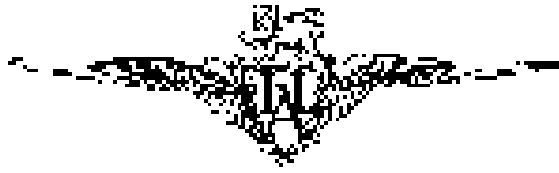


IMPERIAL AIRWAYS GAZETTE



Issue 67

June 2025

Contents

Editorial	1
The Paris ~ Brindisi train connection	2
<i>By Peter Wingent (material provided by Duncan Crewe)</i>	
1934 – First Southern Rhodesia to New Zealand	11
<i>By Christopher J. Cooksey</i>	
Imperial Airways' Rand ~ Rhodesia Supplementary Service, 1934	13
<i>By Peter Wingent</i>	
The Paris ~ Athens train connection, March to May, 1931	14
<i>By Peter Wingent</i>	
Some recent photographs	15
<i>By Duncan Crewe</i>	
Nairobi GPO - A confusing time, June-July 1937	17
<i>By Rick Green</i>	
The new Australian flying boat bases	27
<i>By Sue Burn</i>	
From the Daily Telegraph 100 years ago	30
<i>Material provided by John Berridge</i>	
I.A. test letter with an unusual arrival cachet	31
<i>Material provided by Duncan Crewe</i>	
A RANA compliment slip	32
<i>Material provided by Duncan Crewe</i>	
Imperial Airways' Empire Terminal, Buckingham Palace Road, London	33
<i>By Peter Wingent</i>	
St. Helena air mail rate ~ a correction	40
<i>By Peter Wingent</i>	
A heavy item carried on IE1	41
<i>By Robert Duns</i>	
Service IE1 to New Zealand	42
<i>By Robert Duns</i>	
For the record ~ our Zoom meetings, December 2024 to April 2025	43

Editor: Peter Wingent

Telephone: 01349 888954

e-mail: pwingent@googlemail.com

Editorial

The summer is here at last, at least in the U.K., and here is a bumper edition of the Gazette to occupy you all on the inevitable rainy days which will keep you from gardening. I think there will be something for everyone within and, as always, on behalf of all members I thank our contributors for their efforts. Rick Green has written an extremely detailed article detailing the numerous changes to air mail services in East Africa during the summer of 1937. Much of the information will be new to collectors of this area because Rick has trawled painstakingly through editions of the East African Standard to obtain it. As always, Duncan has chipped in with wonderful items of ephemera and some superb press photographs. A balance to the African content has been provided by Sue Burn and Robert Duns with articles relating to Australia and New Zealand.

Over the years I have been asked many times for information about the Paris ~ Brindisi train connection but I have found very little has been written about it in any detail. Duncan's booklet provides a very detailed description of the southbound journey and I was able to add a leaflet describing the northbound one, but whilst these items provide good snapshots at particular points in time during the 1930s, it must be remembered that during the whole decade the trains utilised changed in accordance with the changes in timetables of the air services.

Our Zoom meetings continue to be very well attended and I for one find them very enjoyable. We have been extremely fortunate to be allowed the use of the West Africa Study Circle Zoom account, which will eliminate the enforced breaks every forty minutes. Each month, as the date for a meeting draws near, I start to panic because only one or two contributions have been offered. Yet a few more arrive during the last few days and we end with a full meeting. If you have any concern for the condition of my nervous system, please let me know of your contributions in plenty of time but, most importantly of course, please keep them coming, otherwise there will be no meetings.

Our member Laurence Kimpton, has produced a second edition of his magnificent book and he has asked me to include the details in this edition of the Gazette. Laurence sent me the following:

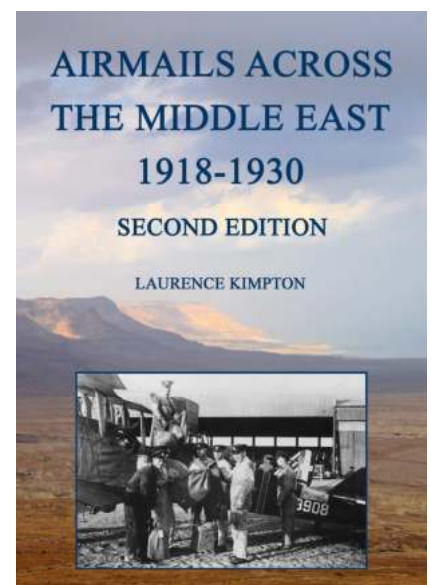
AIRMAILS ACROSS THE MIDDLE EAST 1918 - 1930

Second Edition

Laurence Kimpton

A4 384 pages. Laminated card cover. Colour throughout.
Over 600 illustrations and tables (covers, photographs, ephemera, tables).
Published March 2025.

Following the publication of the first edition in 2015, additional information has appeared in philatelic articles (based on the authors' research) and in aviation books. Also, a variety of interesting and relevant covers which I had not seen before have appeared in auctions, have been 'discovered' or have been made known to me by readers of the first edition. These covers have contributed additional details to the story of airmails flown across the Middle East. The new information, the covers not seen before and the need to correct a few errors and expand explanations led to my decision to produce a second edition with a small print run. The censuses of covers flown on the pioneer flights from 1918 to 1920 have been updated. The number of pages has increased from 336 to 384. Significant additions have been made to almost all chapters. The chapter on the pioneer flights across the Middle East after 1922 has been considerably expanded, the number of pages increasing from 24 to 43.



Price **£40**. Postage & packing: UK £5. For postage to outside UK please email for costs.

Order from Laurence Kimpton l.j.kimpton@blueyonder.co.uk

Payment: by bank transfer, £ cheque; outside UK only, by PayPal

The Paris ~ Brindisi train connection

By Peter Wingent

Duncan Crewe very kindly sent me the copies shown below of a scarce Imperial Airways booklet which provided passengers with information about their journey from London to Brindisi. It is dated April 1932.



Passengers, mail and freight on both African and Eastern services were carried by train between Paris and Brindisi from October 1931 to Feb./March 1937.

The 24-HOUR CLOCK system is used in this time-table. The hours are numbered from midnight to midnight. The diagram above explains the system

Examples

8.30 A.M. = 08.30 hours
 4.10 P.M. = 16.10 "
 7.45 P.M. = 19.45 "

Five minutes past midnight is 00.05

N.B.—The times shown in this booklet are liable to alteration without notice, but the Sleeping Car Conductor will always supply the latest information

On fait usage dans cet horaire de L'HORLOGE à 24 HEURES. Les heures sont comptées de minuit à minuit et le système est expliqué par le diagramme donné ci-dessus

Par exemple

8.30 du matin = 08.30 heures
 4.10 de l'après-midi = 16.10 "
 7.45 du soir = 19.45 "
 Minuit cinq est donc 00.05 heures

N.B.—Les heures données dans cette brochure peuvent être changées sans notification, mais le Conducteur des Wagons-Lits peut toujours donner de renseignements précis

NOTES FOR THE CONVENIENCE OF PASSENGERS TRAVELLING BETWEEN

AVIS AUX VOYAGEURS POUR LEUR FACILITER LE TRAJET

LONDON — BRINDISI

by par

IMPERIAL AIRWAYS

on the EMPIRE AIR ROUTES sur les VOIES COLONIALES

➤ These notes are produced as a guide for our passengers on the London-Paris-Brindisi section of their journey, and will, we hope, help them to make the rail portion of the trip in the greatest comfort

➤ Les renseignements ci-dessous sont donnés afin de guider nos passagers sur la section du voyage Londres-Paris-Brindisi, et nous espérons qu'ils trouveront tout ici pour leur faciliter ce trajet et leur assurer le plus grand confort

MEALS EN ROUTE are provided for in the inclusive fare (wines and spirits excluded), appropriate meal vouchers being bound in the ticket cover

LES REPAS PRIS EN ROUTE sont compris dans le prix du billet (exception faite des vins et liqueurs).

1

GRATUITIES for all services rendered throughout the air journey and on the train are paid by the Company

TIMINGS mentioned in these notes are local, i.e. those standard to the country through which passengers are travelling

➤ In the winter passengers normally travel from London to Paris by the mid-day (*Silver Wing*) service and by the afternoon one during the summer, but they are at liberty to use the morning service if they want to spend a few hours in Paris

On arrival at Le Bourget, the Air Port of Paris, passengers' needs will be attended to through Customs, and they will then be conveyed with their baggage to the hotel in Paris, where the appropriate meals will be provided. Passengers should indicate to the Hotel Management at what time they would like to take their meals, any remaining time being left to the passengers' disposal for sight-seeing and so on

2

Des Bons d'échange pour ces repas se trouvent reliés à la couverture avec les billets

LES POURBOIRES pour tous les services rendus pendant le voyage en avion et dans le train sont payés par la Compagnie

LES HORAIRES ci-après sont les heures locales, c'est-à-dire celles de chacun des pays traversés

➤ En hiver le trajet de Londres à Paris est effectué en général par le service de midi (le fameux *Silver Wing*) et en été par le service de l'après-midi; mais les voyageurs peuvent aussi bien prendre le service du matin s'ils veulent passer quelques heures à Paris

A l'arrivée au Bourget, port aérien de Paris, toute facilité vous est donnée en ce qui concerne les formalités de douane. On vous conduit ensuite avec vos bagages à l'hôtel. Là, on vous sert un déjeuner ou (suivant le cas) un thé et un dîner

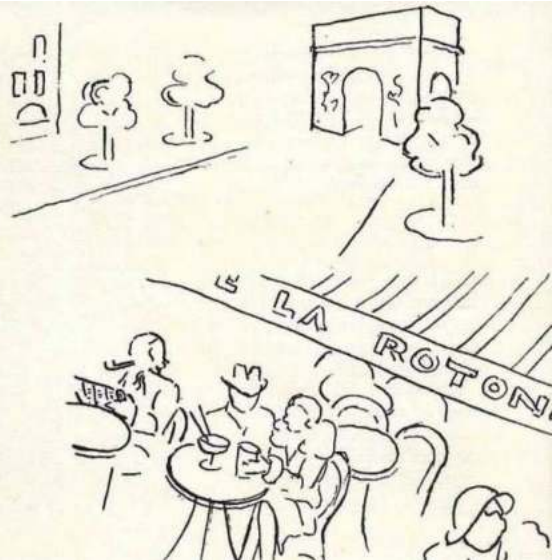
Afin de vous permettre de visiter Paris pendant les heures de loisir, nous vous conseillons

THE COMPANY ARRANGES for a car to leave the hotel for the Gare de Lyon, where passengers will be shown to their sleeping compartments, and will be handed their tickets. Rail tickets and passports should then be handed to the uniformed Sleeping Car Conductor, who will attend to any requirements throughout the train journey

d'indiquer à la Direction de l'Hôtel l'heure à laquelle vous désirez prendre vos repas

UNE VOITURE DE LA COMPAGNIE va vous chercher à l'hôtel pour vous conduire à la Gare de Lyon, où vous êtes conduit à votre couchette et on vous remet vos billets. Les billets de chemin de fer ainsi que le passeport doivent alors être remis au

3

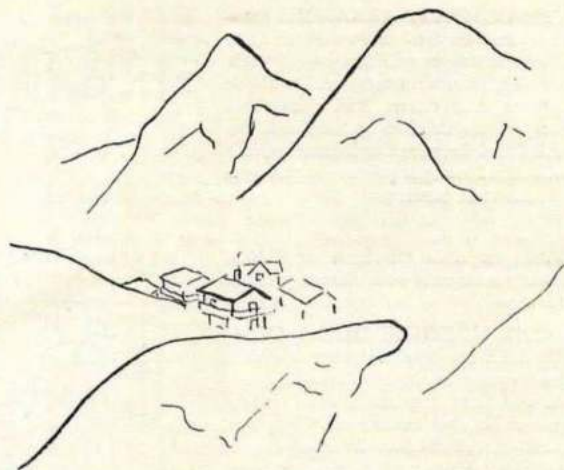


The train is scheduled to leave Paris at 21.30 (9.30 p.m.), reaching the Swiss frontier at Vallorbe at 04.42 (where it is extremely unlikely that passengers will be disturbed for Customs formalities)

Conducteur des Wagons-Lits, qui est à votre entière disposition pendant tout le trajet par chemin de fer

Le train quitte Paris à 21 h. 30 et arrive à la frontière suisse à Vallorbe à 04.42. (Il est peu probable que vous soyez dérangé pour les formalités de douane.)

4



As during the winter Swiss time is one hour ahead of French time—which latter is equivalent to Greenwich time—passengers are advised to advance the time on their watches by one hour before retiring for the night

Passengers who wish to see the very fine mountain scenery in Switzerland should rise about 07.00, at which time the train is scheduled to stop at Lausanne

At this point the breakfast car is attached to the train, and passengers are advised to take breakfast before reaching the Swiss-Italian frontier at *Brigue* (09.18). Owing to Customs examination, it is not possible for meals to be

En hiver l'heure suisse étant en avance d'une heure sur l'heure française, qui est basée sur l'heure de Greenwich, nous vous conseillons d'avancer votre montre d'une heure avant de vous coucher

Si vous désirez admirer les Alpes suisses, levez-vous à 07.00, heure à laquelle le train arrive à Lausanne. A cet endroit le Wagon-Restaurant est attelé au train et nous vous conseillons de prendre votre petit déjeuner avant d'atteindre la frontière italo-suisse à *Brigue* (09.18). En vue des formalités de douane, les repas ne sont pas servis entre *Brigue* et la frontière italienne,



served between *Brigue* and the Italian frontier, *Domodossola* (10.03), between which the train passes through the famous *Simplon* tunnel, which is twenty-one kilometres long

The train then goes on to *Baveno* (11.03), and thence to *Arona* (11.32). Between these two points it follows the shores of the world-renowned *Lake Maggiore*, the largest lake in Italy

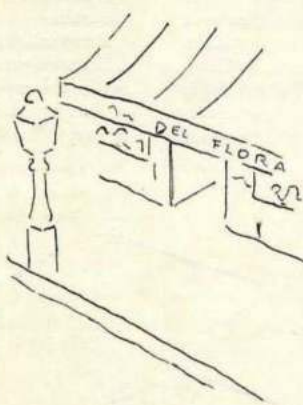
Domodossola (10.03). Entre ces deux gares le train passe sous le fameux tunnel du *Simplon*, long de 21 kilomètres

Le train passe ensuite à *Baveno* (11.03), puis à *Arona* (11.32), longeant le rivage du plus grand lac d'Italie, le *Lac Majeur*, renommé dans le monde entier



ON ARRIVAL AT MILAN

the Conductor will return passports and tickets, and passengers will be met by a uniformed representative of *Thos. Cook & Son*, who will conduct them to the *Hôtel Continental*, in the city, where lunch will be taken at approximately 13.15. The hotel is close to the *Cathedral Square*, and at least one hour is available for sight-seeing. Passengers are advised to take any of their valuables with them when leaving the train. The rest of the luggage, however, can be left in the sleeping compartment, which will be locked by the Conductor. Taxis will be provided for the return journey to the station to



A L'ARRIVÉE A MILAN

le Conduc-teur vous rend vos billets et votre passeport, et un représentant en uniforme de *Thos. Cook* vous attend pour vous conduire en ville à l'*Hôtel Continental*, où le déjeuner est servi vers 13.15. L'hôtel est près de la *Cathédrale* et vous aurez au moins une heure de liberté pour visiter quelques uns des superbes monuments de *Milan*

Nous vous conseillons de prendre avec vous tous vos objets de valeur; le reste des bagages peut, cependant, rester dans votre compartiment, qui est fermé à clef par le Conduc-teur

Le retour à la Gare est effectué en taxi. Ne manquez



Above: Pages 6 & 7 are the center pages of the booklet and thus are continuous. (Size reduced).

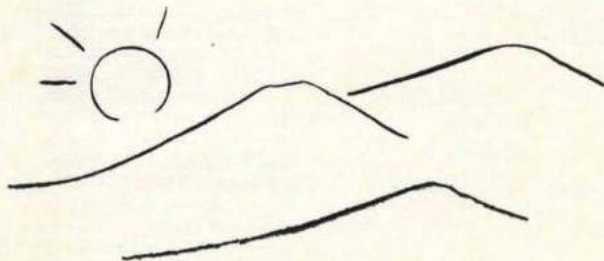
connect with the train for Brindisi, which leaves at 15.20 (3.20 p.m.) *prompt*. Passengers should inspect the architecture of the station, which is the most modern in the world. Before embarking, Cook's representative will obtain from the Milan station buffet the necessary tea and dinner baskets, as between this point

and Brindisi no restaurant car is attached to the train

By special arrangement, the Sleeping Car Conductor will supply coffee and biscuits before passengers retire for the night

The most *attractive scenery on the Adriatic coast* is passed in the very early morning. The

southern plains of Italy, however, are very interesting, more particularly the distant view of the Apennine Mountains, and can be seen at a more convenient hour!



➤ Passengers are requested to rise not later than 08.30, so as to be prepared to alight immediately the train arrives at *Brindisi Central Station, 09.07*, where

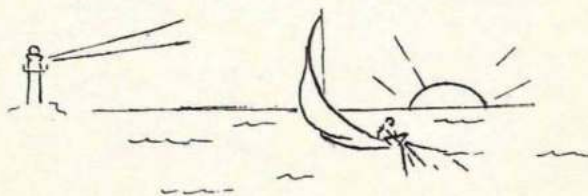
pas de remarquer l'architecture de la Gare, qui est la plus moderne du monde. Le train quitte Milan pour Brindisi à 15.20 *précises*; avant le départ, le représentant de Thos. Cook s'est procuré au Buffet de la Gare les paniers de provisions nécessaires pour le Thé et le Dîner, car entre Milan et Brindisi le train continue sans Wagon-Restaurant

Les arrangements nécessaires ont été faits afin que le Conducteur des Wagons-Lits vous serve du café et des biscuits avant que vous regagniez votre couchette

Le train longe la plus belle partie de la côte Adriatique de très bonne heure le lendemain matin. Pourtant la plaine du sud de l'Italie et le spectacle qu'offrent les

Apennins sont d'un très gros intérêt et vous n'êtes pas obligé de vous lever à une heure indue pour les admirer à votre aise

➤ Il est préférable, cependant, de vous lever à 08.30 au plus tard afin d'être prêt à quitter le train dès l'arrivée à la Gare



uniformed representatives of the Company will be in attendance. Passengers will then be conveyed by car to the *Hôtel Internazionale* for breakfast. The motor-boat leaves here for the *Air Port* at 11.00

Centrale de *Brindisi* à 09.07. Vous trouverez là, en uniforme, des représentants de notre Compagnie, qui vous conduiront en voiture jusqu'à l'*Hôtel Internazionale*, où votre petit déjeuner est servi. À 11 heures vous vous embarquerez sur une vedette qui vous conduira à l'aérodrome



Ask for booklets about **IMPERIAL AIRWAYS** Demandez les brochures des **AIRWAYS**

Empire Routes to Cape Town and India from any travel agent, Imperial Airways attendants, or from Imperial Airways Ltd. concernant leurs lignes extra-européennes (Indes Anglaises, Le Caire—Le Cap) dans toutes les Agences de voyages et dans les bureaux des Imperial Airways Ltd.

LONDON
Airway Terminus, Victoria Station (Continental Departures)

PARIS
38 Avenue de l'Opéra

11/T/166 5000 4/32

Duncan's booklet reminded me that I had tucked away somewhere a small number of documents relating to the train journey. The first is shown below and although undated, from the arrival and departure times given, I think they would have applied between April 1934 and March 1936. In contrast to Duncan's booklet, it describes the journey in the reverse direction, i.e. from Brindisi to Paris.

DETAILS OF TRAIN JOURNEY
from Brindisi to Paris and then by air to Croydon!

IMPERIAL AIRWAYS



**NOTES FOR THE COMFORT AND CONVENIENCE
OF PASSENGERS TRAVELLING BETWEEN
BRINDISI — LONDON
ON THE EMPIRE AIR ROUTES**

The 24 hour clock system is used in these notes

These notes are produced as a guide to passengers on the Brindisi - Paris - London section of their journey, and will, we hope, help them to make the rail portion of the trip in comfort.

MEALS EN ROUTE are provided for in the inclusive fare, (wines and spirits excluded)

TIPS throughout the air journey and on the train are paid by the Company

TIMES. Up to 7 October, times in all the countries through which passengers will travel between Brindisi and London, are the same as British Summer time, and these are the times referred to in these notes. After 7 October Summer Time ends in France and England, when Switzerland and Italy are one hour in advance of Greenwich time. In reading these notes after 7 October, passengers should make due allowance for this

Imperial Airways' flying-boats are due to arrive at Brindisi Air Port at 17.55 hours

Before passengers land, their passports and tickets will be collected by the Steward

After a short Customs and Passport examination at the Air Port, passengers' passports will be handed back to them but their Air tickets retained

Passengers will then proceed from the Marine Air Port to the Hotel Internationale by launch – a distance of three-quarter's of a mile – where dinner will be served

Passengers should look after their small personal items of baggage. Their registered luggage will be sent to the Railway Station, all except the heaviest articles being placed in passengers' compartments. Heavy cabin trunks will, however, travel to Paris in the freight compartment

Cars leave the hotel at 20.00 hrs. for the Central Station, from which the train is scheduled to leave at 20.27 hours. On arrival at the station, passengers will be conducted by Imperial Airways' staff to the Sleeping Coach where they will find their berths ready and their baggage stowed

Air Tickets will be returned before the train leaves. All rail tickets, including Sleeping Car and Restaurant Car tickets will, however, be held by the Sleeping Car Conductor. Sleeping Car berths will be prepared for the night shortly after departure from Brindisi as the train makes its way up the Eastern Coast of Italy towards Bologna

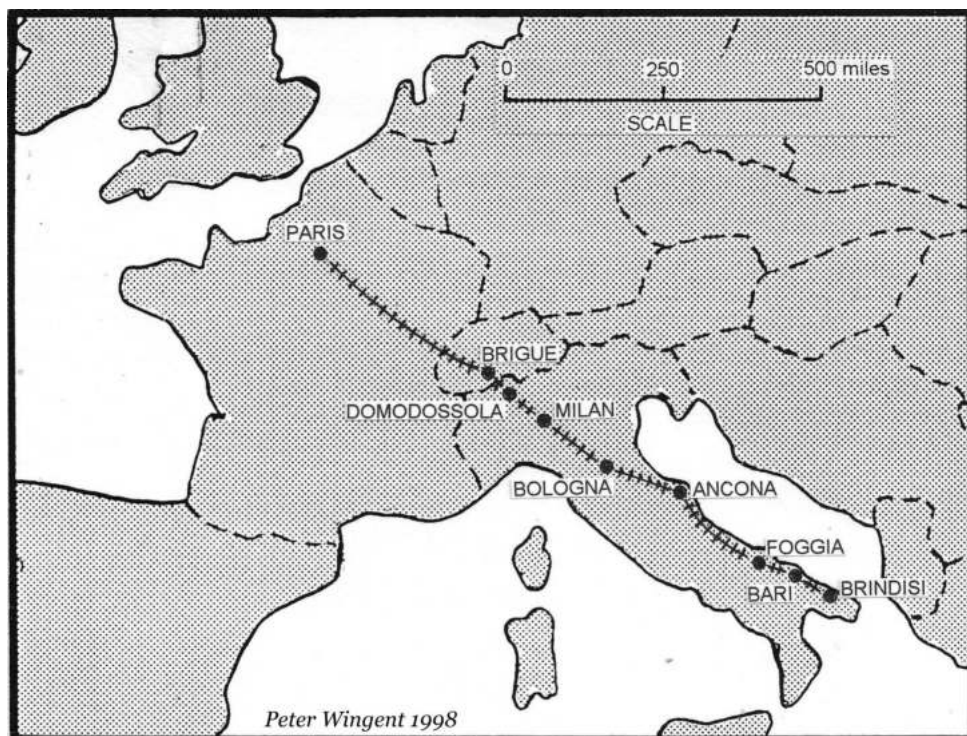
Stops are made during the night and the early morning at the following places:-
Bari – from 22.15 to 22.55. Foggia – from 00.50 to 01.05 and Ancona from 07.20 to 07.33

No Restaurant Car is attached to this train for breakfast, but between Ancona and Rimini tea or coffee, rolls and butter and jam, will be supplied by the Sleeping Car Conductor in the passengers' compartments

Bologna is reached at 11.20 when a Restaurant Car is attached and the train moves off again at 11.35 when the first service for lunch commences. The Conductor will arrange lunch by the first or second service, as desired; the latter is at 12.30

Milan is reached at 15.23, and a Cook's Interpreter will be on the platform to assist passengers. As the train is not due to leave here until 16.55, it has been arranged for passengers to cross the square in front of the station to the Hotel Excelsior for tea and a short rest. For the purpose of leaving and re-entering the station the rail tickets are returned to passengers, but collected again with passports on the train immediately after leaving Milan

Any valuable personal articles should remain in the passengers' personal care, although baggage should be left in the compartment as the same coach travels right through to Paris and the Sleeping Car Conductor stays aboard and locks every compartment. At 16.40 the Cook's Interpreter will conduct passengers from the hotel to the Station and to the coach



Map showing some of the places named in the text on this and the next page.

The most interesting part of the journey commences with the arrival of the train at Seste Calende at the southern end of Lake Maggiore at 17.45 hours. From here, the journey is made around the borders of the lake, passing Arona, Stresa, Baveno and Pallanza

Domodossola, near the Italian – Swiss frontier is reached at 19.25 hours. An Italian Police inspection is made, and the Swiss Customs examination is conducted between here and Brigue in Switzerland, which is reached at 20.32 hours. These examinations are usually very cursory, and passengers will probably not be disturbed

The Restaurant Car is sealed at Iselle, Italy, at 19.47 and remains closed until Brigue is reached

Shortly after leaving Brigue, at 20.46, dinner is served. Seats in the Dining Car are reserved for each passenger

The French frontier is passed well into the night at Vallorbe, where the French Customs and Police will make their inspection in the Sleeping Car

The train is due to arrive at the Gare de Lyon at 06.35. The Conductor will call passengers in good time

Passports and tickets will be handed back to passengers just before arrival at the Gare de Lyon

Imperial Airways' staff will be on the platform to meet the train. They will attend to the baggage transference to the company's cars, and, subsequently, to the Air Liner at the Air Port. Passengers should, however, take care of personal belongings such as coats and umbrellas

Passengers will be conducted to the Hotel Ambassador for breakfast.

Imperial Airways staff will call at the Hotel Ambassador at 08.35 and conduct passengers across the road to Airways Terminus, the Imperial Airways Departure Station in Paris. It is from here that the car for Le Bourget Air Port leaves at 08.45

At 09.30 hours the Air Liner leaves Le Bourget Air Port for London, arriving at the Air Port of London, Croydon, at 11.45, and at Airways Terminus, Victoria, S.W.1 at 12.30 hours

Some more brief snapshots into the running of the train connection are provided by the documents shown on the following pages which I found at Post Office Archives, London, many years ago (it is now named the British Postal Museum and Archive).

The earliest document, dated 4 March 1932, is an internal Post Office memorandum detailing the arrangements for forwarding the mail if the Croydon – Paris air service was cancelled and it is shown on the next page. The letter shown on the page after that (page 9) from the French Post Office to the G.P.O., London, dated 6 October 1933, usefully provides a timetable about to come into force at that time. Note that the southbound and northbound routes are very different. A map comparing the southbound routes in March 1932 and October 1933 is shown below together with the timetables.

NORMAL SCHEDULE			EMERGENCY SCHEDULE		
London	dep.	12.30 Wed.	London	dep.	14.00 Wed.
Paris	arr.	14.45 Wed.	Paris (Nord)	arr.	20.55 Wed.
Paris	dep.	21.50 Wed.	Paris (Est)	dep.	22.00 Wed.
Lausanne	arr.	07.00 Thur.	Belfort	dep.	04.18 Thur.
Lausanne	dep.	07.15 Thur.	Delle	dep.	06.01 Thur.
Domodossola	arr.	10.03 Thur.	Berne	dep.	08.48 Thur.
Domodossola	dep.	10.25 Thur.	Brigue	dep.	11.15 Thur.
Milan	arr.	12.55 Thur.	Dodomossola	dep.	12.20 Thur.
Milan	dep.	15.00 Thur.	Milan	dep.	15.00 Thur.
Brindisi	arr.	07.55 Fri.	Brindisi	arr.	07.55 Fri.

London ~ Paris: by Imperial Airways

Normal route —
Emergency route —

London ~ Paris: steamer via Boulogne and then train

Imperial Airways' London ~ Paris ~ Brindisi connection

SECRETARY
C. O. G. P. O.
MAY 32

REC'D
MAR 9 32

24786

6328/32

MEMORANDUM.

Information is contained in Registered papers 18837/32 that the route to Italy and Switzerland by the 2.0 p.m. service via Boulogne will ~~carry on~~ ^{vary on} from the 1st March and that on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays the service will operate via Paris instead of via Laon. This alteration will affect the diversion arrangements in the case of the African Air Mail. In the event of flight failure these air mails ^{for that service} will be forwarded as at present by the 2.0 p.m. service via Boulogne, but will be routed via Paris-Delle-Lötschberg-Simplon. The timings will be as follows:-

X 12. Supplementarily
The mail will pass by
train at 10.45 am

ms. Jc

18837

Berne

to Geneva

6
3

London	dep.	14.00
Paris (Nord)	arr.	20.55
Paris (Est)	dep.	22.00
Belfort	dep.	04.18
Delle	arr.	04.45 (G.M.T.)
	dep.	06.01 (C.E.T.)
Berne	dep.	08.48
Brigste	dep.	11.15
Domodossola	dep.	12.20
Milan	arr.	15.00 and thence by

train to Brindisi at 15.20 as at present. ^(C)

The telegraphic advice hitherto sent to ~~Boulogne and Bale~~ will not now be necessary, but it would be well to send a telegram to Paris. ^{a telegram should perhaps still be sent to Boulogne}

The Secretary.

Submitted.

Covering authority for the necessary changes as indicated above will perhaps be given.

flu

A. H. Robinson
for Assistant Controller.

Ministère
 des Postes,
 Télégraphes & Téléphones.

République Française.

Paris, le 6 OCT 1933

Direction
 de l'Exploitation Postale.

2^e Bureau.
 103, Rue de Grenelle (811)

Correspondance Postale
 Internationale - Services
 Maritimes postaux.

Tarifs - Franchises
 et Contrventions.

Aviation.

AV A 1/3 561/33

Poste aérienne

Monsieur,

En raison des modifications apportées aux horaires des services aériens Londres-Karachi et Londres-Le Cap et aux horaires des trains à partir du 8 octobre, j'ai l'honneur de vous faire connaître qu'en accord avec l'Office italien l'acheminement terrestre des dépêches-avion sur le parcours Paris-Brindisi sera assuré d'après les horaires suivants:

1° - Paris-Brindisi (à partir du 8 octobre)

Paris PLM	départ	21 ^h 50	train	511
Lausanne	arrivée	7.		
-	départ	7.15	-	36
Domodossola	arrivée	10.03		
-	départ	10.25	-	213
Milan	arrivée	12.55		
-	départ	15.	-	157
Brindisi	arrivée	7.55		

2° - Brindisi-Paris

Brindisi	départ	14.10	-	156
Piacenza	arrivée	7.32		
-	départ	8.56	-	126
Turin	arrivée	13.50	-	1054
-	départ	16.05	-	8
Modane	arrivée	18.35		
-	départ	18.30	-	604
Paris-PLM	arrivée	6.		

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur, l'assurance de ma
 haute considération.

Le Directeur de l'Exploitation Postale.

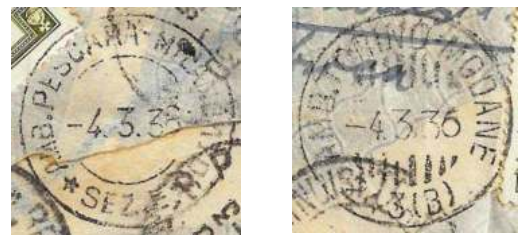
Translation of the first paragraph of the letter above: "Due to changes in the London - Karachi and London - Cape Town air service timetables and train timetables from 8th October, I have the honour to inform you that in agreement with the Italian office, the land routing of airmail dispatches on the Paris - Brindisi route will be assured according to the following timetables:"

Even from just Duncan’s booklet and the other three documents included here, it becomes very apparent that during the six years plus period that the train connection was used, the timetables and routes changed regularly and varied considerably. I am unsure of the significance of the ‘train numbers’ given in the French P.O. letter but they indicate that four different trains were used on the southbound services and five on the northbound ones. Quite a few changes for the passengers.

An interesting aspect of the train service is the application of Italian T.P.O. datestamps on registered mail (Ambulante, usually abbreviated to Amb.). Many readers will have examples. These can sometimes provide an indication of the routing and two examples are given below.



Above: the front and reverse of a cover sent by train from Nkana to Broken Hill, then flown from there to Brindisi by AN320. During the train journey through Italy the AMB. PESCARA – MILANO and AMB. TORINO – MODANE datestamps shown right were applied.



Above: the front and reverse of a cover posted in Mnyusi, sent by road and train to Tanga, then flown by Wilson Airways to Dar es Salaam to connect with I.A. service DN25. During the train journey through Italy the BOLOGNA – TRENTO and AMB. VERONA – BRENNERO datestamps shown right were applied.



If any reader can provide more information about this interesting aspect of the running of Imperial Airways services, please send it to me for inclusion in the December edition of the Gazette.

1934 - First Southern Rhodesia to New Zealand

By Christopher J. Cooksey

No doubt many hundreds if not thousands of covers were carried north from Cape Town to the Far East on AN196. However, very few registered covers would have been carried from Bulawayo to Wellington in New Zealand. This is the story of one such cover.



Reverse of cover.

20th December 1934 Registered Cover from Bulawayo to Wellington, New Zealand

Imperial Airways *Amalthea* departed Cape Town on 4th December 1934 (Service AN196). *Andromeda* took over the flight from Johannesburg arriving at Bulawayo on 5th December. Mail was transferred to *Hanno* at Khartoum arriving at Cairo on 10th December.

Imperial Airways anticipated a high volume of mail for the first service from Croydon to Australia and therefore scheduled two aircraft for the service (E298). *Hengist* and *Horatius* departed Croydon on 8th December. It is thought that *Horatius* carried the mail to Paris from where, after the train journey to Brindisi, *Scipio* continued with the mail to Alexandria. East bound mail from AN196 was loaded on to *Horsa* at Alexandria for the stages to Karachi. At Karachi mail was transferred to *Athena* which stopped at all scheduled stages except Bangkok on its journey to Darwin.

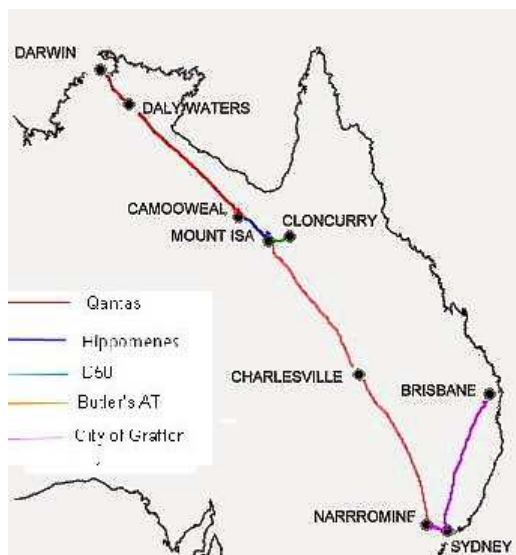
In preparation for the hazardous crossing of the Timor Sea from Koepang to Darwin, a distance of about 500 miles, it was necessary to jettison everything superfluous in order to take on board a full load of petrol and so chairs, tables and other furniture in the plane were removed at Singapore.

The reporter of the Sydney Sun on 19th December wrote a dramatic account on the arrival of the *Athena* at Darwin.

The port and starboard lights of the Athena signalled the plane's arrival in the tropic dusk night. Capt. Wilson circled the aerodrome at 7.35pm. Ground flares were blazing and the Athena dipped deep and Capt. Wilson peered at the ground, then roared upwards, turning and landing as a paraffin flare on the edge of the port wing brilliantly lighted the ground. Gracefully 20,000lb. Athena skimmed the boundary fence with a foot to spare and made a perfect three point landing.

The weight of mail meant that two aircraft of Qantas Airways were required to carry the mail onwards from Darwin, *The Hippomenes*, a de Havilland DH5-J (below left) and *Diana* a de Havilland DH61 (below right).





Map showing the route of planes in Australia.



Avro 18 "City of Grafton"

The aircraft departed Darwin at 6a.m. on the 19th and made short stops at Daly Waters, Newcastle Waters and Brunette Downs before reaching Camooweal, where they remained overnight. The Qantas Airways *Diana* suffered damage to its tail skid when she hit a stone on taking off at Camooweal the next morning (20th). The damage to the *Diana*, which was piloted by Captain Allen, was sufficient to prevent it proceeding further south pending repairs by engineers. The *Hippomenes* took half of the load off the *Diana* to Mt. Isa where it was transferred to another Qantas plane, a D50 which had been sent from Cloncurry. *Hippomenes* then returned to Camooweal for the balance of the mail. Both planes left the following morning for Charlesville arriving in the afternoon of 21st.

The New Zealand portion of the mail, weighing about 200lb., as well as the inter-State mail, were taken off the Qantas planes at Charlesville and flown south to Narrromine in New South Wales (a distance of 486 miles) by a plane of Butler's Air Transport leaving at 1.39pm. As night flying from Narrromine was thought to be dangerous, the mail was picked up at Narrromine by a New England Airways Fokker monoplane *City of Grafton* and flown to Sydney by Mr. Keith Virtue on Saturday 22nd.

Initially it had been planned that the mails would be carried to New Zealand by the *MS Monowai* but she had sailed four hours early and so even if there had been no trouble at Camooweal she could not have carried the mail. However the previous delays also caused the mail to miss the *RMS Oronsay* of Orient Lines which was the replacement vessel to take the mail to New Zealand, but the ship had sailed on 20th December. An article in the Brisbane

Sunday Mail describes how It was decided by the postal authorities that the mail should be brought to Brisbane by plane and be sent to New Zealand by the *RMS Oronsay* which was sailing from Sydney to Brisbane and was due to leave there on 23rd.

The *City of Grafton* (an Avro 18) was delayed for an hour at Sydney while the mail was sorted into separate bags including a special bag for the Duke of Gloucester and was then flown up to Brisbane. Mr. Virtue was again the pilot. One might wonder if the postal authorities would have taken such extreme measures if the mail had not contained a bag for the Duke of Gloucester.



Orient Lines R.M.S. Oronsay.

Brought to Brisbane

Even the damaging of a tail skid was not to end the misfortunes that dogged the progress of the first air mail from London to New Zealand. This portion of the mail, consisting of about 200lb., as well as the inter-State mails, had been taken off the Qantas planes at Charlesville and flown south through New South Wales.

The New Zealand mail was picked up at Narrromine by a New England Airways monoplane and flown to Sydney by Mr. Keith Virtue. It arrived at Sydney at about 9.30 p.m. on Friday, two hours after the Queensland portion of the mail had arrived at Archerfield aerodrome. However, previous delays had caused the mail for the Dominion to miss the steamer which was to have taken it across the Tasman.

It was decided by the postal authorities that the mail should be brought to Brisbane by plane and be sent to New Zealand by the Orient liner *Oronsay*, which is to leave to-morrow. The New Zealand Airways' plane was delayed for an hour at Sydney yesterday morning while the mail was sorted into separate bags, and was then flown up to Brisbane. Mr. Virtue was again the pilot.

Brisbane Sunday Mail, 23rd December.

The *Oronsay* sailed from Brisbane on 23rd December and arrived in Auckland on December 26th at about 4pm. After the mail for the Duke of Gloucester was unloaded, the other bags were taken off shortly afterwards and the southern portion despatched to Wellington on the Main Trunk express which left at 7pm. The North Island Main Trunk (NIMT) is the main railway line in the North Island connecting the capital city of Wellington with the country's largest city, Auckland. The line is 424 miles long, built in 1908 to the New Zealand rail gauge of 3 ft. 6 in.



Main Trunk Express on Mangazweka Viaduct.



Route from Auckland to Wellington.

The letter was recorded as arriving in Wellington at 8am on 28th December 1934.

Imperial Airways' Rand ~ Rhodesia Supplementary Service, 1934

By Peter Wingent

Very little has been written about the supplementary service between Johannesburg and Salisbury which Imperial Airways operated from April to December in 1934. Despite looking out for covers carried by the service for quite some time, I have only the FF cover shown below to reward my efforts. So I thought I would use this space-filler to ask other readers if they have any examples and, if so, to please send me scans.

The official I.A. service numbers, shown on the movement charts, were RRN and RRS, which I assume were Rand – Rhodesia Northbound and Rand – Rhodesia Southbound. My cover was flown by the first services in both directions (RRN1 and RRS1) from Johannesburg on Saturday, 7 April and from Salisbury on Tuesday 10 April 1934. The air mail rate from both countries to the other was 4d. per ½ oz., so the sender from Salisbury overpaid by 1d.



POSTAL NOTICE No. 17 OF 1934.

IMPERIAL AIRWAYS: ADDITIONAL AIR MAIL SERVICES TO AND FROM THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

It is hereby notified for public information that additional air mail services will be introduced between Southern Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa in accordance with the following time table, with effect from the 7th proximo:—

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA—SOUTHERN RHODESIA.	
Leave Johannesburg	Saturdays 9.0 a.m.
Arrive Bulawayo	Saturdays 1.45 p.m.
Leave Bulawayo	Saturdays 2.30 p.m.
Arrive Salisbury	Saturdays 4.35 p.m.
SOUTHERN RHODESIA—UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.	
Leave Salisbury	Tuesdays 8.0 a.m.
Arrive Bulawayo	Tuesdays 10.10 a.m.
Leave Bulawayo	Tuesdays 10.35 a.m.
Arrive Johannesburg	Tuesdays 3.45 p.m.

Further particulars regarding mail closing times, etc., may be obtained from any post office.

P.O. Notice dated 27 March 1934 published in Southern Rhodesia Gazette of 30 March 1934.

The cover is backstamped Salisbury, 8 April (the day after arrival) and Johannesburg 10 April 1934.

The Paris ~ Athens train connection, March to May, 1931.

By Peter Wingent

Having featured the Paris ~ Brindisi train connection earlier in this edition and whilst writing it I rediscovered the letter below in the same file, I thought it an ideal time to include the Paris ~ Athens train connection in the Gazette. From March to May 1931 both the Indian and African services utilized the Simplon Orient Express (S.O.E.) for the connection between Paris and the flying boats which departed from Athens to make the Mediterranean crossing. The distance from Paris to Athens was longer than that to Brindisi which resulted in the train journey taking three days instead of two.

The letter is from Dennis Handover, Imperial Airways Traffic Manager, to Captain D.O. Lumley, Head of the G.P.O. Air Mail Department.

IMPERIAL AIRWAYS

LIMITED


AIRWAYS HOUSE
Charles Street, Lower Regent St.
LONDON, S.W.1.

Telephone:
REGENT 7861 (5 LINES)

TMO/479/DHH

Dennis Handover
Greenwood,

Dear Lumley,



AIRS OF ALEXANDRIA, ATHENS, BAGHDAD, BASLE,
BASRA, BRUSSELS, CAIRO, COLOGNE, CRETE,
CROYDON, GAZA, KARACHI, NEW YORK, PARIS,
PERSIAN GULF, ZURICH, Etc., Etc.

Codes:
BENTLEY'S & LATA.
Telegrams:
IMPAIRLIM LONDON

5th February 1931.

The schedule will therefore be:

Saturday	Depart Croydon	08.38
Tuesday	Arrive Athens	17.37

The passage of the Mediterranean will be made on Wednesdays.

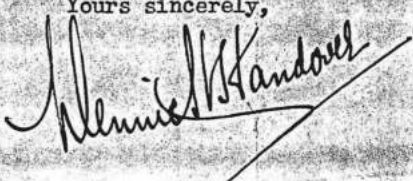
The Near East Division have been instructed that when they can, with absolute safety, they should speed up the mail in their Division and endeavour to arrive in Karachi on Saturdays.

In the reverse direction the westbound Mediterranean crossing will be made on Sundays. Thereafter the 13.30 train on Mondays will be caught, arriving Paris at 08.45 on Thursdays, thence by air to London, arriving about midday Thursdays.

I have no doubt you will be good enough to advise the postal authorities concerned, that all mail from Europe should be routed to Athens, to arrive by the 17.37 train on Tuesday nights.

The above schedule will, I anticipate, hold good until it is possible to undertake the entire sector England-Egypt by air, which I hope will not be very long hence.

Yours sincerely,



Captain D.O. Lumley,
General Post Office,
E.C.1.

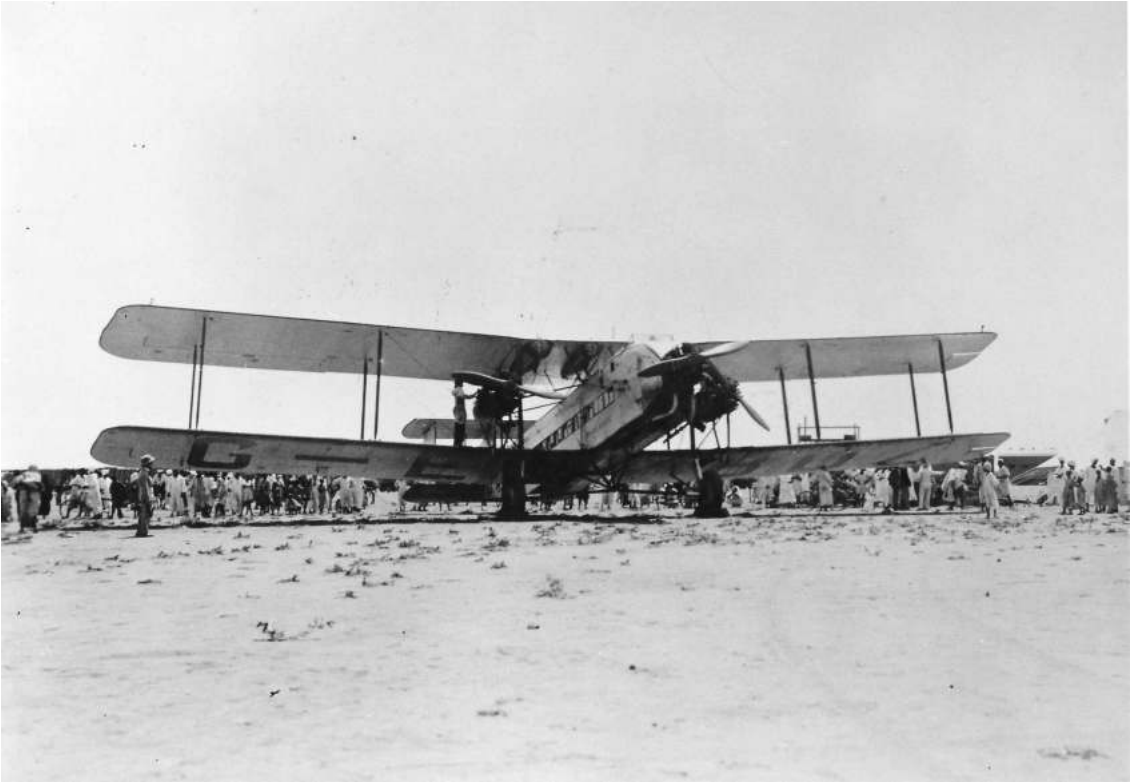
Some Recent Photographs

By Duncan Crewe

Duncan kindly sent the following four interesting photographs which he has acquired recently.



Manuscript note on reverse: *Gaza 1927.*

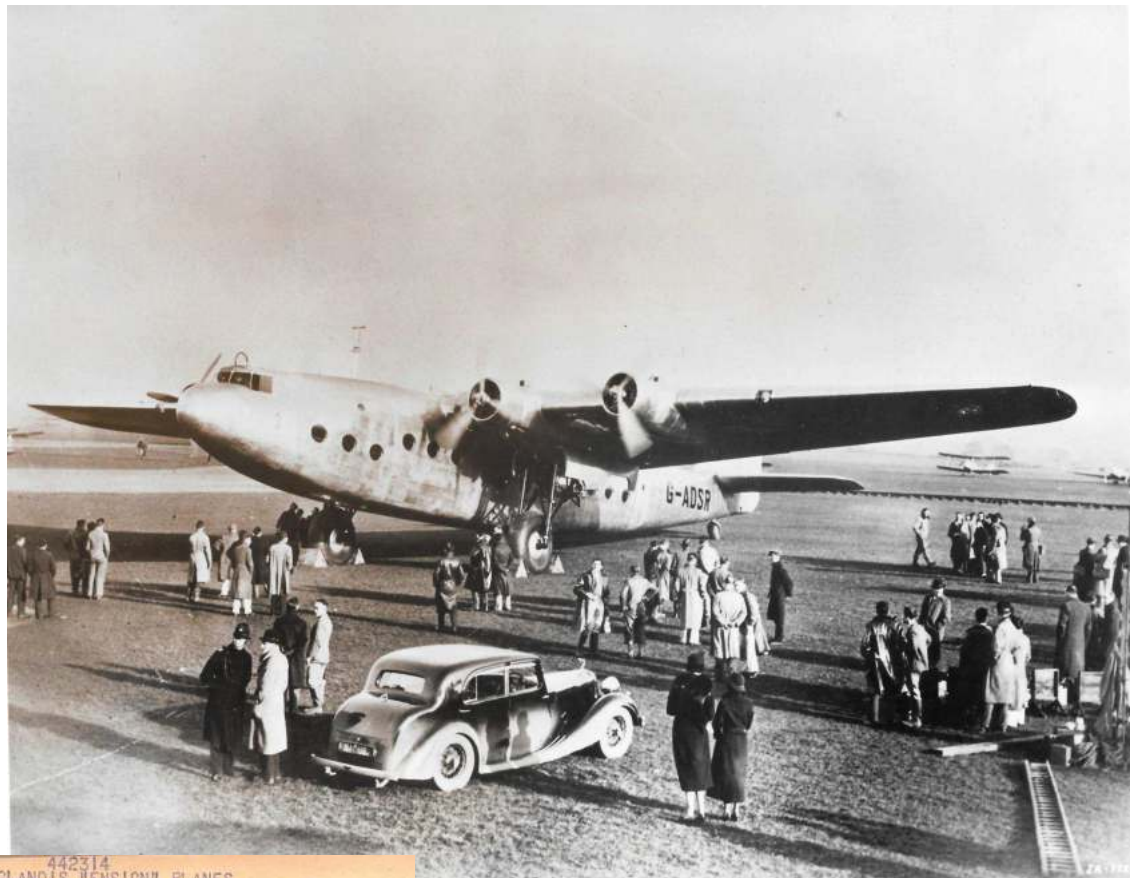


There is a British Airways handstamp on the reverse.
This photograph appears in a BOAC 1960s photograph catalogue with the caption:
“An Imperial Airways Argosy at Khartoum on the route to Cape Town.”



Manuscript note
on reverse:
14 Sept. 1937.

PHOTO **Paris-soir** 1341-Les essais de l'avion américain "Mercury" destiné à la traversée de l'Atlantique.
REPRODUCTION INTERDITE



442314
FIRST OF ENGLAND'S "ENSIGN" PLANES
SOUTHAMPTON, ENGLAND---BRITAIN'S ENTRY INTO THE
FIELD OF LARGER AND FINER PLANES FOR LONG-DIST-
ANCES FLIGHTS IS THE NEW "ENSIGN" SHOWN HERE AT
HER AIRDROME AT HAMBLE, NEAR SOUTHAMPTON. FOURTEEN
OF THESE GREAT AIRCRAFT ARE TO BE BUILT FOR IMPER-
IAL AIRWAYS, WHICH HAS ROUTES REACHING FROM ENG-
LAND TO SOUTH AFRICA, TO INDIAN AND TO AUSTRALIA.
EACH OF THE PLANES WILL WEIGH IN EXCESS OF 20 TONS.
THEY WILL HAVE A WING SPAN OF 127 FEET AND A TOP
SPEED IN EXCESS OF 200 MILES PER HOUR. ON EUROPEAN
ROUTES THE AIRCRAFT WILL BE ABLE TO CARRY 40
PASSENGERS AND A CREW OF FIVE. ON THE MORE DISTANT
EMPIRE ROUTES, THEY WILL BE EQUIPPED WITH BERTHS
FOR 20 PASSENGERS.
CREDIT LINE (ACME) 4/9/38 (BUR CL)

Nairobi GPO - A confusing time, June-July 1937

By Rick Green

On the 28th January 1932 Flight AS47, the first Imperial Service to South Africa, arrived at Nairobi when the DH66 Hercules G-EBMY "City of Baghdad" landed shortly before 11:00AM, nearly eighteen hours behind schedule. From that time Imperial Airways operated directly through Nairobi until June 1937, probably making handling of the air mail at the Nairobi General Post Office reasonably straightforward.

The departure of flight AS453 from Southampton on the 2nd June 1937 saw the implementation of the flying boat service redirecting from Kisumu to the coast route onwards from Mombasa, omitting Nairobi as well as the inland central Tanganyika and Rhodesia stops. The transition period to the introduction of the Empire Air Mail Scheme then saw significant changes to the flights and how the Nairobi GPO had to handle the air mail to join the Imperial Airways Services.

The last northwards flight (AN452) prior to the implementation of the flying boat service departed Nairobi Friday, 4th June 1937, and the last Southwards overland flight AS452 departed 3rd June 1937. The cover Fig. 1 was posted at Nairobi 5PM 1st June 1937 and flown by AW Atalanta G-ABTG *Amalthea* routing to Broken Hill 4th June 1937 where it left the air service, onwards to Livingstone 7th June 1937 and then forwarded to Kafue 8th June 1937 arriving 9th June 1937.



Figure 1 – Flight AS452 to Northern Rhodesia

The East African Standard Newspaper reported daily the expected Shipping and Mails in respect to their arrival and departure from Nairobi, listing the time of closure and availability of the mail at the General Post Office. Fig. 2 Arrivals and Fig. 3 Departures is transcribed from the Shipping Report in respect to letter airmail dated 5th June 1937 with the listed associated flights appended by author.

AIR MAILS - NAIROBI GPO ARRIVALS	ASSOCIATED FLIGHTS
Europe India etc. and Uganda Sunday and Wednesday 12 noon	IA. to Kisumu then by Temporary Overland Service
Southern Rhodesia and Intermediate countries Sunday and Thursday 7 p.m.	Temporary Overland Service
Union of South Africa Sunday 9.45 a.m. ; Tuesday 5.00 p.m.	IA to Dar es Salaam then Wilson Airways Supplemental Flight IA to Dar es Salaam then Wilson Airways Coast Service
Dar es Salaam Sunday 9.45 a.m. ; Tuesday and Thursday 5.00 p.m.	Wilson Airways Supplemental Flight Wilson Airways Coast Service
Zanzibar, Tanga and Mombasa Tuesday and Thursday 5.00 p.m.	Wilson Airways Coast Service
Kisumu Sunday and Wednesday 12 noon, Saturday 5.00 p.m	Temporary Overland Service Wilson Airways Goldfields Service
Musoma, Mwanza, Geita and Lolgorien Saturday 5.00 p.m	Wilson Airways Goldfields Service

Figure 2 – Nairobi GPO Mail expected availability times 5th June 1937

AIR MAILS - NAIROBI GPO DEPARTURES	ASSOCIATED FLIGHTS
Europe India etc. and Uganda Tuesday and Saturday 2.30 p.m.	Temporary Overland Service then by IA from Kisumu
Southern Rhodesia and Intermediate countries Monday and Thursday 8 a.m.	Temporary Overland Service
Union of South Africa Tuesday 7.00 p.m. ; Saturday 3.15 p.m.	Wilson Airways Coast Service then by IA from Dar es Salaam Wilson Airways Supplemental Flight then by IA from Dar es Salaam
Dar es Salaam Sunday and Tuesday 7.00 p.m. ; Saturday 3.15 p.m.	Wilson Airways Coast Service Wilson Airways Supplemental Flight
Lindi Tuesday 7.00 p.m. ; Saturday 3.15 p.m.	Wilson Airways Coast Service then by IA from Dar es Salaam Wilson Airways Supplemental Flight then by IA from Dar es Salaam
Mombasa, Tanga and Zanzibar Sunday and Tuesday 7.00 p.m.	Wilson Airways Coast Service
Kisumu Tuesday and Saturday 2.30 p.m. ; Thursday 7.00 p.m.	Temporary Overland Service Wilson Airways Goldfields Service
Musoma, Mwanza, Geita and Lolgorien Thursday 7.00 p.m.	Wilson Airways Goldfields Service

Figure 3 – Nairobi GPO Mail closing times 5th June 1937

Imperial Airways - Temporary Overland Service

With the omission of Nairobi, Tanganyika and Rhodesia, Imperial Airways implemented a temporary overland route from Kisumu to Salisbury (Fig. 4). Mail from Nairobi GPO intending to join the northbound Imperial flight from Kisumu would now be carried by the Temporary Overland Service, the mail closing at the Nairobi GPO at 2:30PM on Tuesday and Saturday with the service departing Nairobi the same afternoon. The mail would then join the northbound Imperial Airways service flights departing Kisumu on Wednesday and Sunday. The first Overland Service from Nairobi departed to Kisumu Tuesday 8th June airmail joining flight AN453 that departed Kisumu Wednesday 9th June 1937.

The overland mail to Salisbury would close at the Nairobi GPO 8:00AM on Monday and Thursday and the service would depart that morning, overnighting at Mbeya and arriving Salisbury on Tuesday and Friday. The first service departed Nairobi on Monday 7th June overnighting Mbeya and arriving Salisbury Tuesday 8th June 1937.

TIMETABLE OF I.A. KISUMU ~ SALISBURY SERVICE, JUNE 1937							
I.A. Flying Boat Service:							
Sat.	&	Tues.	arr.	KISUMU	dep.	Wed.	& Sun.
Sun.	&	Wed.	dep.	KISUMU	arr.	Tues.	& Sat.
Sun.	&	Wed.	arr.	NAIROBI	dep.	Tues.	& Sat.
Mon.	&	Thur.	dep.	NAIROBI	arr.	Sun.	& Thur.
Mon.	&	Thur.	dep.	MOSHI	dep.	Sun.	& Thur.
Mon.	&	Thur.	dep.	DODOMA	dep.	Sun.	& Thur.
Mon.	&	Thur.	arr.	MBEYA	dep.	Sun.	& Thur.
Tues.	&	Fri.	dep.	MBEYA	arr.	Sun.	& Thur.
Tues.	&	Fri.	dep.	MPIKA	dep.	Sun.	& Thur.
Tues.	&	Fri.	arr.	BR. HILL	dep.	Sun.	& Thur.
Tues.	&	Fri.	dep.	BR. HILL	arr.	Sat.	& Wed.
Tues.	&	Fri.	arr.	SALISBURY	dep.	Sat.	& Wed.

Figure 4 – Temporary overland Service Timetable (Source. P. Wingent)

Week 26 1937 marked the ending of the Temporary Overland service, the last southbound departing Kisumu 30th June then Nairobi 1st July and the last northbound departing Salisbury 30th June arriving Nairobi 1st July and onward to Kisumu Friday 2nd July. The last flight to Kisumu departed Nairobi Friday rather than the timetabled Saturday so it would connect to flight DN1 that departed Kisumu Saturday 3rd July.

The cover Fig. 5 was posted Nairobi 1AM Saturday 26th June 1937, then by Imperial Airways temporary overland service to join the Imperial service AN458 which departed Kisumu 28th June (1 day late) arriving Southampton 1st July. Cover is backstamped Nottingham 1st July 1937. Interestingly the C Class G-ADVD *Challenger* which carried the mail from Kisumu broke a wing float while attempting take off from Brindisi on the 1st July 1937. The mail was transferred to G-AETW *Calpurnia* which flew to Southampton arriving 1st July 1937.

The cover Fig. 6 was posted Nairobi Thursday 8AM 1st July 1937 and carried by the last southbound Thursday temporary overland service which departed Kisumu 30th June then Nairobi 1st July arriving Salisbury 2nd July 1937. Paid at the empire air rate of 20 cents per 1/2 oz., backstamped upon arrival Salisbury 2 JUL 37 4-0PM.



Figure 5 – Flight AN458 to UK



Figure 6 – Last temporary overland Service Nairobi to Salisbury

Wilson Airways – Coast Service

Wilson Airways commenced a weekly duplicate service over the Coast route as from the 27th July 1936, the timetabled flights from Nairobi to Dar es Salaam departing at 06:00AM Monday and Wednesday and from Dar es Salaam at 10:30AM Tuesday and Thursday.

When the flying boat service started then Nairobi airmail to/from South Africa began to be routed through Dar es Salaam. Wilson Airways were still at this time operating on the Monday and Wednesday and the mail for these flights would close at Nairobi GPO at 7:00PM the evening before.

Only one of the bi-weekly Coast services in each direction would carry mail to join the Imperial Airways service from Dar es Salaam. The first service to depart Nairobi was delayed due to the late arrival of flight AS454 at Kisumu being one day behind schedule, with the mail expected to arrive Nairobi the morning of the 10th June. Due to the late arrival, mail for South Africa was altered to close at 12 noon Wednesday 9th June. With the mail closing at noon, it is considered that the Wilson Airways service would then depart Nairobi that afternoon (approx. 8 hours behind schedule) arriving Dar es Salaam early evening. The mail to South Africa would join the Imperial flight AS454 departing Dar es Salaam Friday.



Figure 7 – East Africa Standard 9th June 1937

In reverse the Coast service from Dar es Salaam that departed Tuesday 8th June would be the first to carry the South African mail from Dar es Salaam that had arrived by the Imperial Service AN453 from the South on Monday.

Although there was no change to the days of the Wilson Airways Coast Service the departure times in each direction were altered as from the Monday service 14th June 1937:

- Nairobi - Monday leaving 30 minutes later at 06:30 – mail closed Nairobi GPO Sun 7.00PM
- Nairobi - Wednesday leaving at 11:35 instead of 06:00 – mail closed Nairobi GPO Wed 10:00AM
- Dar es Salaam - Tuesday leaving at 06:30 instead of 10:30 – mail arriving Nairobi GPO Tues 2:00PM
- Dar es Salaam - Thursday, unchanged at 10:30 – mail arriving Nairobi GPO Thurs. 5:00PM

These changes remained operational until 1st July 1937.

Wilson Airways – Supplemental Flight

The Shipping and Mails table within the East African Standard 5th June 1937 (Fig. 2 and Fig.3) is the first reference noted that Nairobi airmail for South Africa and Dar es Salaam would also close at the Nairobi GPO at 3:15PM on Saturday. Mail is also shown arriving from South Africa and Dar es Salaam available at the Nairobi GPO at 9:45AM Sunday.

This airmail departure/arrival time does not correlate to the existing Wilson Airways Coast services and it is therefore deduced that an additional flight direct between Nairobi and Dar es Salaam was undertaken, the flight being direct as the PO notice does not show a mail Saturday closure for Mombasa, Tanga, Zanzibar.

In Fig. 2 the arrival notice of mail from South Africa on Sunday by the supplemental service must have been in reference to Sunday 13th June being the second northwards flying boat service AN454, the first AN453 connecting with the Coast Service as described above.

The first supplemental Sunday service is considered to have operated only in one direction connecting Nairobi to Dar es Salaam. The cover Fig. 8 was posted Uplands (near Nairobi) Friday 4th June 1937 addressed to Lourenco Marques. It is backstamped Dar es Salaam Sunday 4:45PM 6 JU 1937 and Lourenco Marques 8-6-37 showing that it must have been flown on the supplemental flight on Sunday to join flight AS453 departing Dar es Salaam Monday the first Flying boat service to Durban.



Figure 8 – Flight AS453 to Lourenco Marques

This Wilson Airways Sunday supplemental flight would then bring mail from the south that had arrived in Dar es Salaam on the Friday Imperial Service and take mail from Nairobi to join the southbound Imperial Service departing Dar es Salaam on the Monday. The flight would only happen for four weeks connecting southwards at Dar es Salaam to flights AS453, AS455, AS457 and AS459 and in reverse from Dar es Salaam connections, AN454, AN456 and AN458.

Empire Air Mail Scheme

Stage 1 of the EAMS was inaugurated to East and South Africa with flight DS1 which left Southampton on the 29th June 1937, reaching Durban on the 5th July 1937. At the opening of the EAMS Imperial Airways operated three services a week to Africa, one to Kisumu, flights coded KS/KN, and two through to Durban coded DS/DN.

The Nairobi Shipping and Mail report for the 1st July in Figures 9 and 10 shows a significant difference to the one a few weeks earlier.

AIR MAILS - NAIROBI GPO ARRIVALS	ASSOCIATED FLIGHTS
Europe India etc. and Uganda Tuesday 9:45 a.m Wednesday and Saturday 1:00 p.m;	IA KS flight to Kisumu then Wilson Airways Central Africa Service IA DS flight to Kisumu then Wilson Airways Atalanta Service
Moshi Dodoma, Mbeya, Mpika, Broken Hill, Lusaka Thursday 4:15 p.m.	Wilson Airways Central Africa Service
South Africa, N and S Rhodesia, Nyasaland and Portuguese E Africa Tuesday and Friday 2.0 p.m.	IA DN flight to Dar es Salaam then Wilson Airways Coast Service
Mombasa, Tanga, Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam Tuesday and Friday 2.00 p.m	Wilson Airways Coast Service
Musoma, Mwanza, Geita and Lolgorien Thursday 3:30 p.m	Wilson Airways Goldfields Service
Kisumu Tuesday 9:45 a.m Wednesday and Saturday 1:00 p.m; Thursday 3:30 p.m	Wilson Airways Central Africa Service Wilson Airways Atalanta Service Wilson Airways Goldfields Service
Kakamega, Kitale, Eldoret, Nakuru, Nyeri Wednesday and Saturday 11:30 a.m	Wilson Airways Coast Service

Figure 9 – Nairobi GPO Mail expected availability times 1st July 1937

AIR MAILS - NAIROBI GPO DEPARTURES	ASSOCIATED FLIGHTS
Europe India etc. and Uganda Tuesday and Friday 2.30 p.m.; Thursday 2:30 p.m	Wilson Airways Atalanta Service then IA DN flight from Kisumu Wilson Airways Central Africa Service then IA KN flight from Kisumu
Moshi Dodoma, Mbeya, Mpika, Broken Hill, Lusaka Tuesday 7:30 a.m.	Wilson Airways Central Africa Service
South Africa, N and S Rhodesia, Nyasaland and Portuguese E Africa Wednesday and Saturday 10:00 a.m.	Wilson Airways Coast Service then IA DS flight from Dar es Salaam
Mombasa, Tanga, Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam Wednesday and Saturday 10:00 a.m.	Wilson Airways Coast Service
Musoma, Mwanza, Geita and Lolgorien Wednesday 10:00 a.m.	Wilson Airways Goldfields Service
Kisumu Tuesday and Friday 2.30 p.m.; Thursday 2:30 p.m ; Wednesday 10:00 a.m.	Wilson Airways Atalanta Service Wilson Airways Central Africa Service Wilson Airways Goldfields Service
Kakamega, Kitale, Eldoret, Nakuru, Nyeri Tuesday and Friday 12.30 p.m.;	Wilson Airways Coast Service

Figure 10 – Nairobi GPO Mail closing times 1st July 1937

It can be observed from Fig.9 and Fig.10 that Wilson Airways at the beginning of July 1937 had significantly re-arranged and increased their services into and out of Nairobi.



Wilson Airways – Atalanta Service – Kisumu Connection DN/DS Flights

After closure of the temporary overland route a shuttle service was re-implemented to connect with DS/DN flights at Kisumu to be known as the "Atalanta" service. This service connected Nairobi to Kisumu and at the time of commencement flying Tuesday and Friday from Nairobi and Saturday and Wednesday from Kisumu. The aircraft on this service initially were the two AW Atalanta aircraft that had operated the temporary Overland route in June 1937, being G-ABTG "Amalthea" and G-ABTL "Astraea". They would remain in Kenya operating the service to the end of July 1938, when they were returned to Imperial Airways with G-ABTL "Astraea" departing Nairobi for Alexandria circa. the 24th July 1938. G-ABTG "Amalthea" which departed Kisumu on the morning of the 27th July 1938 tragically crashed into a hillside approximately 6 miles after take-off with all four crew being killed.

Fig. 11 presents the Atalanta timetable at date of commencement. The first flight Nairobi to Kisumu was on Tuesday 6th July, mail closing at Nairobi at 2:30PM to join flight DN2 departing Wednesday. The first flight from Kisumu to Nairobi carried mail from DS1 that arrived Friday, was on Saturday 3rd July airmail notified to be available at Nairobi GPO 1:00PM.

ATALANTA SERVICE TIMETABLE 1st JULY 1937					
NAIROBI	Dep. Tues & Fri	16:00	KISUMU	Dep. Weds & Sats.	09:00
KISUMU	Arr.	17:45	NAIROBI	Arr.	10:45

Figure 11 – Wilson Airways Atalanta Timetable

Wilson Airways – Nairobi Connection to KN1 Flight

Prior to the implementation of the Wilson Airways Central Africa Service, a special single service (Fig.12) was flown, mail closing at Nairobi GPO at 2:30PM and the flight departing Nairobi 4:00PM Thursday 1st July to Kisumu. The flight carried the first “All-Up” airmail at 20 cents per ½ ounce rate to join the Imperial Airways flight KN1 departing Friday 2nd July. It was reported on the 9th July that approximately 10,000 letters were carried from Nairobi on this flight.

The aircraft used was a DH89 Dragon Rapide VP-KCG, the pilot was G.F. Francis. This Dragon Rapide was the first to be delivered to Wilson Airways arriving in Kenya in June 1937, the second, VP-KCJ, arrived mid-July. In total Wilson Airways would operate five Dragon Rapides.

Fig. 11 from the East African Standard incorrectly states “connexion with the Empire Flying Boat *Challenger* at Kisumu on the Northbound service from Durban to Southampton.” The actual flight KN1 started at Kisumu with the C Class Flying Boat G-ADUT *Centaurus*.”



Figure 12 – East Africa Standard 1st July 1937

The cover Fig. 13 was posted Nairobi 9:30AM 1st July addressed to England and carried on the special flight then onwards by KN1. Redirected to Morocco postmarked Woodford 11:15AM 6th July 1937 and backstamped British Post Office Fez 12th July 1937.



Figure 13 – Flight KN1



Figure 14 – Wilson Airways Dragon Rapide VP-KCG

Wilson Airways – Central African Service - Kisumu Connection KS/KN Flights

With ending of the temporary overland route through Tanganyika to Salisbury then Wilson Airways established a link from to Kisumu to Lusaka known as the Central African Service. The service would connect Nairobi to the Imperial Airways KN/KS flights at Kisumu. The first CAS flight inbound to Nairobi was timetabled to depart Kisumu at 06:15AM 6th July carrying the airmail that would have arrived with flight KS1, the mail then expected available at Nairobi GPO at 9:45AM. The flight would then depart southwards from Nairobi at 08:30AM arriving Lusaka the next day. Unfortunately flight KS1 was a day late arriving Kisumu and as a result the departing Central Africa Service departed Kisumu 7th July through Nairobi and arriving Lusaka 8th July. Fig. 16 is the notice in the East Africa Standard 6th July of the delay in arrival and departure.

Air Mail Delay
 The airmail from Europe, India, etc. normally due to arrive in Nairobi this morning, is not expected to arrive until approximately 8.45 a.m. to-morrow. The airmail for Lusaka, Dodoma, Moshi etc. will be closed at 7.30 a.m. to-morrow.

Figure 15 – East Africa Standard 6th July 1937

From this time onwards the Central African Service would collect mail from Nairobi on Thursday afternoon, the mail closing at the GPO at 2:30PM to connect with the Friday KN departure. Reversely mail arriving on the KS service on Monday would be forwarded to Nairobi Tuesday morning airmail becoming available as from 9:45AM. Fig. 15 presents the first implemented timetable of the Central African Service as published by East African Standard on the 1st July 1937.

CENTRAL AFRICA SERVICE TIMETABLE 1st JULY 1937					
LUSAKA	Dep. Wednesdays	13:15	KISUMU	Dep. Tuesdays	06:15
BROKEN HILL	Dep.	14:15	NAIROBI	Dep.	08:30
MPIKA	Dep. Thursdays	05:45	MOSHI	Dep.	10:00
MBEYA	Dep.	09:00	DODOMA	Dep.	12:15
DODOMA	Dep.	12:00	MBEYA	Dep.	15:00
MOSHI	Dep.	14:00	MPIKA	Dep. Wednesdays	05:45
NAIROBI	Dep.	16:00	BROKEN HILL	Dep.	08:15
KISUMU	Arr.	17:30	LUSAKA	Arr.	08:50

Figure 16 – Wilson Airways Central African Service Timetable (1st July 1937)

Wilson Airways – Coast Service – Dar es Salaam Connection DS/DN Flights

The Coast Service changed its timetable at the beginning of July 1937 now departing Nairobi Wednesday and Saturday with mail closing at 10:00AM with the flight departing at 11:35AM to join the Imperial services departing Dar es Salaam on Thursday and Sunday. In reverse the Coast Service from Dar es Salaam operated on Tuesday and Friday carrying mail from the Durban Imperial Service that arrived in Dar es Salaam Monday and Thursday. In addition to the change in timetable the Coast service now continued on to Kisumu through the Kenyan Highlands calling at Nyeri, Nakuru, Eldoret, Kitale and Kakamega, so becoming a full service from Kisumu through to Dar es Salaam.

Fig. 17 presents the first implemented timetable of the Kisumu to Dar es Salaam Coast Service. The first service from Nairobi was Saturday 3rd July 1937 then joining flight DS1 departing Dar es Salaam Sunday 4th July 1937. In return the first service from Dar es Salaam carrying mail from DN1 departed Friday 2nd July mail being available at Nairobi at 2:00PM.

It is noted from Fig. 9 and Fig. 10 that at this time mail addressed from Nairobi to Kisumu or reversely would not go via the Coast Service but would be carried by the Atalanta service which left later the same days.

(When Wilson Airways commenced operating a triple weekly Coast Service from Nairobi to Dar es Salaam as from 12th April 1938 then the route from Nairobi to Kisumu remained twice per week and was then defined by Wilson Airways as the Highlands Service).

COAST SERVICE TIMETABLE 1st JULY 1937					
DAR ES SALAAM	Dep. Tues & Fri	06:30	KISUMU	Dep. Weds & Sats.	06:30
ZANZIBAR	Dep.	07:15	KAKAMEGA	Dep.	07:00
TANGA	Dep.	08:15	KITALE	Dep.	07:40
MOMBASA	Dep.	09:45	ELDORET	Dep.	08:15
NAIROBI	Dep.	13:45	NAKURU	Dep.	09:10
NYERI	Dep.	14:30	NYERI	Dep.	10:05
NAKURU	Dep.	15:25	NAIROBI	Dep.	11:35
ELDORET	Dep.	16:20	MOMBASA	Dep.	15:05
KITALE	Dep.	16:55	TANGA	Dep.	16:20
KAKAMEGA	Dep.	17:35	ZANZIBAR	Dep.	17:20
KISUMU	Arr.	17:50	DAR ES SALAAM	Arr	17:50

Figure 17 – Wilson Airways Coast Service Timetable (1st July 1937)

The cover Fig. 18 postmarked Nairobi Saturday 9:30AM 3 JUL 37 postage paid at the new EAMS rate of 20 cents per ½ oz. and flown on the Saturday Coast service to Dar es Salaam arriving the evening 3rd July 1937. Flight DS1 departed Kisumu the morning of the 3rd July 1937 overnighing Dar es Salaam then departing the morning of the 4th July 1937 arriving Durban 5th July 1937. Mail to Cape Town would then be flown by South African Airways the next day.



Figure 18 Flight DS1

Wilson Airways – Goldfields Service

This service is included for sake of completeness of the flights listed in Fig. 9 and Fig. 10. Mail from Nairobi GPO however did not use this service to connect with the Imperial Airways flights at Kisumu.

Wilson Airways had commenced a Goldfields service as from April 1935 with mail commenced to be carried as from 4th May 1935. Kisumu, which was not originally on the route, was added in August 1935. At the beginning of June when the flying boat service through Kisumu was introduced the Goldfields service departed Nairobi on Fridays with the mail closing at 7:00PM Thursday evening. The service arrived back in Nairobi on Saturday with mail available at Nairobi GPO at 5:00PM.

At the commencement of the Empire Airmail Scheme the Goldfields service altered its schedule, Fig. 19 presents the timetable as advertised 1st July 1937. The first flight to the new timetable departed Nairobi Wednesday 7th July 1937 mail closing at 10:00AM and the first return service arrived back in Nairobi on Thursday 8th July mail being available at Nairobi at 3:30PM.

GOLDFIELDS SERVICE TIMETABLE 1st JULY 1937					
NAIROBI	Dep. Wednesdays	11:00	GEITA	Dep. Thursdays	08:00
KISUMU	Dep.	13:20	MWANZA	Dep.	08:50
LOLGORIEN	Dep.	14:45	MUSOMA	Dep.	10:00
MUSOMA	Dep.	16:05	LOLGORIEN	Dep.	11:20
MWANZA	Dep.	17:15	KISUMU	Dep.	13:00
GEITA	Arr.	17:50	NAIROBI	Arr.	14:50

Figure 19 – Wilson Airways Goldfields Service Timetable (1st July 1937)

References

- East Africa Standard Newspaper June / July 1937
- P. Wingent “Movements of Aircraft on Imperial Airways African Route 1931-1939”
- P. Wingent “June 1937 Imperial Airways Africa Service” Zoom Meeting May 2023

The new Australian flying boat bases

By Sue Burn

The introduction of Stage 3 of the Empire Airmail Scheme using C Class Flying Boats necessitated the move to new landing bases along the coast of Australia.

New route Darwin-Groote Eylandt-Karuma-Townsville (overnight)-Gladstone-Brisbane-Sydney.

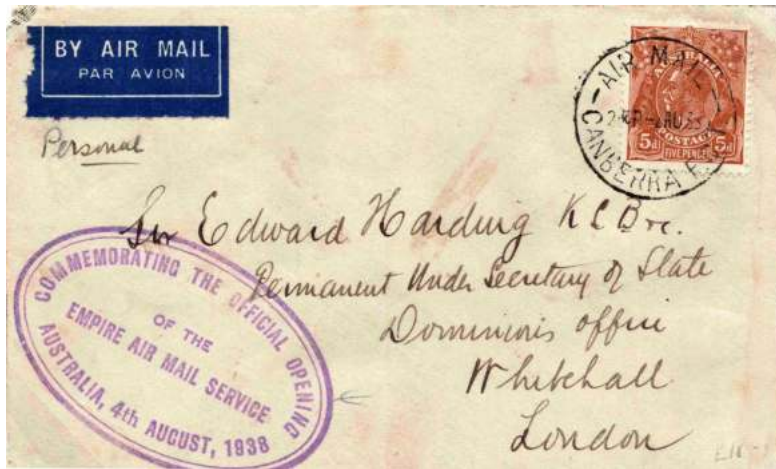
There were three flights each week leaving Southampton on a Saturday, Wednesday and Friday, returning from Sydney on a Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday taking 10 days.

The change resulted in consultation with local Port Authorities and overcoming objections of local residents unused to this new form of transport. I have included scans of the survey reports on Groote Eylandt and debates on the base at Sydney to aid understanding of the thought processes that Imperial Airways and Qantas went through. [Editor’s note: Due to the large size of the survey reports which Sue mentions, they will be sent as PDFs to members attached to a separate email.]

Rose Bay Flying Boat Base

The new Base was opened by the acting Governor- General Lord Huntingfield on the 4 August 1938. The new Flying Boat service was opened by the cutting of a red, white and blue ribbon that connected the Camilla G-AEUB to the shore.

Captain Lester Brain was handed a special mail bag containing a small number of VIP letters. A special oval cancellation was applied to these covers 'Commemorating the Official Opening of the Empire Airmail Service, 4 August 1938'. This should of course have read the Opening of the Flying Boat base! Two examples of covers and a letter confirming that Lord Huntingfield was to hand over the mail bag to Lester Brain the pilot are shown below:



My Dear Corley

On the occasion of the inauguration of the Empire flying-boat mail service between Australia & England I thought I would like to convey to you & Mrs Corley greetings & good wishes from Mrs Wilson & myself.

This letter is being enclosed in a special mail bag which the Acting Governor-General (Lord Huntingfield) will personally hand to the pilot of the flying-boat.

With kind regards
Yours sincerely
A. Wilson

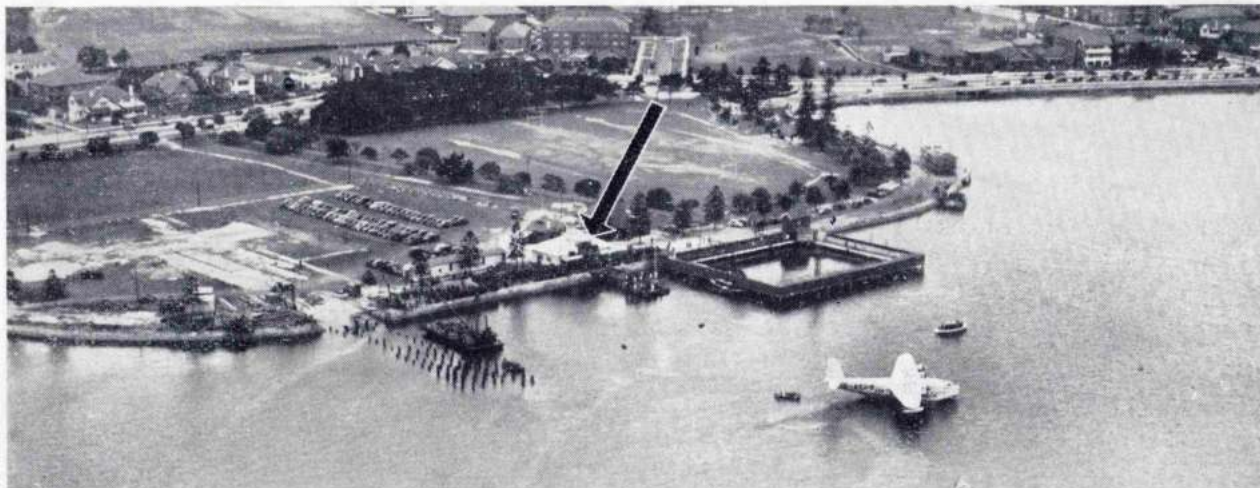
Text of the letter shown right:

“On the occasion of the inauguration of the Empire flying boat mail service between Australia and England I thought I would like to convey to you and Mrs. Corley greetings and good wishes from Mrs. Wilson and myself.

This letter is being enclosed in a special mail bag which the Acting Governor-General (Lord Huntingfield) will personally hand to the pilot of the flying boat.”



OFFICIAL OPENING AUSTRALIA—ENGLAND FLYING-BOAT SERVICE



An air view of Rose Bay flying-boat base taken on August 4th on the occasion of the official opening by the acting Governor-General (Lord Huntingfield) of the Australia-England Empire flying-boat service. The picture was taken a few minutes before Lord Huntingfield cut a ribbon connecting "Camilla" (seen in the foreground) with the Control Building (marked by an arrow). Towards the left of the picture can be seen the piles which will form the foundations of the slipway now under construction.

A contemporary magazine cutting showing the Rose Bay base on the opening day of the flying boat service.

Groote Eylandt Flying Boat Base

Previously an area designated for the indigenous population, this hitherto neglected area joined the new route through to Sydney.



Left: Cover, dated 4 August 1938, carried on the Groote Eylandt to Brisbane section of first flight of the introduction of the EAMS Stage 3.



Right: HMAS Moresby, used on the surveys of the flying boat bases.

From the Daily Telegraph 100 years ago.

John Berridge kindly sent this cutting from his Daily Telegraph newspaper of 18 March 1925.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

The Daily Telegraph

LONDON, WEDNESDAY MARCH 18, 1925

A GREAT FLIGHT.

ARRIVAL IN ENGLAND OF SIR SEFTON BRANCKER

AIRWAYS OF THE EAST.

By MAJOR C. C. TURNER.

With the arrival at Croydon aerodrome yesterday afternoon of Air Vice-Marshal Sir W. S. Brancker, Director of Civil Aviation, the most impressive long-distance tour in the history of aviation came to a successful end. The flight was not conceived for spectacular or record-breaking purposes; it was undertaken at short notice in order to enable Sir W. S. Brancker to survey air routes to the East and to confer with Government and other officials along those routes and in India.

The machine, a D.H. 50, fitted with a 230 h.p. Siddeley engine, had in no sense to be specially prepared. There was no advance organisation. The pilot, Mr. Alan Cobham, was selected as one admirably qualified by his experience. The whole business was arranged in twenty-four hours, including the shouldering of its financial burden. The Treasury were unable to undertake to defray more than half the cost; and the Society of British Aircraft Constructors thereupon took on the responsibility, the De Havilland Aeroplane Company supplied the machine, and the Aircraft Disposal Company the engine, this engine being of a type dating from the war period, and no longer in production, although many are still available for use. As to the cost of this expedition, it has been, by comparison with that of the big historic nights, quite absurdly small. Figures, however, convey little in such a case without lengthy explanations.

A large number of officials and friends were waiting on the aerodrome to welcome the Air Vice-Marshal and the pilot. Sir Samuel Hoare, Secretary of State for Air, was unable to attend, but the Air Ministry was numerously represented, and messages of welcome from the Secretary of State and the Under-Secretary were given to Sir W. S. Brancker. Two directors of Imperial Airways, Mr. H. Scott-Paine and Major Hills, were present, Sir Eric Geddes and the other directors being engaged at a board meeting. Mr. T. O. M. Sopwith, chairman of the Society of British Aircraft Constructors, Sir Charles Wakefield, and many others representative of the aeronautical bodies and the Royal Aero Club were on the field.

"A JOY RIDE!"

The last stage of the flight was in somewhat misty weather and against a northerly wind, and the machine was 2hr 50min coming from Paris. It was so misty that when the aeroplane was sighted it was already close in and preparing to land. When it came to a stop near the Customs office the crowd pressed in so urgently that the pilot and his passenger had some difficulty in getting out. Sir W. S. Brancker, in response to congratulations, referred to the journey as "a joy ride." He had felt no boredom, and declared he would willingly get in and do the journey over again. He said it was warmer in the cabin; and the cold north wind blowing over the aerodrome appeared to cause him discomfort. He has, however, quite recovered from the indisposition experienced at one stage of the flight, culminating in an illness which sent him to bed for a few days at Calcutta.

STORY OF THE TOUR.

Sir Sefton stated that his report has already been sent to the Air Council, and that no doubt an official statement would be issued. He was unable, therefore, to enter into details, but on the general result of the tour and on his estimate of possibilities in connection with Imperial air services, he said: "So far as the operation of an air line to India is concerned we could begin this year. It is, however, a question of finance. That the traffic would come there is no reason to doubt; but the creation of such a service would entail an initial expense." He explained that Karachi had been chosen for the first terminus in India, and that at Karachi a mooring mast is to be erected for the airships soon to be built. "It would, however," he pointed out, "be possible to have an aeroplane service long before the airships are ready."

Karachi has the advantage of an aerodrome close to the town, whereas Bombay, which, as a forwarding base for mails and passengers, has greater claims, has no aerodrome within thirteen miles. Sir Sefton said that the cost of the preparation of the base at Karachi would be less than £150,000. Other points made clear are that Ismailia, on the Suez Canal, has been selected as the airship station for Egypt, but the Kantara aerodrome, a few miles to the north, is being got ready for the aeroplane service to Baghdad. The work at Kantara will be completed by June 30, and it is understood that soon after that date Imperial Airways may take over the aeroplane service to Baghdad and its forthcoming extension to Basra.

Terms by which the company will run this service are still under discussion, and it is not possible at the moment more than to refer briefly to suggestions which, if adopted, would place the company in charge of the service, running at first with Royal Air Force machines (twin-engine troop-carriers), and, to some extent, with R.A.F. personnel, whose work in this connection would be regarded as an integral part of training of Imperial Communications duties. There are even hopes that by the end of the present year the extension to Karachi may be in sight.

Sir Sefton Brancker was asked many questions about an airship service to Australia, but he said that the practical co-operation of the Australian Governments which he hoped for would be necessary before anything could be done. It may be pointed out that every week fourteen tons of letters and postcards, and 120 tons of small parcels and printed matter go out from Great Britain to Egypt, India, and Australia, and that the saving of ten or twelve days on the journey to India alone would be so important that extra fees would be gladly paid. Much saving in cabling expenses also would be secured. The route taking in the Southern frontier of Syria is the one favoured.

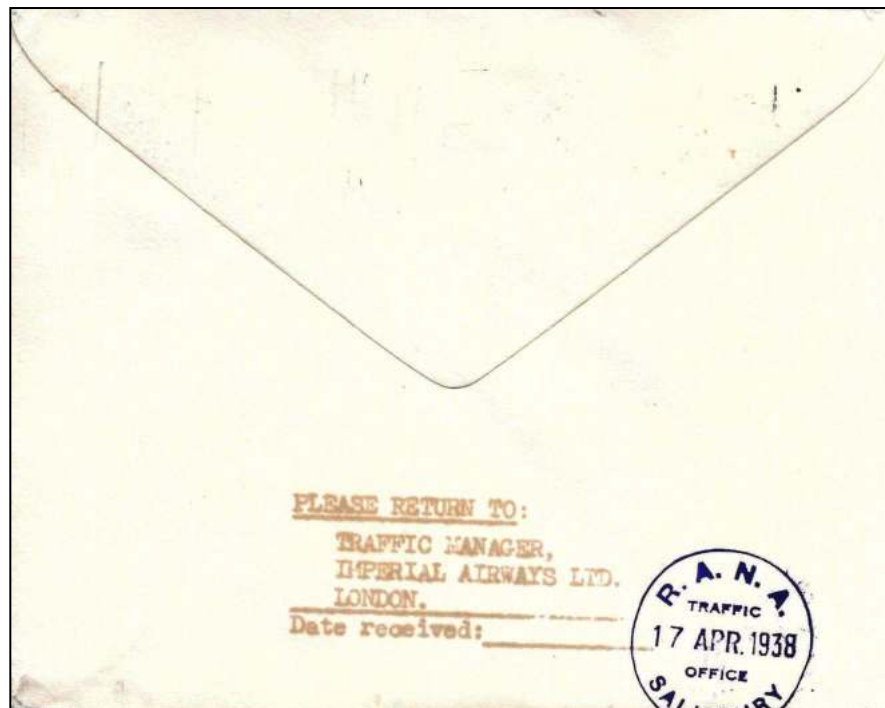
From Sir Sefton and his pilot there was a stream of interesting reminiscences of their journey. Mr. Cobham attributes the heavy cold from which his distinguished passenger suffered at Bucharest to his railway journey from Lemburg to that city, and his more severe illness at Calcutta to driving in an open car in Delhi. It is suggested that the aeroplane is the healthiest mode of travel, as it certainly is the least irksome over such routes as were travelled in this case. Their journey took them through severe weather all the way until India was reached; and on the return journey very severe weather was met over Europe, with much snow.

The Royal Aero Club and the Society of British Aircraft Constructors will entertain Sir Sefton Brancker and Mr. Cobham at dinner at the Savoy next Monday evening. The Duke of Sutherland will preside.

I.A. test letter with an unusual arrival cachet

Material provided by Duncan Crewe

In our recent Zoom meetings Imperial Airways' test letters have been featured twice. Following on, Duncan kindly sent me scans of the test letter shown below. Whilst examples of letters sent on the first accelerated African service (DS83) to the new summer 1938 timetable are some of the most often seen, the RANA Salisbury Traffic Office cachet applied to the reverse to confirm the date of arrival is a first; at least both Duncan and myself have not seen an example previously.



Service DS83 departed Southampton at 05.50 on 13 April and arrived Beira at 09.15 on the 17th. (*Ceres* Southampton to Alexandria; *Canopus* Alexandria to Kisumu; *Coriolanus* Kisumu to Beira).

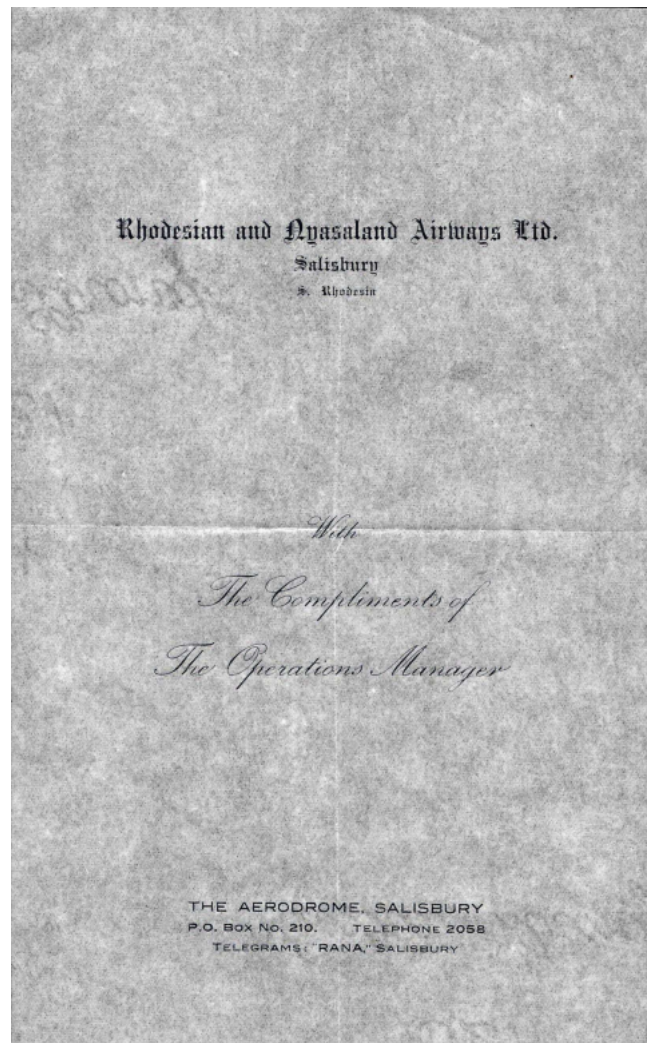
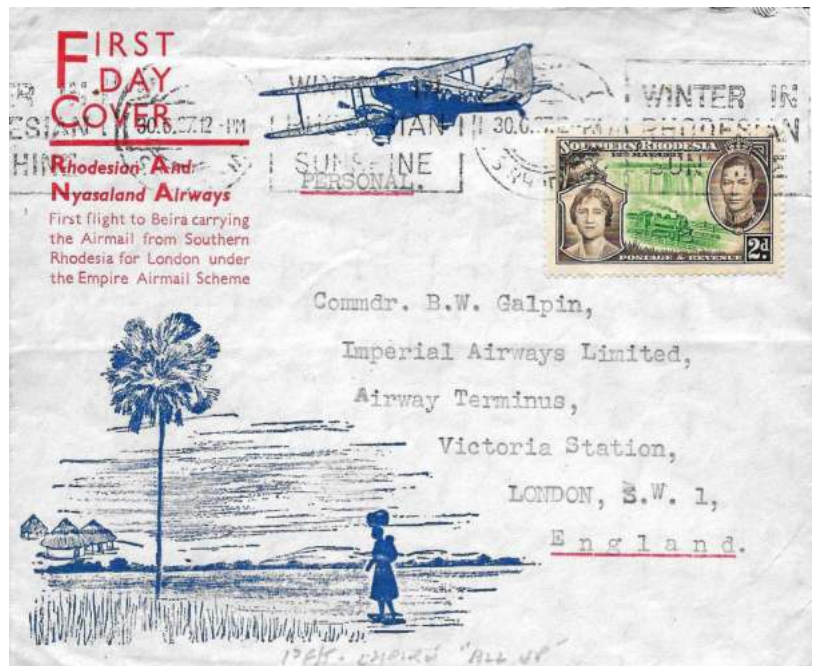
The RANA service was timetabled to depart Beira at 13.00 and to arrive Salisbury at 15.30 on the 17th.

A RANA compliment slip

Material provided by Duncan Crewe

Duncan has sent me another unusual RANA item: the compliment slip which was enclosed in the RANA cover commemorating the first despatch from Southern Rhodesia under the Empire Air Mail Scheme. It was flown to Beira by RANA on 30 June 1937 to connect with Imperial Airways' service DN1, which departed Beira 1 July and arrived Southampton 6 July.

In his email to me, Duncan wrote that the cover was sold to him as a test letter but he thinks it might have simply been a souvenir sent to Commander Galpin. Does any reader have information about Galpin please?



Imperial Airways' Empire Terminal, Buckingham Palace Road, London

By Peter Wingent

I obtained recently four pages cut out from the 16th June 1939 edition of "The Architect & Building News" featuring Imperial Airways' Art Deco style terminal building in Buckingham Palace Road, named Airways House, which opened on the 5th June 1939. The pages are foolscap size and so to keep their reduction in size to a minimum, I will place them on the four pages following this one and I will fill the space below with a smaller-sized front page of the 26th May 1939 edition of Imperial Airways Staff News, kindly sent to me by Duncan Crewe, which gives instructions to Imperial Airways' staff about the use of the new building.



TRANSFER TO NEW BUILDING

The Traffic Department will be transferred to the new building in Buckingham Palace Road during the week-end June 3/4, and the remaining Departments, for which accommodation has been provided, during two subsequent week-ends. Heads of Departments concerned will notify their staffs if they are affected, but all staff are advised of the regulations about Entrances, Exits and Lifts.

There will be four main entrances to the new building in general use:—

1. **Main Staff Entrance** in Buckingham Palace Road towards the north end of the building, near the covered approach to the Main Entrance.
2. **Main Public Entrance** in the centre and front of the building.
3. **Entrance from Railway Platform No. 17** (at rear).
4. **Entrance at South End of Building**, adjoining Coach Departure Station.
1. **Main Staff Entrance.** All Staff with the exceptions mentioned hereafter (and only Staff) accommodated on the four main floors and Tower will use this entrance.

Here are two lifts and a staircase leading up to the four main floors, **but not down to the basement.**

2. **Main Public Entrance.** Only Passengers, Visitors, Senior Staff (who will be notified separately) and Staff whose duties take them to the Main Hall will use this entrance.

3. **Entrance from Railway Platform.** This entrance will be used only by Passengers and Traffic Staff on duty.

4. **Entrance at South End of Building.** This entrance may be used by Staff approaching the building from the south for whom it may be more convenient than the main Staff Entrance. A lift and staircase lead to the four main floors and down to the basement.

5. **Lifts.** It will be necessary for all Staff to use the lift and staircase at the South end of the building when descending from any floor to the Staff Cafeteria or other parts of the basement, unless they prefer to use the lifts or staircase descending to the main Staff Entrance and walk round the front of the building. The central lifts may be used by Staff generally between the first and higher floors only.

The Company's Telephone No., Victoria 2323, and Telegraphic Address, Impairlim Telex, London, remain unchanged. The Postal Address will be Imperial Airways Limited, Airways House, London, S.W.1.

294

THE ARCHITECT & BUILDING NEWS

16.6.39



IMPERIAL AIRWAYS
EMPIRE TERMINAL
BUCKINGHAM PALACE ROAD
S.W.1.

Left, a silhouette of the statuette, "Wings over the Work," which has been designed by E. R. Broadbent and surmounts the main entrance. Below, left, a general view from Buckingham Palace Road, and right, the doors leading from the booking hall to No. 17 platform of Victoria Station.



"Airways House," which was opened on June 5th, stands on a narrow triangular site, chosen because here there was direct access to the platform of Victoria Station; a fact which enables passengers to board trains for Southampton, the flying boat base.

The new building combines and centralises administration and operation of services.

The main entrance in the Buckingham Palace Road front is approached from a crescent-shaped service roadway which is under cover. This service road avoids any obstruction in the main road and its shape on plan has apparently governed the general treatment of the whole façade.

At the north end of the building there is provision for a taxi rank in a covered way. This rank is controlled from indicator boards in the main booking hall.

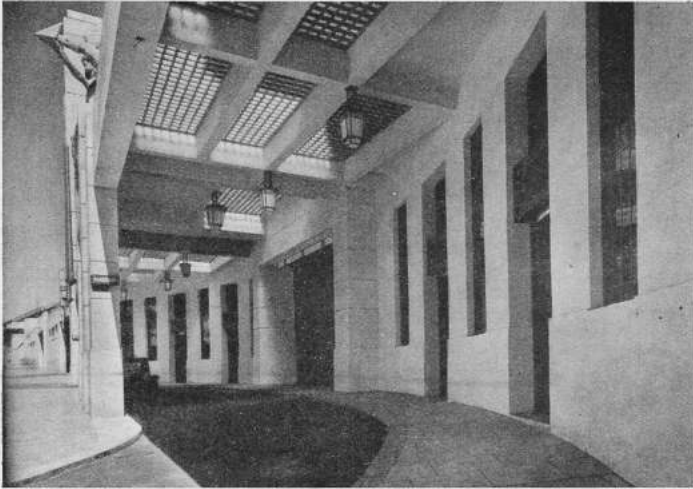
ARCHITECT: A. LAKEMAN, L.R.I.B.A.

Assistant Architect: W. H. Williams, L.R.I.B.A.

16.6.39

THE ARCHITECT & BUILDING NEWS

295



Above, a detail of the covered service road leading to the Buckingham Palace Road front, and right, a detail of the telephone kiosks in the booking hall. The lighting bracket is in the same wood as the panelling of the booking hall.

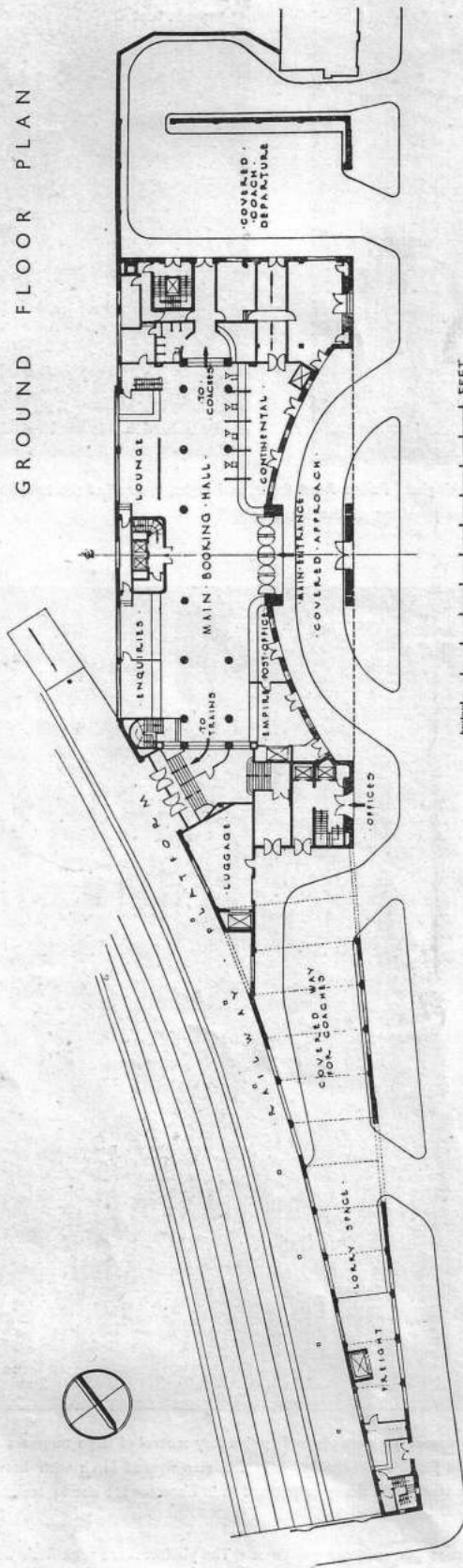


Above, the booking hall: the entrance doors are on the right. This space has been planned to give easy control of large numbers of passengers at one time. The hall is 20 ft. high and has a mezzanine gallery. The panelling in the hall is in Canadian figured birch with horizontal bands of African Zebrano. Architraves and door surrounds are in Burmese teak. The fluted columns, 3 ft. in diameter are also in teak with ebonised bases. The floors of the booking hall and upper floors are of rubber.

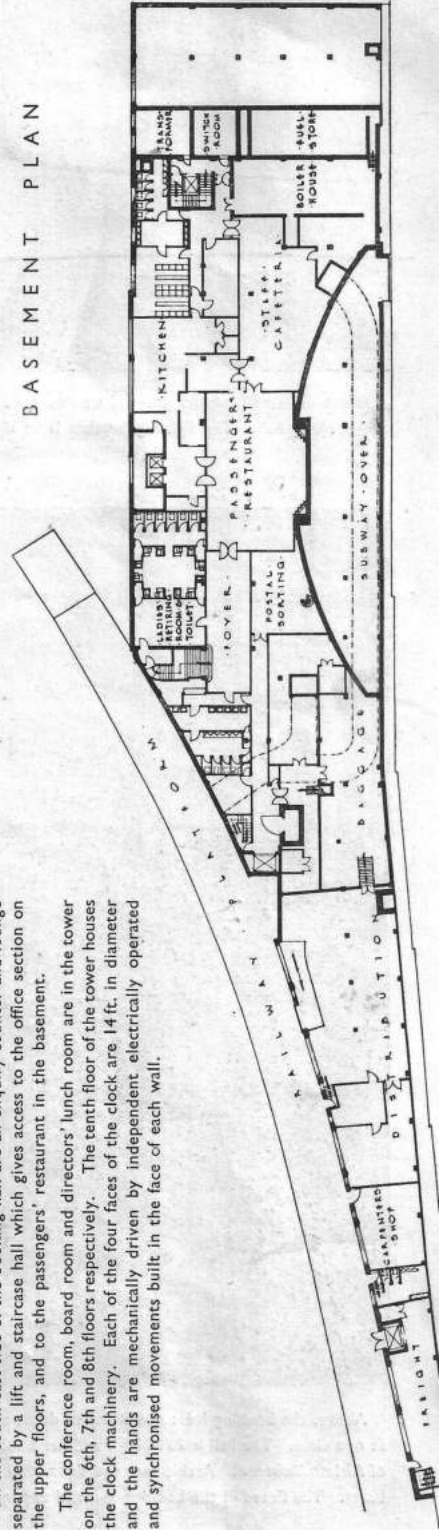
A feature of the equipment in this hall is the treatment of the passenger weighing machines. The platforms are sunk flush with the floor in front of the counters and the weights are registered on the inside of the counter, the actual machinery being housed beneath the counter tops.

IMPERIAL AIRWAYS EMPIRE TERMINAL, BUCKINGHAM PALACE ROAD
 Architect: A. Lakeman. Assistant Architect: W. H. Williams

GROUND FLOOR PLAN



BASEMENT PLAN



On entering the booking hall passengers divide left and right; those bound for Empire routes via Southampton go to the left and so to the railway platform; while passengers for Continental routes go to the right and thence to the covered coach departure for the various continental terminals.

On the south east side of the booking hall are an enquiry counter and lounge separated by a lift and staircase hall which gives access to the office section on the upper floors, and to the passengers' restaurant in the basement.

The conference room, board room and directors' lunch room are in the tower on the 6th, 7th and 8th floors respectively. The tenth floor of the tower houses the clock machinery. Each of the four faces of the clock are 14 ft. in diameter and the hands are mechanically driven by independent electrically operated and synchronised movements built in the face of each wall.

16.6.39

THE ARCHITECT & BUILDING NEWS

297

C O N S T R U C T I O N

The two storey part of the building at the north end is carried on piles, while the main building is carried on reinforced concrete foundations. Main and subsidiary towers are carried on a separate r.c. raft, the underside of the raft being taken down to sand 23 ft. below the pavement level.

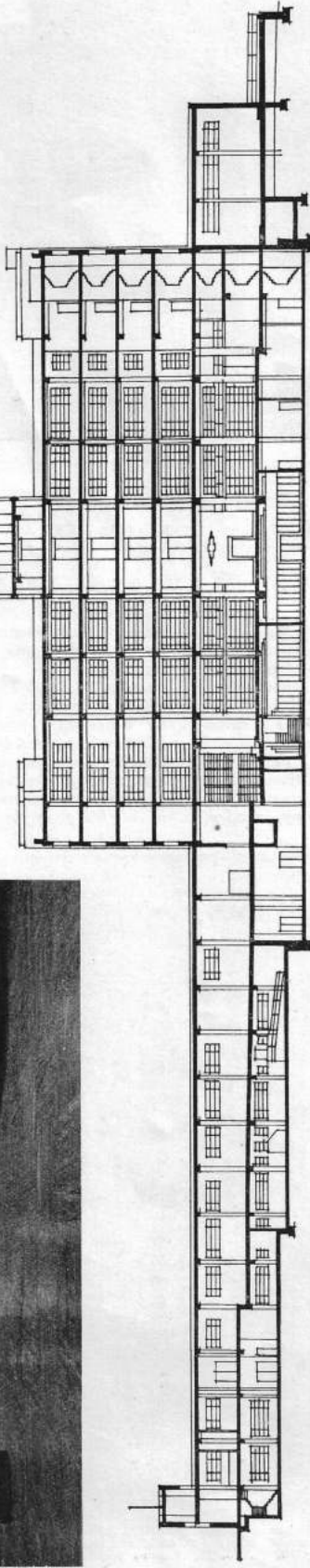
The main structure is steel framed, outer walls being of brick, faced with Portland stone on the main front and in the tower.

Internal partitions are of hollow block construction and floors are of hollow tile.

Windows are of metal and external cills are lead covered, while internally, except in panelled rooms, all cills are of pressed steel.

Left : a view showing the booking hall and mezzanine gallery by night. At night indirect lighting is from wall brackets made in wood to match the panelling. Similar lighting is installed on the stairs and in the restaurant.

Below : left, an office, and right, a rest room.



SUB-CONTRACTORS AND SUPPLIERS:

GENERAL CONTRACTORS
E. A. Roome & Co., Ltd.

PILING
Piling & Construction Co., Ltd.

STEELWORK
Horsley, Bridge & Thos. Piggott, Ltd.

HEATING AND KITCHEN EQUIPMENT
Richard Ordell & Co., Ltd.

SANITARY EQUIPMENT
W. N. Fry & Sons, Ltd.

SANITARY GOODS
Matthew Hall & Co., Ltd.

PANELLING, JOINERY, SPECIAL FURNITURE
J. P. White & Sons, Ltd.

METALWORK
Clodon & Co., Ltd.

SOLID AND FIBROUS PLASTERING, EXTERNAL FACINGS TO REAR
W. A. Telling, Ltd.

WALL TILING
The Decorations, Ltd.

GLAZING
Aggee, Ltd.

PLASTIC RUBBER FLOORING
Semtee, Ltd.

RUBBER FLOORS
Dunlop Rubber Co., Ltd.

WATERPROOFING
William Briggs & Sons, Ltd.

LIFTS & E. Hoop, Ltd.

ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION
Higgins & Catle, Ltd.

INDIRECT LIGHTING
G. V. D. Illuminators, Ltd.

INDIRECT LIGHTING, MAIN BOOKING HALL,
G. V. D. Illuminators, Ltd.

TOWER CLOCK AND MASTER CONTROLLED INTERIOR CLOCK SYSTEM
Gillett & Johnston, Ltd.

PORTLAND STONE
The Bath & Portland Stone Firms, Ltd.

WATERPROOFING
William Briggs & Sons, Ltd.

LIFTS
J. & E. Hoop, Ltd.

ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION
Higgins & Catle, Ltd.

INDIRECT LIGHTING
G. V. D. Illuminators, Ltd.

INDIRECT LIGHTING, MAIN BOOKING HALL,
G. V. D. Illuminators, Ltd.

TOWER CLOCK AND MASTER CONTROLLED INTERIOR CLOCK SYSTEM
Gillett & Johnston, Ltd.

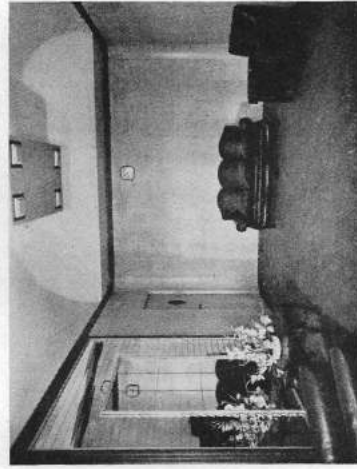




Photo courtesy of Duncan Crewe.

The photo above was taken almost three months before the building opened. The caption on the reverse reads: **“Trains run to new Airways building. Fox Photos, 13 March 1939.** There is a station platform beneath the fine new Imperial Airways building at Victoria. Passengers travelling by train will now be able to arrive and depart direct from offices instead of walking round to the station. Photo shows a view of the new station platform at Victoria showing the Imperial Airways building behind.”



An Associated Press photo of Imperial Airways' Southampton train at platform 17, Victoria Station, taken at the opening of the new terminal on 5 June 1939. Courtesy of Duncan Crewe.

On the ground floor plan of the new building (page 36) can be seen an "Empire Post Office" and a Postal Sorting room in the basement below it. Mail posted there received the special datestamp shown on the cover below, courtesy of Bill Legg back in 2004. It was posted on the day of opening of the new building. Unlike the plentiful examples which can be found of the Wilton Road/Hudson's Place datestamp used at Imperial Airways' previous office, named "Airway Terminus" at Victoria Station, I have seen only this and one other example of this "Airways House S.W.1" datestamp. Can any reader provide a further example?



St. Helena air mail rate ~ a correction.

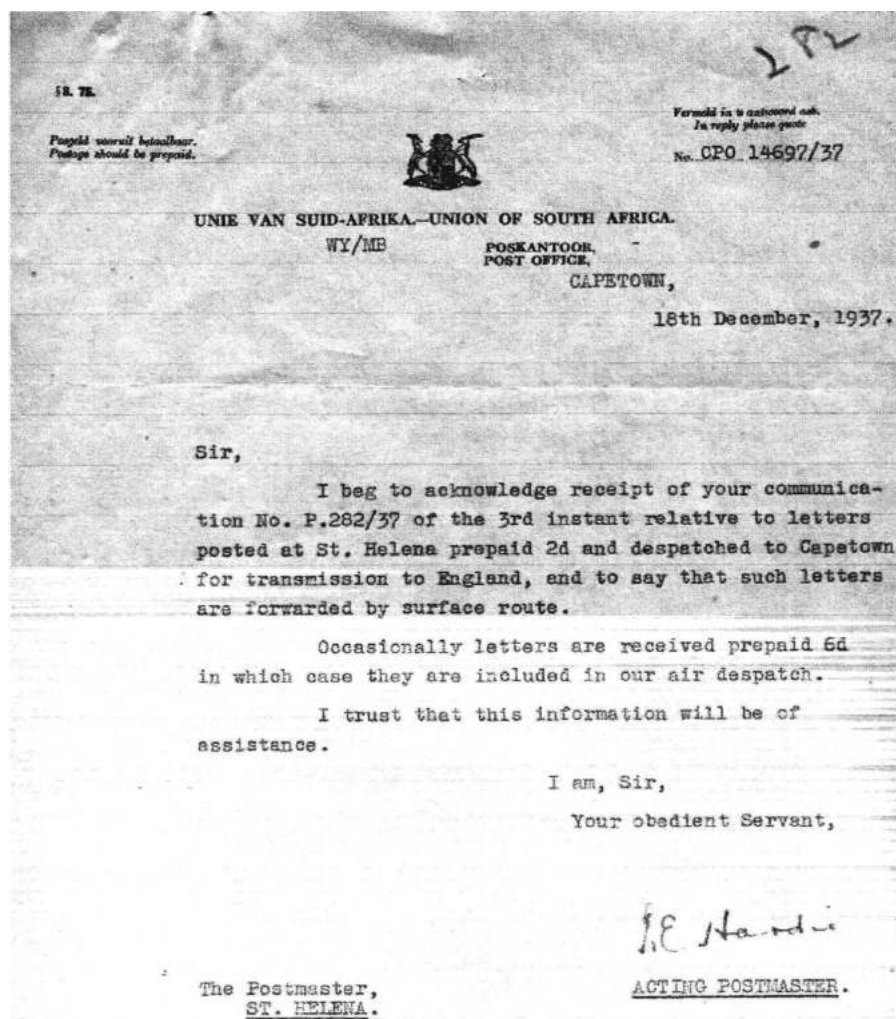
By Peter Wingent

In the March IASG Zoom meeting I included the cover from St. Helena shown right and stated that the correct postage was 2d. first ounce ordinary Empire postage, plus 6½d. per half ounce air mail fee and thus the one shilling franking was philatelic. However, whilst searching my files for something different, I came across a long-forgotten letter from the South Africa Post Office to the Postmaster on St. Helena, written in December 1937, which is shown below. It states clearly that letters franked at 6d. were received on a regular basis at Cape Town and forwarded by air from there. Thus I think it is safe to assume that my cover is franked correctly at double the 6d. air mail rate.



Air mail letters from St. Helena are seldom seen but four examples were described and illustrated in two editions of “Cameo,” the journal of the West Africa Study Circle [1]. It is here that the earlier ordinary postage plus air mail fee rates were detailed as follows;

- Cover 1, posted 21 June 1936 ~ franked 8½d. = 2d. ordinary first oz. + 6½d. per 10 gr. air fee.
- Cover 2, posted 4 December 1936 ~ franked 11½d. = 2d. ordinary first oz. + 6½d. per 10 gr. air fee + 3d. reg.
- Cover 3, posted 31 March 1937 ~ franked 11½d. = 2d. ordinary first oz. + 6½d. per 10 gr. air fee + 3d. reg.
- Cover 4, posted 26 April 1937 ~ franked 1/3d. = 2d. ordinary first oz. + 2 x 6½d. per 10 gr. air fee.



The letter is dated 18 Dec. 1937 and since letters from St. Helena at the 6d. rate had been received “occasionally” up to that time, the change in rate is likely to have been between the end of April (date of cover 4 above) and perhaps early November 1937.

The air mail fee on the covers listed above was per 10 gr. I do not know if the later combined 6d. rate was still per 10 gr. or per half ounce. It is surprising the metric system was used by the St. Helena Post Office.

A heavy item carried on IE1.

By Robert Duns.

A recent Ebay purchase, is the item below posted LONDON SW1, at 6.15pm on 28 March 29, in time to be carried on IE1 to India which departed on 30 March. The flight arrived at Karachi on 6 April, and was then railed to Calcutta – backstamped 9 April.

The postage paid 9 shillings and 9 pence halfpenny, equals an item weighing 9 ounces!

Surface 1½d. for the first ounce; 1d. each additional ounce; air fee to India 6d. per ½ ounce.

The total weight of the mail is reported as being 360 lbs. and about 12,000 pieces of mail, so this item accounts for a few pieces of regular mail. The item presumably contained a catalogue or commercial papers which were smaller than the envelope, hence to condition of the upper row of stamps. Would not be described as great condition, but is certainly **UNIQUE**. [I can't find where I got this from to confirm].

It measures 8½ inches by 9 inches.



Service IE1 to New Zealand.

By Robert Duns.

Mid 2024 I bid on an item on Ebay, and as often happens I was outbid, as often items close in the middle of the night here [Ed. Robert lives in New Zealand]. Early in December, I happened to do a Google search, and the item at the top of the results was a listing from a UK dealer – the same item. It was priced three times what I had bid, but I quickly decided to purchase it. That was my Christmas present to myself, but I had to wait as the dealer was not posting any items until after Christmas to save items being lost in the post.

Now to the item:



Posted from MAGIL, a suburb of BASRAH, on 4 April then back stamped Basrah the same day. The flight left Basrah that day, but returned due to a sandstorm, and left early the next morning to arrive at 5.15 pm.

Correctly backstamped Karachi / Reg 9pm. Fortunately the item was registered, as this proves that it was carried on the flight.



Mail to New Zealand was not accepted until 31 August 1929, to be carried on IE23, but the plane crashed at Jask on 6 September – some or all of the mail being destroyed.

Mail to New Zealand is known carried on the next flight IE24, a week later. See Robert Clark's website [www.nzstamps.org.uk] 'To UK via Karachi and Australia'.

THE SENDER.

Thanks to Laurence Kimpton, the handwriting is that of "Major" O.G. Kiernander, Deputy Traffic Manager, Iraq Railways, Magil, Basra, Iraq, a name that appears on a lot of middle eastern mail. Probably a part or full time stamp dealer !

THE RECIPIENT.

C.M. McNaught was a New Zealand stamp dealer, whose name appears on many philatelic covers at different addresses throughout New Zealand. He is listed in the membership register of the Airmail Society of NZ as being member #10 on 16 September 1930, along with H London, Ray Collins, Wilfrid Peers and Alex F M Paterson. His brother was Dr Kenneth McNaught RDP.

For the record ~ our Zoom meetings, December 2024 to April 2025

December 2024:

- Peter Richards - BOAC air mail from West Africa, June 1940 – May 1942.
- Christopher Cooksey - The development of air mail services from the Rhodesias to the Far East, 1932-1934.
- Sue Burn - Recent acquisitions.
- Nick Guy - First flight Nairobi, the Post Office and Imperial Airways.

January 2025:

- Duncan Crewe - KLM mail from Hong Kong, 1933-1937.
- David Bradley - 1938-1939 Seaplane covers from Mozambique to Switzerland.
- Chris Hawley - New acquisitions.
- Robert duns - To New Zealand via the Horseshoe Route.
- Laurence Kimpton - Mail from King Faisal's doctor to Baghdad on the King's visit to London and France 1925.
- Peter Wingent - Mail between Africa and the West Indies.

February 2025:

- Duncan Crewe - Imperial Airways – the early years.
- Christopher Cooksey - Off-line destinations from N. & S. Rhodesia on AN47.
- Peter Richards - BOAC trans-Africa services, 1940 – 1945.
- Rick Green - Wilson Airways' Atalanta Service.
- Peter Wingent - Imperial Airways' test letters.
- Sue Burn - A cover question.

March 2025:

- Duncan Crewe - Imperial Airways survey flights to Hong Kong, 1935-36.
- Adrian de Bourbon - Three out-of-the-ordinary covers.
- Christopher Cooksey - First flight to Australia – a correction.
- Robert Duns - WWII U.K. airmail to a merchant navy Chief Officer.
- Peter Wingent - Some new acquisitions.

April 2025:

- Duncan Crewe - Imperial Airways' 1,000th service.
- Nick arrow - Test letters – old and not so old.
- Laurence Kimpton - P.G. Taylor's Indian Ocean survey flight, 1939.
- Peter Wingent - Malta air mails to and from Africa.