City of Swanage”**

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360509 – Imperial Airways – “Dardanus” – De Havilland DH-86 Diana Class – G-ADUE – Erkelenz, Germany – London-Cologne route

Captain & 1<sup>st</sup> officer unknown

The aircraft was enroute to Cologne with eleven passengers. Due to a break in the petrol pipes and fog, the pilot had to make a forced landing at Erkelenz. No other information is available and no mail is known.



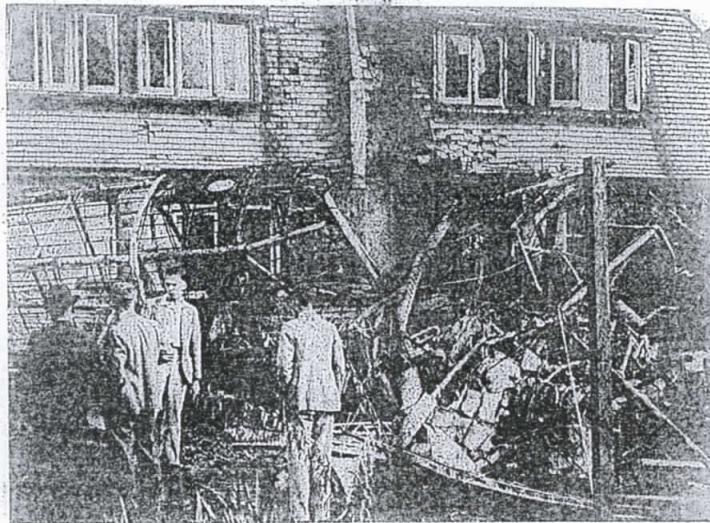
**De Havilland DH-86 Diana Class – “Dardanus”**

360810 (Nierinck 360810) – Imperial Airways – Vickers 212 Vellox – G-ABKY – Wallington, Great Britain – London-Paris route

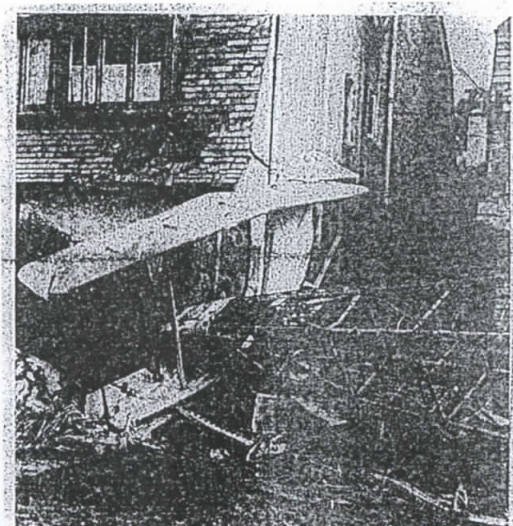
Acting Captain L. F. Hastings “Laddie” Orr, First Officer Stanley Miles Fergusson, Radio Operator Robert Arbuckle & Radio Operator J. D. Dear

After a night take-off from Croydon, the engine failed, causing a stall, and the plane crashed onto a house in Hillside Gardens, in the suburbs of Wallington. It caught fire and was destroyed. All four crew members were killed.

Most of the mail consisted of newspapers and printed matter. No covers have been recorded in collectors’ hands.



Twisted metal and charred woodwork tell their grim story whilst the damaged roofs give some idea of the force of the impact when the plane hurtled to its doom.



Only the fall of the plane escaped the fire in which the occupants were burned to death whilst rescuers stood helpless against the fierce heat.



360822 (Nierinck 360822) – Imperial Airways – “Scipio” – Short S.17 Kent Scipio Class – G-ABFA – Mirabella Bay, Crete, Greece – Australia-Great Britain route

Captain A. S. Wilcockson, First Officer S. G. Long & Wireless Operator Birkenshaw

“Scipio” was landing at Mirabella Bay. One of the pilots had inadvertently set the tailplane at maximum incidence, making the aircraft nose-heavy. When the Captain opened up the engines to make another landing attempt, the high thrust line increased the nose-down pitch and the flying boat dived into the sea and sank in a few minutes. The Captain, crew and all but two passengers escaped without injury, with two passengers having only minor injuries. Reports that the aircraft encountered engine trouble and was attempting an emergency landing, are incorrect.

Thirty eight bags of mail were recovered and dried out. Hopkins<sup>19</sup> reported that within six hours all the mail had been salvaged and handed over to the Greek Post Office at Athens. The stamps had soaked off many of the covers. Many different cachet and label varieties are known, as well as mimeograph explanations from various post offices.

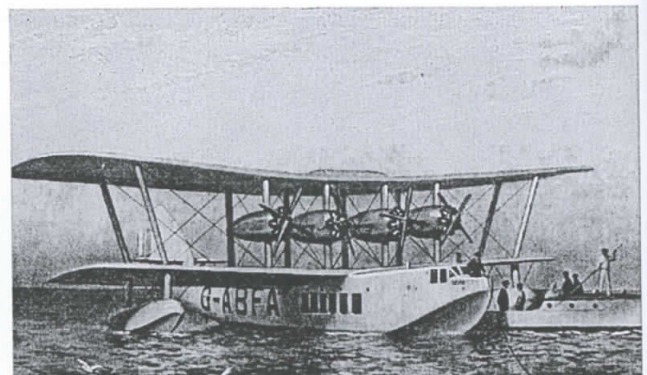
A study of many covers to countries other than Great Britain shows that the mail was processed through the Brindisi, Italy Post Office. A transit postmark was applied there on September 1<sup>st</sup> to some, but not all, of the mail. This mail was carried to Paris by train, and forwarded from there. Some of the mail to Great Britain was carried by the next Imperial flight coming through Athens, arriving in London on August 25<sup>th</sup>. The balance of the mail to Great Britain was sent by rail to Paris, reaching London on the 27<sup>th</sup> or 28<sup>th</sup>.

According to Duncan Crewe<sup>28</sup>, “Two bags of Hong Kong mail weighing just over 29 kilos were on board. They were salvaged within a few hours and flown through from Athens by a relief aircraft, arriving in London on 25 August. .... Most of the Hong Kong mail I have seen still has adhesives on, probably because it was recovered so quickly that the stamps had not had time to float off. Another possibility is that the bags were in the rear mail compartment which remained above the surface after the crash.”

Proud<sup>32</sup> reports mail from Australia postmarked 15.8.36, from Singapore 16.8.36, from Karachi on 19.8.36, reaching London on either the 25<sup>th</sup> or the 28<sup>th</sup> of August.



Captain Wilcockson who commanded the first westbound flight of the Empire flying boat *Caledonia*, July 1937. *Bennett Family*.



24/8/36

### SCIPIO CRASH SURVIVORS

Cairo, Monday.

Ten of the 11 survivors of the accident to the Imperial Airways flying boat *Scipio*, which crashed in rough weather in the harbour of Mirabella (Crete), on Saturday, have left for Athens.

They are taking with them some of the mail that was salvaged, but which has not been identified because the mailbag labels were missing.—Reuter.

## FLYING-BOAT'S CRASH AT MIRABELLA

on 22/8/36.

### TWO PASSENGERS KILLED IN THE SCIPIO

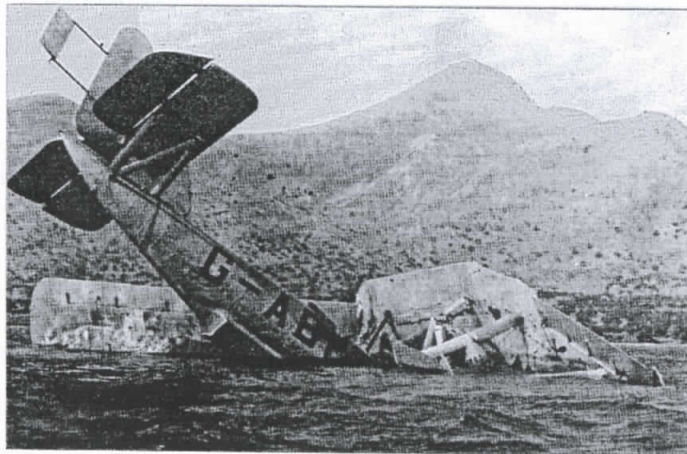
A Reuter message from Athens states that the Imperial Airways flying-boat Scipio, carrying seven passengers and a crew of four, crashed into the sea in rough weather on Saturday when alighting in Mirabella Bay, Crete, after crossing safely from Alexandria, and sank.

Mr. T. A. C. Forbes, a retired Indian Police officer, and Lieutenant R. G. Wilson-Dickson, of the Royal Tank Corps, were killed. Of the five passengers rescued, Mr. J. N. Draught was seriously injured. The other four received slight injuries, as did the four members of the crew.

The local Cretan authorities and doctors rendered first-aid to the injured occupants of the flying-boat, who were as quickly as possible taken on board the Imperial Airways depôt ship Imperia. The cruiser Durban is expected hourly at Mirabella from Haifa.

A Reuter message from Mirabella states that the two victims of the accident were buried at Mirabella at noon yesterday.

A statement issued by Imperial Airways on Saturday night said that the Scipio was sunk by rough seas when alighting at



“Scipio” in Mirabella Bay After the Crash

The Daily Telegraph reported about the state of affairs at the London Sorting Office, as follows:

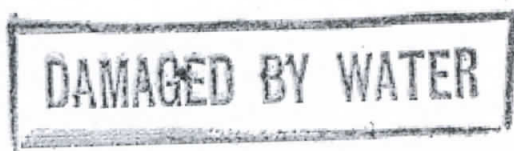
“The floor is ankle deep in the stamps of almost every nation east from Egypt to New Zealand. Generally, the first thing that happens when a letter is dried is that the stamp peels off.

All the stamps are sent to the Returned Letter Section, where they are carefully preserved for six months before being sold. Anyone receiving a stampless letter marked Damaged by Sea Water may apply there for the missing stamp—or one like it.” !!!

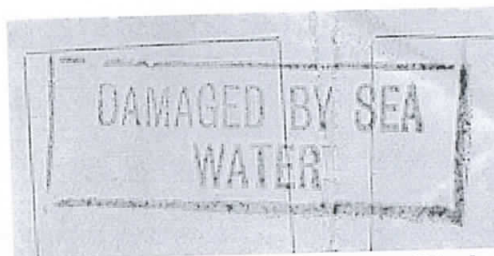
Quote from an unknown book:

“According to my calculations we were now closing fast on Crete where, if they had been compromised by headwinds, the flying boat skippers could stop for extra fuel at Mirabella Bay, notorious in aviation circles for its treacherously clear water. Incoming pilots tended to see it only seconds before the instant of impact and, after several dangerously heavy landings, Imperial's engineers were asked urgently to devise equipment that would give a true indication of altitude. What they came up with were net containers secured to each wingtip and filled with ping-pong balls. At the appropriate moment the nets were released and the balls bouncing across the limpid surface gave the pilot his crucial visual reference.”





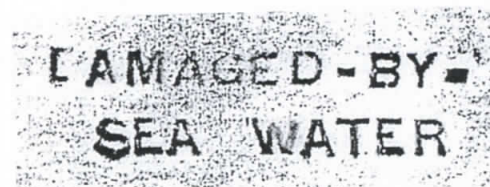
Type “a” – Cachet – Violet, Red or Black



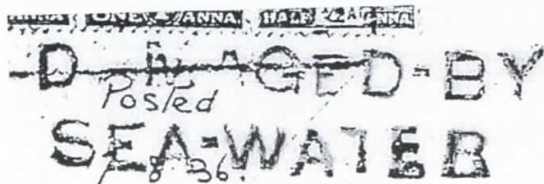
Type “b” – Cachet – Violet or Black

Damaged By Sea Water

Type “c” – Cachet – Red or Black



Type “d” – Cachet – Black



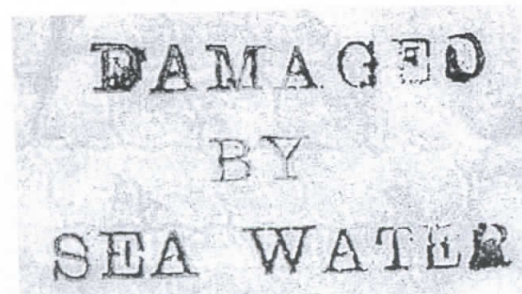
Type “e” – Cachet – Black



Type “f” – Cachet – Black



Type “g” – Cachet – Black, Blue or Purple



Type “h” – Cachet – Black



Type “i” – Cachet – Black or Blue



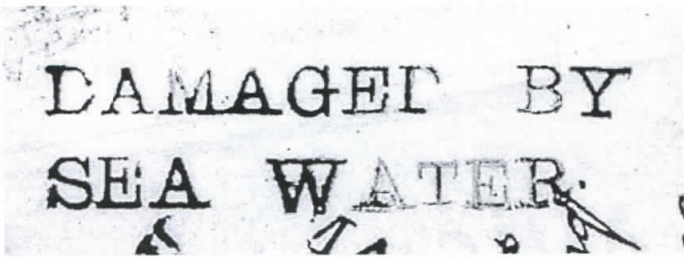
Type “j” – Cachet – Black  
Applied to mail addressed to France and processed in France to European countries other than the UK

ACCIDENT D'AVION  
Correspondances recueillies en Mer  
NE PAS TAXER

Type “k” – Cachet – Black  
Applied to mail addressed to France and processed in France to European countries other than the UK

Accident d'Avion

Type “l” – Cachet – Red or Violet  
Applied to mail addressed to France and processed in France to European countries other than the UK

Type “m” – Not Used	Type “n” – Not Used
 <p>DAMAGED BY SEA WATER</p> <p>Type “o” – Cachet – Red</p>	Type “p” – Not Used

Y AIR MAIL  
Lettera danneggiata dall'acqua del mare in seguito a sinistro aereo

Type “q” – Onion-Skin Label – On Mail To Italy

Lettre endommagée de l'eau de la mer à la suite du désastre aérien.  
E DEI TELEGRAFI  
SERVIZIO POSTALE

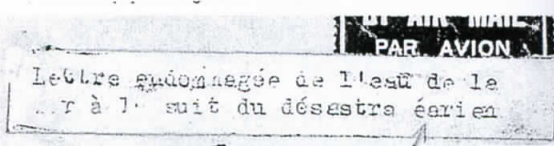
Type “r” – Onion-Skin Label – Applied to mail addressed to France and processed in France to European countries other than the UK





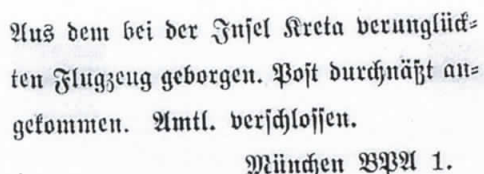
Lettre endommagée de l'eau de la mer suite du sinistre aérien

Type “s” – Onion-Skin Label – Applied to mail addressed to France and processed in France to European countries other than the UK



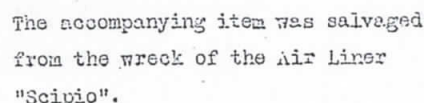
LET AIR MAIL  
PAR AVION  
Lettre endommagée de l'eau de la mer suite du désastre aérien

Type “t” – Onion-Skin Label – Applied to mail addressed to France and processed in France to European countries other than the UK



Aus dem bei der Insel Kreta verunglückten Flugzeug geborgen. Post durchnäht angekommen. Amtl. verschlossen.  
München BPA 1.

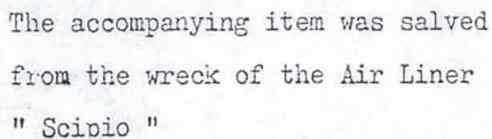
Type “u” – Onion-Skin Label on Mail to Germany



The accompanying item was salvaged from the wreck of the Air Liner “Scipio”.

Returned Letter Section,  
London.

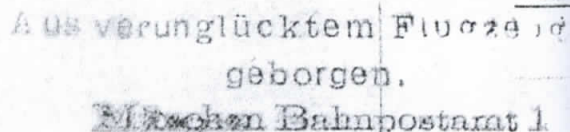
Type “v” – Typed Label



The accompanying item was salvaged from the wreck of the Air Liner “Scipio”


Returned Letter Section  
London .

Type “vv” – Typed Label – Similar to Type “v”



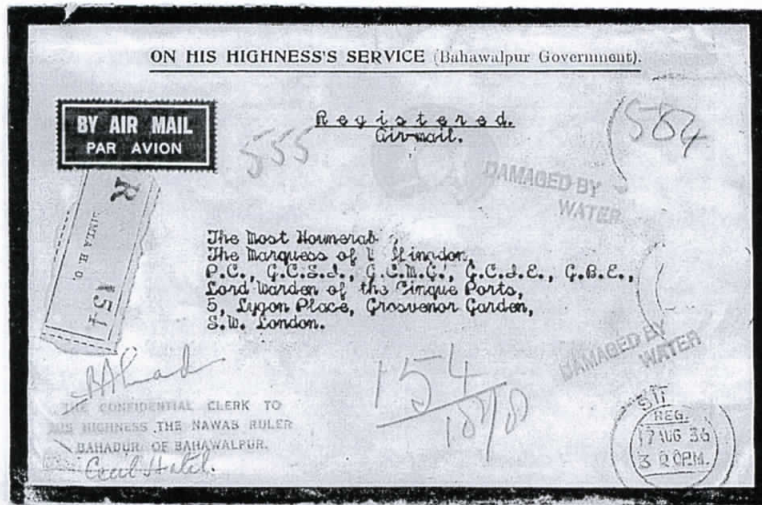
Aus verunglücktem Flugzeug geborgen.  
München Bahnpostamt 1.

Type “w” – Cachet on Covers to Germany - Violet

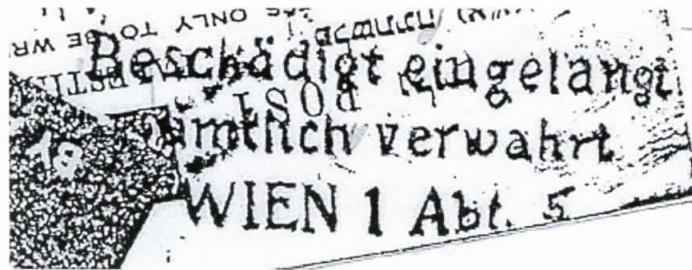


DAMAGED BY  
SEA WATER  
IN AIRPLANE  
ACCIDENT

Type “x” – Cachet – Violet



Type “y” – Cachet – Violet



Type “bb” – Cachet – Color Unknown – On Mail to Austria



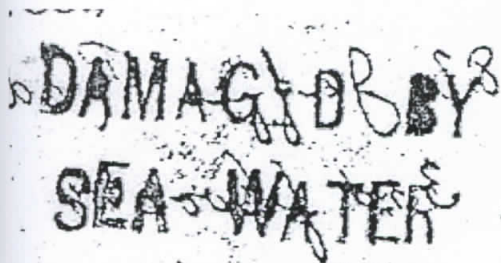
Type “cc” – Cachet – Color Unknown



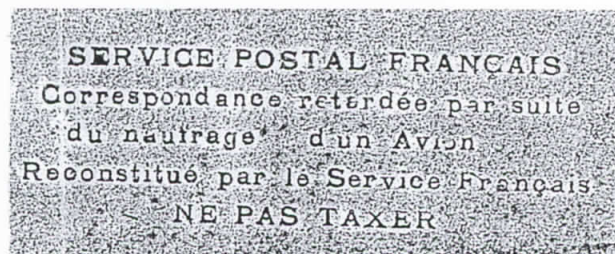
Type “dd” – Cachet – Violet



Type “ee” – Cachet – Violet



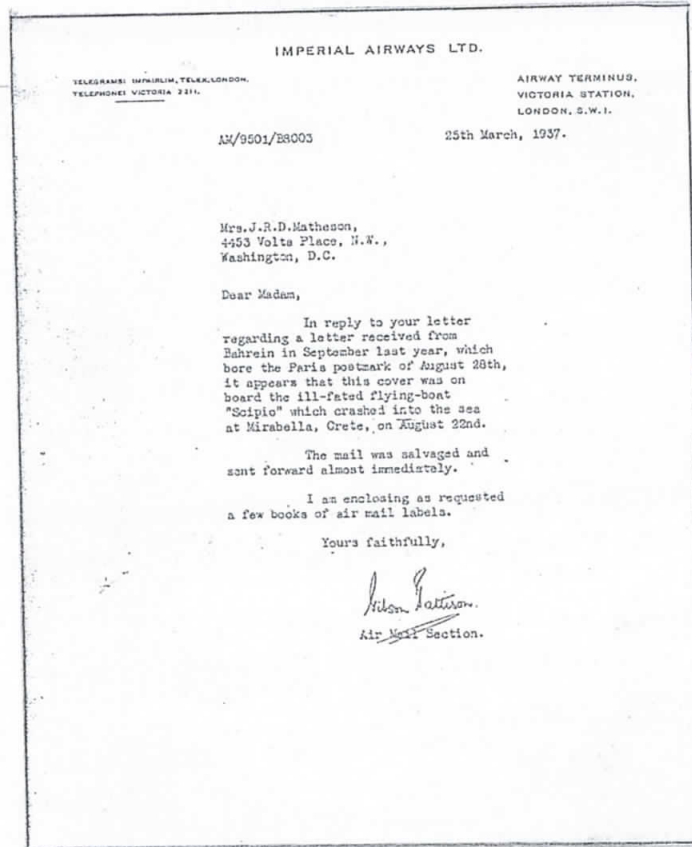
Type “gg” – Cachet – Color Unknown – On Mail to the USA



Type “ll” – Cachet – Red – On Mail to France Also Known on an Ambulance Cover to Holland



360822 (Nierinck 360822) – Imperial Airways – “Scipio” – Short S.17 Kent Scipio Class – G-ABFA –  
Mirabella Bay, Crete, Greece (continued)



**Imperial Airways' reply to an inquiry – Listed by Nierinck as Type "pp"  
However, it is not listable as a crash marking, as it is not from a postal authority**



**Postcard Reproduction of a Poster**

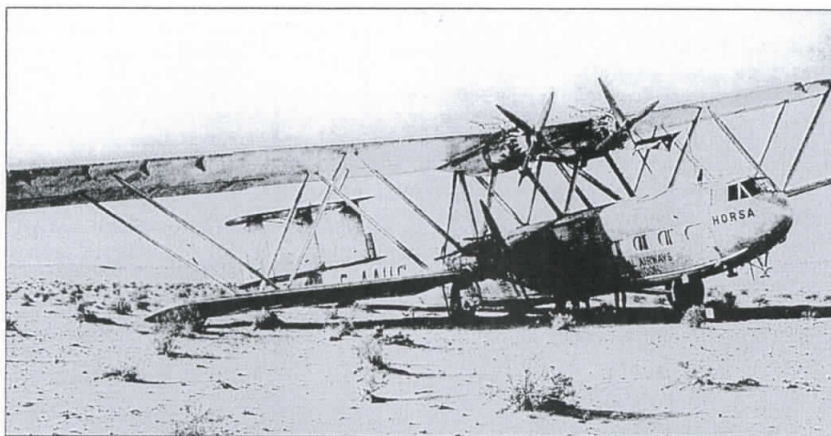
360829 (Nierinck 360829) – Imperial Airways – “Horsa” – Handley Page HP42 Hannibal Class – G-AAUC – near Salwa Wells, Doha – Great Britain-Australia route

Captain L.V. “Buddy” Messenger, First Officer Baker, Wireless Operator Janes & Steward Doyle

On a flight from Basra, Iraq to Bahrein, the pilot radioed a request to the Bahrain Aerodrome to switch on the airfield lights, but it was not executed. The pilot became lost after dark and made a forced landing in the desert about 60 kilometers south of Salwa Wells. In the morning, the Imperial aircraft “Atalanta”, “Lancia” and an RAF aeroplane went out looking for the lost “Horsa”. The “Lancia” found “Horsa” but did not land. The pilot and eight passengers were unharmed, but had to endure a day in 140 degree heat before they were rescued. The undercarriage of the aircraft was slightly damaged and could not take-off. Repairs were carried out on the spot and the aircraft flew out to Bahrein.

The mail was not damaged. Nierinck <sup>4</sup> reports that mail is known with an arrival postmark at Lahore, India of 2 September 1936. Another cover is known, as shown

Proud <sup>32</sup> reports mail to Australia



Handley Page HP42 Hannibal Class – G-AAUC – “Horsa”  
After the Accident





360925 (Nierinck 360925) – Imperial Airways – “Boadicea” – Boulton & Paul P.71A Boadicea Class – G-ACOX – English Channel

Acting Captain A. C. Thomas & Radio Operator H. E. Percival

On a flight from London to Paris, with mail to various colonies, “Boadicea” disappeared over the English Channel. Three bags of mail were found at different times. One mail bag was washed ashore on November 10<sup>th</sup> at Dymchurch, Kent, Great Britain. The second bag was found on the beach at Cucq, Pas de Calais, France a month after the disappearance. The last one was brought up in the fishing nets of a trawler on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April 1938 – 19 months after the crash, on the coast of France. The majority of the mail was addressed to Africa, but the third bag contained mail for India, Australia and the East. The body of the Captain was washed ashore on the French coast near Boulogne a month after the crash. The body of the Radio Operator was never found. The wreckage was never recovered, but in 1937 a fisherman’s trawler brought up some pieces of aluminum and struts three miles off Rye, which were thought to be from the “Boadicea”.

Webb <sup>22</sup> reports mail to Hong Kong, as follows:

“A bag of mail recovered by a trawler off Dungeness 1<sup>1/2</sup> years later contain mail for Hong Kong and Mr. Hardeman Smith has shown us a letter to a Lance Corporal of the R. U. Rifles in Hong Kong later forwarded to Rawalpindi. Two typed explanatory notes were affixed by the G.P.O. Arrival cds HK 2 June 1938.”

Proud <sup>32</sup> reports mail to Australia, Kenya, Sudan, Northern Rhodesia & South Africa made up in London 24.9.36, and mail for Lagos, Nigeria dispatched from London on 25.9.36. Field <sup>18</sup> reported that the second bag of mail found also contained letters to Tanganyika. Covers in the author’s collection are to Northern Rhodesia, Uganda and Nigeria. A cover is also known to Nairobi, Kenya. The Aero Field <sup>39</sup> of August-September 1937 also reported mail to Tanganyika.



**Boulton & Paul P.71A Boadicea Class – “Boadicea”**

**“BOADICEA’S”  
AIR MAILS?**

**Salvaged Letters  
Delivered**

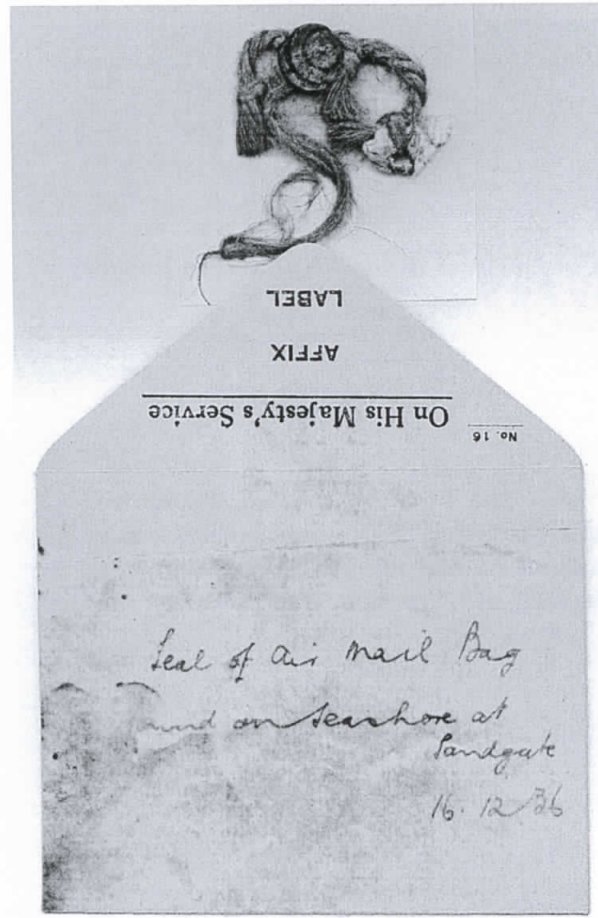
A number of letters believed to have been carried by the Imperial Airways air liner, “Boadicea,” which disappeared over the English Channel in September, were delivered in Lahore on Tuesday. All were in a partially-destroyed condition, but many were quite decipherable. It appears that they were washed up on the south coast of England, sent to the dead letter office in London, and as many as were recognisable forwarded on to their destinations in India by air mail.

Attached to each letter was the following typewritten announcement:—

“The accompanying packet, which was washed ashore on the coast of England, was apparently conveyed by the Imperial Airways Airplane, “Boadicea,” which left Croydon on September 25 and failed to arrive at Paris.

“The inconvenience occasioned is regretted.

“Returned Letter Section,  
“Mount Pleasant,  
“London, E.C.1.”



Seal From One of the 3 Recovered Mail Bags

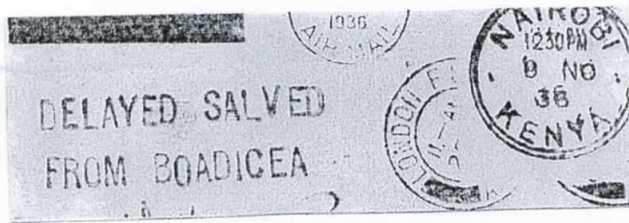
**Some Factors Which Probably Led to the Crash of the “Boadicea”**

Specifications for a mail carrying aircraft led to the twin-engine Boulton & Paul P.64 (G-ABYK), first received at Martlesham Heath in June 1933 for the RAF Display at Hendon. The type was quickly sent back to the factory, as it was not only directionally unstable but divergent in yaw, even with full correcting rudder, control being maintained only by differential use of the engines. On return to Boulton & Paul on 16 October 1933, the auxiliary fins on the tailplane helped but did not cure the problems. At maximum weight (11,300 lbs.) firm rudder needed constantly and sideslips were alarming. On 21 October, during a flight to corroborate the previous problems, the aircraft crashed, killing the pilot. It was considered that the long, deep fuselage ahead of the center of gravity was to blame. The following year, the same company's P.71A (G-ACOX), the “Boadicea”, was tested. Generally similar to the ill-fated P.64 but with a slimmer and longer fuselage, the P.71A also was directionally unstable, yet was recommended for a Certificate of Airworthiness (C of A).

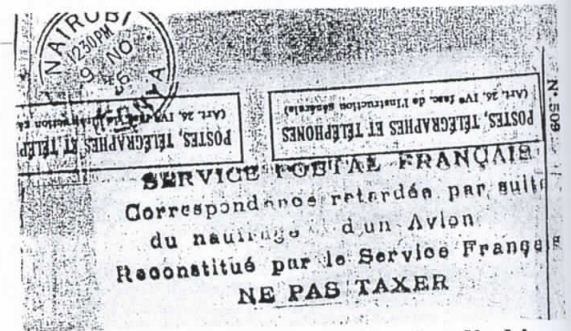
The aircraft's C of A trials were undertaken in October 1934. It was noted that the elevators and ailerons were light and effective and quick in response., but that the rudder was slightly heavier initially, becoming lighter as the aircraft responded. With one engine throttled back the aircraft could be turned against the port engine, but only just against the starboard engine. In fact, the P.71A was directionally unstable, with a marked tendency to turn to starboard. No further orders for the P.71A were forthcoming, even though Boulton & Paul offered them in different layouts.



360925 (Nierinck 360925) – Imperial Airways – “Boadicea” – Boulton & Paul P.71A Boadicea Class – G-ACOX (continued)



Type “a” – Cachet – Blue – Applied in London



Type “b” – Cachet – Red – Applied in Paris

Type “c” – The Type “c” printed slip shown in “Recovered Mail” by Henri Nierinck was a facsimile, as he had not seen an actual copy. The author believes that it is actually the same as Type “d”.

The accompanying packet which was washed ashore on the coast of England was apparently conveyed by the Imperial Airways Airplane “Boadicea” which left Croydon on the 25th September and failed to arrive at Paris.

The inconvenience occasioned is regretted.

Returned Letter Section  
Mount Pleasant,  
London, E.C.1.

Type “d” – Printed Slip From Mount Pleasant Post Office in London

The enclosed letter was recovered from the sea by a fisherman's trawler. The letter was apparently included in the despatch from London on the 25th September, 1936, conveyed by the airplane “Boadicea” which met with disaster.

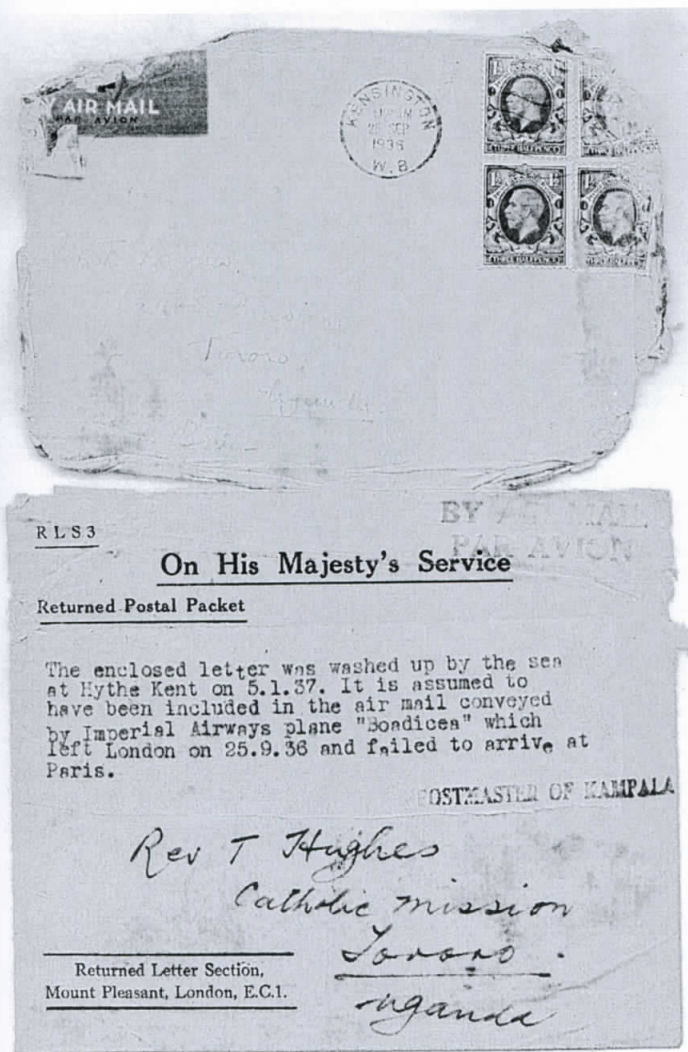
The inconvenience occasioned is regretted.

Returned Letter Section,  
Mount Pleasant,  
London. E.C. 1

Type “e” – Printed Slip From Mount Pleasant Post Office in London

The enclosed letter was recovered from the sea near Dungeness on the 27th. April 1938; and is presumed to be part of the lost mail conveyed by the aeroplane “Boadicea” which met with disaster on the 25th September, 1936

Type “f” – Facsimile of Printed Slip From Mount Pleasant Post Office in London



**MISSING** 1936  
26 SEPT  
1936

## DISAPPEARANCE IN CHANNEL

FROM OUR AERONAUTICAL CORRESPONDENT

One of the twin-engined aeroplanes used chiefly for special charter work by Imperial Airways disappeared yesterday afternoon, presumably in the Channel, and was still missing last night. It was taking an extra load of mails and baggage to Paris, and carried no passengers. The crew consisted of Mr. A. C. Thomas, the pilot, and Mr. H. E. Percival, the wireless operator.

The machine was one of the two Boulton and Paul biplanes in the company's fleet and bore the name Boadicea. It left Croydon at 12.44 p.m., and at 1.8 reported that it was passing over Rye and was about to lay a course across the Channel for Berck. Thereafter no word was received from the aeroplane. The absence of an S.O.S. call led at first to the assumption that it could not have been forced to descend at sea, but when a subsequent search on the French side of the Channel failed to yield any trace of the machine officials were disposed to amend that opinion.

### FRUITLESS SEARCH

As soon as there was reason to suppose that Boadicea had suffered mishap one of the four-engined Diana class machines set off from Croydon to make a search. Captain H. J. Horsey was in charge and spent some hours over the Channel and the land near the French coast. He returned without news except that he had found some patches of mist on the Channel. These should not have incommoded a pilot who had directional wireless at his disposal, nor should the failure of one of the Jaguar engines have caused the machine to come down in the sea, for it had been shown capable of maintaining height easily on the power of one engine. Last night the Hastings and Dungeness lifeboats were launched in search of the missing machine.

Two aeroplanes went up from Le Touquet early in the evening, but when they returned after flying well over the Channel towards England they reported that they had seen no wreckage.

An unconfirmed report from Hastings states that wreckage, believed to be that of the missing machine, was seen 18 miles out in the Channel.

Mr. Thomas, who has been in the employ of Imperial Airways since November, 1934, had until lately been working on the section of the mail route between Karachi and Singapore. He is 36 years of age. Mr. Percival, who is 31 years old, entered the service of the company three months ago.

### Type "g" – Typed Label Prepared by Postmaster of Kampala, Uganda

## MAIL FROM LOST 'PLANE

### Sea-Stained Packet Delivered

A sea-stained air mail packet, which had been carried on the lost Imperial Airways plane, Boadicea, was delivered to "The Sun" to-day.

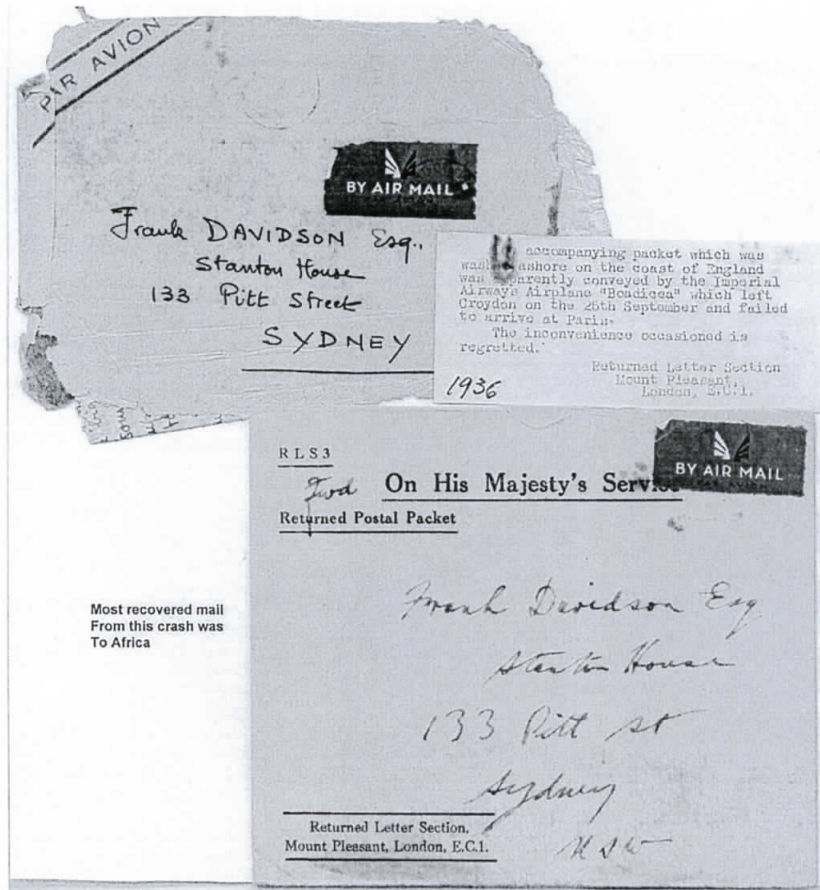
It was washed up on the coast of England from the Channel about two weeks ago—mute evidence of the tragedy of the Boadicea, which left London on September 25, and failed to arrive at Paris.

The packet, which was from the "News-Chronicle," London, had been carefully dried, and the contents were in readable condition.

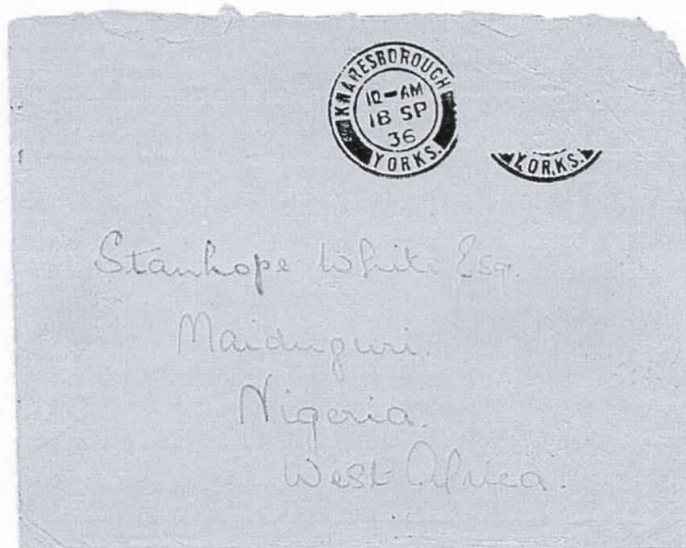
27.11.36



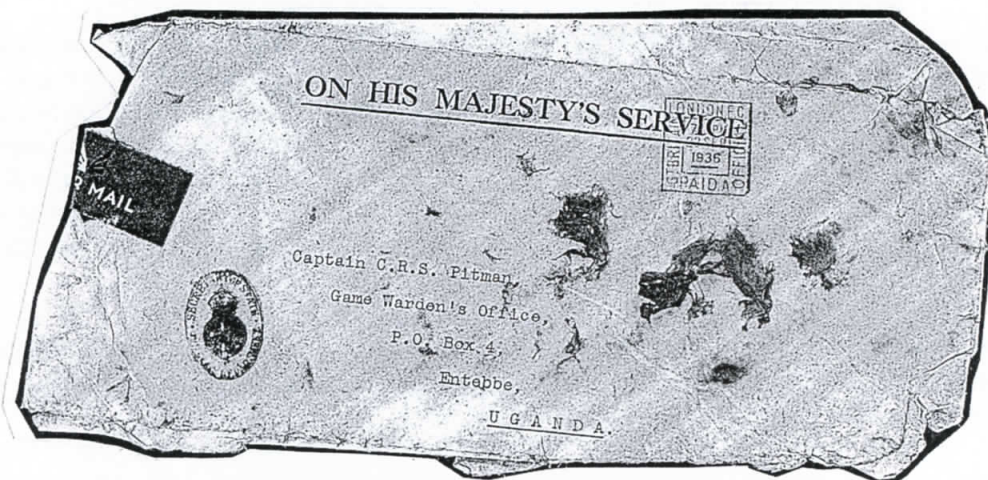
360925 (Nierinck 360925) – Imperial Airways – “Boadicea” – Boulton & Paul P.71A Boadicea Class – G-ACOX (continued)



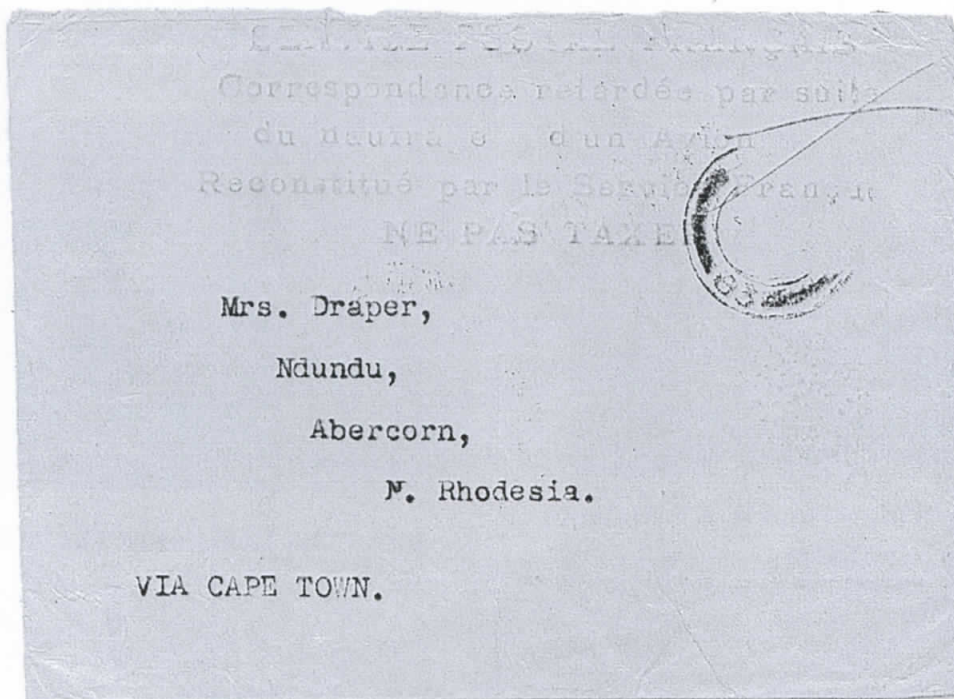
Type “h” – “Ambulance” Cover From Mount Pleasant Post Office, London  
The Author’s collection includes one conveying a letter to India because the original cover was missing



Type “i” – No Cachet  
Cover From England to Nigeria  
The Only Recorded Cover to West Africa



Type “j” – “On His Majesty’s Service” Cover From Great Britain to Uganda



Cover From England to Northern Rhodesia  
One of two recorded covers to this colony



360929 (Nierinck 360929) – Imperial Airways – “Athena” – Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class – G-ABTK – Willingdon Airport, Delhi, India – Great Britain-Asia route

Captain Vernon G. Wilson, Captain Anthony C. Loraine & First Officer Worradel

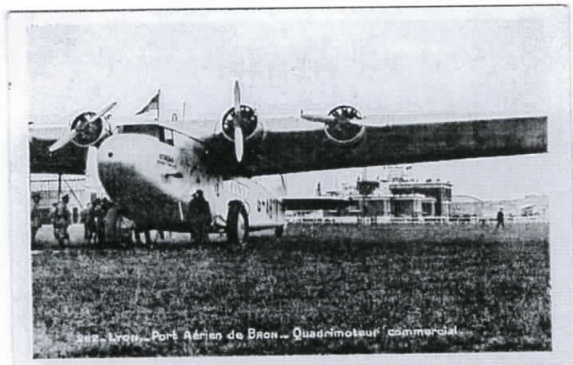
The Imperial airliner “Athena”, caught fire while the engines were being started, in preparation for the next stage of the flight from England to Australia. It was assumed that a bottle of oxygen instead of compressed air, had carelessly been used to start the engines, which started the fire. The two passengers and crew members hastily jumped out of the burning aircraft. There were no injuries, except for some slight scorches on the First Officer. “Athena” was operating the section of the route between Karachi and Singapore. A relief plane left Karachi on the 30<sup>th</sup> of September and the service was delayed by only a few hours. “Athena” never flew again and was eventually written off. The reports that the aircraft caught on fire at take-off were wrong.

About half the mail from England and intermediate stops for places east of Delhi was destroyed. Of the remainder, many of the letters were charred but were decipherable. 35 mail bags were intact, out of 113 mail bags and 93 packets. 43 bags were damaged by the fire.

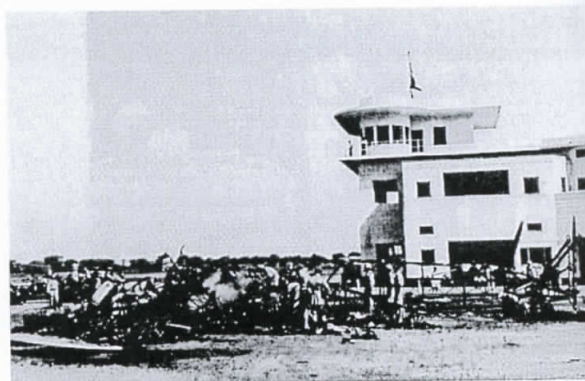
Many different cachet and label varieties are known, as well as mimeograph explanations from various post offices.

Proud<sup>32</sup> reports mail to Dutch East Indies and Australia posted in London on 23.9.36. Five covers from South Africa have been recorded.

Some reports of this incident state that the fire started in a hangar, but the photo showing the burnt out aircraft on the ramp next to the control tower disputes this.



Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta  
Class  
G-ABTK – “Athena”



Burnt Out Remains of The “Athena”

**Fire on Air Liner.**—Bombay, October 1: It was stated in the course of an inquiry, which was held in camera, that the fire on the air liner Athena caused damage to the machine and its contents amounting to £30,000.

The Athena, carrying mails loaded for Australia from London on September 23, caught fire when taking off from Delhi on September 29. The passengers and crew escaped injury, but the machine was completely destroyed.

THE STATESMAN, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1936.

# MAIL PLANE BURNT OUT AT NEW DELHI

PASSENGERS AND CREW LEAP  
 TO SAFETY

MANY LETTERS DESTROYED

EXPLOSION AS ENGINE WAS  
 STARTED UP

An explosion just before the plane took off for Cawnpore and Calcutta, "en route" to Singapore, resulted in Imperial Airways' air liner "Athena" being destroyed by fire on the New Delhi Civil Aerodrome on Tuesday morning.

**T**HE plane was completely destroyed, all that remains of it being a mass of burnt out fabric and twisted steel. The two passengers and the crew hastily jumped out and escaped injury except for slight scorching to the first officer, but a large part of the mail and all the freight and baggage was lost.

*Frantic efforts were made to bring the fire under control before the flames reached the petrol tanks, but soon the heat became so intense that no one could approach the burning plane. As the petrol tanks exploded huge tongues of flame shot into the air.*

As much as possible of the mail has been salvaged, but it is believed that the mail which was being sent from Delhi for Calcutta, Singapore and other places en route to Australia, was completely destroyed. The edges of many of the letters saved have been badly charred.

## TERRIFYING SPECTACLE

ALL that now remains of Imperial Airways' air liner *Athena* is a charred mass of burnt out fabric and twisted steel framework. As No. 3 engine was being started up at Delhi Civil Aerodrome yesterday morning prior to leaving Delhi for Cawnpore and Calcutta, there was an explosion under the cockpit. The air liner suddenly caught fire and in a few seconds the flames had got out of the control of the fire extinguishers that had been hastily collected.

It is understood that two engines had been started by the portable jack which operates the compressed air

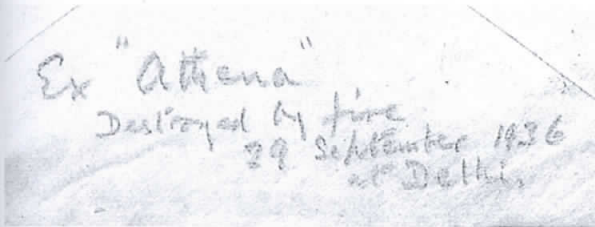
### IMPERIAL AIRWAYS' STATEMENT

IMPERIAL Airways' plane *Athena*, which left Karachi on Monday for Singapore, was destroyed by fire at Delhi Aerodrome while taking off on Tuesday morning.

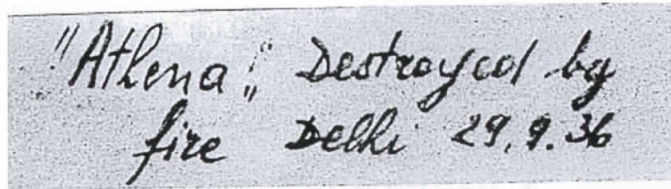
The passengers and crew were saved and the greater part of the mail is undamaged. A relief plane left Karachi at 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday afternoon.

This is an official statement made by the Imperial Airways from Karachi.

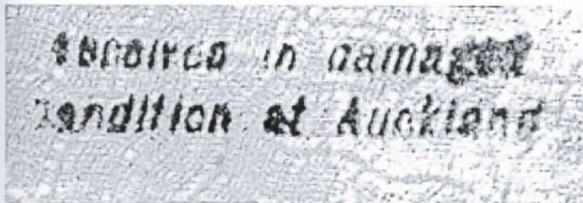
totally destroyed.



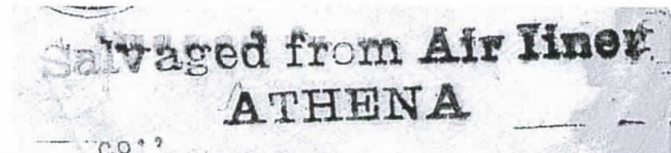
Type "a" – Manuscript Explanation



Type "a" – Manuscript Explanation



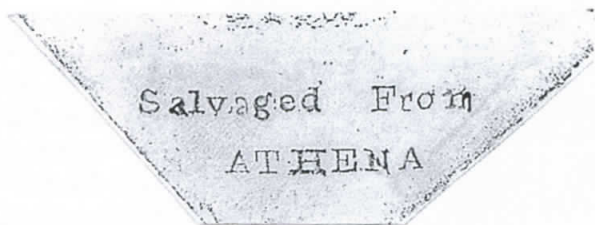
Type "b" – Cachet – Pink



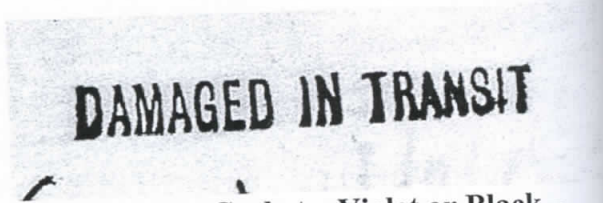
Type "c" – Cachet – Black  
 Note "Liner" is spelled "Iiner"  
 No examples are known with correct spelling



360929 (Nierinck 360929) – Imperial Airways – “Athena” – Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta  
Class – G-ABTK – Willingdon Airport, Delhi, India (continued)



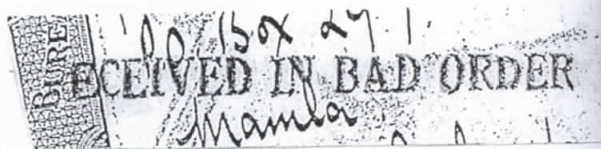
Type “d” – Cachet – Violet – on Covers to Australia



Type “e” – Cachet – Violet or Black – Applied at Brisbane, Australia

RECEIVED AT  
WELLINGTON  
IN DAMAGED CONDITION

Type “f” – Cachet – Color Unknown



Type “g” – Cachet – Black or Violet on Mail to The Philippines

GENERAL POST OFFICE,  
*Singapore, 2nd October, 1936.*

This postal article was salvaged from the Imperial Airways aeroplane “Athena” destroyed by fire at New Delhi on the 29th September, 1936.

Any enquiry regarding this article should be addressed to:-

The Superintendent of Mails,  
General Post Office,  
Singapore.

14 x 10

Type “h” – Printed Explanation From Singapore GPO





This article was received to-day in the mail salvaged from the Imperial Airways Aircraft 'ATHENA' which was destroyed by fire at Delhi.

G. C. ALLEN,  
Supt. of Mails.

Penang,  
2nd October, 1936.

Type “i” – Printed Explanation From Penang, Malaya

Type “ii” – Printed Explanation as above, with “Penang” mis-spelled “Pcnang”

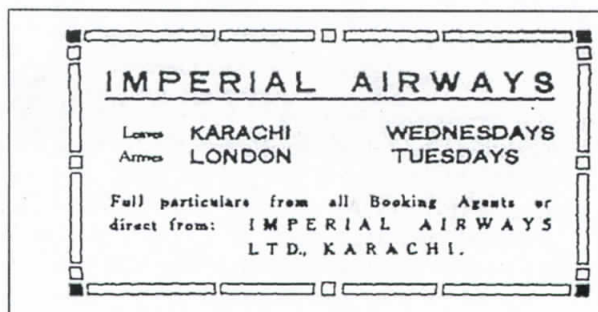


Figure 8B

Page From Airmail Etiquette Booklet





POSTMASTER-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT,  
GENERAL POST OFFICE,  
SYDNEY.

8th October, 1936.

I regret that this article addressed  
to you was damaged when the airliner  
“Athena” was destroyed by fire at Delhi,  
India, on 29th August.

J. S. DUNCAN

Deputy Director,  
Posts and Telegraphs.

**Type “j” – Printed Explanation From Sydney, Australia**

**Type “k” – Printed Explanation, as Above, From Sydney, Australia but with  
Date Corrected With a Red cachet “29 SEP. 1936”**

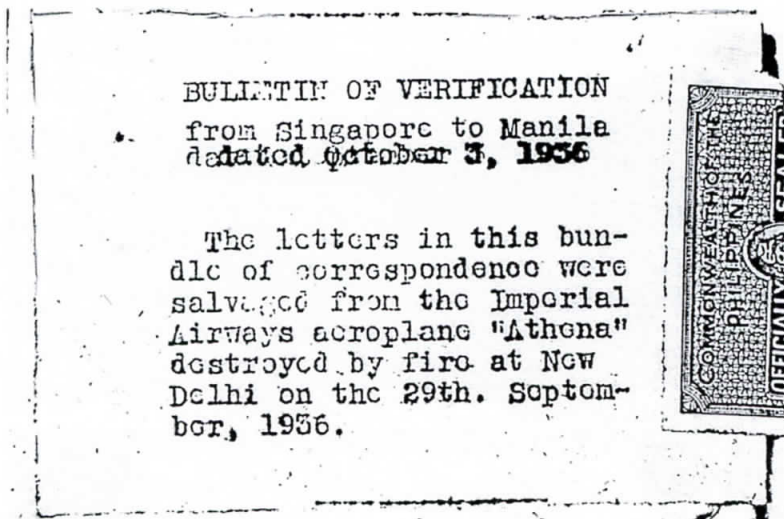
Damaged by fire when the  
mail plane “Athena” was  
destroyed at Delhi on 29/9/36  
en route to Singapore.



**Type “l” – Printed Explanation From Brisbane, Australia Dead Letter Office**

This cover was salvaged from the Imperial Airways aeroplane "Athena" destroyed by fire at New Delhi on the 29th September, 1936.

Type "m" – Facsimile of Printed Label



Type "n" – Printed Label on Mail to The Philippines

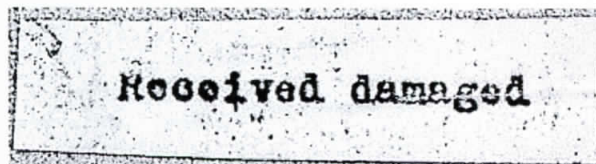
Type "o" – Hopkins <sup>19</sup> reported a cover to Sarawak with a typewritten onion skin label reading "This cover was salvaged from the Imperial Airways aeroplane "Athena" destroyed by fire at New Delhi on the 29<sup>th</sup> September, 1936.

B. for Postmaster".

This label was not recorded by Nierinck <sup>4</sup>



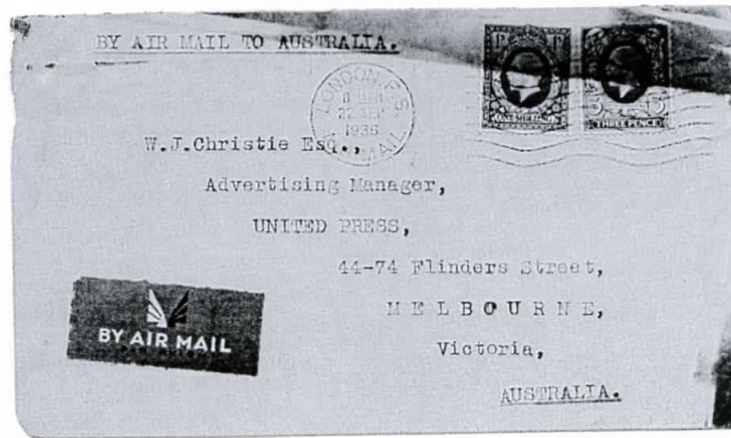
Type "p" – Cachet – Color Unknown – On Mail to India



Type "q" – Typed Label Cachet – On Mail to Thailand



360929 (Nierinck 360929) – Imperial Airways – “Athena” – Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class – G-ABTK – Willingdon Airport, Delhi, India (continued)

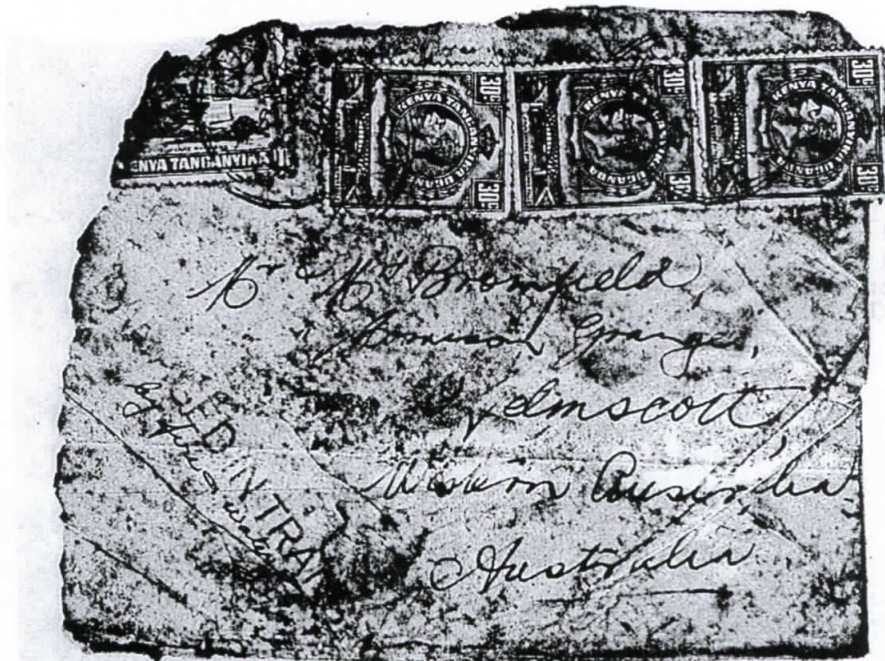


The accompanying postal article was salvaged from the Air Liner "Athena", which was damaged by fire at Delhi, India, on 29.9.36.

G.P.O., Melbourne, C.I.

F.W. ARNOLD  
A/g. Deputy Director.

Type "r" – Printed Explanation from Melbourne, Australia



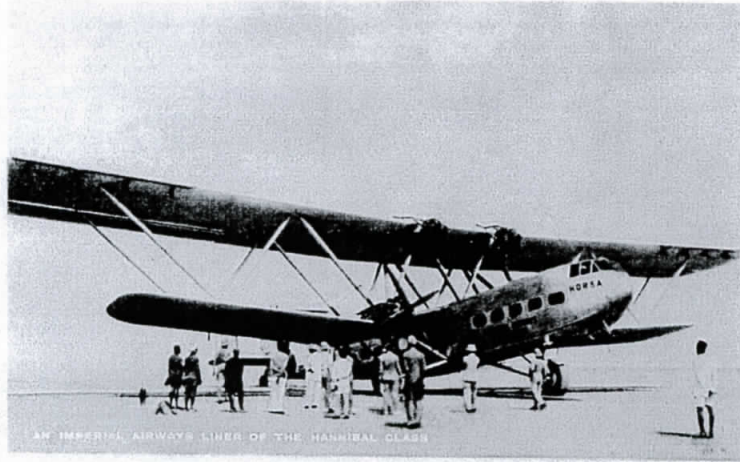
Type "s" – Cachet – color unknown – Printed letters "DAMAGED IN TRANSIT" And Manuscript "by fire & water"

361123 (Nierinck 361123) – Imperial Airways – “Horsa” – Handley Page HP42 Hannibal Class – G-AAUC – Enroute from Haifa to Port Said

Pilot & 1<sup>ST</sup> officer unknown

The aircraft was forced to land 20 miles from the Egyptian border. The passengers, crew and mail were rescued by Bedouins. No other details are known.

No mail is known in collectors’ hands.



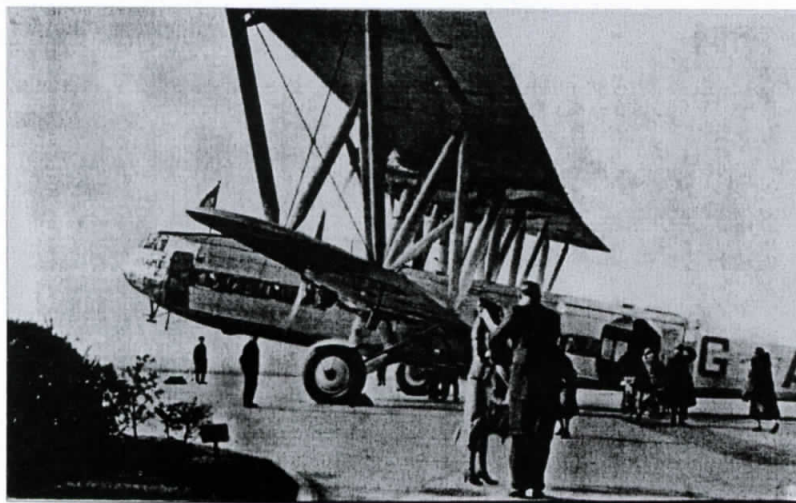
**Handley Page HP42 Hannibal Class – “Horsa”**

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361127 – Imperial Airways – “Heracles” – Handley Page HP42 Hannibal Class – G-AAXC – Croydon Airport, London, Great Britain

Pilot & 1<sup>st</sup> officer unknown

The tail wheel of the aircraft struck a fence on landing. No other details are available.



**Handley Page HP42 Hannibal Class – “Heracles” – G-AAXC**

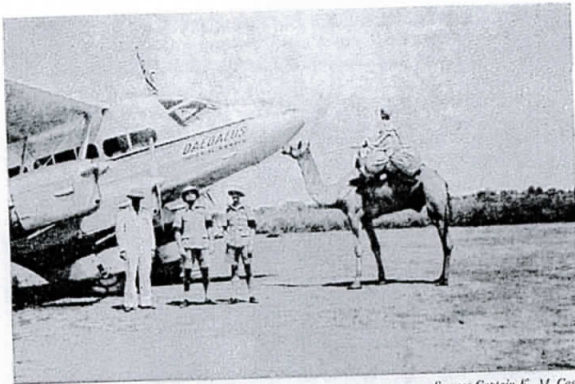


361223 – Imperial Airways – “Daedalus” – De Havilland DH-86 Diana Class – G-ADCN – Abecher, Chad

Captain R. O. O. “Root” Taylor, First Officer Ken Cass & Flight Engineer Harry Morris

The aircraft bounced on takeoff, damaging the undercarriage, an engine and a lower wing, which put her out of action. Most of the cargo was currency, so a truck was hired, and the mail and cargo was driven back to Geneina, Sudan. A relief aircraft, the Avro 618 Ten “Achilles” was sent out, but this developed an oil leak and made a forced landing in the bush near Geneina, shattering a propeller. Eventually, a second relief aircraft, “Delia” flew the mail through to Kano, Nigeria on the 27<sup>th</sup> of December. Abecher was only a refueling stop until 1936, when it became a regular scheduled stop.

One cover is known, as shown, which is from the Duncan Crewe collection.



“Daedalus”, crew and visitor, El Fasher, 1936.

Source: Captain K. M. Cass.

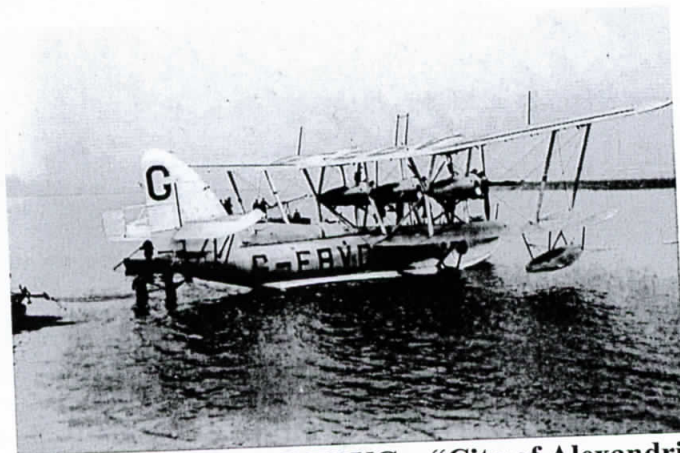
**De Havilland DH-86 Diana Class  
G-ADCN – “Daedalus”**



361228 (Nierinck 361227) – Imperial Airways – “City of Alexandria” – Short S.8 Calcutta – G-EBVG – Mirabella Bay, Crete, Greece

Acting Captain S. G. Long

The aircraft was doing supplementary duty during a period of heavy mails and was returning light to its base at Alexandria, Egypt. It spent the night at Mirabella Bay. A storm came up and a strong gust of wind picked up a wing, nearly flipping the aircraft over. Some damage was done to the wing structure and an engine. No crew members were onboard. It is not known if there was mail onboard, and none is known in collectors’ hands.



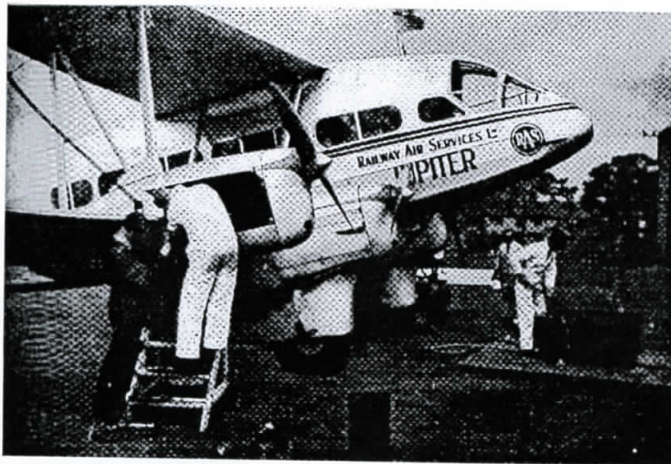
Short S.8 Calcutta – G-EBVG – “City of Alexandria”

370316 (Nierinck 370315) – Railway Air Services, chartered to Imperial Airways – “Jupiter” – De Havilland DH-86 – G-ACVZ – Elsdorf, Germany – London-Cologne route

Captain George B. Holmes & Radio Operator C. E. Langman

The aircraft was enroute to Cologne, and was scheduled to land at midnight. The aircraft crashed in a forest near Elsdorf, about 20 miles from Cologne, because of a snowstorm. It was thought that the plane was forced down by the weight of the ice which had accumulated on the wings and struts. The aircraft caught fire and was destroyed. One passenger, Captain Charles Wolley Dod, European Manager of Imperial Airways, and the two crew members were killed. The burned out wreckage was found by a woodcutter ten hours after the crash. He ran four miles to the nearest farm and gave the alarm. Subsequent models of the aircraft, on the insistence of an Imperial Airways/Qantas joint specification, allowed for a Captain and First Officer side by side.

No mail is known in collectors' hands.



De Havilland DH-86 – G-ACVZ – “Jupiter”





370324 (Nierinck 370324) – Imperial Airways – “Capricornus” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– G-ADVA – Le Carouge, near Ouroux, Beaujolais Mountains, France – Great Britain-Egypt route

Captain A. S. “Jock” Paterson, First Officer Gareth E. Klein, Flight Clerk D. R. O’Brien & Radio Operator J. L. Cooper

The new flying boat was on its inaugural flight to Egypt. It was caught in a violent snowstorm in the Rhone Valley. The pilot lost all visibility and circled around while trying to determine his position by radio. It was also believed that the aircraft encountered severe icing. The aircraft wing hit a tree, and the aircraft crashed into a mountain at 2,200 feet altitude. Five of the six occupants were killed. Radio Operator Cooper survived and he escaped from the wreckage and found aid at a nearby farm. 40 kilos of gold & jewels, and 65 bags of mail were recovered. The mail was recovered on the 25<sup>th</sup> and sent to Macon, and was then carried onward by “Cygnus”. The mail was not damaged, so no special markings were applied. Very few covers have been recorded.

Proud<sup>32</sup> reports mail to Australia, India, Malaya which left London on 24 March 1937



“Echo” photo.  
Captain A. Paterson, commander  
of the ill-fated Empire flying boat  
Capricornus, which crashed on its  
maiden flight from Southampton  
yesterday.



“Echo” photo.  
First-Officer G. R. Klein, who was  
killed when Capricornus crashed.

### Captain A. S. “Jock” Paterson & 1st Officer Gareth E. Klein



Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– “Capricornus”

**FIVE DEAD IN  
AIR CRASH  
AN EMPIRE FLYING  
BOAT  
LOST IN SNOWSTORM**

The Imperial Airways flying-boat Capricornus crashed in the Beaujolais mountains, near Ouroux, in France, yesterday afternoon on the first stage of her maiden flight from Southampton to



Alexandria. According to an official statement, four persons were killed. They were:

CAPTAIN A. PATERSON.  
FIRST OFFICER C. E. KLEIN.  
FLIGHT CLERK D. R. O'BRIEN.  
STEWARD F. A. E. JEFFCOATE.

The only passenger, Miss B. M. Coates, was injured, and an Exchange message states that she died later last night. The wireless operator, Mr. J. L. Cooper, was not hurt.

Our Paris Correspondent says that the accident occurred during a severe storm when the pilot, hampered by heavy rain and snow, was circling among the mountains in search of the emergency landing place at Mâcon: the machine fell into a fir wood on the mountain side.

**THE LAST MESSAGE**

At 2.10 p.m. the wireless operator was in communication with the aerodrome at Bron, near Lyons. He said that the flying-boat had lost her bearings in a snowstorm and was looking for the landing place at Mâcon, and then his transmission was suddenly interrupted. After the crash Mr. Cooper, the wireless operator, freed himself from the wreck and made his way nearly two miles to a farm, where he found help. Miss Coates was seriously hurt and was taken to Mâcon Hospital.

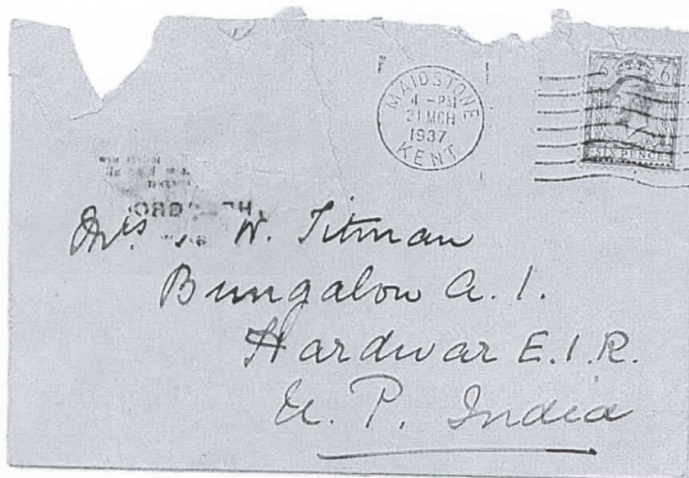
The Capricornus, which left Southampton at 11.30 a.m. yesterday, was one of 29 big flying-boats which are being built by Messrs. Short Brothers, of Rochester, for service on Empire air routes, and was the tenth of them to be delivered. One, the Cavalier, is now at Bermuda, two have been equipped for experimental long-range work, and the remaining seven, including the Capricornus, were allotted to the new flying-boat route between England and Alexandria.

Captain Paterson was about 30 years of age.

**SALVAGED MAIL  
FORWARDED TO INDIA BY  
AIR**

INFORMATION has been received from the British Post Office that the mails for India aboard the British flying boat Capricorn, which crashed in France near Oroux, 40 miles from Lyons, on March 24, have been salvaged and forwarded to India by air.

No delay in the arrival of the mails in India is anticipated.—A.P.I.



**Two Covers From The “Capricornus” Crash – As the mail was mostly undamaged, no cachets were applied**



370405 – Imperial Airways – – “Daedalus” – De Havilland DH.86 Diana Class – G-ADCN – Geneina, Sudan

Captain Joe Davis

“Lloyds Weekly Casualty Reports” on 9 April 1937 said the plane crashed into a pile of stones while landing at Geneina. The damage to the aircraft was extensive, but the pilot and passengers were uninjured. No mail is known in the hands of collectors.



**De Havilland DH.86 Diana Class – “Daedalus”**

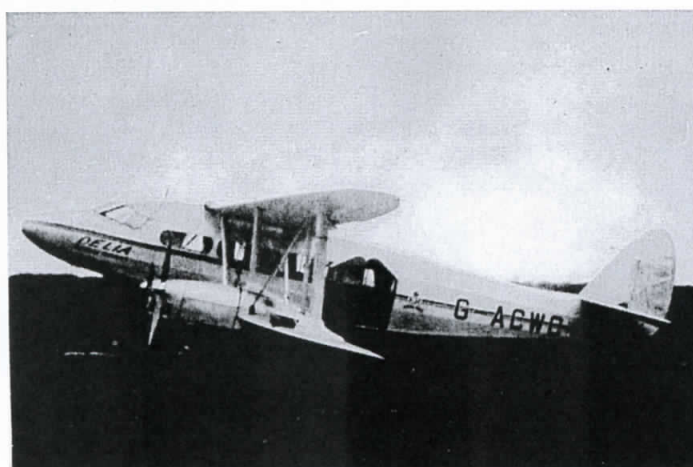
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370411 – Imperial Airways – “Delia” – De Havilland DH.86 Diana Class – G-ACWC – Abecher, Chad

Captain & 1<sup>st</sup> Officer unknown

According to a British Post Office internal memo dated 12 April 1937, Imperial Airways reported by telephone that the West African mail, which left London on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April, has been further delayed owing to another mishap at Abecher. This mail left from Southampton on the 3<sup>rd</sup>.

No mail is known in the hands of collectors.



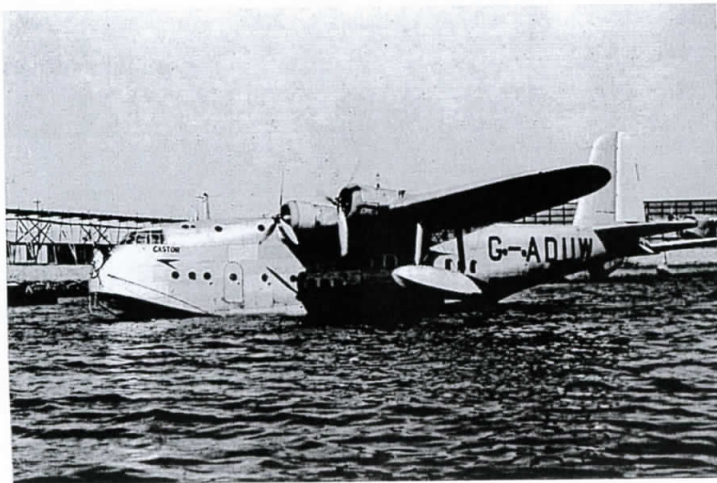
**De Havilland DH.86 Diana Class – “Delia”**

370522 (Nierinck 370522) – Imperial Airways – “Castor” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– G-ADUW – Hythe, Great Britain – London-Johannesburg route

Captain H. W. C. “Jimmy” Alger

This was the 1000<sup>th</sup> flight from England on the Empire air routes. While taxiing from her mooring, the aircraft was caught by a strong gust of wind and collided with the yacht “Neptune”. Considerable damage was done to the flying boat’s tailplane and ailerons. The mail was taken onboard “Cygnus” and it arrived in Johannesburg on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May. No special crash markings were applied, but there were some souvenir covers being carried with a special cachet for the 1000<sup>th</sup> flight.

Proud <sup>32</sup> reports mail to South Africa, arriving Johannesburg on 29 May. Shown is one of the special Imperial souvenir covers.



Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – “Castor”



Special Cover Prepared by Imperial Airways For the 1,000<sup>th</sup> Flight

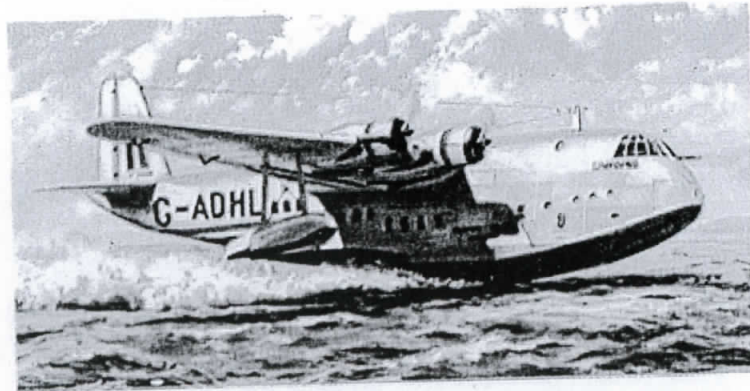


370623 – Imperial Airways – “Canopus” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– G-ADHL – Mediterranean Sea near Mirabella Bay, Greece

Captain & crew members names unknown

According to Flying Empires <sup>36</sup> “Canopus” experienced a failure of the port inner engine, alighted on the sea, and taxied to Mirabella Bay.

No mail is known.



Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – “Canopus”



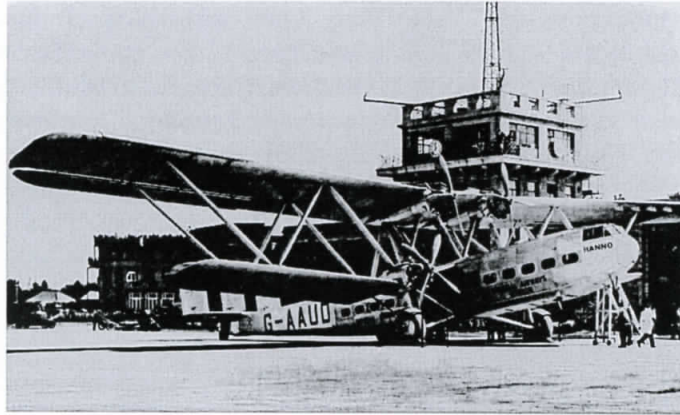
Imperial Airways Promotional Label

370906 – Imperial Airways – “Hanno” – Handley Page HP42 Hannibal Class – G-AAUD – Le Touquet, France

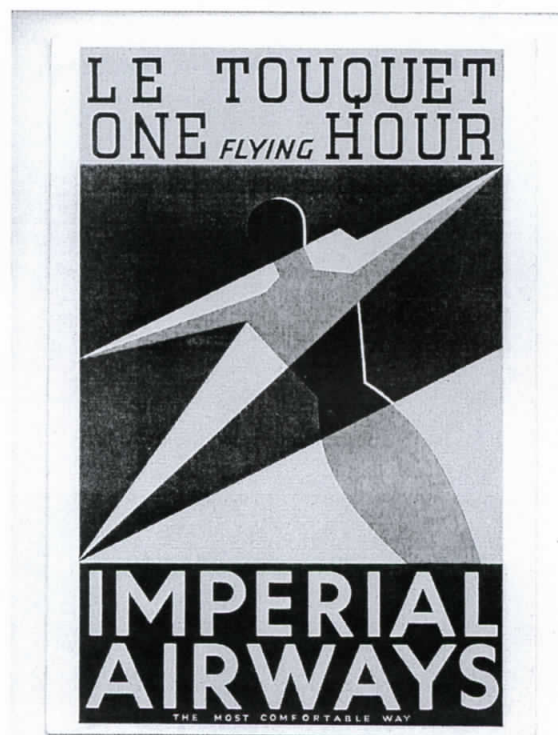
Captain Herbert J. Horsey

The prevailing wind was from the southeast, which meant going to the northwest corner of the aerodrome for takeoff. When the aircraft was thirty yards from the northwest boundary markings, and the aircraft was turning, the starboard wheel sunk up to its axle in soft ground where there was an underground stream. The aircraft slewed, the engines were cut, and the aircraft suffered some damage.

The mail was picked up later in the day by Captain Youell in the “Syrinx”. No mail is known from this incident.



Handley Page HP42 Hannibal Class – “Hanno”



Postcard Reproduction of a Poster



370915 – Imperial Airways – Great Britain-India route

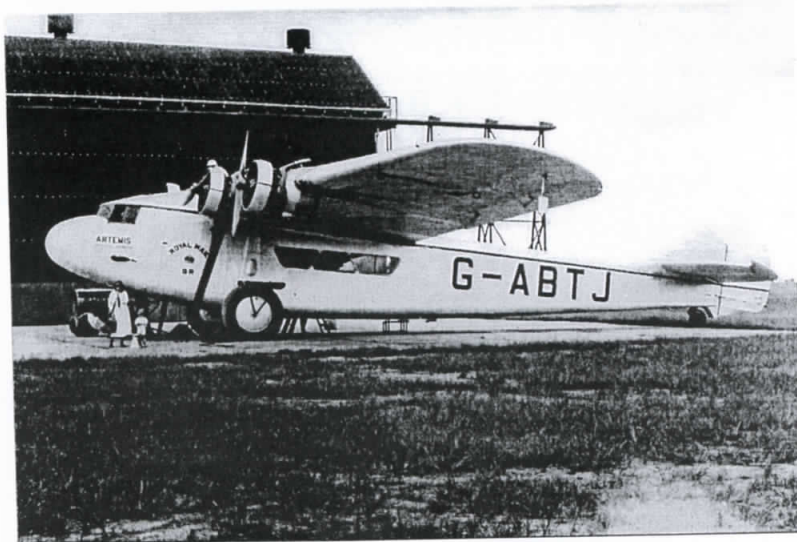
“Arethusa” – AW XV Atalanta Class – VT-AEF (previously G-ABPI) – Cawnpore, India

“Artemis” – AW XV Atalanta Class – G-ABTJ – Karachi, India

Captains unknown

The Times of London of 16 September reported that “The Indian airmail has been delayed by a series of mishaps. The Imperial Airways liner Arethusa was damaged when she was bogged in taking off from Cawnpore: the Artemis (being sent as relief aircraft) had her wing and airscrew damaged when she struck a boundary light on taking off from Karachi for Cawnpore: and a third machine going to Cawnpore to pick up mails and passengers was held up at Jodhpur by adverse weather.”

“Arethusa” had been operating service IW582. Hong Kong mail which left the colony on 10 September on service FEW77 had connected with IW582 at Penang on 12 September (see cover below). Normally the mail involved would have been postmarked between 4 September and early on the morning of 10 September. However, an extra service had been operated on Tuesday, 7 September, taking advantage of a repositioning flight by the “Delphinus”, which had arrived in Hong Kong on a charter on 3 September. The mail for the extra service had closed at 5 p.m. on 6 September. Thus the FEW77 service was carrying mail posted between the evening of 6 September and the early morning of 10 September. The machine referred to in the Times was the HP42 “Horsa” that eventually brought the mail to Karachi on 17 September, two days late. The service eventually reached Southampton on 20 September when the “Ceres” landed one day late. No mail is known in the hands of collectors.



AW XV Atalanta Class – “Artemis”

<b>AIR MAIL LABELS</b>	
<small>THESE BOOKS OBTAINABLE FREE AT POST OFFICES</small>	<b>IMPERIAL AIRWAYS</b>
بطاقات البريد الجوي	<small>THE GREATEST AIR SERVICE IN THE WORLD</small>
مجموعات تصرف مجاناً من مكاتب البريد	<small>Travel-Post your letters</small>
<b>ETIQUETTES PAR AVION</b>	<small>Send your Goods by Air</small>
<small>Carnets délivrés gratuitement par les Bureaux de Poste.</small>	

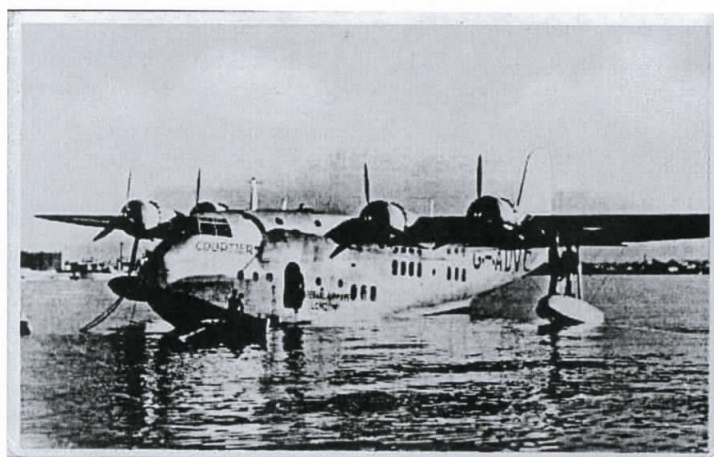


371001 (Nierinck 371001) – Imperial Airways – “Courtier” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– G-ADVC – Phaleron Bay, Greece – Asia-Great Britain route

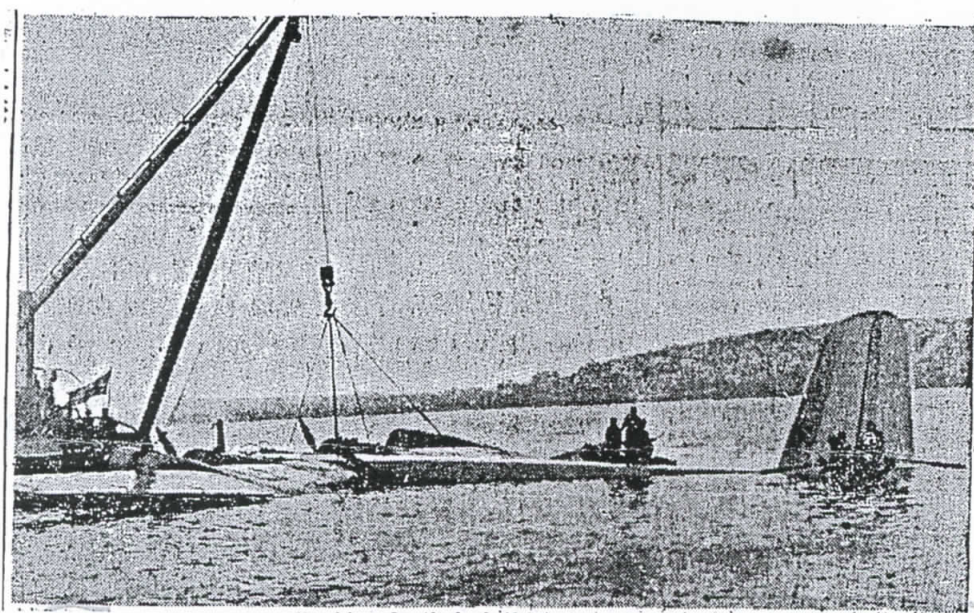
Captain E. Poole, First Officer Jack S. “Ginger” Hall, Radio Operator A. T. Dunk & Flight Clerk G.A. Boughton

The aircraft was making its scheduled landing at Phaleron Bay. The pilot failed to flatten the flying boat out and it struck the water with great force, which cause the hull to burst open, and it sank in a few minutes. Captain Poole claimed that the reflection of the sun on the still water of the bay, blinded him and he thought the aircraft was touching down on the water, when in fact, it was still fifty feet up. “Courtier” thus became victim of the phenomenon called “glassy calm”. Rescue attempts were hampered by the propellers, as they continued to turn in the water. Two passengers drowned, and five passengers were injured, one seriously. The remaining four passengers and crew were uninjured. An Air Ministry regulation followed this accident, making seat belts for passenger seats compulsory in British airplanes.

All the mail was recovered in watersoaked condition, and many varieties of cachets, markings and labels are known. Field <sup>18</sup> reported that mails from India, Iraq and Egypt were on board.

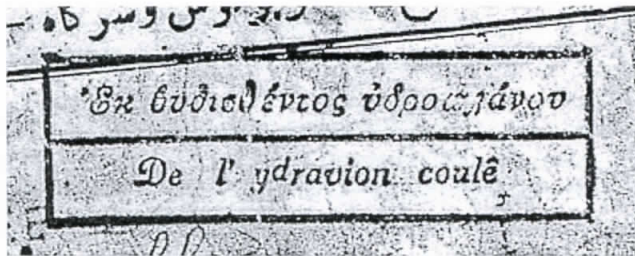


Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – G-ADVC – “Courtier”

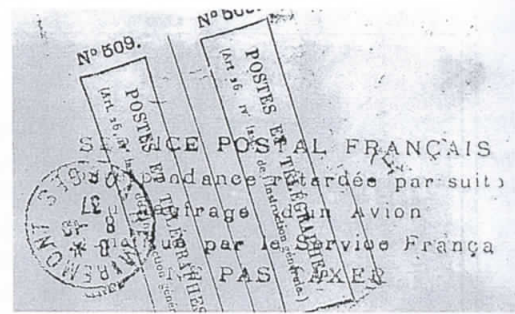


**Photo from a Greek Newspaper with the following Caption:**  
*“This is what is left after the accident of the hydroplane of Imperial Airways after yesterday’s tragedy.”*

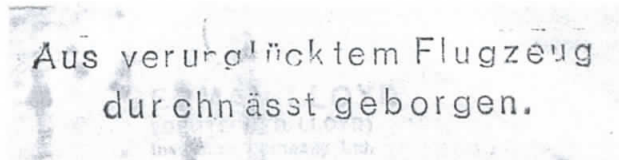




Type “a” – Cachet – Violet or Blue  
On Mail to Greece



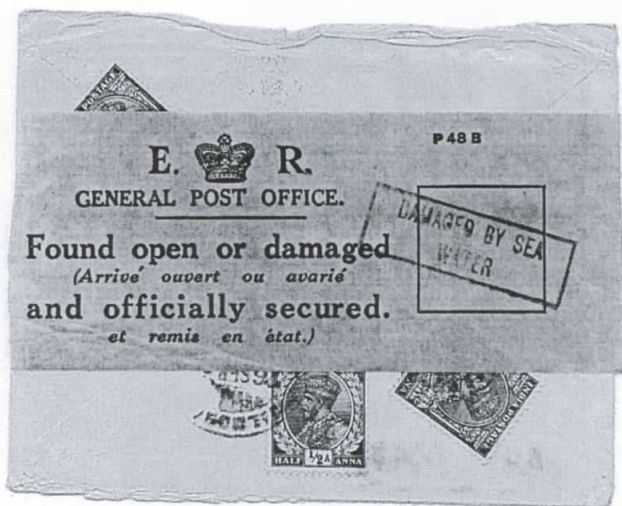
Type “b” – Cachet – Violet – On Mail to  
France



Type “c” – Cachet – Violet – On Mail to  
Germany



Type “d” – Cachet – Violet – On Mail to  
England



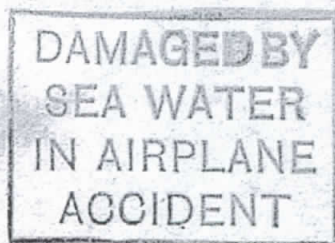
Type “e” – Cachet – Violet or Black – On Mail  
to England

### U. S. Crash Victim Buried in Athens

ATHENS, Oct. 2.—(U.P.)—The body of John Raymond Henderson, 48, theatrical agent for Katherine Cornell who died when the British Imperial Airways flying boat Courtier crashed into Phaleron Bay yesterday, was buried today in the British cemetery here.

The funeral was arranged by the British Athens Society.

Henderson, one of three passengers killed in the crash, was born in Colorado Springs, Colo., and grew up in Omaha, Neb. He was a resident of Washington, D. C.



Type “f” – Cachet – Violet –  
On Mail to England

Durch Meerwasser beschädigt

Type “g” – Cachet – Violet – On Mail to Switzerland



REÇU DANS CET ÉTAT



*Accident  
d'Avion*

Type “h” – Manuscript – On Mail to Switzerland

ACCIDENT D'AVION  
Correspondances recueillies en Mer  
NE PAS TAXER

Type “i” – Cachet – Black – On Mail to France

Amtlich verschlossen!

Art der Beschädigung:

Zugegangen von:

Unterschrift:

Zeuge:

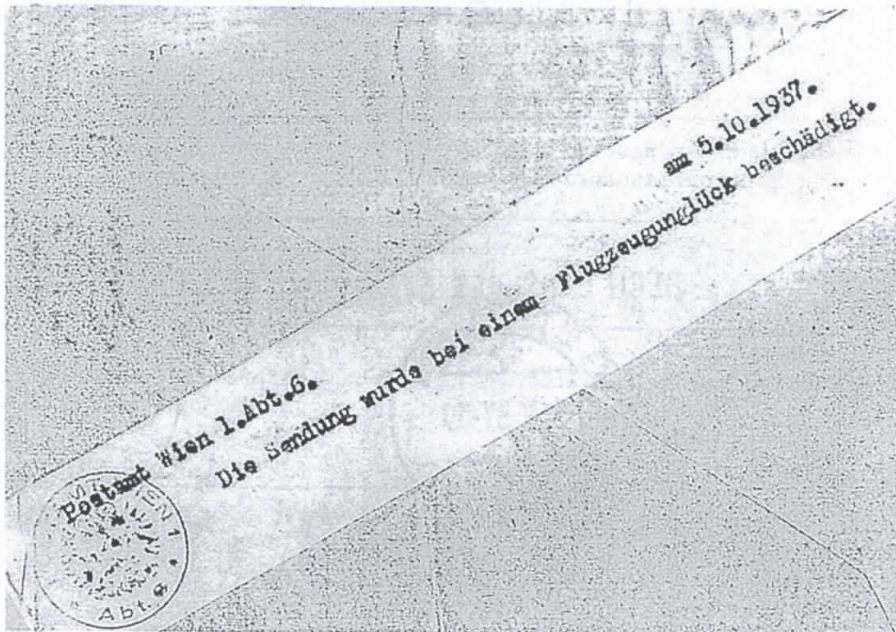
B 35 a V. 2975 (19. 79)

Type “j” – Onion-Skin Label – On Mail to Germany

*By overlanding van het  
vliegtuig van de Imperial  
Airways is post beschadigd  
Aan het postkantoor te  
Athene is worden  
inbrengen zonder postkistje*

POSTKANTOOR AMSTERDAM  
Loket Nr. 1  
Poste Exp.

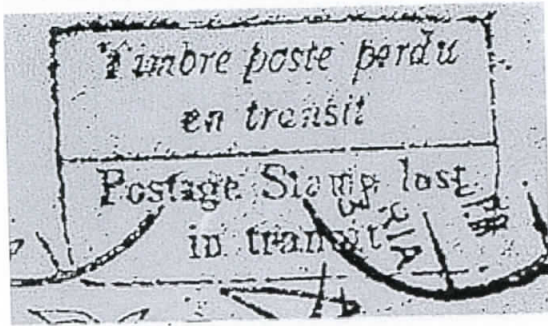
Type “k” – Manuscript – On Mail to The Netherlands



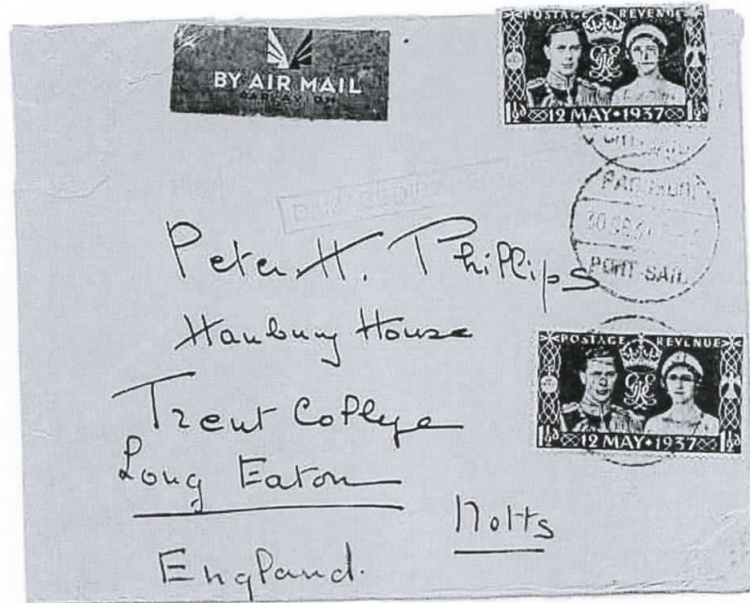
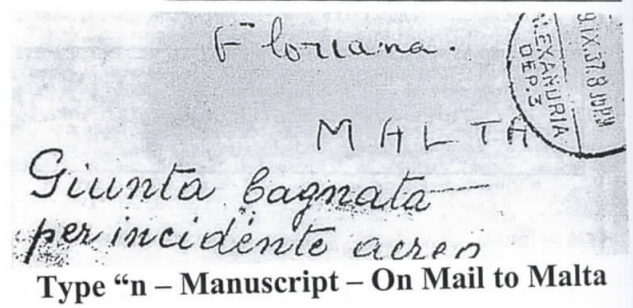
Type “l” – Label – Applied to Ambulance Covers by the Vienna, Austria Post Office



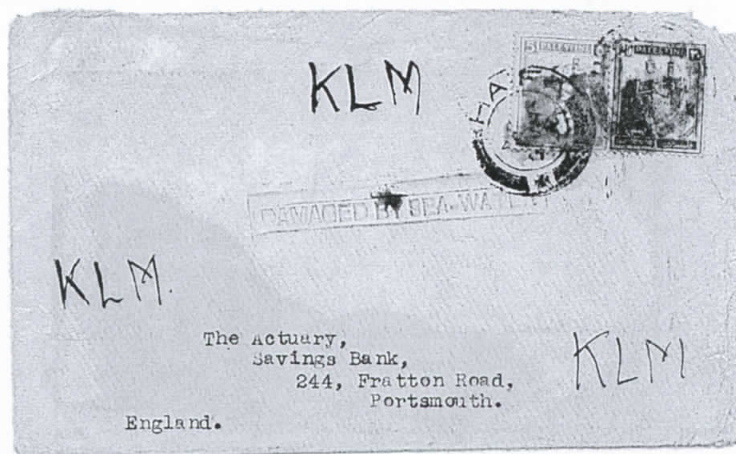
371001 (Nierinck 371001) – Imperial Airways – “Courtier” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– G-ADVC – Phaleron Bay, Greece (continued)



Type “m – Cachet – color unknown – On Covers Where Stamps Were Missing



Cover With Type “d” Cachet & Port Said, Egypt Paquebot Cancellation



The sender intended this cover to go via the Dutch KLM service, but apparently it missed the KLM flight and was on the ill-fated “Courtier”. Another similar cover with the “KLM” printed on it has been seen by the author.

371205 (Nierinck 371205) – Imperial Airways – “Cygnus” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– G-ADUZ – Brindisi, Italy – Asia-Great Britain route

Captain Roger P. Mollard, Acting Captain F. U. Hollins, Second Officer Ralph Mountain, Radio Operator E. C. Barnes & Flight Clerk F. J. Hanscombe

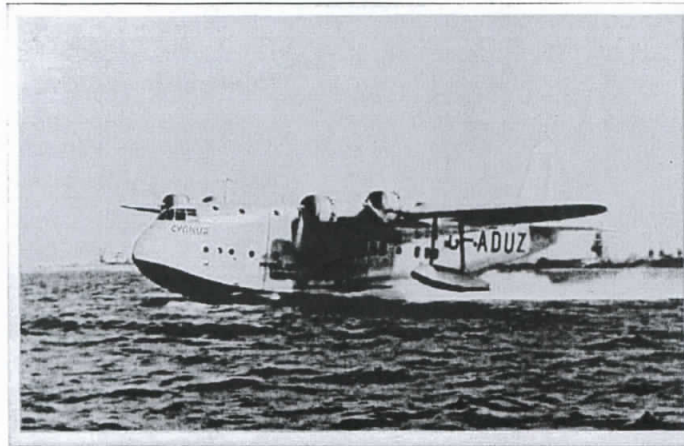
When taking off in a choppy sea, the Captain inadvertently set the flaps fully down, causing the aircraft to bounce off the water. It dropped with a splash, bounced up again, and after rising 20 to 30 feet, it dropped nose down, and the aircraft overturned and sank. The steward F. L. Stoppani and one passenger were killed. Five passengers were injured, including the Government Director of Imperial Airways, Air Marshall Sir John Salmond. An enquiry later blamed pilot error for the accident. Imperial was censured for failing to have specified sufficient push-out windows and escape hatches when ordering flying boats.

Most of the mail (100 bags with approximately 120,000 letters) was recovered in watersoaked condition, and many varieties of cachets, markings, labels and mimeograph explanations have been recorded.

Hopkins<sup>19</sup> makes an interesting comment. “A newspaper report at the time says that the whole of the mail had been salvaged, and that there were 100 bags with something like 120,000 letters. It is a good thing that most recipients throw them away immediately or collectors would be inundated with them!”

Hopkins also reported a cover from the Hardemann Smith collection, which had a “DAMAGED BY SEA WATER” cachet in a box (see cachet type “i”), with the lower portion being cut away, and more wording with it. His opinion was that this was the same handstamp, which was made in 1930 for the covers from the wreck of the ship “Comorin” in Colombo, Ceylon harbour.

Proud<sup>32</sup> reports mail from New Zealand, Australia, Ceylon, Malaya, Hong Kong, India, Iraq and Palestine. Field<sup>18</sup> also reported mail from Burma and Egypt.



Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– “Cygnus”

A cover is known from Malaya to England Without Cachet

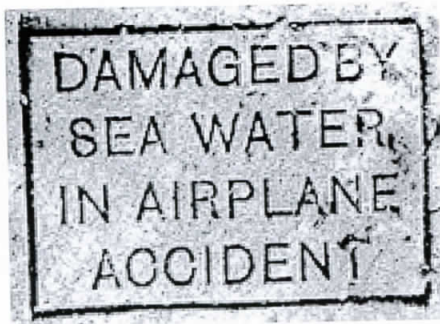


Type “a” – Cachet – Violet – On Mail to England

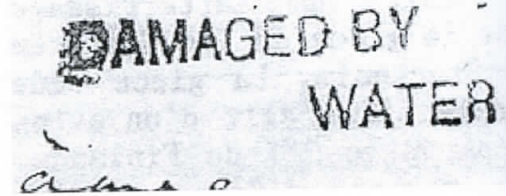


Type “b” – Cachet – Violet or Black  
– On Mail to England





Type “c” – Cachet – Violet  
On Mail to England



Type “d” – Cachet – Violet – On Mail to  
England

**BRAVEST DEED OF 1937**

The Duke of Gloucester, president of the Royal Humane Society, at York House yesterday presented the Stanhope Gold Medal (awarded for the bravest deed of the year) to Flying Officer Ralph Mountain, Reserve of Air Force Officers, who is on the staff of Imperial Airways. Mr. Mountain saved the lives of three passengers when the Imperial Airways flying-boat Cygnus crashed as it was taking off in Brindisi harbour on December 5, 1937.



Flight Officer Ralph Mountain, thirty-two-year-old Imperial Airways pilot, awarded yesterday the Stanhope gold medal for the “bravest deed of the year,” said to a Daily Express staff reporter last night: “Gold medal? Can’t believe it. No, I’ve not heard a word. Excuse me, I’ve a train to catch. Off to Alexandria tomorrow in the Caledonia.”

He didn’t know till then that the Royal Humane Society had given him the medal for his heroism when Imperial Airways flying-boat Cygnus crashed in the sea at Brindisi, Italy, in 1937. He dived three times to rescue passengers trapped in the cabin. Says Pilot Mountain: “Brave? No, you don’t know why you do that sort of thing. You simply dash in—all of a flurry.”

He lives with his wife and six-month-old daughter Tessa in a four-roomed flat at Chelsea Manor-street, S.W.

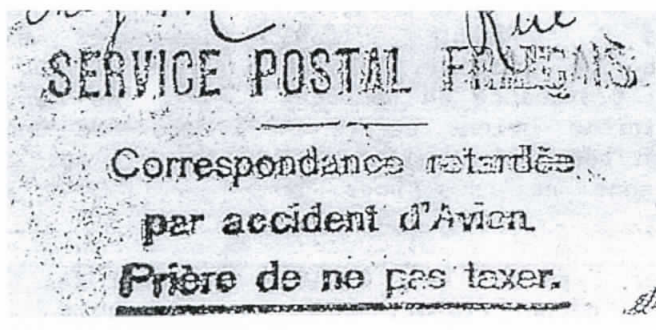
## British Airliner Crash Kills 2

LONDON, Dec. 5.—(AP)—One passenger and one member of the crew were killed today when the Imperial Airways flying boat Cygnus, en route from India to London, crashed in the outer harbor of Brindisi, on the southeastern Italian coast, with thirteen persons aboard.

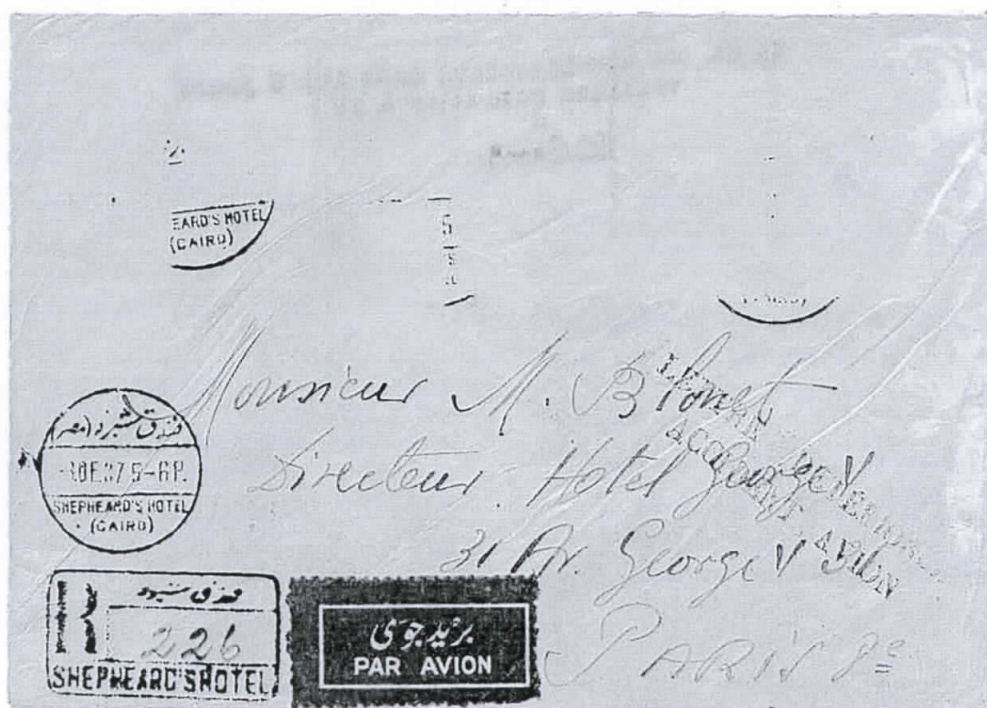
The eleven rescued, including Sir John Salmond, a government director of Imperial Airways and former British Air Staff chief, all were injured. The dead were a steward named Stappani and a Captain MacDonald.

The Cygnus, one of the latest type 20-ton Empire flying boats and costing \$200,000 sank in the outer harbor after taking off. The cause was not determined.

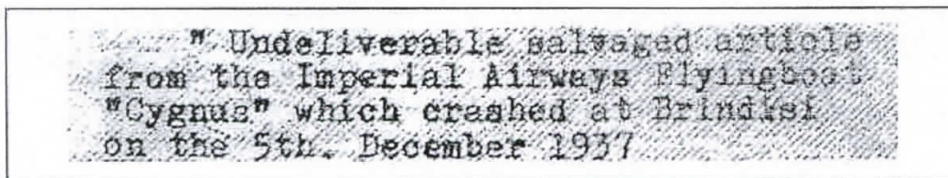
A sister ship, the Capricornus, crashed in France last March, killing five, injuring eleven.



Type “e” – Cachet – Violet – On Mail to France & Various European Countries Other Than England

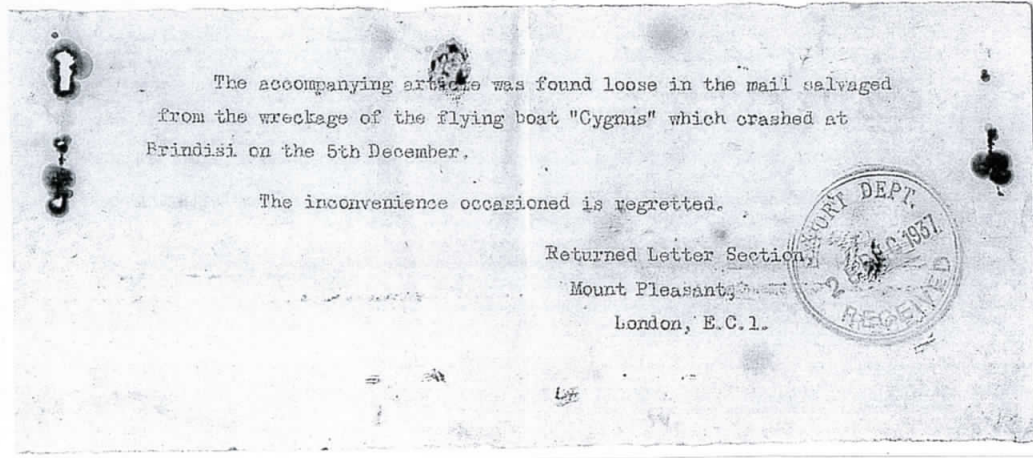


Type “f” – Cachet – Black – On Mail to France

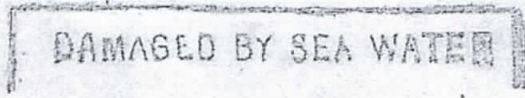


Type “g” – Label – Salmon – Applied by Dead Letter Office, Bombay, India

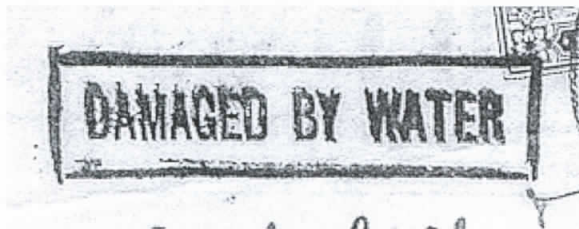




Type “h” – Printed Explanation From Mount Pleasant P.O., London



Type “i” – Cachet – Violet – On Mail to England



Type “k” – Cachet – Black – On Mail to England



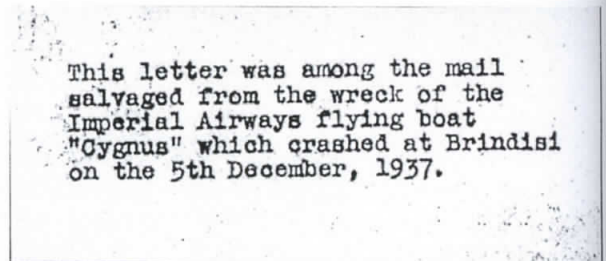
Type “m” – Cachet – Black – On Mail to Belgium



Type “j” – Cachet – Violet – On Mail to Austria



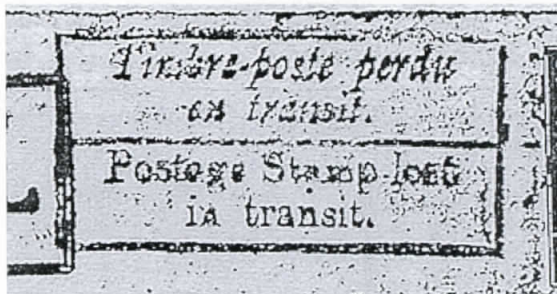
Type “l” – Cachet – Violet – On Mail to England



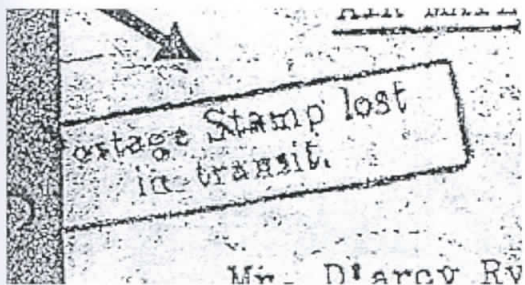
Type “n” – Typed Label – On Mail to England



Type “p” – Cachet – Dark Violet – On Mail to The Netherlands (Nierinck reported this as black)



Type “s” – Cachet – Violet – Applied to Mail to the USA & Canada by the London Post Office, but also known on a cover to England



Type “t” – Cachet – color unknown – On Mail to the USA



Type “u” – Cachet – Similar to Type “e” With additional cachet “RECUS DANS \_\_\_ ETAT” + Manuscript “Timbre manqué” (Stamp missing)

INLAND SECTION,  
LONDON POSTAL REGION,  
20<sup>th</sup> December, 1937.

IMMEDIATE.

The Head Postmaster,  
*Birmingham*

The accompanying correspondence which was salvaged from the wreck of the Imperial Airways Air Liner “Cygnus” is forwarded for disposal as early as possible.

The writing is not sufficiently decipherable to determine the precise address, but as the item appears to be proper for delivery in your area no doubt, with local knowledge, delivery can be effected.

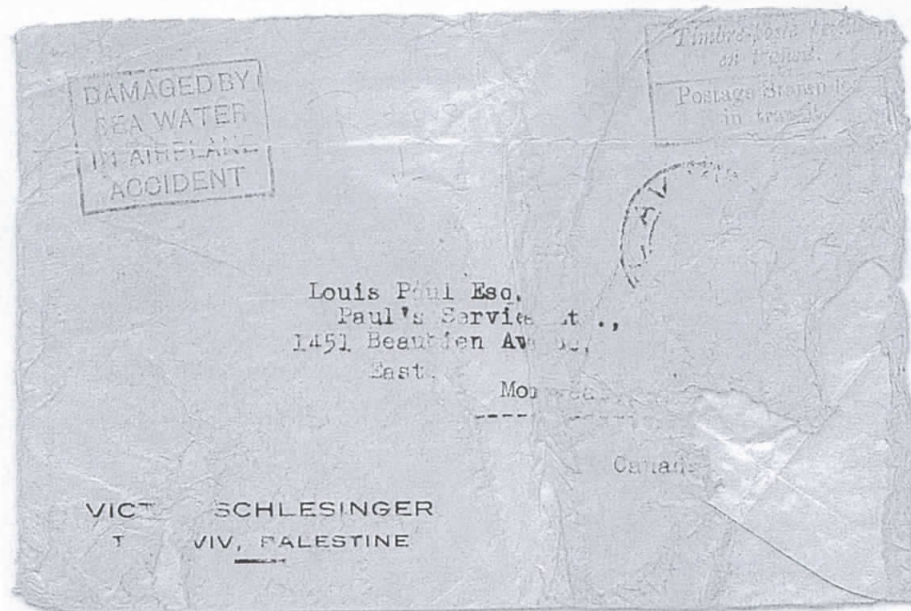
G. HICKMAN,  
Divisional Controller.

Type “w” – Letter From Inland Section, London Postal Region



*Beschädigte Einschreibsendung.*  
*Im Amte ausgefolgt.*  
Aufgabeort: *Jerusalem* ..... Nr. *9413* .....  
Empfänger: *Norbert Hoffmann*  
*W. Jelinekstrasse 13*  
An das  
Bei Flugzeugabsturz *Postamt Wien 1/6*  
durch Wasserbeschädigt.

Type “x” – Note From Vienna, Austria Post Office



Cover from Palestine to Montreal, Canada  
with bilingual cachet used mainly on mail to Canada and the USA

Daily Herald  
Monday, August 29th, 1938

# AIR CAPTAIN BLAMED FOR LINER CRASH

**COMMANDER MOLLARD**, Imperial Airways captain, is blamed for the crash of the flying-boat *Cygnus* in Brindisi harbour on December 5, in which two died.

The Chief Inspector of Accidents, Air Ministry, in his findings, just issued, says that the accident was caused by the captain attempting to take-off with the *Cygnus*' wing-flaps in the full-out position.

He states that he is satisfied that there was no defect in the controls, and that the structure of the aircraft was in no way defective; that less than the maximum load was carried, and it was correctly distributed.

The steward and one passenger were killed in the crash and the radio-operator and five passengers - including Sir

John Salmond, Marshal of the R.A.F., and Sir Edwin Lutyens' son—were injured.

The inspector states that he came to the conclusion that the maladjustment of the flaps was due to the fact that the full routine instructions for take-off were not in this case carried out and checked, as between the captain and the supernumerary captain (Captain Hollins).

Imperial Airways has since the accident carefully reviewed the routine instructions for the taking-off of flying-boats.

It is satisfied that these instructions were adequate, but a reminder has been sent to all officers concerned drawing their attention to the need for rigid adherence to these instructions in all cases.

## DRYING 120,000 LETTERS

### SALVAGED FROM SEA

From a Special Correspondent

The last batches of 120,000 sea-sodden letters from the Imperial Airways liner *Cygnus*, wrecked at Brindisi on Dec. 5, are being dried before delivery in a basement room at the General Post Office.

The whole of the *Cygnus*'s 100 bags of mail has now been salvaged. Although some of the letters have been soaked in sea water for over a week, very few are so badly damaged as to be undeliverable.

The radiator-lined room where all this mail is being dried is usually used to dry the wet clothing of postmen. For the past five days men have been employed day and night placing thousands of letters one by one on the radiators. As soon as one batch has dried, other waiting bundles are opened and their contents spread out.

The floor is ankle-deep in the stamps of almost every nation east from Egypt to New Zealand. Generally the first thing that happens when a letter is dried is that the stamp peels off. Already several basketfuls have been swept up.

All the stamps are sent to the Returned Letter Section, where they are carefully preserved for six months before being sold. Anyone receiving a stampless letter marked "Damaged by Sea Water" may apply there for the missing stamp—or one like it.

### Salvaged Mail

Some 120,000 letters were salvaged from the Imperial Airways liner *Cygnus* which was wrecked in Brindisi Harbour on the 5th December. Most of these letters were dried at the G.P.O. in London before being delivered, but a large packet was delivered to one London dealer with the sea water still running out of the package. Thousands of stamps from the Near and Far East are being retained by the Returned Letter Section of the Post Office in case they are claimed by the owners of the letters on which they were stuck. Most of the envelopes were stamped "Damaged by Sea Water" before being delivered. Surely waterproof mail bags would be a good idea?

### AIR MAIL

Imperial Airways Empire Mail carrying flying boat "Cygnus" crashed at Brindisi, Italy, whilst endeavoring to take off on the last part of her homeward journey to Southampton on Sunday December 5th. She was flying mail from Australia and India as well as passengers. One passenger and the plane's steward were killed. It appears that the plane lost height twice just after becoming "unstuck" after the take off and the second time stove in her bows on impact with heavy seas. The serious nature of the damage caused the machine to sink almost immediately. Passengers and crew were taken off by the shore base launch which reached the plane just in time. All that was visible above the water was the tail unit. The boat was salvaged and towed ashore tail first. It is understood that most of the mail was recovered although badly damaged by sea water. Just wondering if the "Cygnus" had any Christmas mail for me!!

## £40,000 MACHINE BUILT TO SPEED UP AIR MAILS

The *Cygnus*, whose engines develop 2,960 h.p. is one of the Class C Empire flying-boats, with a span of 114ft. She cost more than £40,000, and was delivered last March.

This class was introduced to speed up the Empire air mail schedules, and helped to make possible the 1½d rate for Empire air mail.

The crew is accommodated on the upper deck and the passengers in four saloons below.

Similar machines, the *Cambria* and *Caledonia*, have been carrying out test flights between Foynes, Ireland, and Botwood, Newfoundland, and another *Centaurus*, is now on a flight to Australia.

Mishaps in which machines of the type have been involved include:

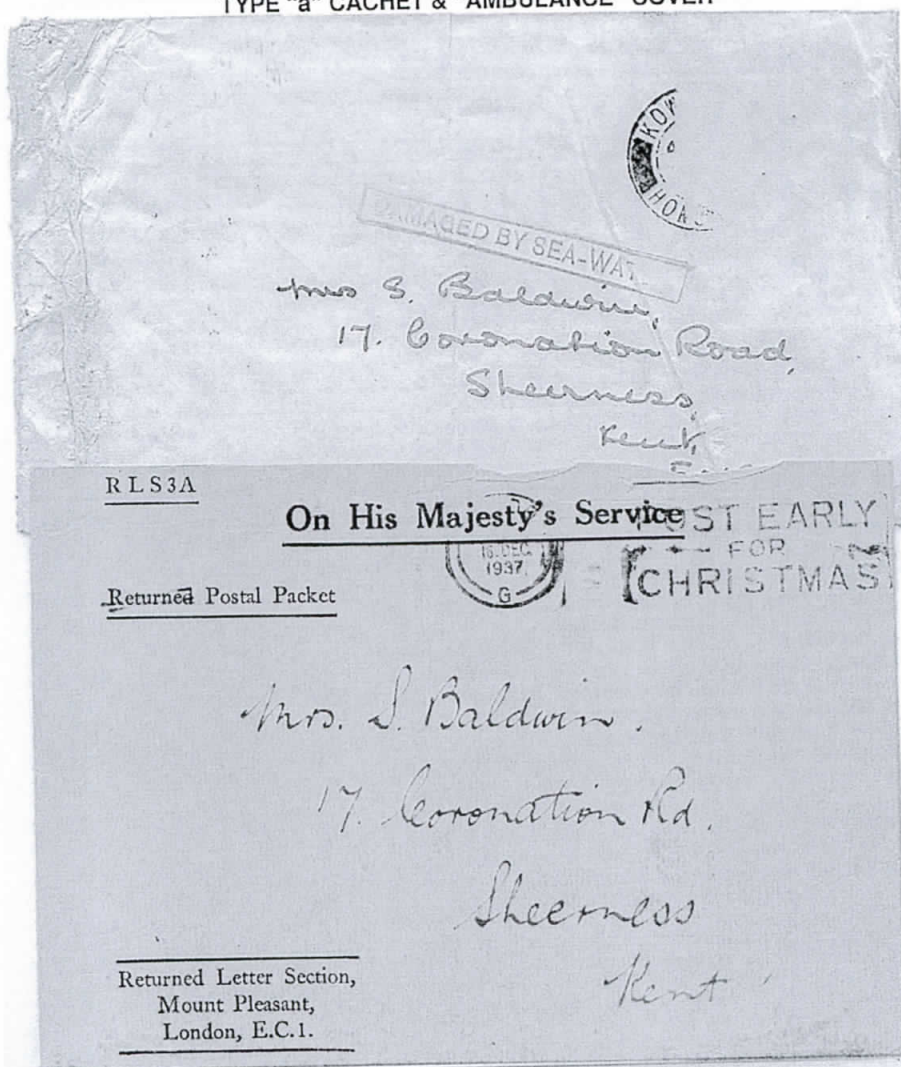
Oct 1: *Courtier* crashed off Athens. Three killed.

March 24: *Capricornus* crashed in France. Five killed.

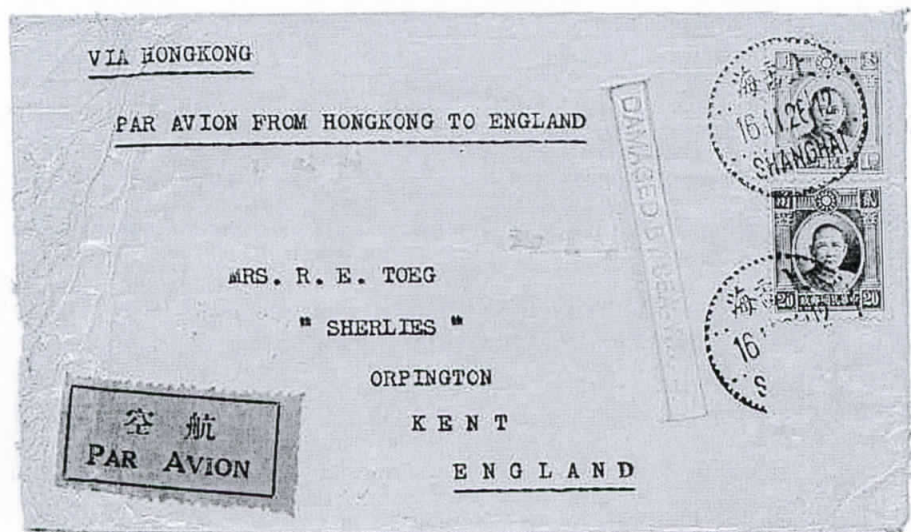


371205 (Nierinck 371205) – Imperial Airways – “Cygnus” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– G-ADUZ – Brindisi, Italy (continued)

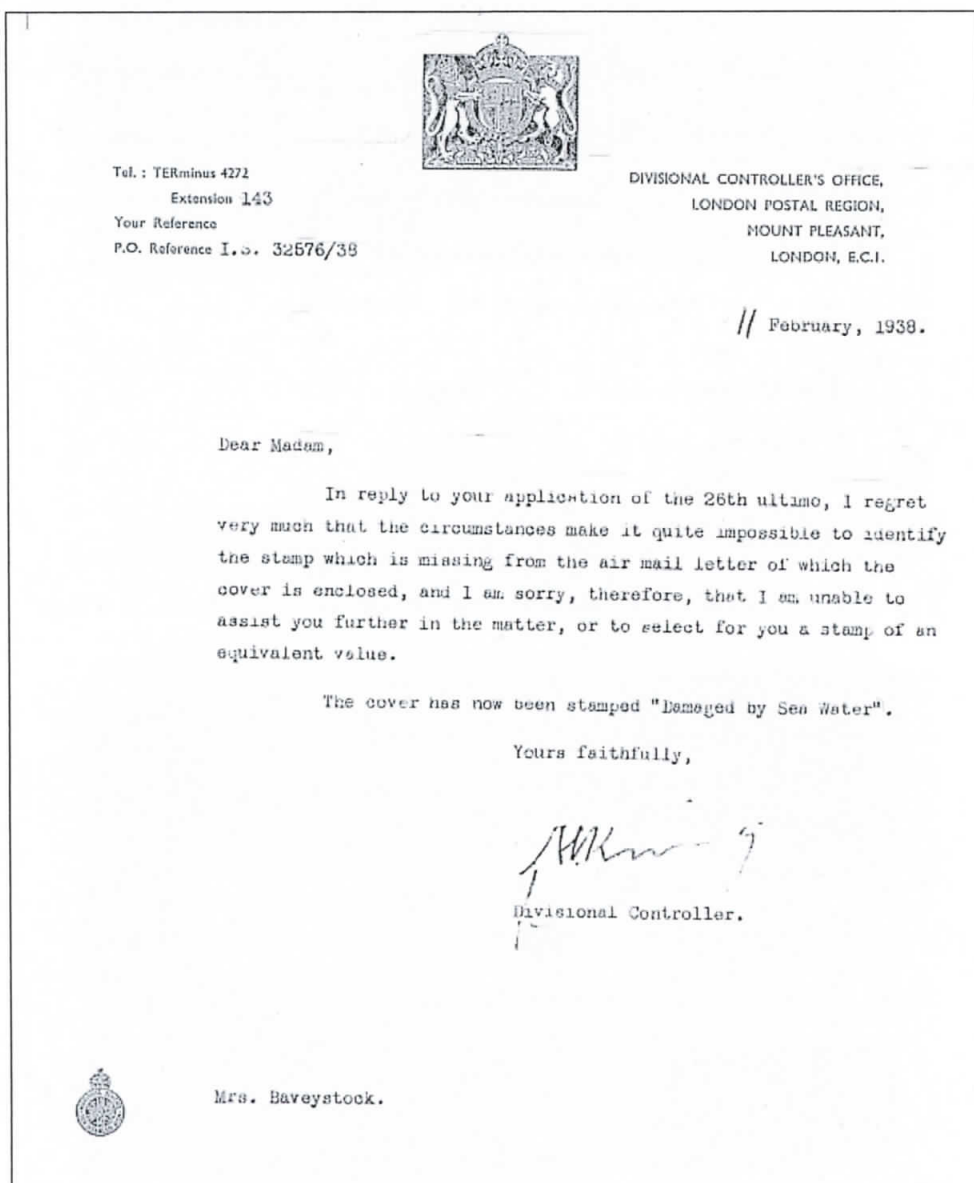
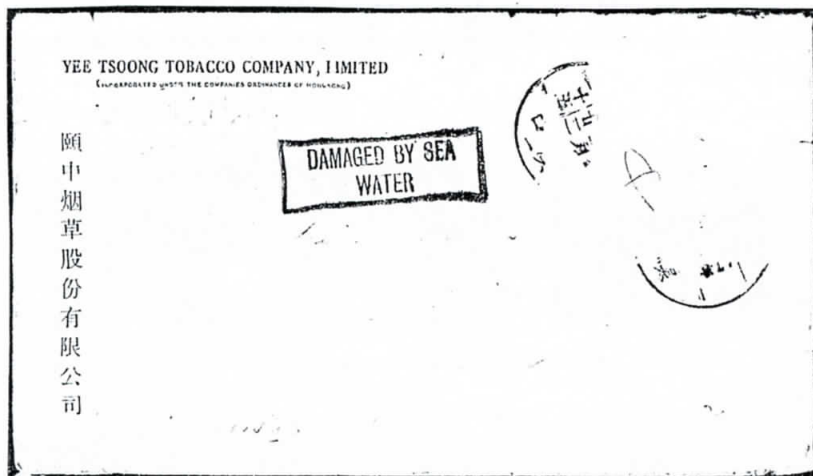
TYPE “a” CACHET & “AMBULANCE” COVER



Type “y” – Ambulance Cover From Mount Pleasant P.O., London



Cover from Shanghai, China with type “a” cachet

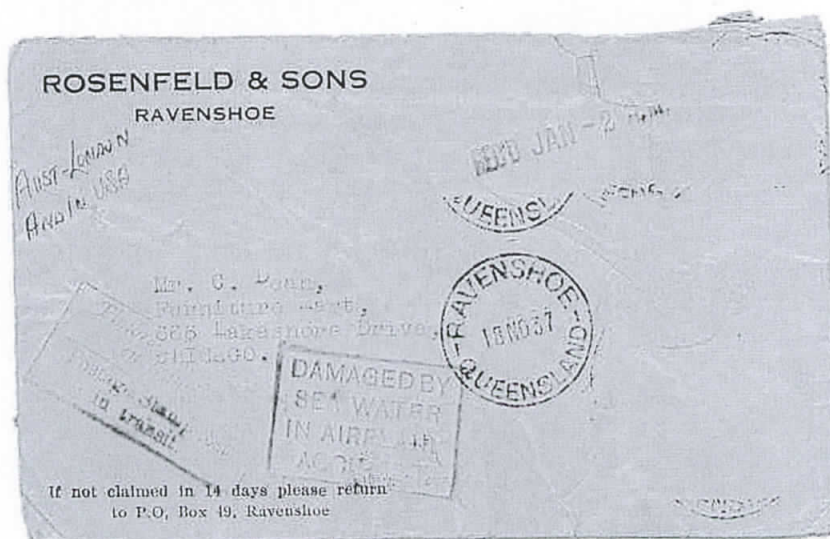
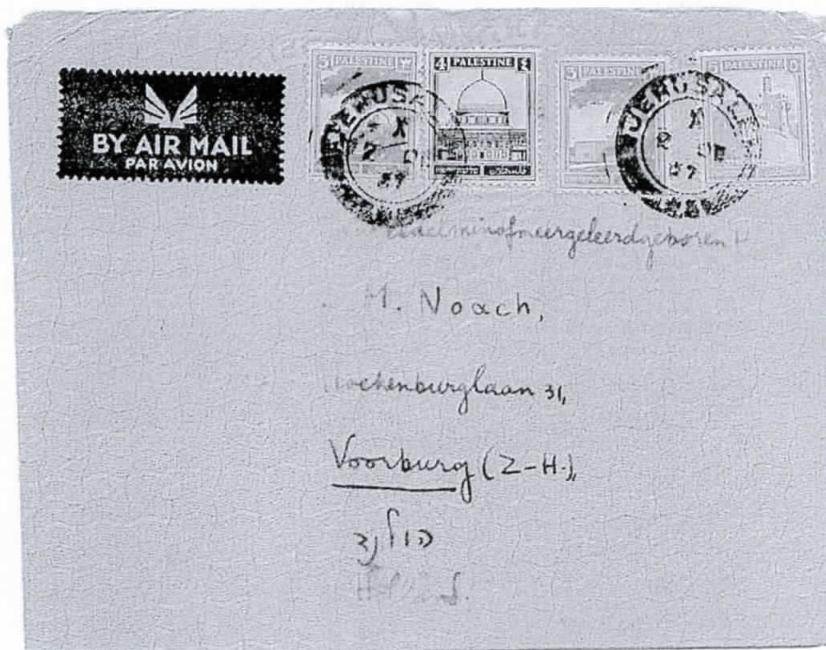


Type "z" – Letter from London Postal Region explaining missing stamp



371205 (Nierinck 371205) – Imperial Airways – “Cygnus” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– G-ADUZ – Brindisi, Italy (continued)

Mail to European countries other than England was sent by the Brindisi Post Office to Paris by train, where it was redistributed to the various destinations. Some covers were backstamped with the Brindisi Air Mail cancellation, as shown.



Cover to the USA with Type “s” bilingual cachet & Type “c” cachet

380115 – Imperial Airways – Aircraft unknown – Rohtak District, India – Cairo-India route

Captain unknown

The following is an extract from an Indian newspaper:

“New Delhi, January 15, 1938. Imperial Airways mailplane from Karachi, which was due at Delhi today, was unable to land on Delhi Aerodrome owing to a heavy ground mist, north-west of Delhi in the Rohtak District and damaged its undercarriage. Nobody was injured and the passengers and mail were brought to Delhi by a motor car. The mail and the passengers have left for Calcutta by relief plane which was sent from Karachi.”

No mail is known in collectors' hands.

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380123 – Imperial Airways – “Cordelia” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – G-AEUD – On the sea near La Boule, France – Great Britain-Egypt route

Captain unknown

The following is an extract The Times of London, 24 January 1938:

“The four-engined Imperial Airways flying-boat Cordelia, outward bound from England, was forced to come down on the sea at La Boule, near Saint-Nazair, yesterday by slight engine trouble, and was towed the 12 miles to the Imperial Airways base at Saint-Nazair by a launch.”

No mail is known in collectors' hands.



Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – “Cordelia”

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**PARTY RATES!**

Special rates have been fixed for Touring Parties. Particulars from any Travel Agency, or direct from

**IMPERIAL AIRWAYS LTD.,**  
Airways House, Charles Street, Haymarket, S.W.1. Telephone—Regent 7394.

After July—London Air Terminus, Victoria Station (Continental Departures), S.W.1. Telephone—Victoria 3242.



Page from Airmail Etiquette Booklet

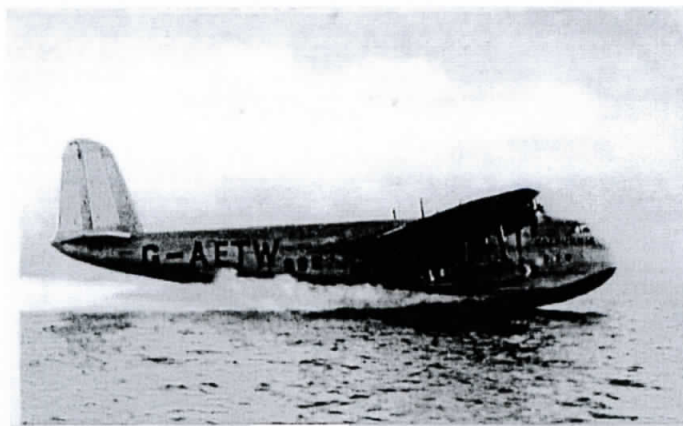


380206 – Imperial Airways – “Calpurnia” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – G-AETW – Brindisi, Italy – Great Britain-Africa route

Captain J.P. Kirton

The aircraft was operating the southbound service to Kisumu, Kenya, and it broke a wing-tip float when taking off at Brindisi. A relief aircraft the “Calypso” was sent from Southampton shortly after news of the mishap was received. The “Calypso” picked up the eight passengers and mail, and carried them onward to Africa.

No mail is known in collectors’ hands.



Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – “Calpurnia”

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380308 – Imperial Airways – “Delphinus” – DH-86 Diana Class – G-ACPL – Fort Bayard, Indochina – Great Britain-Hong Kong route

Captain unknown

The Lloyd’s Weekly Casualty Reports reported that the “Delphinus” overshot the runway whilst attempting a landing at Fort Bayard on 8 March. The propellers and undercarriage of the aircraft were damaged and it was feared that the connection at Bangkok would be missed. A later report stated that a relief aircraft was being sent from Bangkok and that it was expected that the mail would be recovered in time to make the regular connection. In fact this was not the case and after a three day delay at Fort Bayard, the “Delphinus” was repaired and completed the operation of service HB13, arriving in Bangkok on the 13<sup>th</sup> of March, four days late.

No mail is known in collectors’ hands.



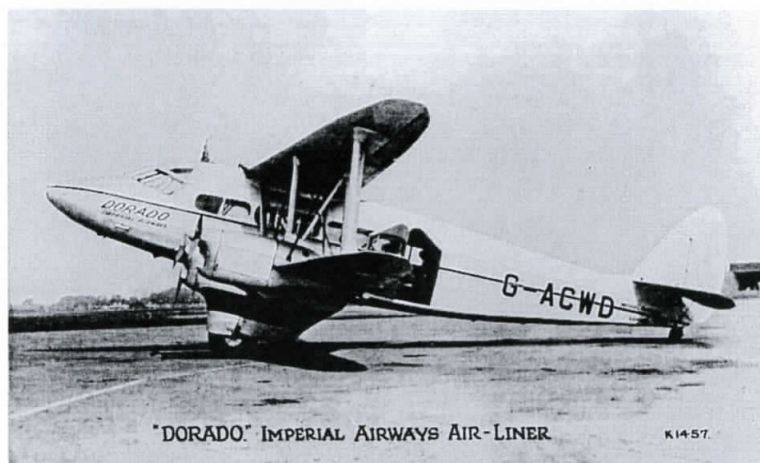
DH-86 Diana Class – “Delphinus”

380603 – Imperial Airways – “Dorado” – DH-86 Diana Class – G-ACWD – Hong Kong – Hong Kong-  
Great Britain route

Captain unknown

The “Dorado” caught fire when its engines were started in preparation for the service HB36. The passengers were hastily evacuated. In Lloyd’s Weekly Casualty Reports, it was reported that “four persons had remarkable escapes from death when the Imperial Airways liner “Dorado” caught fire on the ground just before taking off for Bangkok this morning. One of the Chinese employees, who broke his leg, was the only casualty. Mails and freight were hastily removed from the machine and it was at first thought that the damage was so slight that plane would be able to leave on its flight tomorrow. Examination however showed that the damage was more serious than first thought and the *Daedalus*, which is due here today, will take over the schedule of the *Dorado*.”

The mail was not damaged and no covers are known in collectors’ hands.



**DH-86 Diana Class – “Dorado”**

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380612 (Nierinck 380620) – Imperial Airways – “Ceres” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– G-AETX – Lake  
Dugari, India – Great Britain-Asia route

Captain E. M. Gurney

After leaving Karachi enroute to Singapore, the pilot got caught in heavy monsoon rain and made a forced landing in Lake Dugari, in the State of Tonk about thirty two miles south of Tonk in Central India. This was an emergency landing place between Raj Samand and Gwalior, about fifty miles south of Jaipur. The aircraft was unable to continue, as the lake was very shallow, and it was stuck in soft mud. The mail was carried by bullock cart for 20 miles and by car for a further 10 miles to join the railway connecting to Lake Gwalior, where the relief plane “Capella” was waiting on the day after the incident. The mail was carried onward and arrived at Calcutta at 5:00 p.m. the 17<sup>th</sup>. Because there was no damage to the mail, no special markings were applied.

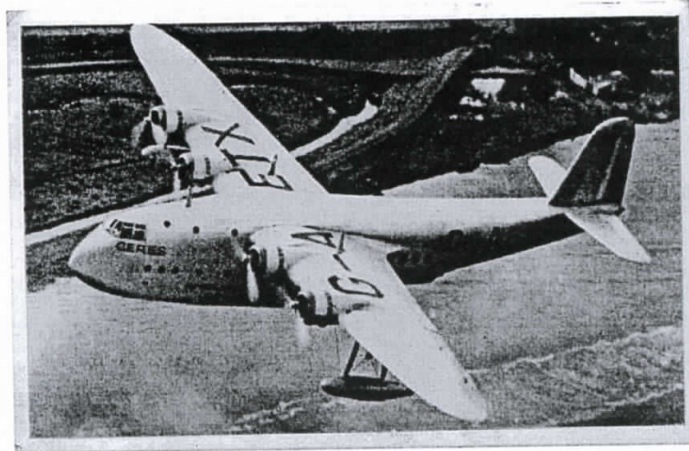
Hopkins <sup>19</sup> reported that Lake Dugari was normally deep enough for a safe landing, but because of drought, the water level was 8 feet below normal. After soundings were taken to determine the deepest area for take-off, the aircraft finally left on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June.



380724 – Imperial Airways – “Ceres” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– G-AETX – Wadi Halfa, – South Africa-  
Great Britain route

Pilots unknown

Lloyd's Casualty Reports say that “Ceres” collided with a floating Dock. “Caledonia” operated as relief  
aircraft. No mail is known.



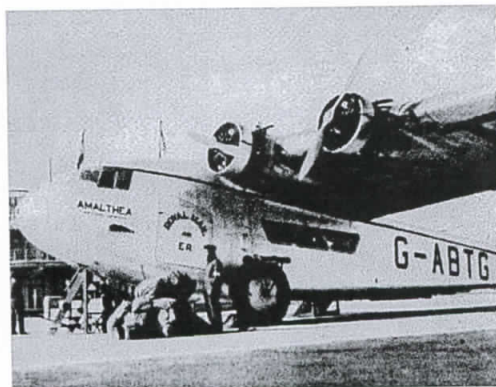
Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – “Ceres”

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380727 (Nierinck 380727) – Imperial Airways – “Amalthea” – Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta  
Class – G-ABTG – Kisumu, Kenya – South Africa-Great Britain route

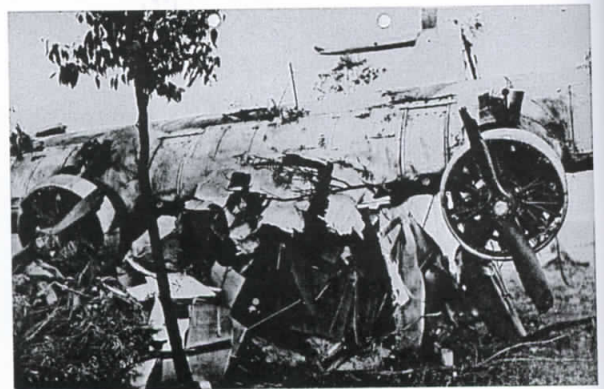
Captain M. V. Johnstone, First Officer J. E. Ray, Radio Officer T. Morris & Ground Engineer M. J.  
Gough

When taking off for Alexandria, the aircraft hit some birds, crashed into a hill and was destroyed by fire.  
The four crew members were killed. According to Imperial Airways files, there were no passengers,  
mails or cargo on board, as it was a ferry flight to India. It has been included here only because it was  
listed by Nierinck, and if it was omitted, some readers might wonder why.



Rand Airport.  
Arrival of  
Air Mails  
from Europe  
and Intermediate  
Countries.

Randje Lughaw.  
Aankom van  
Lugpost uit  
Europa en  
tussenvliegende  
landen.



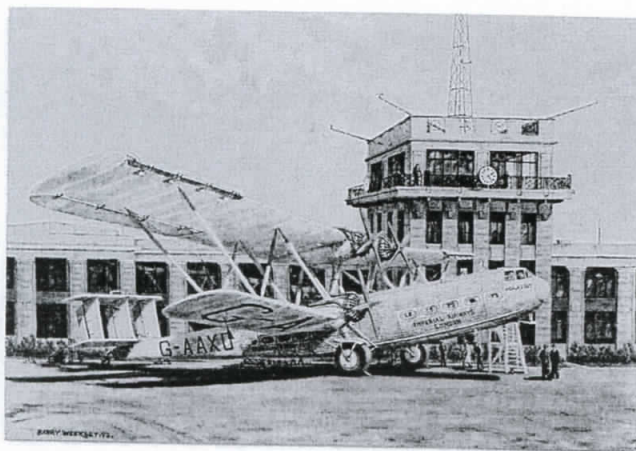
Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class  
– “Amalthea”

After the Crash

381025 – Imperial Airways – “Horatius” – Handley Page HP 42 Heracles Class – G-AAXD – Lympe, Great Britain – Paris-London route

Captain A. B. Dykes

The flight was due to land at Croydon, but after receiving weather reports showing deterioration of Croydon visibility, the pilot was instructed to proceed to Lympe at 2049 hours. The pilot was unfamiliar with the Lympe Aerodrome, and when about to land, the landing lights revealed a fence on the edge of the aerodrome. The pilot pulled back on the controls to clear the fence, and then tried to gain forward speed with the engines, but the aircraft dropped heavily and bounced into the air. He let it down again but the port undercarriage had been damaged by the fence. The port plane dragged on the ground and slewed the aircraft around at the end of the run. There were no injuries to the pilot, the steward or the sixteen passengers. The passengers were taken by bus to Folkestone. The mail was not damaged and no covers are known in collectors' hands.



Handley Page HP 42 Heracles Class – “Horatius”

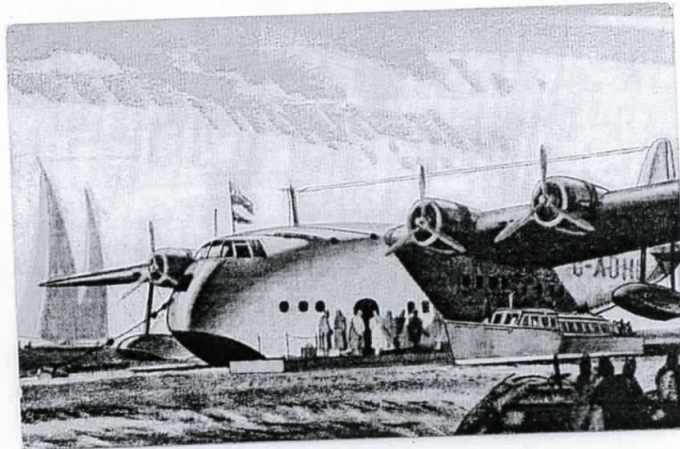




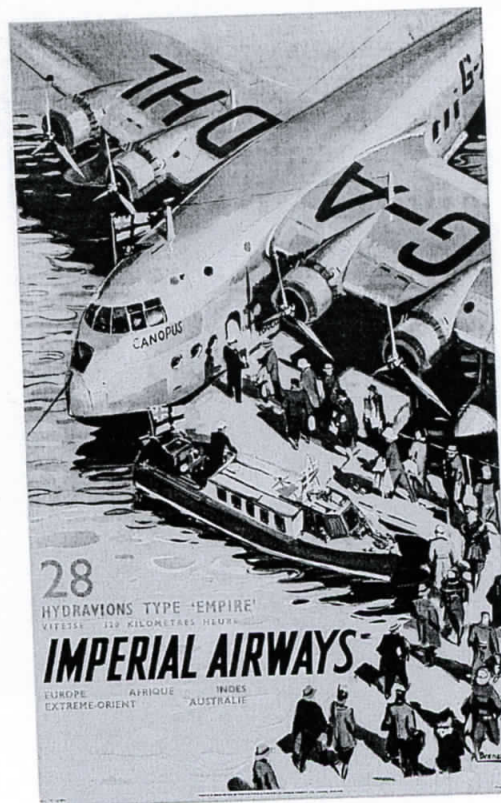
381110 – Imperial Airways – “Canopus” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– G-ADHL – Rangoon, Burma – Great Britain-Australia route

Captain & crew members names unknown

The eastward-bound flying boat and an oil barge collided when the plane alighted at Rangoon, due to rough water. A float of the aircraft was damaged and the flying boat was delayed for two or three days while a spare float was obtained from Singapore. The mail was not damaged and no covers are known in collectors’ hands.



“Canopus” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– G-ADHL



Postcard Reproduction of a Poster

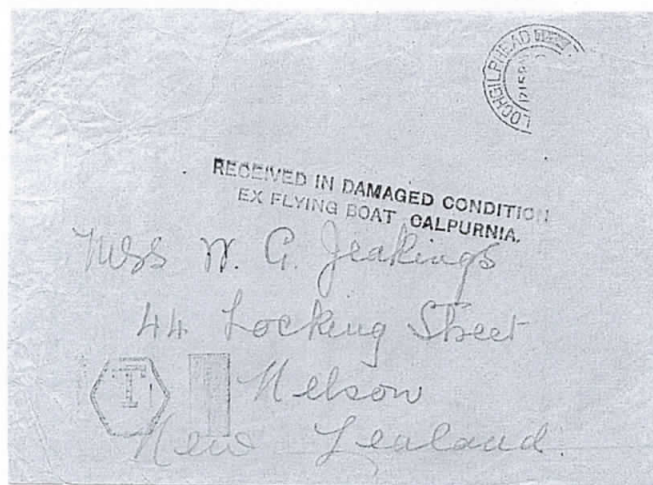
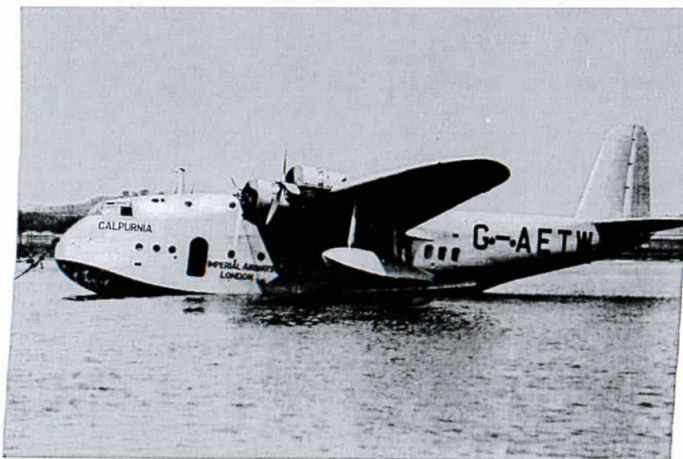
381127 (Nierinck 381127) – Imperial Airways – “Calpurnia” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– G-AETW – Lake Ramadi, Iraq – Great Britain-Australia route

Captain Ernest Henry “Tich” Attwood, First Officer Alexander Ninian Spottiswood, Radio Operator B. Bayne-Rees & Flight Clerk F. G. Ubee

The flight had departed from Southampton on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, and was carrying a heavy load of Christmas mail. When attempting to land during a severe sand storm and in the dark, the aircraft struck the water too hard and crashed in Lake Ramadi, which is 12 miles from Lake Habbaniyah. The Captain had mistaken it for the normal landing place, Lake Habbaniyah. All four flight crew members were killed, whilst two Imperial staff passengers and the Steward D.E. Anderson escaped with some injuries. There were no revenue passengers onboard.

Most of the mail (about 80 bags–800 lbs.) was scattered across the lake. It was salvaged by the Royal Air Force (RAF) in watersoaked condition, and many of the covers had the stamps soaked off. To assist with the salvage, Imperial Airways staff came out from Basra. They were accompanied by some GPO personnel, who were not pleased to find the RAF people drying out the mail in an irregular manner. By the 30<sup>th</sup> of November, eighteen mailbags had been recovered. Many different cachets, labels, markings and mimeograph explanations were used by the post offices at the various destinations of the mail.

Proud<sup>32</sup> reports mail to Iran, Iraq, Australia & New Zealand posted in the UK 23.11.38 & 24.11.38

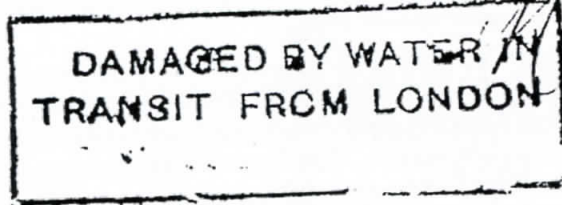


**Type “a” – Cachet – Violet**

Even though the Universal Postal Union regulations specify that “postage due” should not be collected on mail missing stamps because of an accident, some post offices in New Zealand did apply postage due markings and collected the postage because stamps were missing. A cover is also known to Western Australia with a postage due “T” marking.

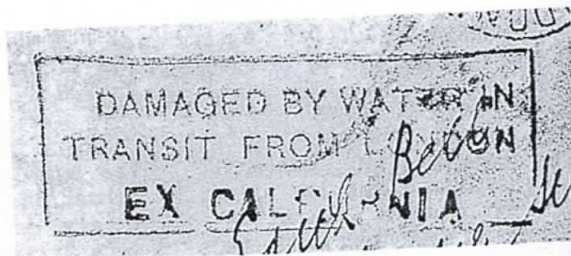


381127 (Nierinck 381127) – Imperial Airways – “Calpurnia” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– G-AETW – Lake Ramadi, Iraq (continued)



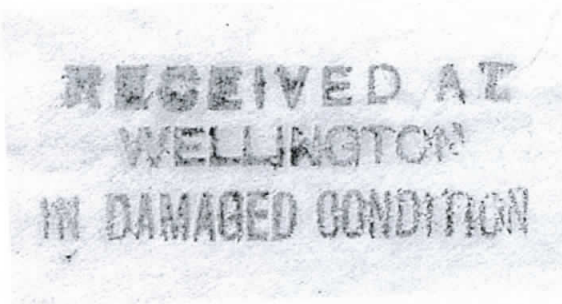
DAMAGED BY WATER IN  
TRANSIT FROM LONDON

Type “b” – Cachet – Pink



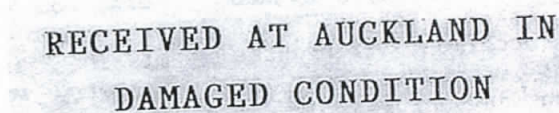
DAMAGED BY WATER IN  
TRANSIT FROM LONDON  
EX CALPURNIA

Type “bb” – Cachet – Pink – Similar to type “b” but with “EX CALPURNIA” added



RECEIVED AT  
WELLINGTON  
IN DAMAGED CONDITION

Type “c” – Cachet – Violet – Applied by Wellington, New Zealand Post Office



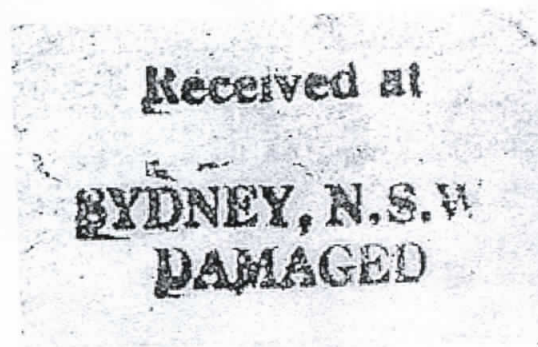
RECEIVED AT AUCKLAND IN  
DAMAGED CONDITION

Type “d” – Cachet (facsimile) – Pink – Applied by Auckland, New Zealand Post Office



RECEIVED IN DAMAGED CONDITION  
AT CHRISTCHURCH.

Type “e” – Cachet – Pink – Applied by Christchurch, New Zealand Post Office



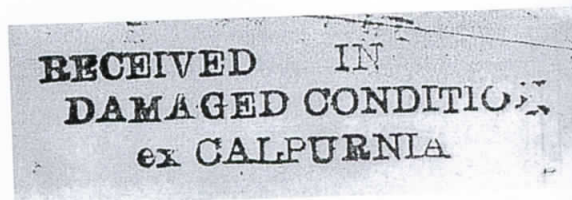
Received at  
SYDNEY, N.S.W.  
DAMAGED

Type “f” – Cachet – Black or Pink – Applied by Sydney, Australia Post Office



SALVAGED  
EX “CALPURNIA”

Type “g” – Cachet – Black – Applied by Hobart, Australia Post Office



RECEIVED IN  
DAMAGED CONDITION  
ex CALPURNIA

Type “h” – Cachet – Violet – Applied by Wellington, New Zealand Post Office

Insurance Co.  
LONDON, E.C.1, ENGLAND

DAMAGED BY WATER  
THROUGH ACCIDENT  
TO FLYING BOAT.

Type "i" - Cachet - Red or Violet - Applied by Sydney, Australia Post Office

The enclosed letter was salvaged from the mail of the Empire Flying Boat "Calpurnia" which crashed at Lake Ramadi, Arabia. This accounts for the unfortunate delay and the condition of the article.

B.H. BROWN  
Superintendent, Mail Branch

Type "j" - Printed Explanation - From Victoria, Australia

The accompanying postal article was salvaged from the Flying Boat "Calpurnia", which crashed in Lake Habbaniyah on 27.11.38, when en route with mails for Australia from England.

*R. N. Partington*  
(R.N. PARTINGTON)  
Deputy Director  
2504

Type "k" - Printed Explanation - From Melbourne, Australia

The accompanying postal article was salvaged from the Flying Boat "Calpurnia", which crashed in Lake Habbaniyah Irak on 27.11.38, when on route with mails for Australia from England.

Registered London ES.7  
No. 9506

*R. N. Partington*  
(R.N. PARTINGTON)  
Deputy Director  
2504

Type "kk" - Printed Explanation - From Melbourne, Australia



The accompanying postal article was salvaged from the Flying Boat "Calpurnia", which crashed in Lake Haboniyah Irak on 27.11.38, when en route with mails for Australia from England.

(R.W. P. TINGTON)  
Deputy Director.

**Type “kl” – Printed Explanation – From Melbourne, Australia**

G3.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

TELEPHONE No. \_\_\_\_\_  
SWITCH No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Sch. C.1109 3/1934.

IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE  
No. \_\_\_\_\_

POSTMASTER-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT.  
GENERAL POST OFFICE.  
SYDNEY. 20. 12. 1937.

The enclosed air mail was damaged when the flying boat Calpurnia, outward bound from England, was forced down on water while crossing Iraq.

The delay and inconvenience caused you by this most unfortunate happening, are very much regretted.

*V.E. Butler*  
(V.E. BUTLER)  
Deputy Director,  
Posts and Telegraphs.

**Type “l” – Explanation letter From Sydney, GPO, Australia**

**WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE EMPIRE FARES**

	Accommodation on land each night	Meals	Tips	Transport between terminal and air ports
London to—				
Cairo .. .. .	£42	single	£75	12s. return
Calcutta .. .. .	£108		£194	8s. ..
Rangoon .. .. .	£120		£216	.. ..
Singapore .. .. .	£154		£280	16s. ..
Nairobi .. .. .	£109		£196	4s. ..
Johannesburg .. .. .	£125		£225	.. ..
Cape Town .. .. .	£130		£234	.. ..
Brisbane .. .. .	£195		£351	.. ..

(All fares liable to alteration)

Figure 6A

**EUROPEAN AIR MAILS**

Letter Air Mails are despatched every day to most EUROPEAN countries. The postage rates for letters and post-cards are:—

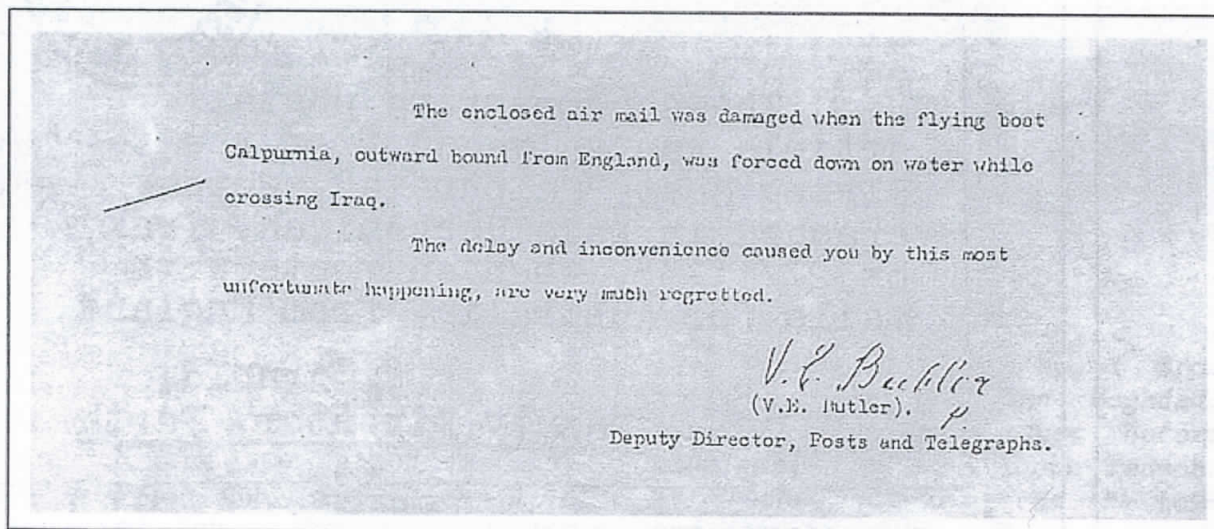
LETTERS:—First Ounce	- - -	4d
Each Additional Ounce	- - -	3d
POST-CARDS	- - -	2½d

Correspondence may also be sent by air or by combined air and ordinary services to most countries outside Europe. Parcel Air Mails are despatched on week-days to most European countries. For postage rates and full particulars of letter and parcel air mail services, see AIR MAIL LEAFLET obtainable free of charge from any Post Office.

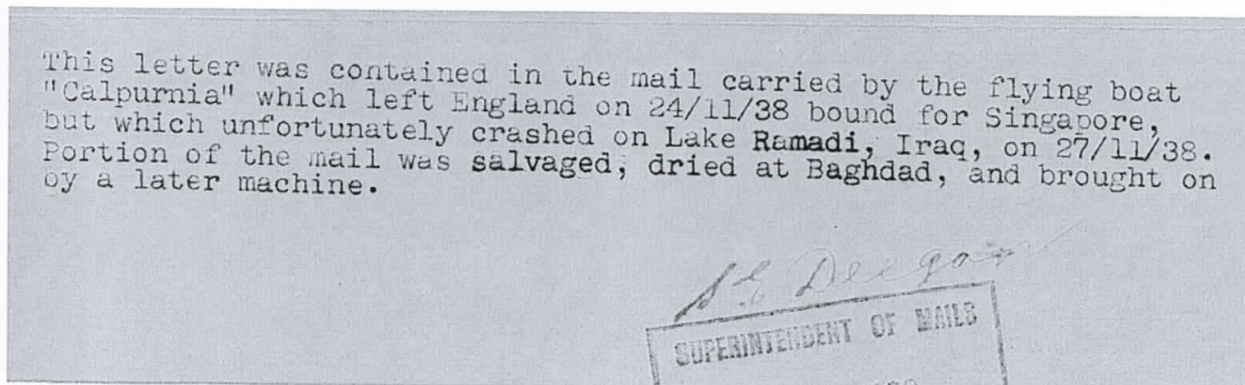
Figure 6C

Figure 6D

**Pages from Airmail Etiquette Booklet**



**Type “ll” – Explanation letter From Sydney, GPO, Australia – Similar to Type “l”**



**Type “m” – Printed Explanation From Hobart, Tasmania, Australia**

The accompanying postal article was salvaged from the Flying Boat "Calpournia", which crashed in Lake Habbaniyah Irak on 27.11.38, when on route with mails for Australia from England.



R.M. PARTINGTON  
Deputy Director.

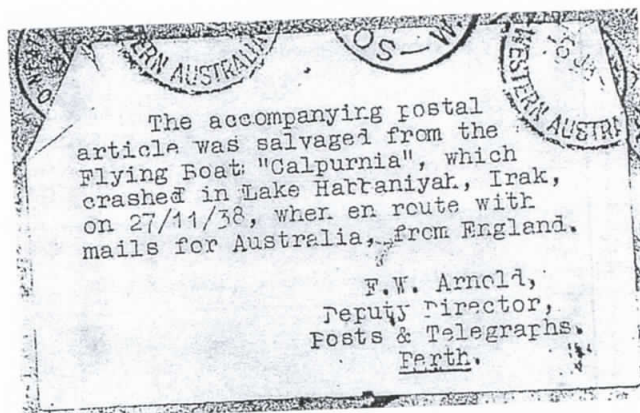
**Type “n” – Printed Explanation – From Melbourne, Australia With Misspelling “Calpournia” – Note postage/revenue stamp affixed to it**



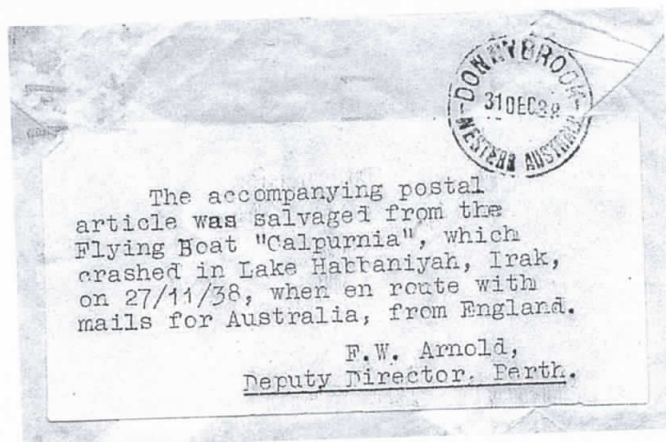
381127 (Nierinck 381127) – Imperial Airways – “Calpurnia” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– G-AETW – Lake Ramadi, Iraq (continued)



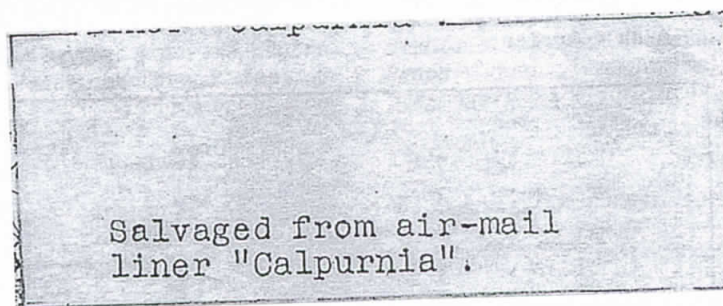
Type “o” – Cachet – Pink – On Officially Sealed Label From Christchurch, New Zealand Post Office



Type “q” – Printed Label From Perth, Australia Post Office



Type “qq” – Printed Label From Perth, Australia Post Office – Variation of Type “q”



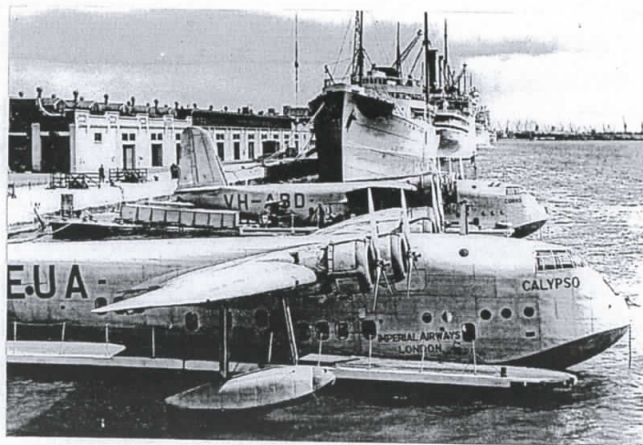
Type “s” – Printed Label From Dunedin, New Zealand Post Office

381231 (Nierinck 381231) – Imperial Airways – “Calypso” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – G-AEUA – Alderney, Great Britain – South Africa-Great Britain route

Captain W.R. Brown & Radio Officer Folger

The aircraft was carrying 2 passengers, 6 crew members and 1,300 kilos of mail. After take-off from St. Nazaire, France, bound for Southampton, the flight encountered bad weather and engine trouble. The pilot made a forced landing on the sea near the Island of Alderney. The Captain radioed that an aileron was damaged. The steamer “Regal” towed the aircraft to Cherbourg, France. Imperial sent an aircraft to Cherbourg, which picked up the passengers and mail and took them to Croydon. The Calypso flew on to Southampton on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January.

No special markings were applied because the mail was undamaged. A few covers from South Africa are known.



Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – “Calypso”

**FLYING BOAT TOWED  
30 MILES**  
MONDAY, JAN. 2, 1939  
LANDING IN CHANNEL  
D. TELEGRAPH  
From Our Own Correspondent  
CHERBOURG, Sunday.

The Imperial Airways flying-boat Calypso was towed 30 miles into Cherbourg this morning after making a forced landing on the sea in a heavy swell 14 miles north of the Casquets, the dangerous rocks near the Channel Islands.

The machine, which was flying from South Africa to Southampton, was piloted by Capt. Brown, and had a crew of six on board and two passengers, Lt.-Col. Baynes and Mr. Clarke. She was forced down by engine trouble.

Capt. Brown and his crew tried to repair the trouble themselves, but finding this to be impossible took on a tow-line from the British steamer Regal, 350 tons, which had arrived in the meantime. The two passengers were transferred to the Regal, which then slowly towed the machine into Cherbourg.

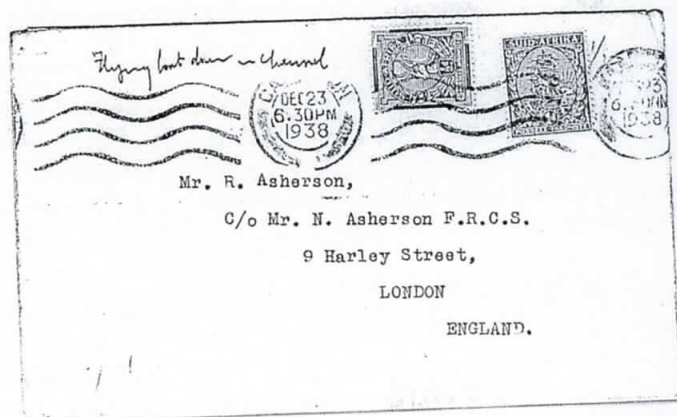
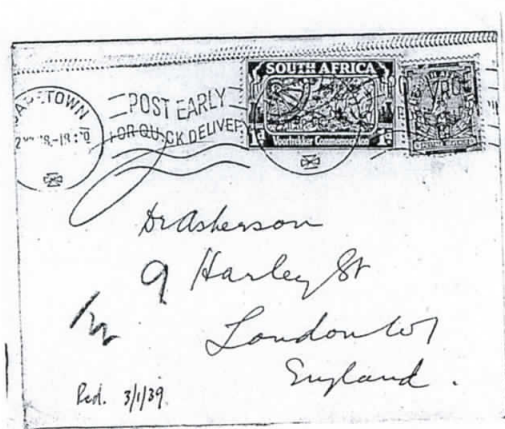
**CALYPSO HOME AGAIN**

The Imperial Airways flying boat Calypso which was forced down in the Channel on Saturday during a storm and towed to Cherbourg, flew to Hythe air base, Southampton, to-day.

**EVENING STANDARD**  
3/1/39



381231 (Nierinck 381231) – Imperial Airways – “Calypso” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – G-AEUA – Alderney, Great Britain (continued)



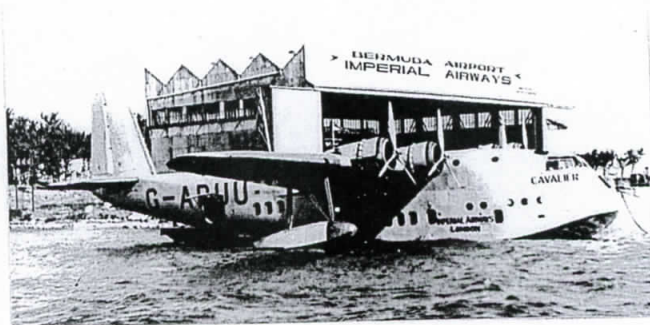
**Two Covers From the “Calypso” – No cachets were applied, but one cover has a manuscript “Flying boat down in Channel”**

390121 (Nierinck 390121) – Imperial Airways – “Cavalier” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – G-ADUU – Near Bermuda – New York-Bermuda route

Captain M.R. Alderson, First Officer Neil Richardson & Wireless Operator W. Patrick Chapman

The flight left New York at 10:38 a.m. The aircraft experienced ice formations on the wings, and at 11,000 feet, all four engines suddenly went out of synchronization and then began to fade. The engine revolutions fluctuated significantly and did not respond to crew manipulation of the throttles. The Captain made an emergency landing in the sea 250 miles from Bermuda, and the aircraft sank. Ten survivors, including four crew members, were rescued by the oil tanker ship “Esso Baytown”, after clinging to lifejackets and pieces of wreckage of the plane for ten hours in heavy seas. Two passengers and the steward R. Spence lost their lives. Following the investigation of this accident, the Air Ministry’s Chief Inspector of Accidents, Wing Commander Vernon S. Brown, recommended that some type of raft or lifeboat be carried on all flying boats.

According to Proud<sup>32</sup>, the flight was carrying mail from London posted between 11 and 13 January. No mail is known in collectors’ hands.



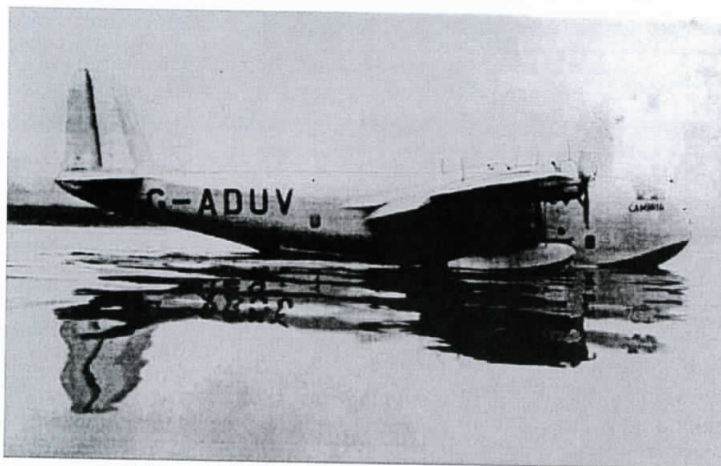
**Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – “Cavalier”**

390308 – Imperial Airways – “Cambria” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – G-ADUV – Indian Ocean near Kroosi Bay, Mozambique – Great Britain- South Africa route

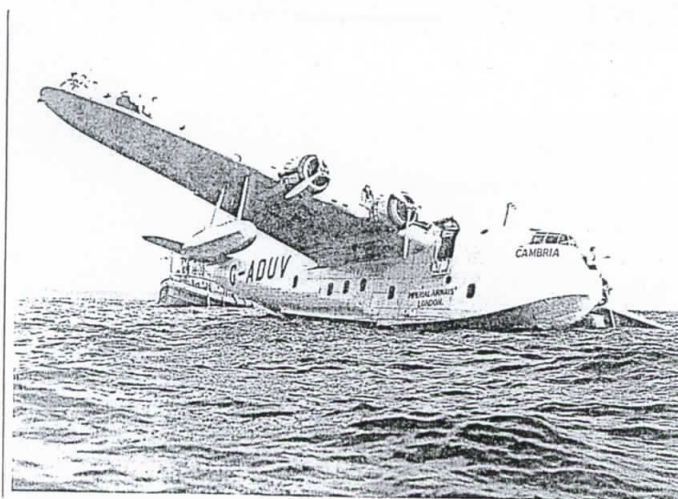
Captain E. S. John Alcock, First Officer Shakespeare, Radio Officer G. “Paddy” Cussans & Flight Clerk Parsons

After leaving Dar-es-Salaam and Lindi, the final stop of the day was to be Lumbo, Mozambique. At 1409 GMT, forty miles from Mozambique, the aircraft came up against a gigantic dark storm. There being no way around it, Captain Alcock decided to fly through it and try to make Lumbo. However, the weather was so bad there, a landing would have been impossible. He consulted with Colonel Garth Trace, Manager of the South African Division of Imperial, and a former pilot, who happened to be a passenger. It was decided to alight on sheltered water and wait out the storm. At 1442, all four engines faded, completely and rapidly, as though all the throttles had been closed. There was 180 gallons of fuel left, so the Captain was unable to determine what the reason was. Using all his experience and skill, he managed to glide the flying boat down onto the very rough seas, and then “sail” it into the bay like a ship. The passengers were taken off by a small local boat. There was speculation that the fuel, which was taken on at Dar-es-Salaam, was contaminated by dirt and dust, and/or water, but this was never proven.

The mail was undamaged and no covers are known in collectors’ hands.



Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – “Cambria”



“Cambria” After the Forced Landing on the Sea

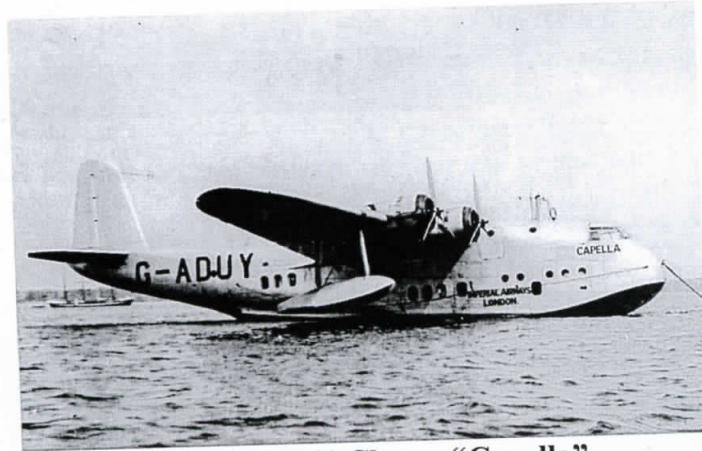


390312 (Nierinck 390312) – Imperial Airways – “Capella” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – G-ADUY – Batavia, Java, Netherlands East Indies

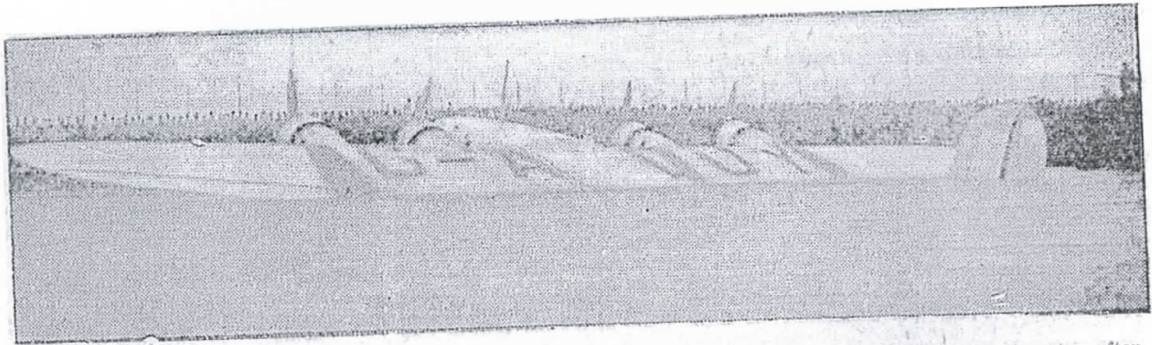
Captain H. B. Hussey

When taxiing in Batavia Harbour, the aircraft was brought in too close to the shore and it hit a submerged shipwreck, which tore a hole in the hull. The Captain quickly drove the flying boat up onto the beach, where she lay in the shallows and filled with seawater. The hull damage proved irreparable and Capella was dismantled and shipped to England, where she had to be scrapped.

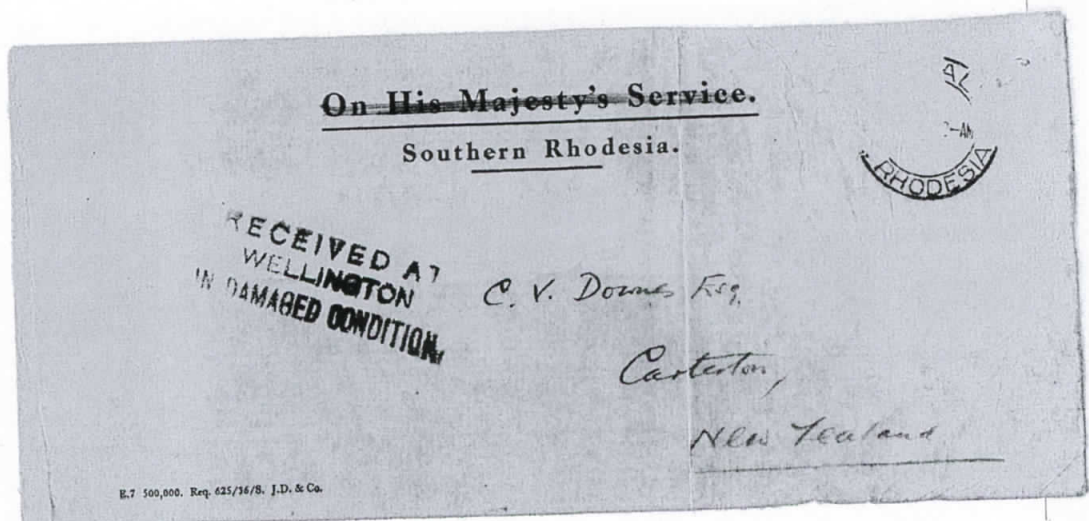
One cover is known, as shown.



Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – “Capella”



The Empire Airways' flying-boat "Capella," which was recently partly submerged in five feet of water after striking a piece of driftwood when landing at Batavia.



Type “a” – Cachet – Purple

390315 (Nierinck 390315) – Imperial Airways – “Corsair” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – G-ADVB – Near Faradje, Belgian Congo – South Africa-Great Britain route

Captain E. S. J. Alcock, First Officer Shakespeare, Radio Officer G. “Paddy” Cussans and Flight Clerk Parsons

Enroute from South Africa, the flight was scheduled to land at Juba, Sudan. The weather was very bad and there was thick fog. The aircraft was lost, and flew around for about two hours, trying to find Juba. It descended through the clouds, the captain saw a straight stretch of water, and landed. It turned out to be a narrow river, the Dangu, and at the end of the landing, the aircraft hit a submerged rock and ripped open the hull. The aircraft was in danger of sinking quickly, so Captain Alcock opened up the engines and beached the aircraft.

It took over four months and great effort to repair the aircraft. A repair party, comprised of Short Brothers and Imperial personnel, repaired the aircraft under trying conditions. Roads had to be constructed, and a 150 foot wide dam was built from trees and boulders, creating an artificial lake to provide a longer take-off surface. A take-off attempt on the 14<sup>th</sup> of July ended in failure, when the aircraft swung to starboard, a wingtip float hit the river bank, and Captain Alcock had to cut the engines. The flying boat hit a submerged rock and ripped open the other side of the hull. The engines were removed and rebuilt, and the inside fittings were stripped out in order to lighten the aircraft as much as possible. After nearly six months more, the aircraft had been repaired and it was successfully flown out by Captain J.C. Kelly-Rogers. The aircraft served Imperial and BOAC for many years afterward. It flew more than half a million miles before the war had ended.

The mail was recovered, but very few covers have survived. Four different cachet varieties are known, as shown. Field <sup>18</sup> reported a cover from Southern Rhodesia to the Sudan. A cover is also known from Nyasaland to the Gold Coast.



Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – “Corsair”

Damaged by Water when the Imperial Airways Aircraft forced landed near Juba, Sudan.

Type “a” – Cachet – Black

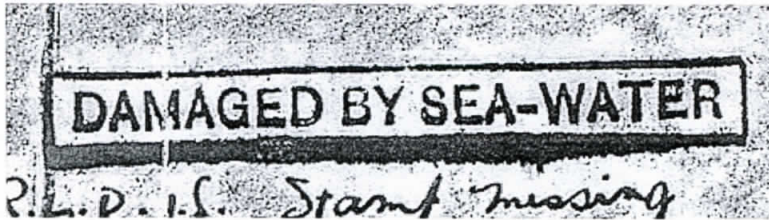
ACCIDENT D'AVION  
Correspondances recueillies en mer  
NE PAS TAXER

Type “b” – Cachet – Black – On mail to France

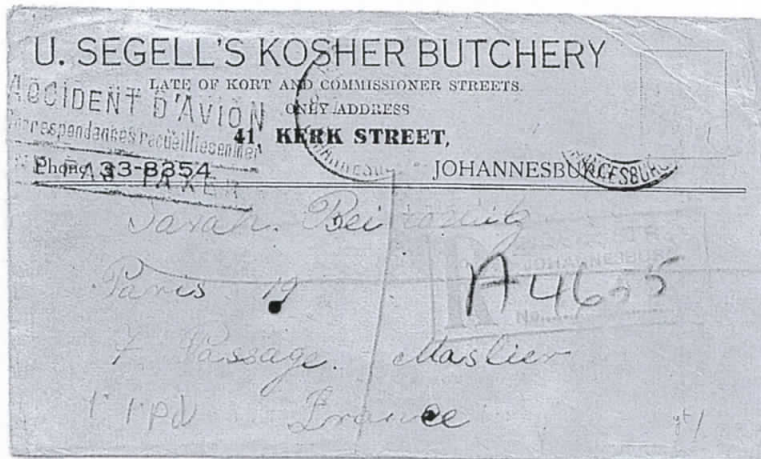




Type “c” – Cachet – Black – On mail to France



Type “d” – Cachet – Color Unknown  
On mail to England



Cover with Type “b” Cachet Applied in Paris, France

## TEN MONTHS TO FREE AIR-LINER

24 D.J. ————— 8.1.40

### RIVER DAMMED IN BELGIAN CONGO

After being stranded for nearly 10 months in the Belgian Congo owing to an accident the Imperial Airways flying-boat Corsair is now on her way to England. Her pilot is Capt. J. C. Kelly Rogers.

On March 14 the Corsair was making her homeward journey from Durban to Southampton when she found herself off her course. She was compelled to alight at Faraje, on the River Dangu, about 150 miles south-west of Juba.

There were no casualties. All mail, freight and baggage were saved. The flying-boat, however, was badly holed.

The river was altogether unsuited to flying-boat operations. Between the river and the nearest road lay at least 2,000 yards of thick bush. On May 9 the flying-boat was successfully beached for repairs, and by the end of June she was ready to resume her flying.

### ROAD MADE THROUGH BUSH

The river in its original condition would have made a take-off impossible. Co-operation came from the officials of the Government in the Belgian Congo and a gold-mining company.

A road was hacked through the virgin bush, so that lorries could bring to the riverside great rocks with which to build a dam. Rocks in the bed of the river were blasted, and on July 13 it was decided that the Corsair should attempt her take-off.

The Corsair unfortunately hit a rock still embedded in the river and received further damage.

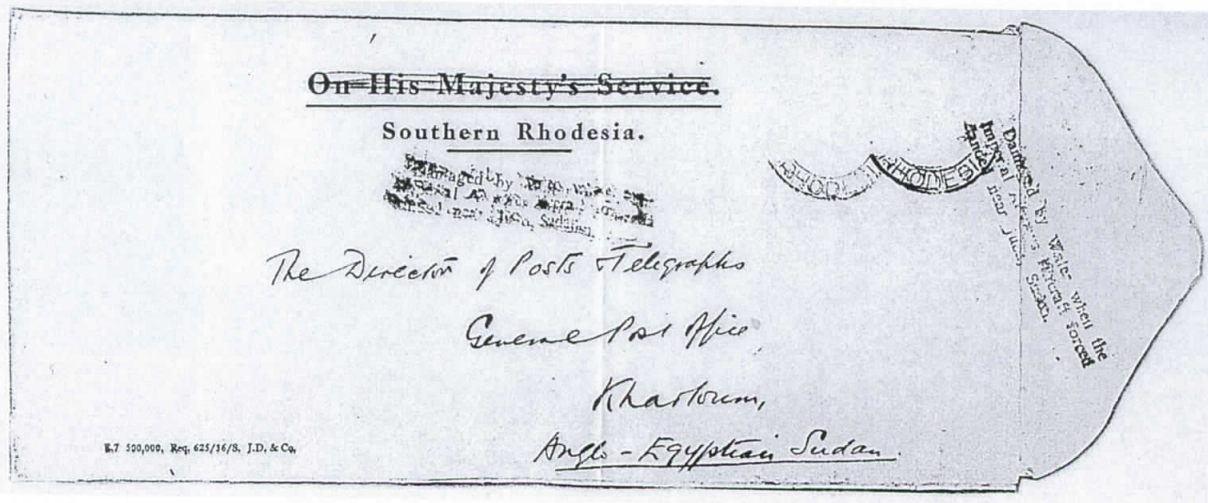
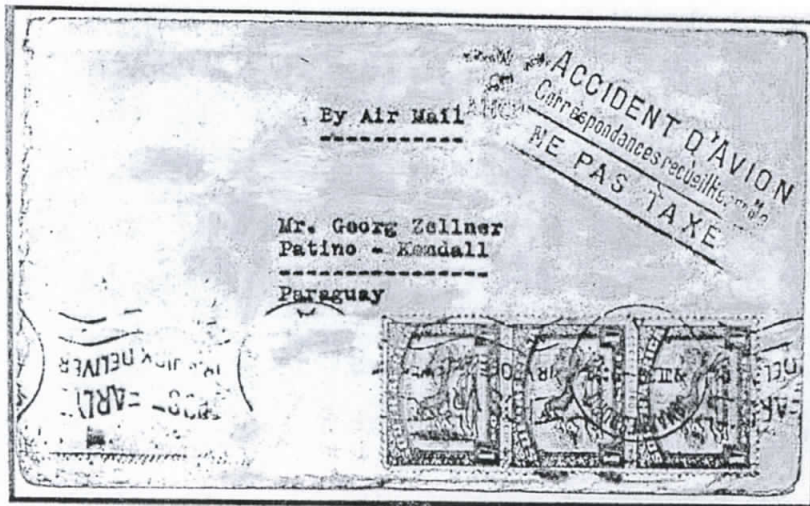
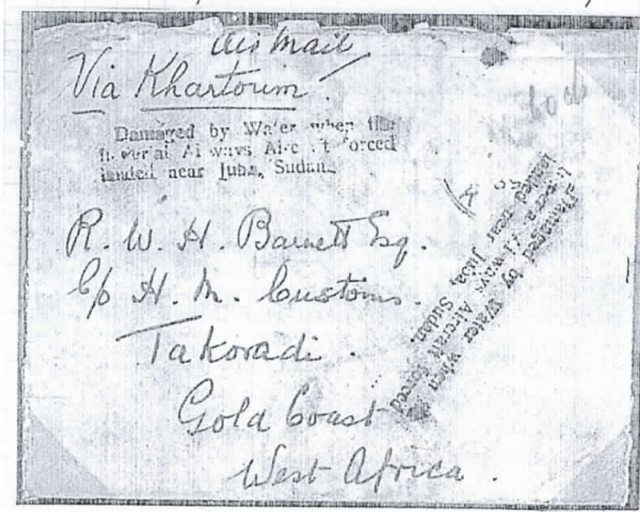
Meanwhile the river was falling, and it was realised that a second take-off could not be attempted until the waters had risen in September. The Corsair was once more afloat on Oct. 5.

Yet another dam was built and more rocks were blasted. A month ago Capt. Kelly Rogers left England to bring back the Corsair from the Belgian Congo.

He was in command of the flying-boat Caribou during her inaugural flight for the British North Atlantic air mail service to Botwood, Montreal and New York last August.

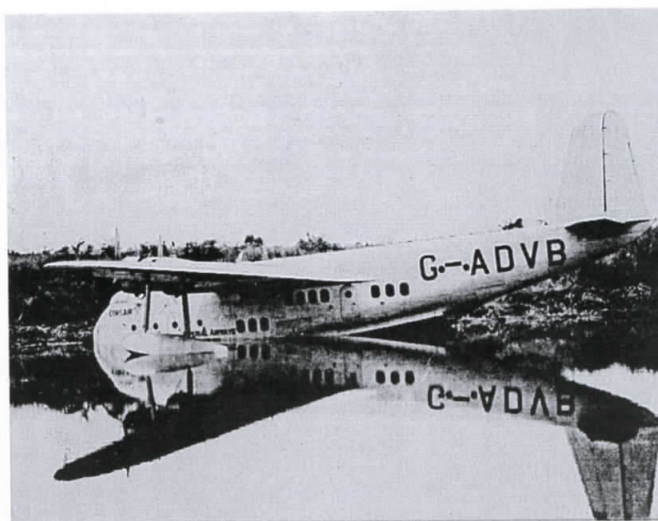
The Corsair is one of the standard flying-boats used on the Empire routes.

**Covers to Unusual Destinations**

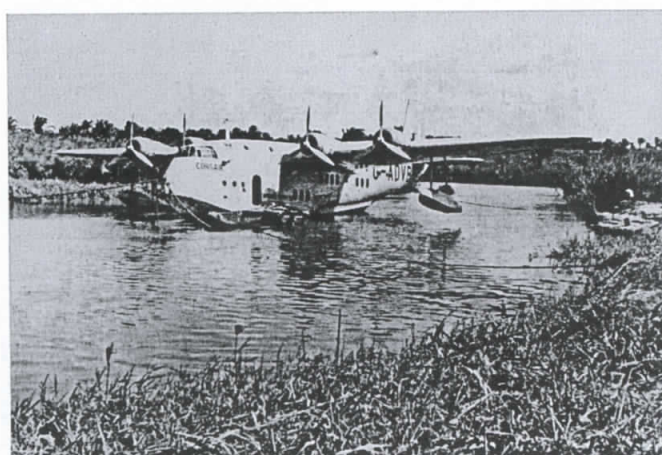




390315 (Nierinck 390315) – Imperial Airways – “Corsair” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – G-ADVB – Near Faradje, Belgian Congo (continued)

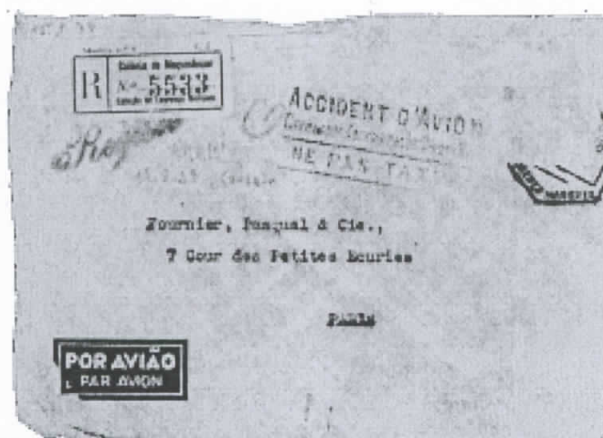


Corsair after landing on the river and hitting a submerged rock



Corsair after repairs were made

To support the necessary repairs to the Corsair, a small village was created, where none had existed previously. After the Corsair was finally flown out, this village was named “Corsairville”.



The Only Cover Recorded From Mozambique

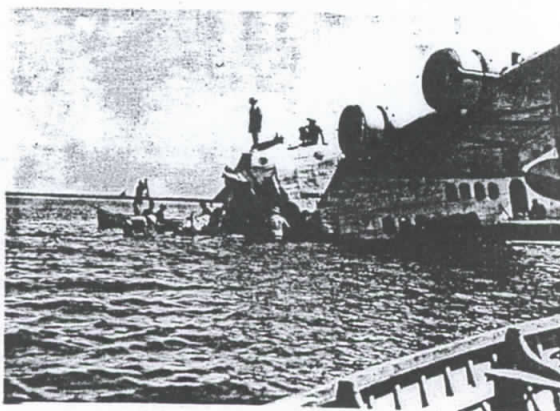
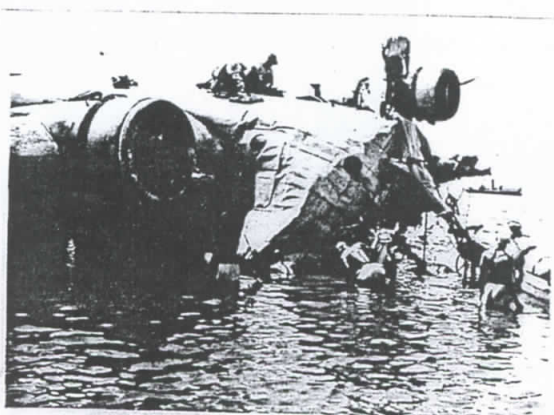
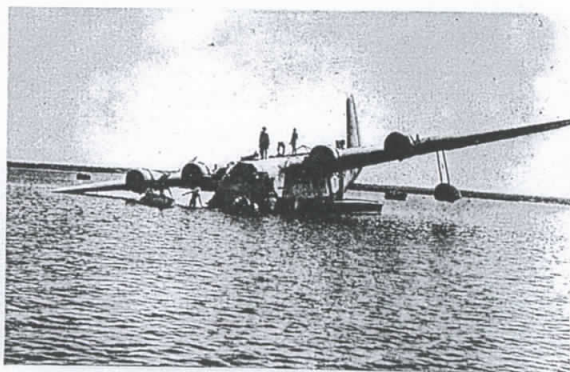
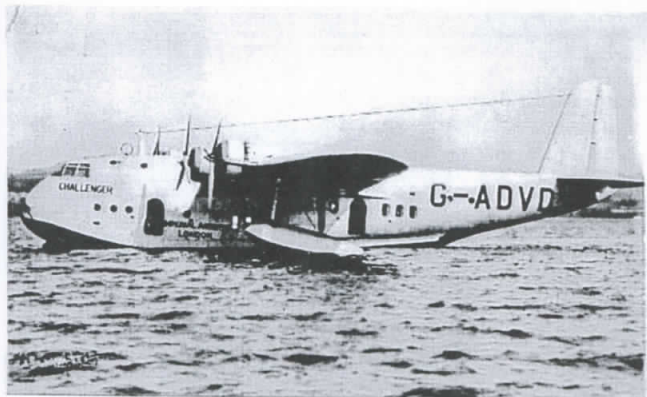
390501 (Nierinck 390501) – Imperial Airways – “Challenger” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– G-ADVD – Lumbo, Mozambique – Great Britain-South Africa route

Acting Captain Frederick D. Smith, First Officer W. G. N. Saunders, First Officer J.E. Gavshon, Radio Operator Tom Webb & Flight Clerk George Knight

The flight had taken off from Dar es Salaam, Tanganyika at 2:35 a.m.. On landing at 7:10 a.m., the flying boat struck a small boat and sunk in shallow water. Even though Captain Smith had previously made several landings at Lumbo, on this occasion the wind direction necessitated a landing in the opposite direction to the previous landings. The radio operator and flight clerk were both killed. The remaining crew members and three passengers were saved.

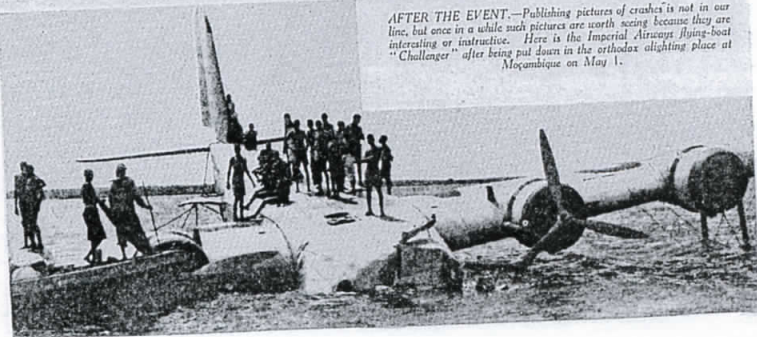
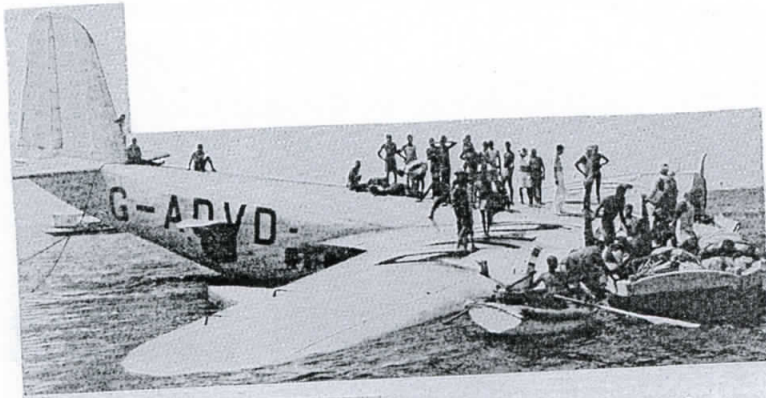
The mail was recovered and forwarded on the flying boat “Canopus”. Mail to the Transvaal Province and Cape Town was put onto a train at Lorenzo Marques. Six different cachets were applied to the mail, as shown. Mail to Rhodesia was not cacheted.

Proud <sup>32</sup> reports mail to Nyasaland, Mozambique & South Africa, posted in the UK between 21.4.39 and 25.4.39. A cover is known from Tabora, Belgian Congo to Durban, South Africa. Field <sup>18</sup> reported mail also to Southern Rhodesia and Southwest Africa. A cover is also known from Entebbe, Uganda to Johannesburg, and another one is known from Tanganyika to Durban. Covers are also known from New Zealand and Australia to South Africa. Hopkins <sup>19</sup> also reported mail to Nyasaland and Portuguese East Africa (Mozambique).



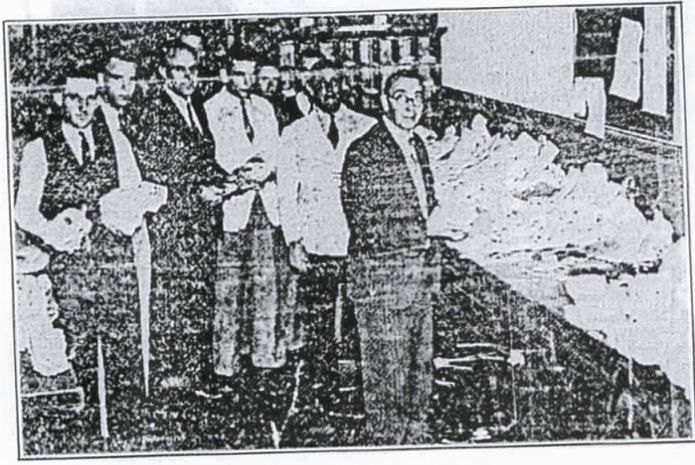


390501 (Nierinck 390501) – Imperial Airways – “Challenger” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– G-ADVD – Lumbo, Mozambique (continued)



AFTER THE EVENT.—Publishing pictures of crashes is not in our line, but once in a while such pictures are worth seeing because they are interesting or instructive. Here is the Imperial Airways flying-boat “Challenger” after being put down in the orthodox alighting place at Mozambique on May 1.

Mozambique, Port E. Africa  
 May 1, 1939. The Imperial Airways flying boat CHALLENGER en route from Dar es Salaam to Durban, was wrecked in shallow water after striking a small boat in landing. The pilot, Capt. Smith, and First Oic. Saunders were injured and two crew members were killed. Three other crew members and 3 passengers were unhurt. British mails for southern Africa postmarked April 21-25 were on board, and most of it reported salvaged. A two line bi-lingual cachet in purple was applied to the damaged mail as follows: FLYING BOAT CORRESPONDENCE DAMAGED BY SEAWATER / Vliegboot Korrespondensie Deur 'SEEWATER BESKADIG. The cachet is inclosed in frame lines. Covers are offered at 15/.



A typical scene in the sorting department of the Port Elizabeth Post Office



Postgeschichtl. Archiv Heyd - Hamburg  
 MAILED DELAYED IN FLYING-BOAT CRASH.  
 Johannesburg Post Office officials deciphering addresses on envelopes which had been saturated when the flying-boat Challenger crashed at Lumbo.

Sorting Damaged Mail from the “Challenger”

390501 (Nierinck 390501) – Imperial Airways – “Challenger” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– G-ADVD – Lumbo, Mozambique (continued)

FLYING BOAT CORRESPONDENCE DAMAGED BY SEAWATER  
VLEIEBOOT KORRESPONDENSIE DEUR SEEWATER BESKADIG

Type “a” – Cachet – Violet – Bilingual  
English-Afrikaans Applied in  
South Africa

SALVAGED MAIL FROM  
FLYING-BOAT  
CHALLENGER

Type “c” – Cachet – Black – Applied in  
South Africa

DAMAGED BY SEAWATER  
SEAPLANE CHALLENGER

Type “b” – Cachet – Violet – Applied in  
South Africa

EX F.B.  
CHALLENGER  
CRASHED

Type “d” – Cachet – Black – Applied in  
South Africa, often on Ambulance covers

PCST OFFICE/PCSKANTOOR,  
JOHANNESBURG.

4 May/Mei, 1939.

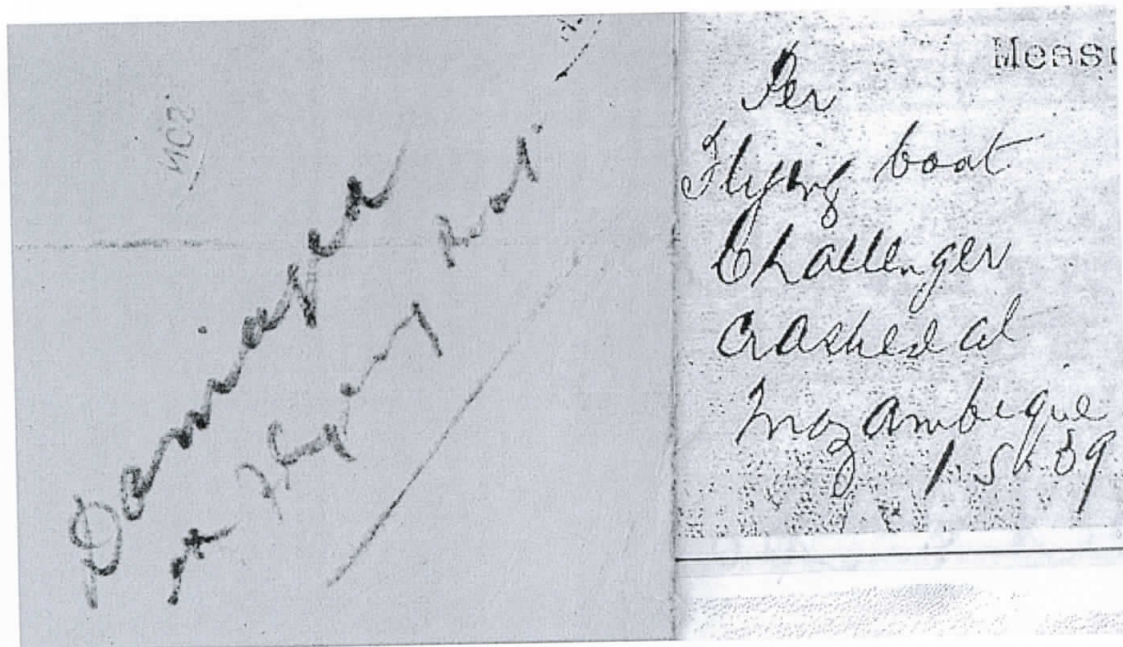
<p>The accompanying postal article has been received in the mail salvaged from the flying boat "Challenger", which crashed at Lumba, on the east coast of Africa, on the 1st May, 1939.</p>	<p>Die bygaande posartikel was ontvang in die pos gered van die vliegskip "Challenger", wat op 1 Mei, 1939, te Lumba, aan die Oos kus van Afrika, verongeluk het.</p>
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ASSISTANT POSTMASTER/ASSISTENT POSMEESTER  
 (POSTS). (POSAFDELING).

Type “e” – Printed Explanation from Johannesburg, South Africa Post Office



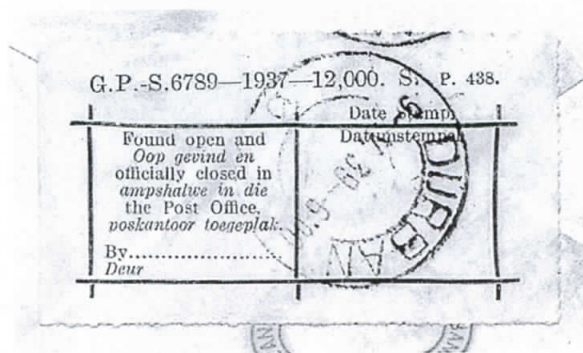
390501 (Nierinck 390501) – Imperial Airways – “Challenger” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– G-ADVD – Lumbo, Mozambique (continued)



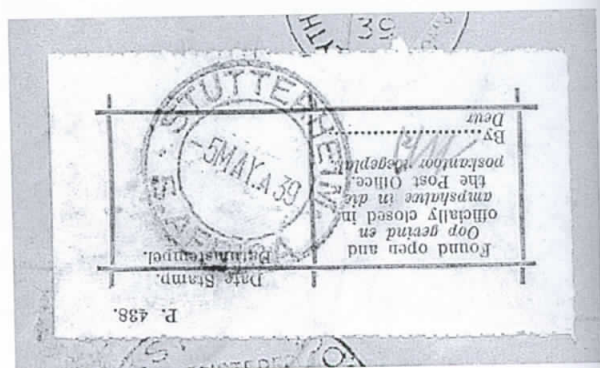
*By Flying Boat Challenger  
Sunk at Lumbo Bay  
Mozambique 8.20am 1/5/39  
Forwarded by F.B. Canopus.*

**Type “f” – Various Manuscript explanations**

The one above is believed to have been applied at Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia

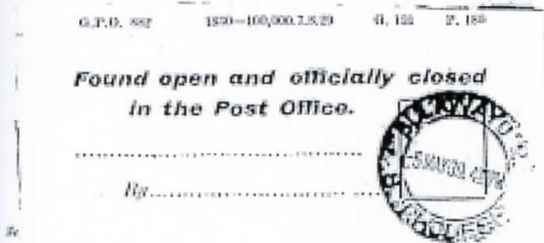


**Type “g” – Label Applied at Durban, South Africa. Similar labels were applied at Capetown and other South African Post Offices**



**Type “h” – Label Applied at Stutterheim, South Africa – Slightly different than Type “g”**

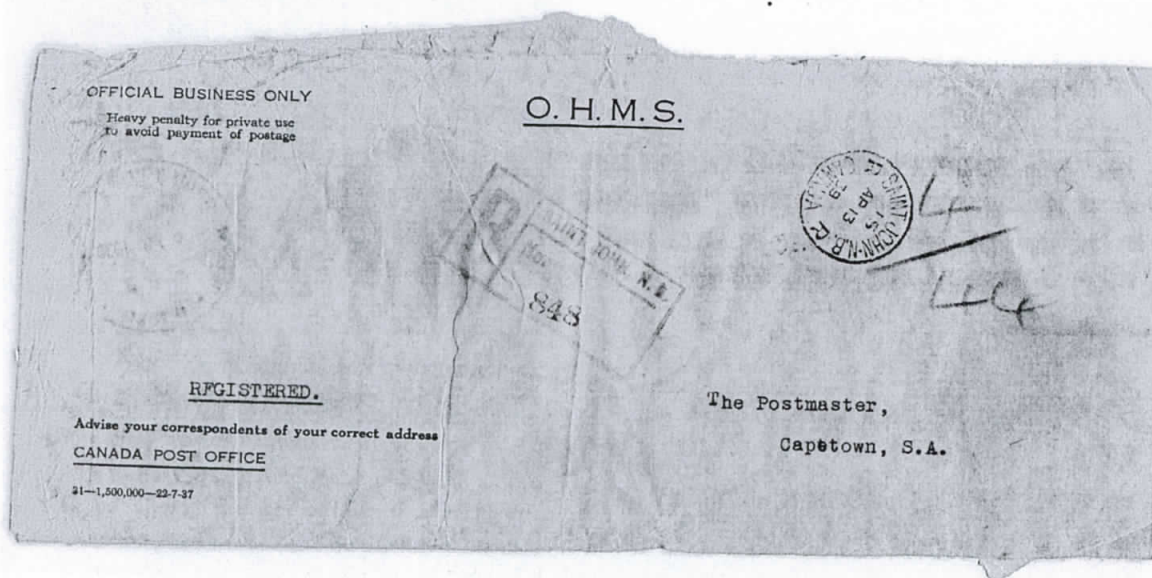
390501 (Nierinck 390501) – Imperial Airways – “Challenger” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– G-ADVD – Lumbo, Mozambique (continued)



Type “i” – Label Applied at Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia



A number of covers are known with the small “Challenger” emblem in a circle. It is believed this was applied to recovered covers by the well known aerophilatelic dealer Francis J. Field



Official Cover from Canada, which was on the Challenger Crash

FROM LONDON TO—  
 EGYPT IN 2½ DAYS (four services a week)  
 KENYA IN 5½ DAYS (two services a week)  
 JOHANNESBURG IN 8 DAYS (two services a week)  
 (All times liable to alteration)

IMPERIAL AIRWAYS

PLEASE POST YOUR  
 AIR MAIL LETTERS  
 EARLY IN THE WEEK  
 IN YOUR OWN  
 INTEREST

Information about  
 IMPERIAL AIRWAYS  
 From: Travel Agents or IMPERIAL AIRWAYS,  
 AIRWAY TERMINUS, VICTORIA, S.W. 1.  
 VICTORIA 2111 (Day and Night) P. 25 G

Pages From Airmail Etiquette Booklet



390501 (Nierinck 390501) – Imperial Airways – “Challenger” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class– G-ADVD – Lumbo, Mozambique (continued)



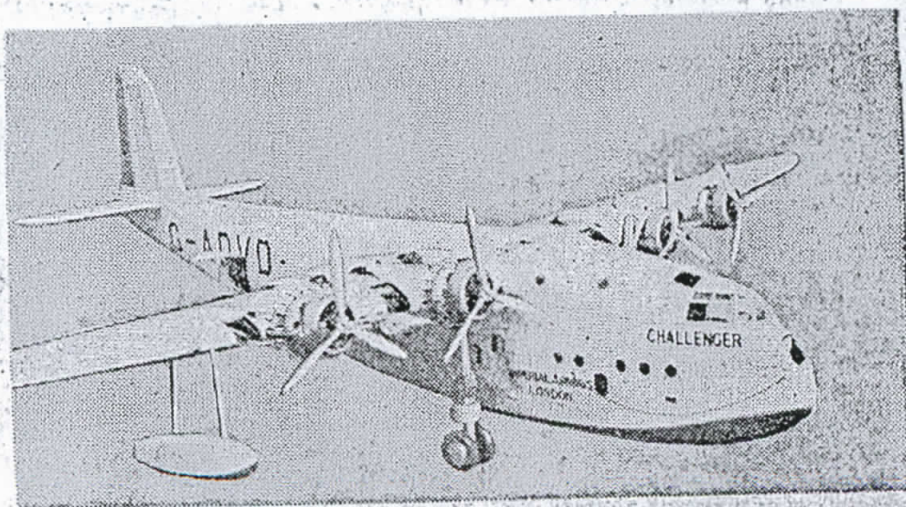
This is a “Test Cover”, mailed in London on 25 April 1939, which is believed to have been on the Challenger when it crashed. No information is known about this “Test”, and there are no references to it in any of the books consulted.

**I** Durban, met with an accident when landing at Mozambique (Portuguese East Africa) at 8.20 a.m. to-day (South African time).

Of the eight people on board Flight-Clerk Knight was killed and Radio Officer Webb is missing. The rest of the crew and the three passengers were injured.

It is not known yet whether the flying-boat sank or whether the mails are safe.

### PASSENGERS REPORTED SAFE

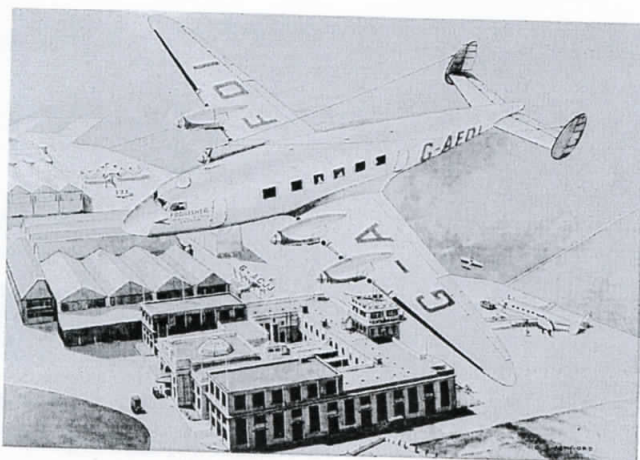


IMPERIAL AIRWAYS flying-boat Challenger, which crashed at Mozambique to-day.

390518 – Imperial Airways – “Falcon” – De Havilland DH-91 Albatross – G-AFDJ – Croydon Airport, London, Great Britain – Paris-London route

Captain S. T. B. Cripps, Captain F. T. Digby & First Officer N. F. Rose

The aircraft was taxiing in from the afternoon service from Paris. It slid sideways in mud into the edge of the concrete apron, which at that spot was some inches higher than the aerodrome fairway. The undercarriage collapsed and the aircraft went into the mud. The flaps were buckled and the wing covering was ripped, and the aircraft was out of service for weeks. No other details are available and no mail is known.



**De Havilland DH-91 Albatross – Same type as “Falcon”**

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390523 – Imperial Airways – “Delia” – De Havilland DH.86 Diana Class – G-ACWC – Bangkok, Thailand

Captain & 1<sup>st</sup> Officer unknown

The Lloyd's Weekly Casualty Reports for 23 May 1939 reported that: “The Imperial Airways liner *Delia* ran off the runway when taking off from Bangkok today. The *Delia* was damaged but nobody was injured.” No mail is known in the hands of collectors.



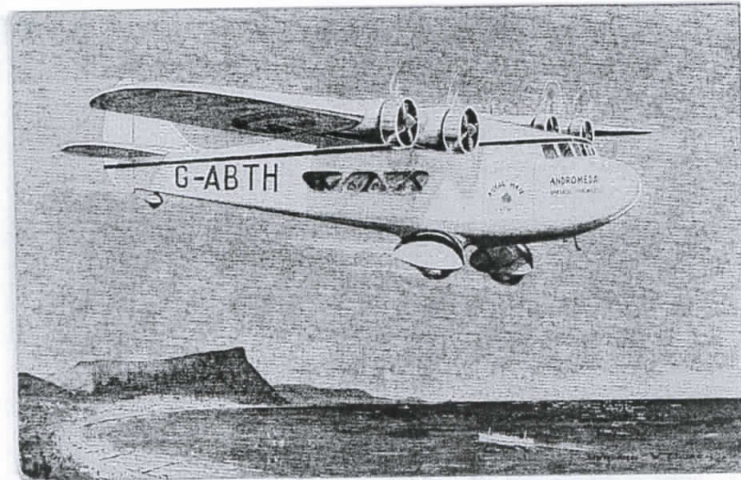
**Imperial Airways Promotional Label**



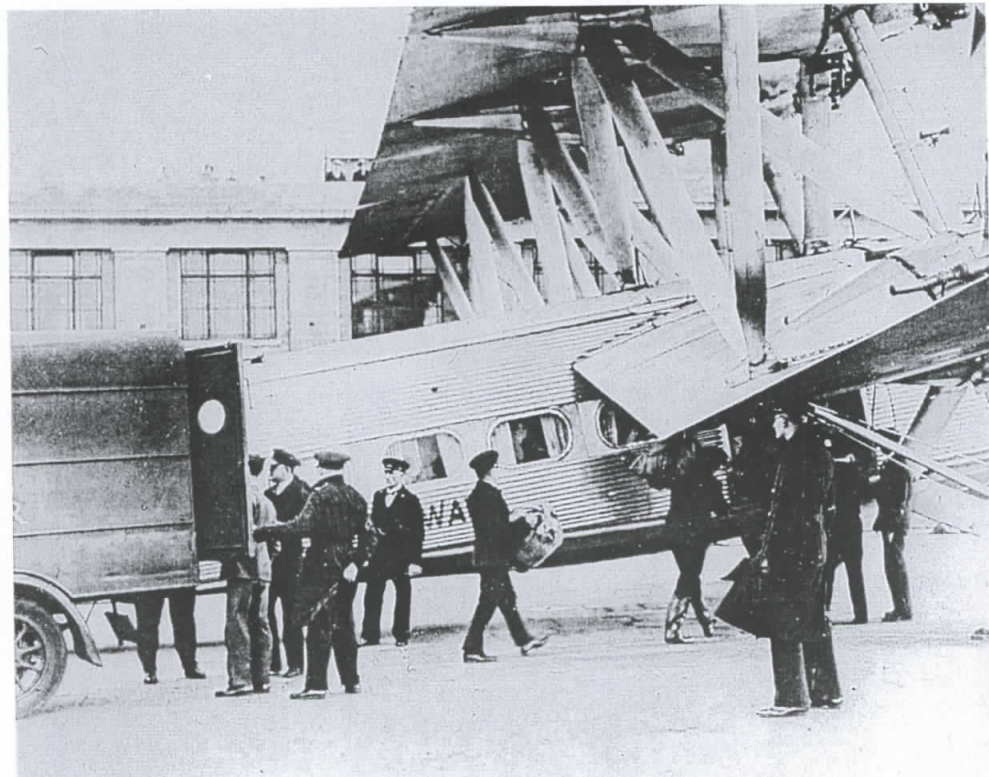
390601 – Imperial Airways – “Andromeda” – Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class – G-ABTH  
– Cairo, Egypt

Pilot & 1<sup>st</sup> Officer unknown

According to Denham <sup>6</sup>, the aircraft was damaged beyond repair. No other details are known, and no mail is known.



Armstrong Whitworth AW XV Atalanta Class – “Andromeda”



Loading Mail at London Croydon Airport

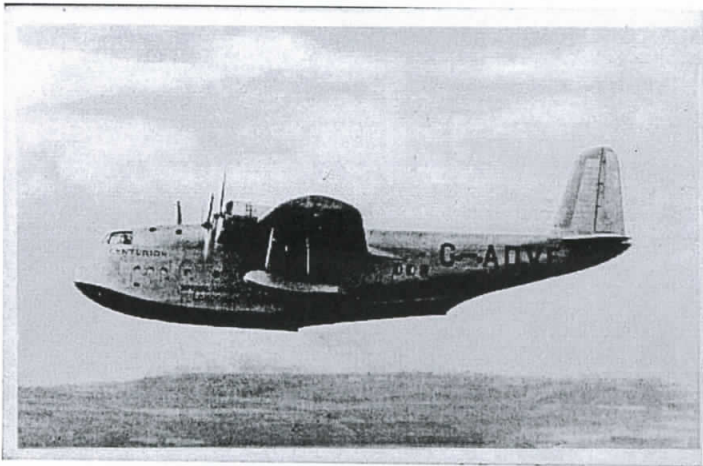
390612 (Nierinck 390612) – Imperial Airways – “Centurion” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – G-ADVE – Calcutta, India – Australia-Great Britain route

Captain Anthony C. Loraine, First Officer Evan A. T. Murray, Radio Officer Edward B. Brown & Flight Clerk L. R. Smith

When landing on the alighting area at Bally on the Hooghly River at Calcutta, a severe wind gust caught the tail, lifting it suddenly and causing the aircraft to nose into the water. The aircraft slowly began to sink. The four passengers and the crew members were rescued by launches within 16 minutes after the aircraft hit the water. Shortly after that, the aircraft sank. When attempts were made to raise the wreckage, the aircraft broke into two because chains were used.

The majority of the mail (about 40 bags) was salvaged. Many different types of cachets, labels and mimeograph explanations are known. Many of the covers were processed at the Calcutta Post Office. A cachet with the wording “SALVAGED MAIL/EX • CENTURION” was made up from a “John Bull” rubber stamp, where the individual letters were inserted. Therefore, many varieties of this cachet are known, such as spelling “Centuria”, letters inverted, missing letters, etc.

Proud<sup>32</sup> reports mail from New Zealand, Australia, Papua New Guinea, North Borneo, Sarawak, Malaya, Hong Kong & Burma



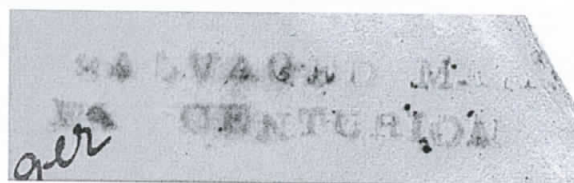
Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – “Centurion”



Captain Anthony C. Loraine



Type “a” – Cachet – Magenta – E (EX)  
under S (SALVAGED)  
This is considered the “Normal” cachet

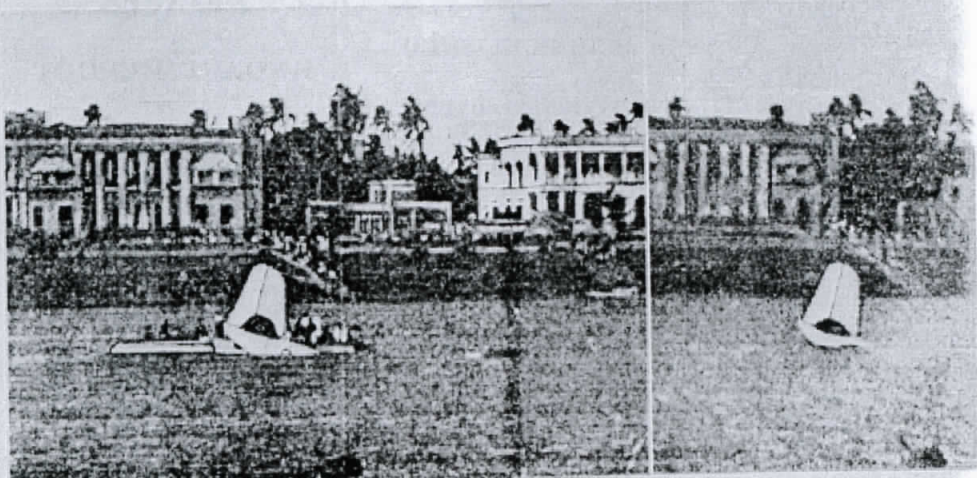


Type “aa” – Cachet – Red – second line  
shifted to the left



THE STATESMAN, TUESDAY, JUNE 13, 1939.

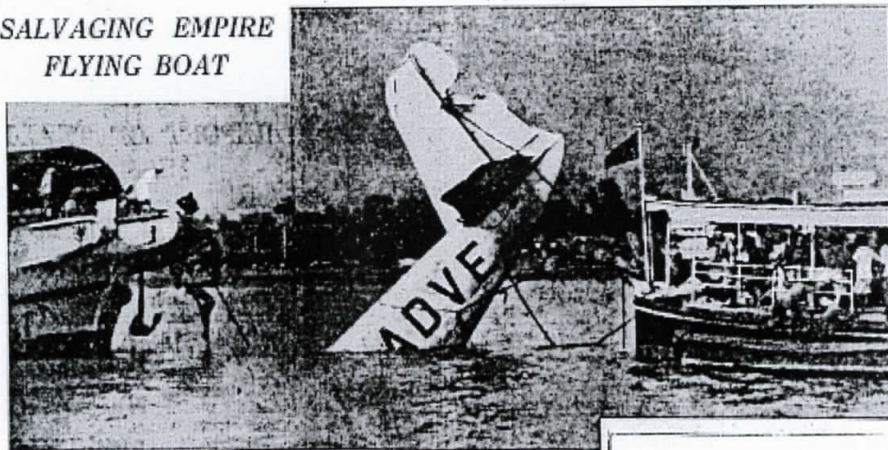
## CRASHES IN HOOGHLY



**CENTURION CRASH.** Two pictures taken shortly after the flying boat had struck the wafer. The first shows rescuers assembled round the rudder of the sinking craft. The second photograph was taken a few minutes later.

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH AND MORNING POST, TUESDAY, JUNE 20, 1939

### SALVAGING EMPIRE FLYING BOAT



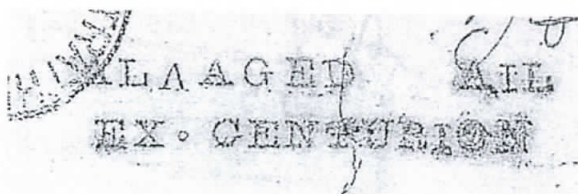
Salvage work in progress on the Empire Flying Boat Centurion, crashed and sank in the Hooghly River, near Calcutta. Two of the occupants were injured.

  
There is a  
regular Air  
Service by  
**IMPERIAL AIRWAYS**  
THE BRITISH AIR LINK to ITALY, GREECE, EGYPT, IRAQ,  
PERSIA, INDIA, EAST & CENTRAL AFRICA and THE EAST  
*Particulars from any Post Office, or from*  
Airways House, *Alfa July*—London Air Terminal,  
Charles Street, Victoria Station (Continental  
Haymarket, S.W.1. Departures), S.W.1.  
Telephone:—Regent 7811. Telephone:—Victoria 8212.

Page From Airmail Etiquette Booklet



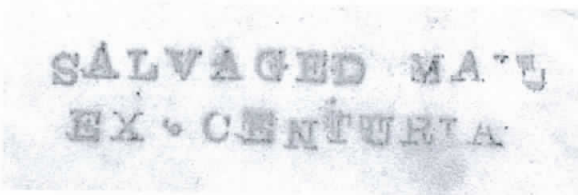
Type “b” – Cachet – Red or Magenta  
 E (EX) under A (SALVAGED)



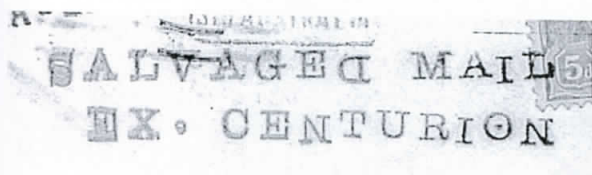
Type “bb” – Cachet – Red – “S” Missing  
 & Inverted “V” in SALVAGED  
 & “M” missing in MAIL



Type “c” – Cachet – Red or Magenta  
 Missing “S” in SALVAGED  
 & spelling “CENTURIA”



Type “cc” – Cachet – Red or Magenta  
 Inverted “S” in SALVAGED  
 & spelling “CENTURIA”



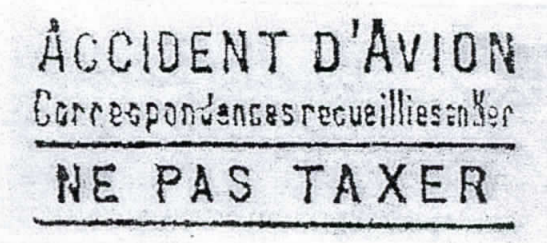
Type “d” – Cachet – Red or Magenta  
 Inverted “D” in SALVAGED



Type “e” – Cachet – Purple



Type “f” – Cachet – Violet or Black



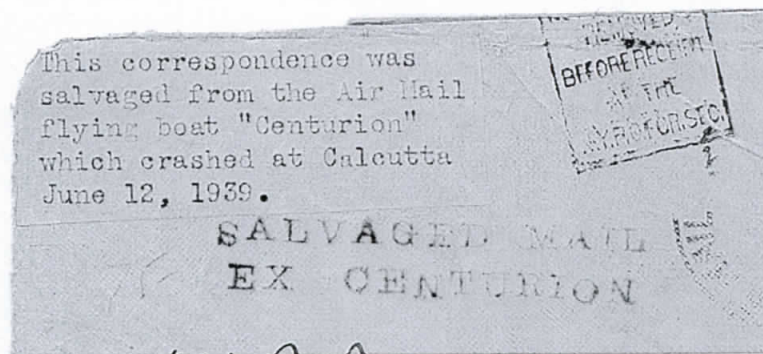
Type “g” – Cachet – On Covers to France  
 and other European Countries



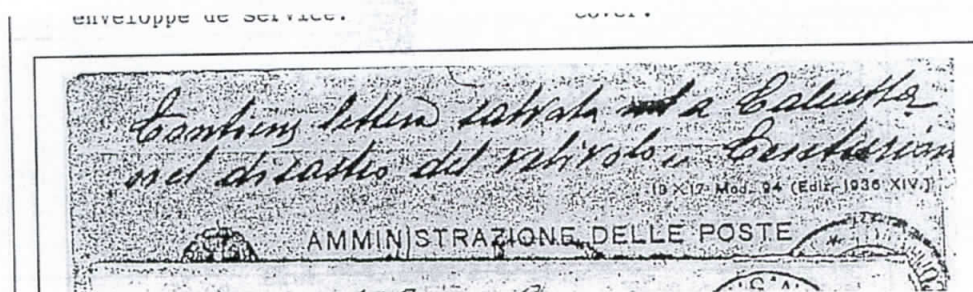
390612 (Nierinck 390612) – Imperial Airways – “Centurion” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – G-ADVE – Calcutta, India (continued)



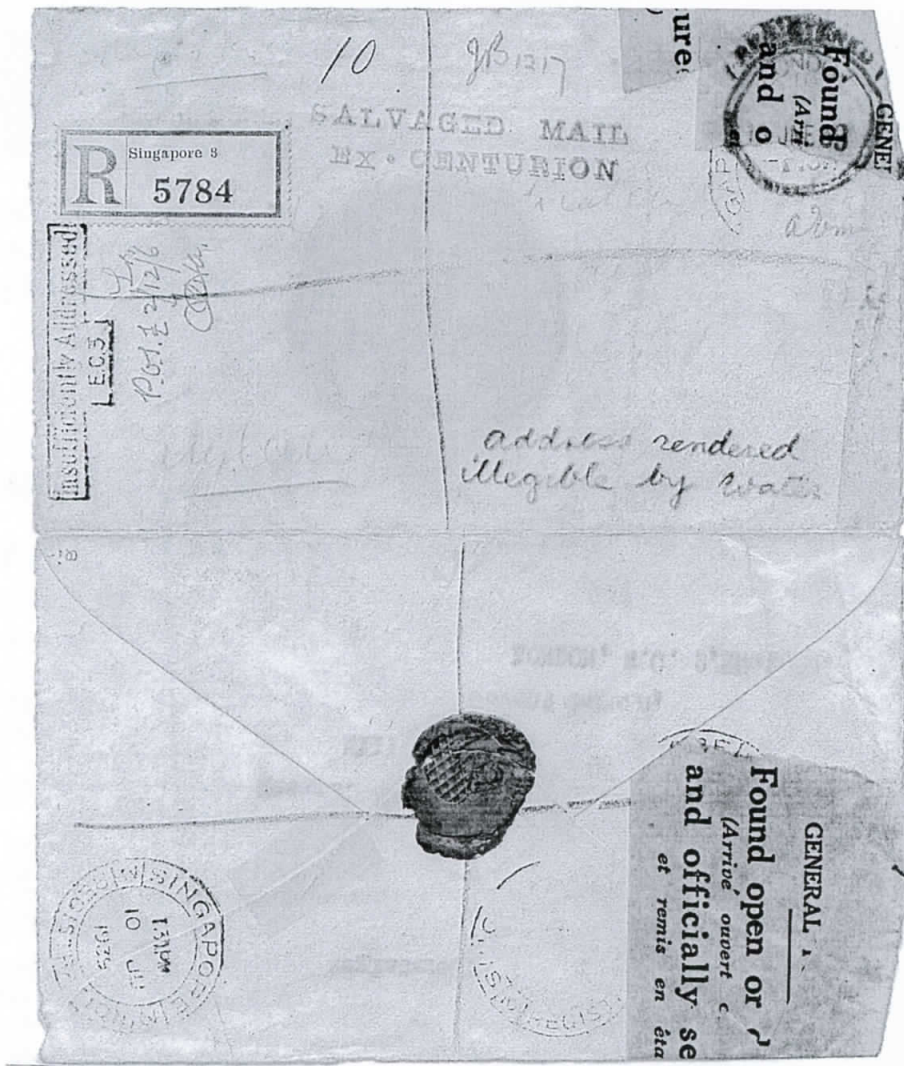
Type “h” – Label Affixed in Munich, Germany  
 Type “hh” – Cachet – Purple – Applied in Munich, Germany



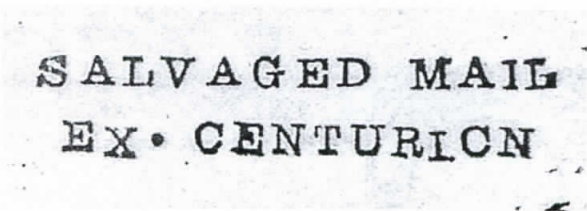
Type “i” – Onion Skin Label with Typed Explanation on Covers to the USA



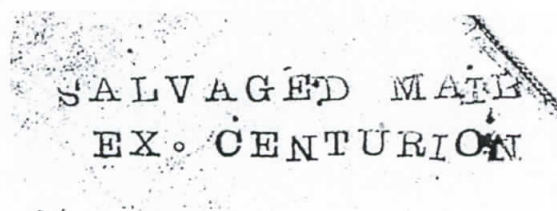
Type “j” – Manuscript Explanation on Ambulance Cover used with mail to Italy



Type “k” – Cachet – Purple – “Insufficiently Addressed”  
 Applied by London Post Office because the addressed was washed off the envelope



Type “m” – Cachet – Red  
 With Spelling “CENTURION”

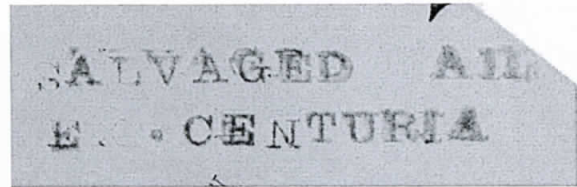


Type “n” – Cachet – Red  
 Inverted “S” in SALVAGED





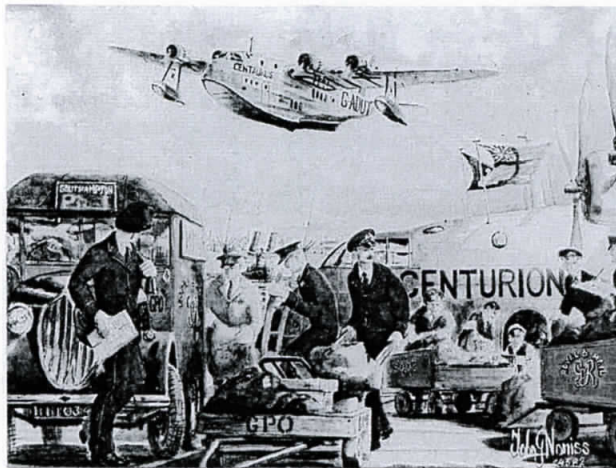
Type “o” – Cachet – Red  
With “S” Missing in SALVAGED



Type “p” – Cachet – Red  
With “M” Missing in MAIL  
& Spelling “CENTURIA”

DAMAGED BY SEA-WATER

Type “r” – Cachet – Color Unknown



## Flying boat sinks: 9 saved

Daily Express Air Reporter

Racing speedboats rescued four passengers and a crew of five from the Imperial Airways flying boat Centurion when it sank just after landing on the muddy waters of the Hoogly River, near Calcutta, yesterday.

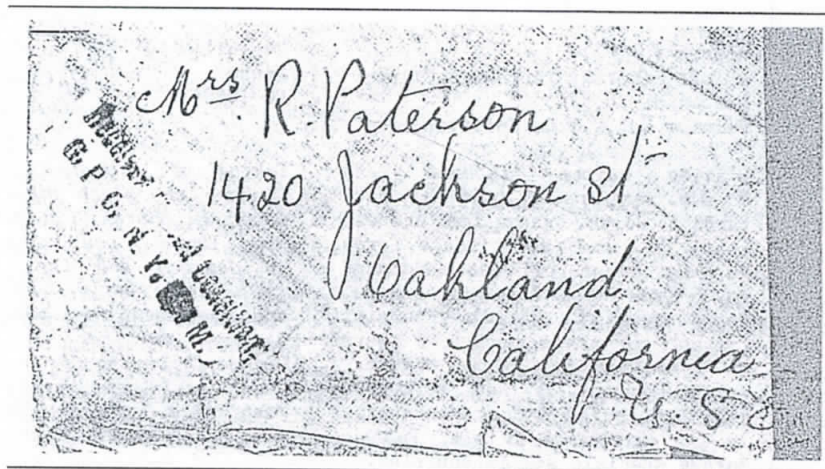
The 18-ton metal boat had settled normally in a flurry of foam at 80 mph, and was losing speed on the river, when a gusty north-west wind got under its tailplane.

Watchers saw the Centurion, Europe bound from Sydney, nose forward and then dive beneath the surface. Crew and passengers tore open emergency get away hatches, and were taken off the half-submerged 200 mph plane.

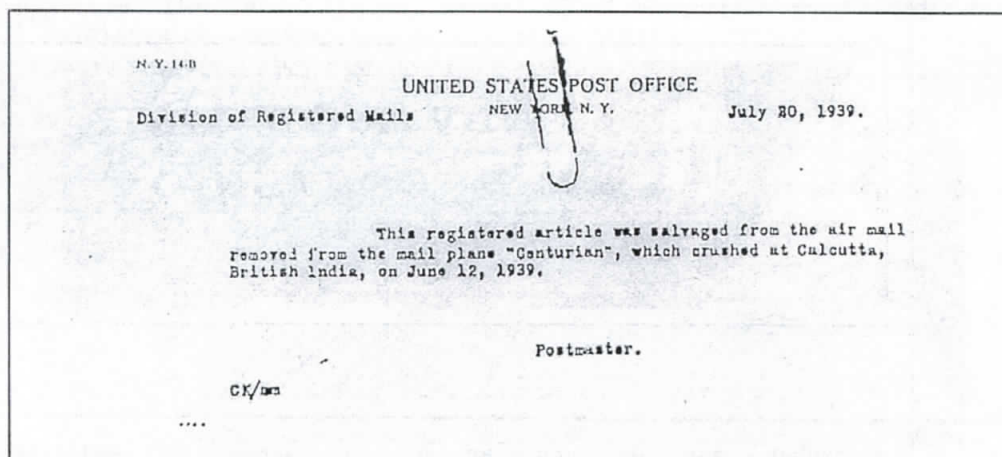
Salvage workers got busy at once rescuing the mailbags,



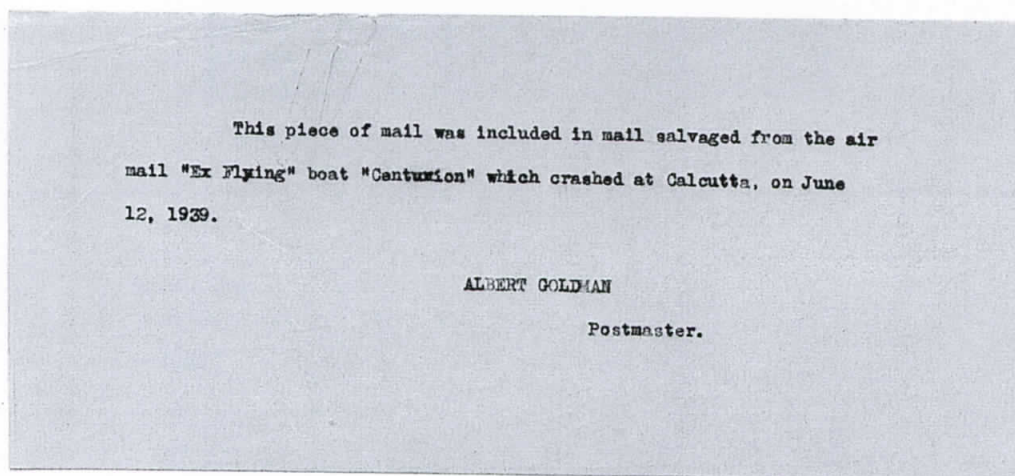
Baggage Label



Type “s” – Cachet – Applied by the General Post Office, New York on Mail to the USA



Type “v” – Mimeograph Explanation Prepared by the New York Post Office on Registered Mail to the USA



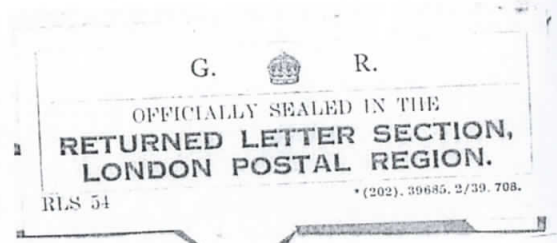
Type “w” – Mimeograph Explanation Prepared by the New York Post Office on Normal Mail to the USA



390612 (Nierinck 390612) – Imperial Airways – “Centurion” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – G-ADVE – Calcutta, India (continued)



Type “x” – Cachet – Red  
“M” in MAIL missing



Type “y” – Sealing Label Affixed  
to Covers by London Post Office

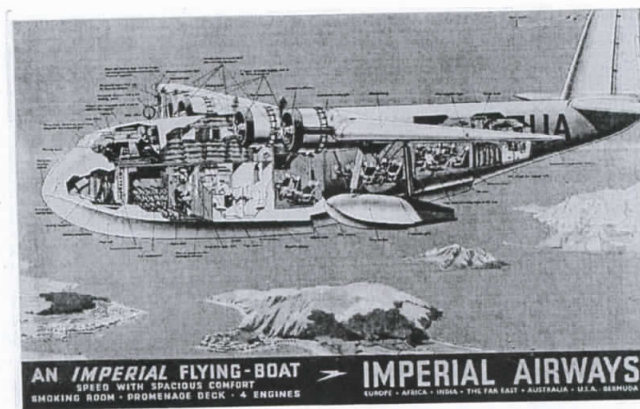
390714 – Imperial Airways – “Calypso” – Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – G-AEUA – Bahrain – Great Britain-Australia route

Captain unknown and First Officer Tommy Rose

The flight left Basra and when alighting at Bahrain, “Calypso’s” keel and afterstep were slightly damaged on coral. There were no injuries and they were able to make a test flight later that day.

The Qantas S.23 “Cooee”, which was at Karachi, was rescheduled to pick up the mail and passengers from Bahrain and take them on to their destinations. “Calypso” was put back into service on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

No mail is known.



Short S.23 ‘C’ Class – G-AEUA – “Calypso”

شركة الطرق الجوية الامبراطورية اكبر خطوط جوية في العالم  
للطيران في الاسبوع: اربع مرات لاوريا ومرتين لسودان  
وجنوب افريقيا ومرتين لشرق افريقيا والهند ومرتة  
واحدة لاوريا  
لمعرفة اترموعد محدد لقبول الرسائل يستلم من مكاتب البريد

**IMPERIAL AIRWAYS – THE GREATEST AIR LINE**  
Four services a week to Europe  
Two services a week to Sudan and Africa  
Two services a week to the East  
Once weekly to Australia  
For latest times of posting apply to any Post Office.

TRAVEL TO EUROPE, INDIA, AUSTRALIA OR AFRICA  
BY  
**IMPERIAL AIRWAYS – THE GREATEST AIR SERVICE**

For any enquiries concerning  
Airmail, Air Passages or Air  
Freight apply to  
**IMPERIAL AIRWAYS,**  
Cairo Alexandria Luxor  
6229315 27413

Figure 17A

Figure 17B

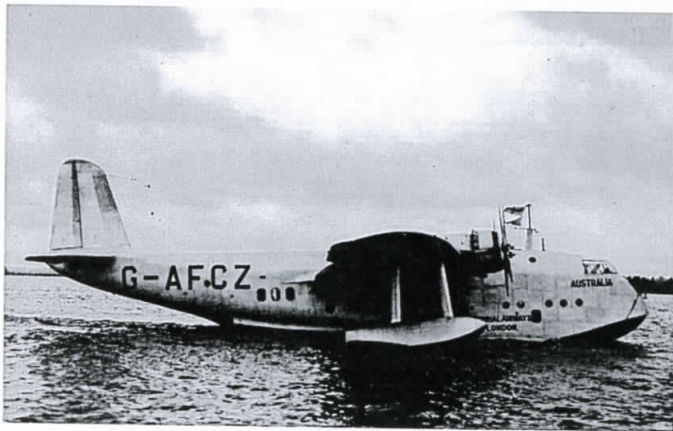
Pages from Airmail Etiquette Booklet

390809 (Nierinck 390809) – Imperial Airways – “Australia” – Short S.30 ‘C’ Class – G-AFCZ – Basra, Iraq – Great Britain-India route

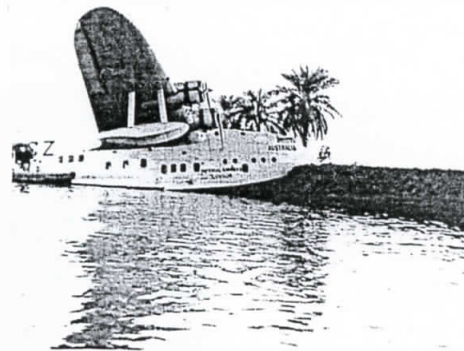
Captain G.C. Butler & First Officer J.B. Harris

Captain Butler taxied down the narrow fairway to the take off position. He mishandled the turn at the end of the channel and ran smack into a submerged sandbank on Cold Island. It was reported, however, that they had collided with part of the flare path during the take-off run and, having lost power, Butler purposely ran her aground in the shallows. The crew and the ten passengers were taken off. Whilst being towed back to the dockside for repairs, “Australia” sank and sustained serious water damage. Imperial’s engineers at Basra managed to get her ashore, strip out the interior and rebuild the lower nose section. The damage was so great that a locally made jig was employed. “Australia” remained at Basra until her repairs were completed in February 1940. None of the passengers or crew members were injured.

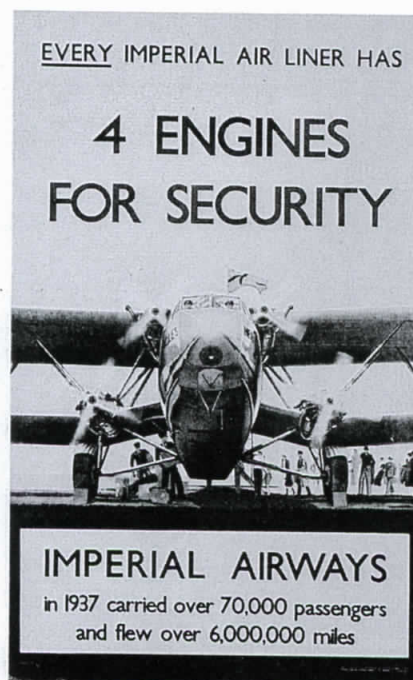
A heavy load of mail was onboard, but it was not damaged. No covers are known in collectors’ hands.



Short S.30 ‘C’ Class – “Australia”



“Australia” After the Accident



Postcard Reproduction of a Poster



390811 (Nierinck 390811) – Imperial Airways – Lockheed Model 14-WF62 Electra – G-AFGN – Saint Sauveur, near Luxeuil, France – Great Britain-Switzerland route

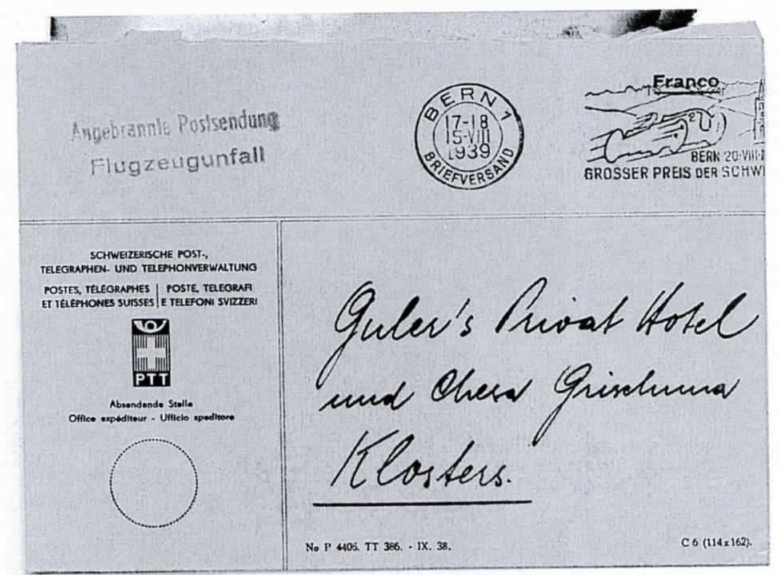
Captain Ben Prowse, First Officer A.C. Whincop & Wireless Operator D.M. Stott

The aircraft was being leased by Imperial from British Airways. The flight was enroute from London to Zurich with a stop in Basel. One of the engines had been giving trouble at 10,000 feet and the aircraft was descending. At 3,000 feet the carburetor caught fire, and although the pilot followed the recommended course, by opening the throttle and diving, the flames spread. The Captain put the aircraft down in a field near Saint Sauveur, at an approximate speed of 120 mph. The undercarriage broke but the aircraft did not turn over. Captain Prowse and First Officer Whincop, slightly burned by the flames near the cockpit, jumped out and opened the cabin door to let the nine passengers escape. The aircraft was burned out. The passengers continued their journey by car.

According to an item in The Times of London of 12 August, "The machine and the mails it was carrying were destroyed". Part of the mail was in fact salvaged in burned condition. Various cachets and labels were applied by different destination post offices in Switzerland.



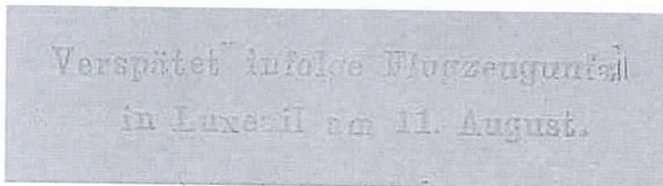
Lockheed Model 14-WF62 Electra – G-AFGN



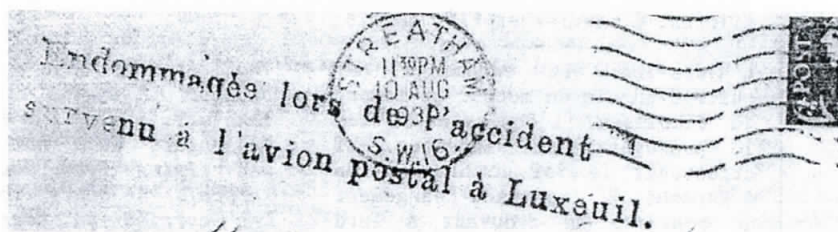
Type "a" – Cachet – Red or Violet – Applied to Ambulance Covers from Bern Post Office

Beim Flugzeugunfall in Luxeuil  
am 11. August 1939 beschädigt.

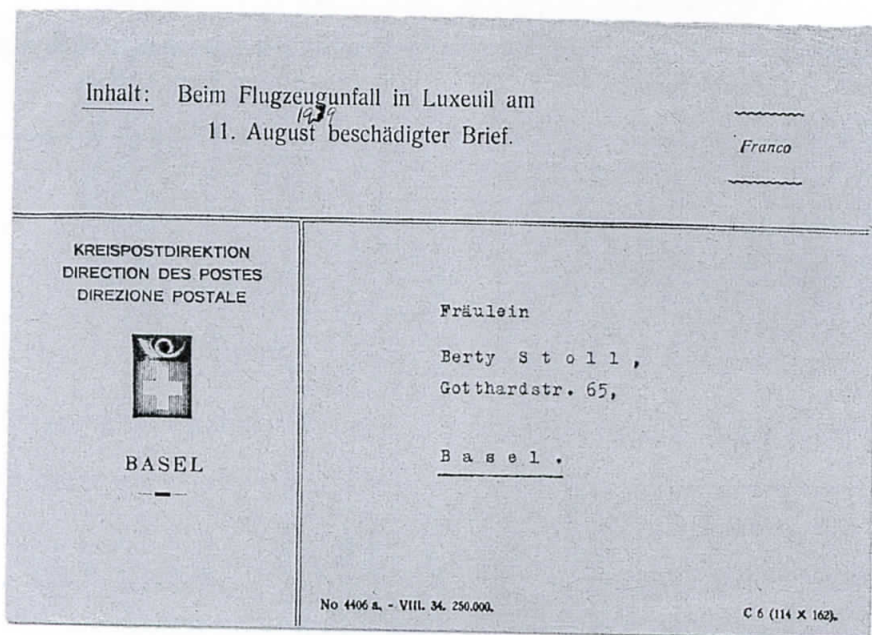
Type "b" – Cachet – Red



Type "c" – Cachet – Red



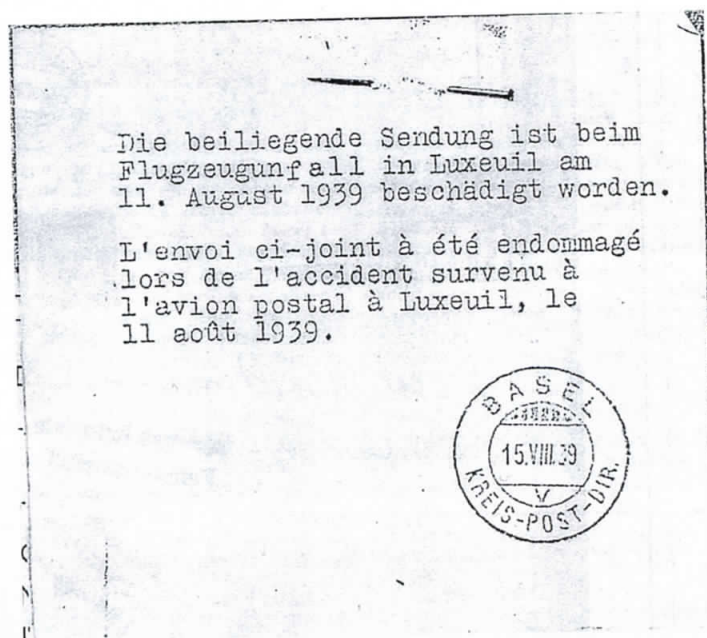
Type "d" – Cachet – Red



Type "e" – Cachet – Printed on Ambulance Cover From Basel Post Office



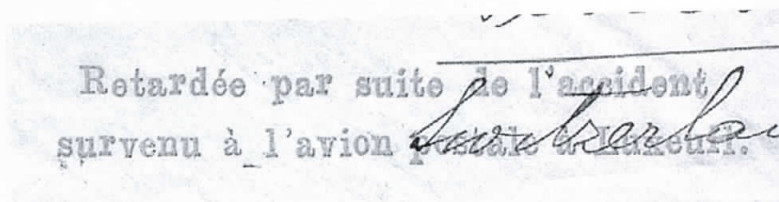
390811 (Nierinck 390811) – Imperial Airways – Lockheed Model 14-WF62 Electra – G-AFGN – Saint Sauveur, near Luxeuil, France (continued)



Type "f" – Bilingual Label – From Basel Post Office



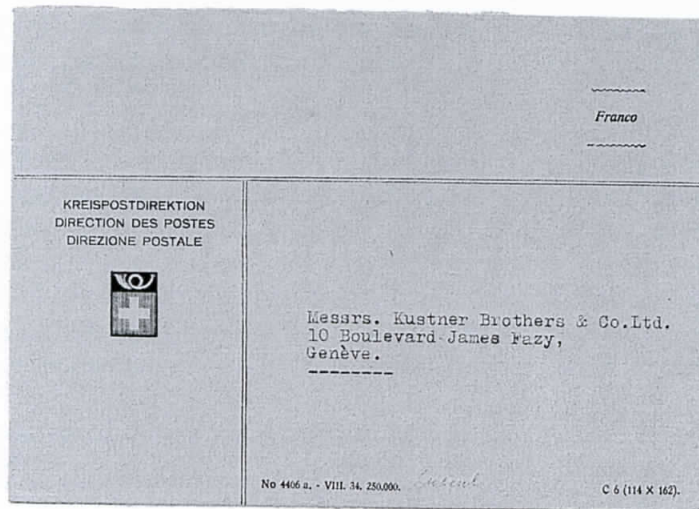
Type "g" – Cachet – Black



Type "h" – Cachet – Red – Applied by Geneva, Switzerland Post Office



Postcard Reproduction of a Poster



Type "i" – Ambulance Cover From Bern, Switzerland Postal Headquarters



Type "k" – Cachet – Color Unknown – On French Ambulance Cover



Figure 8A



Figure 8C

Pages from Airmail Etiquette Booklet



391108 (Nierinck 391108) – Imperial Airways – “Dardanus” – De Havilland DH-86 Diana Class – G-ADUE – near Waichow Island – Hong Kong-Hanoi route

Captain J. N. Wilson & Mr. Raeburn

The aircraft was flying between Hong Kong and Bangkok. The aircraft was fired on and forced down by five Japanese fighters, being hit by about 90 bullets. Captain Wilson was able to land the damaged aircraft, and the passengers and crew were captured by the Japanese. Britain and the Dominions were not yet at war with Japan. According to Crewe <sup>28</sup>, “The Japanese authorities in Tokyo told the British Embassy that the airliner was mistaken by the Japanese fighters for a Chinese aircraft, and that before her nationality was discovered, one of the fighters had opened fire on her. .... A Reuters message states that apologies have been offered to the Hong Kong authorities through the Japanese Consul General there. .... It was probably about this time that the DH 86s operating the service had large Union Flags painted on the wings and fuselage in order to reduce the chance of misidentification.” Also, future flights gave the island of Waichow a wide berth. Although the passengers were released right away, Captain Wilson and Mr. Raeburn were detained and interrogated on the island of Waichow. The mail and aircraft were also detained. The British Government lodged strong protests with the Japanese Government and the crew and mail were finally released on the 15<sup>th</sup> of November, and the mail was taken back to Hong Kong for onward delivery.

A few covers are known to exist, and no cachets or special markings were applied. Westbound covers from Hong Kong postmarked between 1 and 7 November were probably onboard. The mail was being carried in the forward locker of the aircraft, and it was here that some of the bullets found a mark. On arrival in Hong Kong the mail was reflighted to Bangkok for distribution, and at Singapore the Australian mail was picked up by Qantas and carried through to Sydney, arriving on the 5<sup>th</sup> of December. When the mail was opened at the General Post Office in Sydney, a bundle of registered letters (approximately 40) were found to be perforated by a machine gun bullet, which fell out onto the sorting table.

A cover with a bullet hole (as shown) was reported in Qantas Aeriana <sup>26</sup>, dated Hong Kong, 12:30 p.m., 1 November 1939, and backstamped Sydney on 5 December.

This was not the first time that an Imperial Airways aircraft was fired upon by the Japanese. The Times of London of 1 March 1938 Reported that: “The Imperial Airways liner flying with mails from Bangkok to Hong Kong was fired on by a Japanese aeroplane south of Hong Kong yesterday. The Japanese authorities in Tokyo have told the British Embassy that the air liner was mistaken by Japanese fighting aircraft for a Chinese machine, and that before her nationality was discovered, one of the fighters had opened fire on her. A Reuters message states that apologies have been offered to the Hong Kong authorities through the Japanese Consul General there. In order to avoid similar incidents however it has been decided to divert the Imperial Airways route between Bangkok and Hong Kong....”.

The aircraft fired on was “Daedalus” (G-ADCN), which was operating service BH 11 on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February. The diversion referred to appears to have related to the courses flown rather than an alteration to stopping points. It was probably about this time that the DH86s operating the service had large Union Jack flags painted on the top of the wings and the fuselage in order to reduce the chance of misunderstanding. However, it didn't appear to help in the case of the November 1939 Waichow Island incident.



De Havilland DH-86 Diana Class – “Dardanus”

# Attack on British Air Liner Related

## Passengers Say Japan Fliers Riddled Ship With Machine Guns

HONG KONG, Nov. 10.—(AP)—Passengers of the British airliner Dardanus, brought here from Canton today by an American naval vessel, said five Japanese planes staged a 20-minute attack at close range on their ship and continued to fire machine-gun bullets into it even as the pilots landed it.

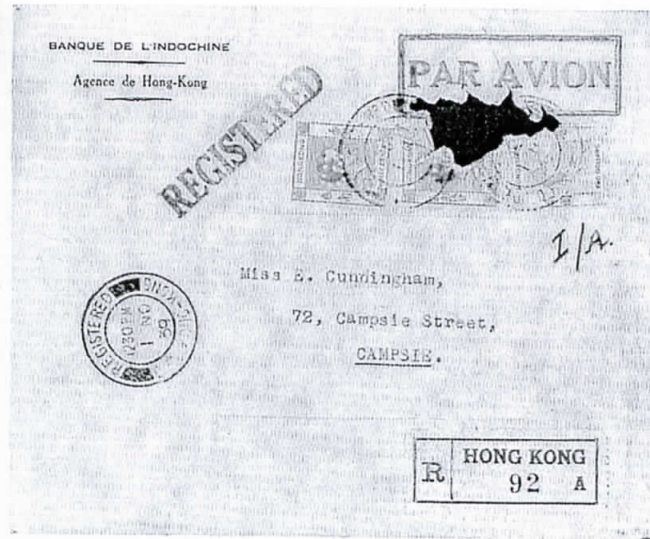
Japanese officials said the plane was forced down Tuesday at Waichow Island because it flew too low over a prohibited area en route from Hong Kong to Hanoi, French Indo China.

The three passengers, one of them O. Cuevas, Puerto Rican employce of the Intercontinent Corporation of New York, said the report the plane was forced down was a “masterpiece of understatement.”

Kenneth C. Krentz, United States consul at Canton, protested to the Japanese consul there against endangering the life of an American passenger. The other passengers were a Norwegian and a Persian.

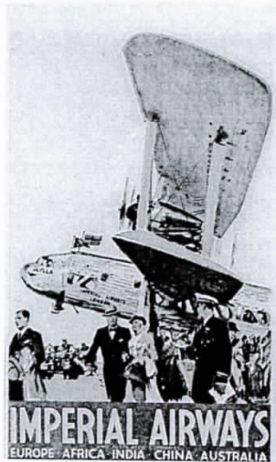
Japanese held the plane and its mail sacks at Waichow and the two British pilots at Canton.

The plane's passengers asserted they were compelled to sign pledges that they would not reveal details of the Japanese base at Waichow.



Cover perforated by a Japanese machine gun bullet when the “Dardanus” was shot down in November, 1939.

**Cover With Bullet Hole, which is in the National Library of Australia, in Canberra**



**Postcard Reproduction of a Poster**



391221 (Nierinck 391221) – Imperial Airways – Lockheed Model 14-WF62 Super Electra – G-AFYU – Malta – Egypt-Malta-Great Britain route

Captain Peter C. Fair, First Officer J.W.F. Beach, Flight Engineer J.J. Broome & Radio Officer G.R. Brentnall

The aircraft was operating a flight from Alexandria, Egypt. After making a scheduled stop at Sollum, it left there at 8:14 a.m. for Malta. The last message received by the Malta wireless station was a routine one at 10:20 a.m., and nothing more was heard from the flight. It had to make a forced landing on the sea between Sollum and Malta. The aircraft floated for about twenty minutes. A nearby Maltese sailing boat picked up three crew members and three passengers. They were later transferred to a French ship the "St. Georges", which arrived at Malta on December 23rd. Two crew members and three passengers were killed.

Eisendrath<sup>31</sup> reported that a small amount of mail for Great Britain was on board, consisting of a few letters from the Belgian Congo, all of which was lost.



Lockheed Model 14-WF62 Super Electra – Same Type as G-AFYU

## Egypt-Britain Plane Falls in Sea; 5 Lost

LONDON, Dec. 23.—(U.P.)—Imperial Airways, Ltd., announced today that one of its airliners crashed into the sea with loss of all mails. Three passengers and two members of the crew were listed as missing.

The Air Ministry announced that a French ship landed at Malta three passengers and three members of the crew of the plane, which crashed on a flight between Egypt and England.

## Six Survivors of Plane Crash in Sea

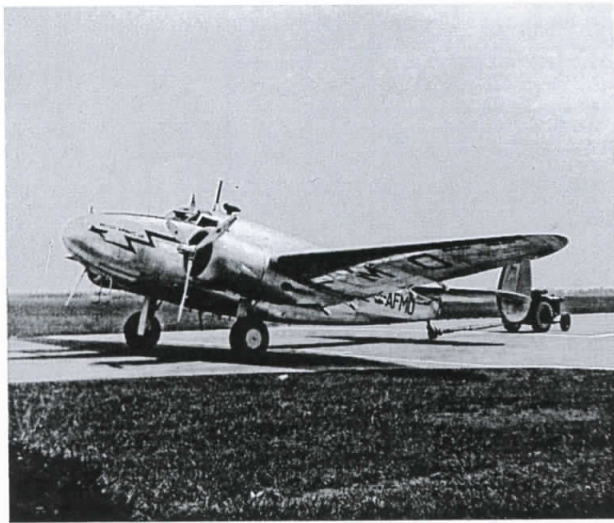
*By United Press*

LONDON, Dec. 23.—A French ship has landed at Malta six survivors of a British airliner which crashed on a flight between Egypt and England, the Air Ministry announced today. The survivors were picked up near Sicily. The plane was carrying six passengers and five crew members.

400115 – Imperial Airways – Lockheed L-14 Super Electra – G-AFMO – Heston, Great Britain – Great Britain-India route

Captain Flowerday - 1<sup>st</sup> Officer unknown

The aircraft was taking off from a snow covered aerodrome in poor visibility, with a crew of three and seven passengers. After a run of 500 yards, the aircraft bounced into the air in a semi-stalled condition. The pilot decided that it would not be possible to clear the obstructions beyond the aerodrome boundary and throttled down. The aircraft was severely damaged and one member of the crew was slightly injured. The other occupants were unhurt. The accident was due to an error of judgment on the part of the pilot, who took off in difficult conditions. No mail is known.



**Extract from The Times, London  
16 January 1940**

**News in Brief**

The passengers escaped injury when a British air liner, bound for Alexandria and Calcutta, crashed during the take-off at Heston yesterday. The First Officer received a slight cut.

**Lockheed Model 14-WF62 Super Electra  
G-AFMO**



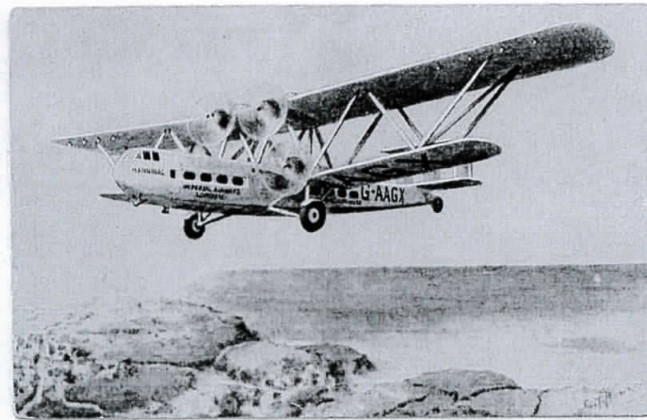
**Imperial Airways Poster**



400301 – Imperial Airways – “Hannibal” – Handley Page HP42 Hannibal Class – G-AAGX – Gulf of Oman – Calcutta-Alexandria route

Captain N. Townsend, 1<sup>st</sup> Officer C.J. Walsh & Radio Operator A.H.H. Tidsbury

The aircraft left Karachi on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March and made a stop at Jiwani, Baluchistan. It left Jiwani at 5:30 a.m. and was due at Sharjah at 10:35 a.m. At 8:50, the wireless operator reported they were over Jask, flying at 1,000 feet, with a ground speed of 77 mph. The last message received was at 10:10 a.m., saying they were trying to make contact with Sharjah. It was never seen again, despite a massive air and sea search in the Gulf of Oman. On the 4<sup>th</sup> of March, some wreckage was found by an Imperial Airways flying boat about two miles East of Rasel Kheimah, on the South Coast of Iran. The flight was carrying four crew members and four passengers. The amount of mail is unknown, and no covers were recovered.



**Handley Page HP42 Hannibal Class – “Hannibal”**

This was the last Imperial Airways crash. The British Government merged Imperial Airways and British Airways, which became British Overseas Airways Corporation on 1 April 1940.

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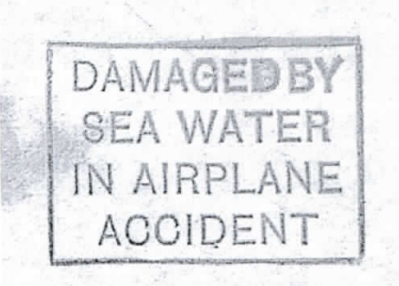

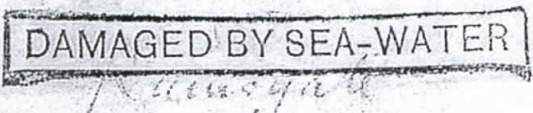
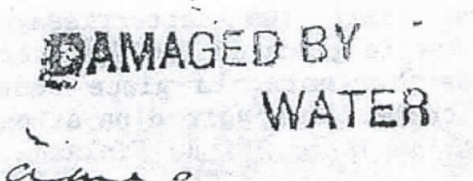



**Imperial Airways Poster**

**IDENTIFICATION OF COVERS WITHOUT CLEAR POSTMARKS**


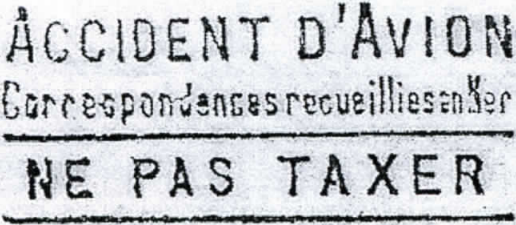
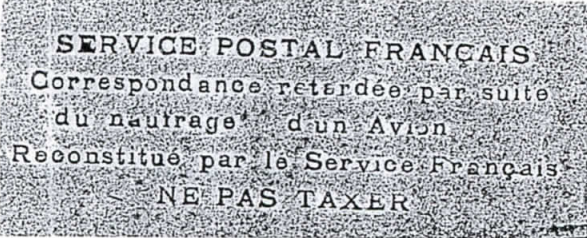
It is sometimes difficult to identify covers with a specific crash, especially where the postmarks have vanished with the missing stamps, and when the same cachets were applied to covers from different crashes. Thus, without a clear postmark, it is impossible to definitely identify such covers.

The following eight cachet types were used by British & French post offices on covers from three different crashes, where the aircraft were destined to Great Britain.

	<p>Used on covers from following crashes:</p> <p>360822 – type “x” – Scipio          371001 – type “f” – Courtier          371205 – type “c” – Cygnus          390612 – type “e” – Centurion</p>
	<p>Used on covers from following crashes:</p> <p>360822 – type “b” – Scipio          371001 – type “e” – Courtier          371205 – type “b” – Cygnus          390612 – type “f” – Centurion</p>
	<p>Used on covers from following crashes:</p> <p>371001 – type “d” – Courtier          371205 – type “a” – Cygnus          390612 – type “r” – Centurion</p>
	<p>Used on covers from following crashes:</p> <p>360822 – type “y” – Scipio          371205 – type “d” – Cygnus</p>
	<p>Used on covers from following crashes:</p> <p>360822 – type “a” – Scipio          371205 – type “k” – Cygnus</p>



## IDENTIFICATION OF COVERS WITHOUT CLEAR POSTMARKS

	<p>Used by London Post Office on covers primarily to the USA &amp; Canada from following crashes:</p> <p>371001 – type "m" – Courtier</p> <p>371205 – type "s" – Cygnus</p>
	<p>Used by Paris Post Office on covers to France and other European countries from following crashes:</p> <p>360822 – type "k" – Scipio</p> <p>371001 – type "i" – Courtier</p> <p>390612 – type "g" – Centurion</p>
	<p>Used by Paris Post Office on covers to France and other European countries from following crashes:</p> <p>360822 – type "ll" – Scipio</p> <p>371001 – type "b" – Courtier</p>

**IMPERIAL AIRWAYS & PREDECESSORS' AIRCRAFT  
THAT CRASHED OR WERE INTERRUPTED**

(Listed alphabetically by aircraft registration)

MANUFACTURER	MODEL NO./TYPE	NAME	REGISTRATION	DATE OF CRASH or INTERRUPTION
Armstrong Whitworth	Argosy II	"City of Liverpool"	G-AACI	330328
Short	S.8 Calcutta	"City of Rome"	G-AADN	291026A
De Havilland	DH61 Giant Moth	"Youth of Britain"	G-AAEV	300119
Handley Page	HP42	"Hannibal"	G-AAGX	310808 & 400301
De Havilland	DH 66 Hercules	"City of Basra"	G-AAJH	300729 & 320129B
De Havilland	DH 66 Hercules	"City of Karachi"	G-AARY	310822 & 321231
Short	S.8 Calcutta	"City of Khartoum"	G-AASJ	310318, 310704 & 351231
Short	S.8 Calcutta	"City of Swanage" previously named "City of Salonika"	G-AATZ	360324
Handley Page	HP42 Hannibal Class	"Horsa"	G-AAUC	331218, 360829 & 361123
Handley Page	HP42 Hannibal Class	"Hanno"	G-AAUD	350227, 351007 & 370906
Handley Page	HP42 Hannibal Class	"Heracles"	G-AAXC	361127
Handley Page	HP45 Heracles Class	"Horatius"	G-AAXD	320509, 340101 & 381025
Handley Page	HP45 Heracles Class	"Helena"	G-AAXF	340309
De Havilland	DH 66 Hercules	"City of Jodhpur"	G-ABCP	320106, 330102 & 351123
Westland	Wessex	No name	G-ABEG	360101
Short	S.17 Kent Scipio Class	"Scipio"	G-ABFA	360822
Short	S.17 Kent Scipio Class	"Sylvanus"	G-ABFB	351109
Short	S.17 Kent Scipio Class	"Satyrus"	G-ABFC	310524 & 330304
Vickers	212 Vellox	No name	G-ABKY	360810
Avro	Ten	"Apollo"	G-ABLU	331230



IMPERIAL AIRWAYS & PREDECESSORS' AIRCRAFT  
THAT CRASHED OR WERE INTERRUPTED

MANUFACTURER	MODEL NO./TYPE	NAME	REGISTRATION	DATE OF CRASH or INTERRUPTION
Armstrong Whitworth	AW XV Atalanta Class	"Atalanta" (this name was given to G-ABTI in Oct. 1932)	G-ABPI (later "Arethusa" VT-AEF with Indian Trans-Continental)	320927
Armstrong Whitworth	AW XV Atalanta Class	"Amalthea"	G-ABTG	380727
Armstrong Whitworth	AW XV Atalanta Class	"Andromeda"	G-ABTH	390601
Armstrong Whitworth	AW XV Atalanta Class	"Atalanta"	G-ABTI	351103
Armstrong Whitworth	AW XV Atalanta Class	"Artemis"	G-ABTJ	330610, 360210 & 370915
Armstrong Whitworth	AW XV Atalanta Class	"Athena"	G-ABTK	330715, 350116 & 360929
Armstrong Whitworth	AW XV Atalanta Class	"Astraea"	G-ABTL	351102
Short	L17 Scylla Class	"Syrinx"	G-ACJK	351010
Short	L17 Scylla Class	"Scylla"	G-ACJJ	340803
Boulton & Paul	P.71A Boadicea Class	"Boadicea"	G-ACOX	360925
Boulton & Paul	P.71A Boadicea Class	"Britomart"	G-ACQY	351025
De Havilland	DH-86 Diana Class	"Delphinus"	G-ACPL	380308
De Havilland	DH-86G	"Jupiter"	G-ACVZ	370316
De Havilland	DH-86 Diana Class	"Delia"	G-ACWC	350522, 370411 & 390523
De Havilland	DH-86 Diana Class	"Dorado"	G-ACWD	380603
De Havilland	DH-86 Diana Class	"Draco"	G-ADCM	351022
De Havilland	DH-86 Diana Class	"Daedalus"	G-ADCN	361223 & 370405
Short	S.23 'C' Class	"Canopus"	G-ADHL	370623 & 381110
De Havilland	DH-86 Diana Class	"Dardanus"	G-ADUE	360509 & 391108
Short	S.23 'C' Class	"Cavalier"	G-ADUU	390121
Short	S.23 'C' Class	"Cambria"	G-ADUV	390308

IMPERIAL AIRWAYS & PREDECESSORS' AIRCRAFT  
THAT CRASHED OR WERE INTERRUPTED

MANUFACTURER	MODEL NO./TYPE	NAME	REGISTRATION	DATE OF CRASH or INTERRUPTION
Short	S.23 'C' Class	"Castor"	G-ADUW	370522
Short	S.23 'C' Class	"Capella"	G-ADUY	390312
Short	S.23 'C' Class	"Cygnus"	G-ADUZ	371205
Short	S.23 'C' Class	"Capricornus"	G-ADVA	370324
Short	S.23 'C' Class	"Corsair"	G-ADVB	390315
Short	S.23 'C' Class	"Courtier"	G-ADVC	371001
Short	S.23 'C' Class	"Challenger"	G-ADVD	390501
Short	S.23 'C' Class	"Centurion"	G-ADVE	390612
Short	S.23 'C' Class	"Calpurnia"	G-AETW	380206 & 381127
Short	S.23 'C' Class	"Ceres"	G-AETX	380612 & 380724
Short	S.23 'C' Class	"Calypso"	G-AEUA	381231 & 390714
Short	S.23 'C' Class	"Cordelia"	G-AEUD	380123
Short	S.30 'C' Class	"Australia"	G-AFCZ	390809
De Havilland	DH91	"Falcon"	G-AFDJ	390518
Lockheed	Model 14-WF62 Super Electra	No name	G-AFGN	390811
Lockheed	Model 14-WF62 Super Electra	No name	G-AFMO	400115
Lockheed	Model 14-WF62 Super Electra	No name	G-AFYU	391221
De Havilland	DH.4A	No name	G-EAHG	191030
De Havilland	DH.4A	No name	G-EAJD	200822
Handley Page	HP12	No name	G-EALX	201005
Handley Page	HP12	No name	G-EAMA	190922 & 201214
Handley Page	W.8	"Newcastle" later changed to "Duchess of York"	G-EAPJ	211021 & 230710
B.A.T.	FK26	"City of Newcastle"	G-EAPK	210818 & 220731
Westland	Limousine	No name	G-EARF	220610
De Havilland	DH.18	No name	G-EARI	200816
Vickers	Vimy Commercial	"City of London"	G-EASI	250701 & 250823
Handley Page	O/10	No name	G-EATH	211109
Handley Page	O/10	No name	G-EATM	211230
Handley Page	O/10	No name	G-EATN	220114



IMPERIAL AIRWAYS & PREDECESSORS' AIRCRAFT  
THAT CRASHED OR WERE INTERRUPTED

MANUFACTURER	MODEL NO./TYPE	NAME	REGISTRATION	DATE OF CRASH or INTERRUPTION
De Havilland	DH.18	"City of Paris"	G-EAUF	210513
De Havilland	DH.4A	No name	G-EAVL	210400
De Havilland	DH.18A	No name	G-EAWO	220407
Handley Page	W.8b	"Princess Mary"	G-EBBG	280215
Handley Page	W.8b	"Prince Henry"	G-EBBI	250303 & 260619
Vickers	Type 61 Vulcan	"City of Antwerp"	G-EBBL	220623 & 220812
De Havilland	DH.34	No name	G-EBBQ	220523 & 230827
De Havilland	DH.34	"City of Glasgow"	G-EBBR	220511, 230217 & 240527
De Havilland	DH.34	No name	G-EBBS	230914
De Havilland	DH.34	No name	G-EBBU	221103
De Havilland	DH.34	Name unknown	Registration unknown	230317
De Havilland	DH.34	No name	G-EBBX	231205 & 241224
De Havilland	DH.34	No name	G-EBCX	240923
Supermarine	Sea Eagle	No name	G-EBFK	231130
Handley Page	W.8f Hamilton	"City of Washington"	G-EBIX	301030
De Havilland	DH 50	No name	G-EBKZ	270203 & 281023
Handley Page	W.9	"City of New York"	G-EBLE	270627
Armstrong Whitworth	A.W. Argosy I	No name	G-EBLF	261208
Armstrong Whitworth	A.W. Argosy I	"City of Birmingham"	G-EBLO	310328 & 310616
Handley Page	W.10	"City of Melbourne"	G-EBMM	261224
Handley Page	W.10	"City of Pretoria"	G-EBMR	261010
Handley Page	W.10	"City of London"	G-EBMS	261021
Handley Page	W.10	"City of Ottawa"	G-EBMT	260417 & 290617
Handley Page	W.10	Name unknown	Registration unknown	270101
De Havilland	DH 66 Hercules	"City of Cairo"	G-EBMW	261209, 271229, 301011 & 310419

IMPERIAL AIRWAYS & PREDECESSORS' AIRCRAFT  
THAT CRASHED OR WERE INTERRUPTED

MANUFACTURER	MODEL NO./TYPE	NAME	REGISTRATION	DATE OF CRASH or INTERRUPTION
De Havilland	DH 66 Hercules	"City of Delhi"	G-EBMX	290430, 310610 & 320129C
De Havilland	DH 66 Hercules	"City of Baghdad"	G-EBMY	320129A
De Havilland	DH 66 Hercules	"City of Jerusalem"	G-EBMZ	290906
De Havilland	DH 66 Hercules	"City of Teheran"	G-EBNA	300214
Armstrong Whitworth	A.W. Argosy I	"City of Wellington" in August 1931, renamed "City of Arundel"	G-EBOZ	291201 320309 330213
Short	S.8 Calcutta	"City of Alexandria"	G-EBVG	291026, 310816 & 361228
Short	S.8 Calcutta	"City of Athens"	G-EBVH	291026
Bristol	F.2B	No name	H1019	200217
De Havilland	DH83 Fox	No name	VO-ABC	350825
De Havilland	DH.60G Gypsy Moth	No name	VT-ACO	330425
Armstrong Whitworth	AW XV Atalanta Class	"Arethusa"	VT-AEF (previously G-ABPI)	340415, 340612 & 370915
Armstrong Whitworth	AW XV Atalanta Class	"Aurora"	VT-AEG (G-ABTM before going to Indian Trans-Continental)	340505



**IMPERIAL AIRWAYS & PREDECESSORS PILOTS  
THAT HAD FORCED LANDINGS & CRASHES**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>INTERRUPTION/CRASH DATE (year, month, day as used in Listings) – 00 means exact date unknown</b>	<b>TITLE AT TIME OF INTERRUPTION/CRASH</b>
Alcock, E. S. John	390308 & 390315	Captain
Alderson, M. R.	390121	Captain
Alger, H. W. C. "Jimmy"	310419, 311205, 320129B & 370522	Captain
Amor, H. C.	290906 & 351231	Flight Engineer
Attwood, Ernest Henry "Tich"	320927, 321231, 330610 & 381127	Captain
Bager, Robert	201214	Captain
Bailey, F. J.	291026	Captain
Baker,	360829	First Officer
Barnard, Franklyn I.	260417 & 261209	Captain
Beach, J. W. F.	391221	First Officer
Beckham, G.	360210	First Officer
Birt, L. Spence	291026A	Captain
Brackley, H. G.	311205	First Officer
Bradley, G.	220511 & 220812	Captain
Brailli, R. P. D.	290617	Captain
Broome, J. J.	391221	Flight Engineer
Brown, W. R.	330328 381231	Flight Engineer Captain
Butler, G. C.	390809	Captain
Capper, N. J.	351022	Acting Captain
Cass, Ken	361223	First Officer
Chataway, H. W.	210513 & 210818	Captain
Cripps, S. T. B.	390518	Captain
Davis, Joe	370405	Captain
Dawson, V. A.	351025	Acting Captain
Digby, F. T.	390518	Captain
Dismore, S. A. Freddy	220114  261021 310808	Wireless Operator (at the time) Captain Captain
Donald, J. B.	320106	Captain
Drew, D. H.	250524 & 351109	Captain
Duke, Robin E.	220407	Captain
Dykes, A. B.	381025	Captain
Fair, Peter C.	391221	Captain
Ferguson,	350522	Captain

**IMPERIAL AIRWAYS & PREDECESSORS PILOTS  
THAT HAD FORCED LANDINGS & CRASHES**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>INTERRUPTION/CRASH DATE (year, month, day as used in Listings) – 00 means exact date unknown</b>	<b>TITLE AT TIME OF INTERRUPTION/CRASH</b>
Fergusson, Stanley Miles	360810	First Officer
Flowerday,	400115	Captain
Flynn, John Joseph "Paddy"	301030	Captain
Gavshon, J. E.	390501	First Officer
Ginn, P. C.	351103	Captain
Gittins, John "Jack"	320129C & 331230	Captain
Griffiths, C. F.	320927	Flight Engineer
Gurney, E. M.	380612	Captain
Hall, Jack S. "Ginger"	371001	First Officer
Harris, J. B.	390809	First Officer
Hinchcliffe, W. G. R. "Ray"	270203	Captain
Hollins, F. U.	371205	Acting Captain
Holmes, Cy	200816	Captain
Holmes, George B.	370316	Captain
Horsey, Herbert J.	260619, 280215 & 370906	Captain
Hussey, H. B.	390312	Captain
Johnstone, M. V.	380727	Captain
Jones, E. F.	200217 & 220610	Captain
Jones, O. P.	261208 & 320509	Captain
Keys, R. E.	220623	Captain
Kirton, J. P.	380206	Captain
Klein, Gareth E.	351123 370324	Acting Captain First Officer
Leleu, Lionel Louis	330328	Captain
Loch, H. G.	331230	First Officer
Long, S. G.	360822 361228	First Officer Acting Captain
Lorraine, Anthony C.	360929 & 390612	Captain
Mason, F. H.	301030	Flight Engineer
McIntosh, R. H.	190922, 211109, 220114 & 270101	Captain
McNaught-Davies, Stanley Gordon	201005	Captain
Menenger, L. W.	350227	Captain



**IMPERIAL AIRWAYS & PREDECESSORS PILOTS  
THAT HAD FORCED LANDINGS & CRASHES**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>INTERRUPTION/CRASH DATE (year, month, day as used in Listings) – 00 means exact date unknown</b>	<b>TITLE AT TIME OF INTERRUPTION/CRASH</b>
Messenger, L. V. "Buddy"	360829	Captain
Minchin, F. F.	270627	Captain
Mollard, Roger P.	300729 & 310419 310610, 310822, 340415 & 371205	First Officer Captain
Morris, Harry	361223	Flight Engineer
Mountain, Ralph	371205	Second Officer
Murray, Evan A. T.	390612	First Officer
Rose, N. F.	390518	First Officer
Olley, G. P.	240923 & 281023	Captain
Orr, L. F. Hastings "Laddie"	360810	Acting Captain
Owen, H. W.	221103	First Officer
Paterson, A. S. "Jock"	370324	Captain
Pembroke, F. T.	291026A	Flight Engineer
Percy, J. T.	351007	Captain
Poole, E.	371001	Captain
Pratt, G. E.	230827 & 230914	Captain
Prowse, Ben	390811	Captain
Raeburn, Mr.	391108	Unknown
Ray, J. E.	380727	First Officer
Reid, R. C.	351103	First Officer
Richardson, Neil	390121	First Officer
Roberson, H. S.	221103	Captain
Robinson, A. L. "Scruffy"	220523, 230914, 231205, 240527 & 261010	Captain
Rogers, W.	250303	Captain
Rose, Tommy	390714	First Officer
Saunders, W. G. N.	390501	First Officer
Shakespeare, Mr.	390308 & 390315	First Officer
Sharma, P. D.	330425	Captain
Shaw, Jerry	191030	Captain
Sheppard, J. S.	291201, 320129A & 351102	Captain
Smith, Frederick D.	390501	Acting Captain
Spafford, John	360210	Captain

**IMPERIAL AIRWAYS & PREDECESSORS PILOTS  
THAT HAD FORCED LANDINGS & CRASHES**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>INTERRUPTION/CRASH DATE (year, month, day as used in Listings) – 00 means exact date unknown</b>	<b>TITLE AT TIME OF INTERRUPTION/CRASH</b>
Spottiswood, Alexander Ninian	381127	First Officer
Stewart, David Arthur	241224	Captain
Stocks, Mr.	291026 & 310524	Captain
Taylor, R. O. O. "Root"	310616 & 361223	Captain
Thomas, A. C.	360925	Acting Captain
Townsend, N.	400301	Captain
Travers, F. Dudley	271229	Captain
Walsh, C. J.	400301	First Officer
Walters, L. A.	340101	Captain
Warner, Mr.	261010	First Officer
Waters, Mr.	250701	Captain
Wheeler, S. J.	300214	Captain
Whincop, A. C.	390811	First Officer
White, E. R. B.	310808	First Officer
Wilcockson, A. S.	211230, 230710, 351010 & 360822	Captain
Wilson, Vernon G.	330304, 350116, 351231 & 360929	Captain
Wilson, J. N.	391108	Captain
Wolley Dod, Charles F.	230217 & 300119	Captain
Woodbridge, Albert Edward	290906	Captain
Woodhouse, H. O.	351010	First Officer
Worradel, Mr.	360929	First Officer
Youell, A. B. H. "Jimmy"	261224	Captain



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Miscellaneous files, archives & accident reports

### **Books, handbooks, magazine & newspaper articles, etc.**

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## The Wreck & Crash Mail Society

The Wreck & Crash Mail Society was formed in the latter part of 1994, and is devoted to the collecting and study of all aspects of delayed and/or damaged mail and interrupted mail services. Currently the Society is composed of four study groups, namely: the Air Crash Study Group, The Railroad Wreck Study Group, the Ship Wreck Study Group, and the Suspended Mail/Conflicts Study Group.

The Society publishes a quarterly journal "La Catastrophe", which contains articles on all aspects of wreck and crash mail, as well as news on new cover discoveries, auction realizations on wreck and crash mail, and questions from members who are seeking information on their crash and wreck covers and the stories behind them.

The Wreck & Crash Mail Society normally holds an annual meeting (so far, all have been held in London), where members display parts of their collection, meet other collectors of wreck and crash mail, and exchange information and material with fellow members. Two meetings have also been held in the USA.

If you have an interest in this area of postal history, the organisers believe that the Wreck & Crash Mail Society will fulfill your interest. Annual membership dues are UK£12.50 or US\$20.00, which includes a subscription to four issues of "La Catastrophe".

If payment is in UK£, send application to:

Mr. Norman Hoggarth  
The Wreck & Crash Mail Society  
10 Lady Jane Park  
Bradgate Road  
Newton Linford  
Leicester, England LE6 0HD  
Phone +44 1530 243452

If payment is in US\$, send application to:

Mr. Hank Berthelot  
The Wreck & Crash Mail Society  
132 Livingston Place West  
Metairie, LA – USA 70005  
Phone 001 504 831 8144  
Email: hankberthelot@yahoo.com

Please provide your name, mail address, email address, and note your area(s) of philatelic interest

## **Major Aerophilatelic Societies in the English Speaking World**

**The American Air Mail Society (AAMS)** is the world's second oldest and the largest aerophilatelic society. Publisher of the American Air Mail Catalogue, the monthly "Airpost Journal" and the quarterly "Jack Knight Air Log". The AAMS holds two meetings each year at major philatelic exhibitions in the USA, and offers many services for the aerophilatelist. For membership details, contact the Membership Secretary, Rudy Roy, P.O. Box 5367, Virginia Beach, VA, USA 23471-0367, Email: [RRoyperfin@aol.com](mailto:RRoyperfin@aol.com)

**The British Aerophilatelic Federation (BAeF)** is the world's oldest aerophilatelic society. The BAeF represents aerophilately in Great Britain and has many members in Great Britain and many other countries. The BAeF has six Regional Groups, which conduct regular meetings, and it publishes the quarterly journal "Air Mail News". Many BAeF members collect crash mail, especially Imperial Airways crash covers. For membership details, contact the Membership Secretary, Peter Lister, 97 Albany Park Ave., Enfield Highway, Middlesex, England EN3 5NX, Email: [P.Lister@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:P.Lister@mdx.ac.uk)

**The Australian Air Mail Society** represents aerophilately in Australia and in addition to members in Australia, it has many members in many other countries. It publishes quarterly, The Australian Aerophilatelist. For membership details, contact the Secretary, Nelson Eustis, GPO Box 954, Adelaide, South Australia 5001, Australia, Email: [drowley7@chariot.net.au](mailto:drowley7@chariot.net.au)

**The Air Mail Society of New Zealand** represents aerophilately in New Zealand and in addition to members in New Zealand, it has many members in many other countries. It publishes the monthly Air Mail News. For membership details, contact the Membership Secretary, Mr. Alan Tunnicliffe, Air Mail Society of New Zealand, P. O. Box 29144, Fendalton, Christchurch, New Zealand, Email: [Alant@linz.govt.nz](mailto:Alant@linz.govt.nz)

**The Irish Airmail** represents aerophilately in Ireland. Most of its members are in Ireland, but it has members in many other countries. It publishes a Bulletin "O.E. 78" from time to time. For membership details, contact the Secretary, Mr. David Reid, 18 Glenlucan, Killarney Road, Bray, County Wicklow, Ireland, Email: [david@kmcs.ie](mailto:david@kmcs.ie)

**The Canadian Aerophilatelic Society** represents aerophilately in Canada. It has many members in Canada, as well as the USA and other countries. It publishes the quarterly newsletter, The Canadian Aerophilatelist. For membership details, contact the Secretary, Ron Miyanishi, 124 Gamble Ave., Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4J 2P3, Email: [squeak@interlog.com](mailto:squeak@interlog.com)

**The Aerophilatelic Society of Southern Africa** represents aerophilately in Southern Africa. Most of its members live in South Africa and surrounding countries, but it also has members in other countries. It publishes the quarterly newsletter, The Aeroletter. For membership details, contact Mr. Neville E. Polakow, 149 Cape Road, Port Elizabeth 6001, South Africa, Email: [nepolakow@intekom.co.za](mailto:nepolakow@intekom.co.za)



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