



*FIGURE 3 : Empire boat flying over inhospitable territory near Cairo on the Empire Route established by Imperial Airways.<sup>1</sup>*



FIGURE 29 : Machine cancelled used on mail which had been censored.

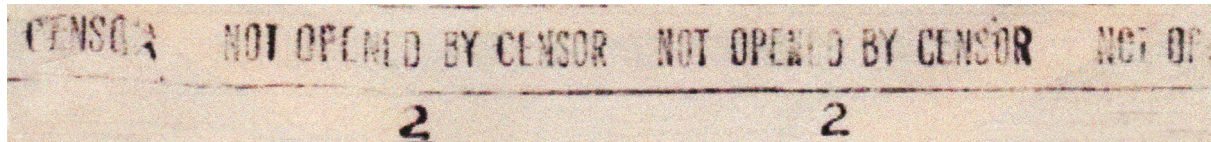


FIGURE 30 : Machine cancel used on mail not opened by censor.

## 1939 - 4 September

### Mail unloaded from flying boat *Champion*

One of the first tasks for the new censor section in Sydney was to examine mail unloaded from flying boat *Champion* which was recalled from Townsville (Chapter 4, [page 61](#)). The cover, (Figure 31), is of considerable interest. Not only is it an example of early censorship it is also an item transferred from SW 168, which had returned from Townsville, to SW 169 which departed Sydney on 6 September ([page 61](#)).

As this mail was addressed to a non-British empire country it had not been franked at the 'All Up' rate of 5 pence but at the full rate of one shilling and nine pence to a foreign country (including 3 pence registration). This cover could, therefore, be carried on the flight carrying only surcharged mail..

FIGURE 31 : Cancelled Sydney GPO on Thursday 31 August 1939 but returned when 'Champion' was recalled. Being appropriately franked for foreign destination it would have been carried on Flight SW 169 which departed Sydney at 7 am on 6 September 1939 – an example of early Sydney censorship. Collection : Gary Watson, ex. Neil Russell UK.





## AUSTRALIA AT WAR : 1939 - JULY 1940 THE EMPIRE ROUTE



**This chapter details the effect on the mail caused by the events that occurred during the first ten months of war.**

**Although Australia was not immediately directly involved in the conflict the declaration that Australia was at war with Germany, at 9.30 pm on Sunday 3 September 1939, changed the lives of many Australians.**

**Family members joined the armed forces, many foreign migrants were interned and censorship of mail was immediately introduced.**

**Australia's defence forces were alerted and overseas airmail rates were immediately increased by almost 400 percent to reduce loading on flying boats.**

**The Australian way of life was changed forever.**

**In England, also, the preparations for war and the declaration of war resulted in rapid changes to their way of life. The changes in both England and Australia altered the operation of the Empire Route.**

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Heading Photo : A mother and her four sons, all in the army, typifying the war effort of the ordinary Australian family.



FIGURE 70 : Cancelled 11 September 1939 at Buderim, QLD to Middlesex at 9d postcard rate. Carried on 'Clio' from Brisbane on 13 September 1939, and from Singapore on 17 September 1939. Flight arrived in England on 24 September 1939. Collection : Gary Watson.

### 1939 - 16 September

#### **KLM agrees with German Postal Authorities that airmail could be sent by train through Germany to the KLM terminus in Naples**

KLM was flying from Amsterdam to Batavia where the flight connected with KNILM service to Sydney. KLM reached agreement with Germany that it could send mail for the air service to Australia through Germany by train to Naples from where KLM were flying to Batavia.<sup>26</sup> On 16 September 1939 DC3 *Gier* departed from Naples but carried no mail.

### 1939 - 19 September

#### **Mail sent from Naples**

The DC3 *Guizerd* departed Naples for Bandung. At Alexandria DC3 *Gier* took up the mail from DC3 *Poelu Roebiah* which had departed Amsterdam on 2 September 1939.

### 1939 - 22 September

#### **KLM begins a regular twice weekly service from Naples to Bandung**

The service commenced with Flight 792 which departed Naples on Tuesdays and Fridays and from Bandung on Mondays and Thursdays.

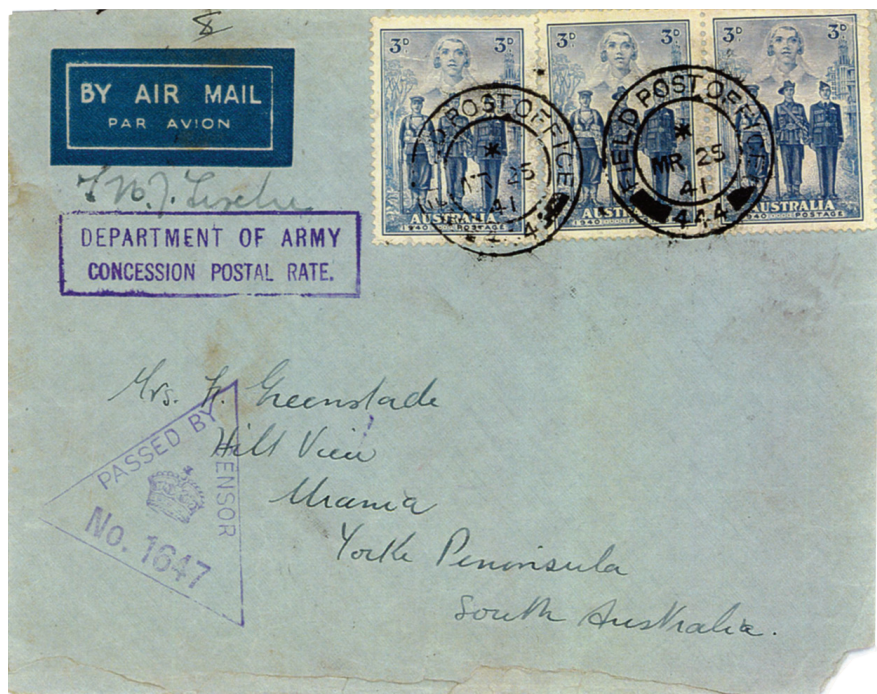
FIGURE 163 : Cancelled 15 July 1940, a full set first day cover which exceeded the 9 pence concession rate for airmail to a soldier overseas.



FIGURE 164 : A registered cover to England with 9 pence stamp added for one shilling and nine pence registered to Britain. Backstamped Beenleigh 15 July; registered Brisbane 15 July; no backstamp on arrival in Britain. The unboxed PASSED stamp, on the lower right hand corner of the cover has only been seen on Story Bridge covers and only a few items of commercial mail.



FIGURE 165 : Cancelled 25 March 1941 at Field PO 454 at Atlantic Hotel, Alexandria, Egypt. Stamps not officially available to Australian troops in the Middle East.



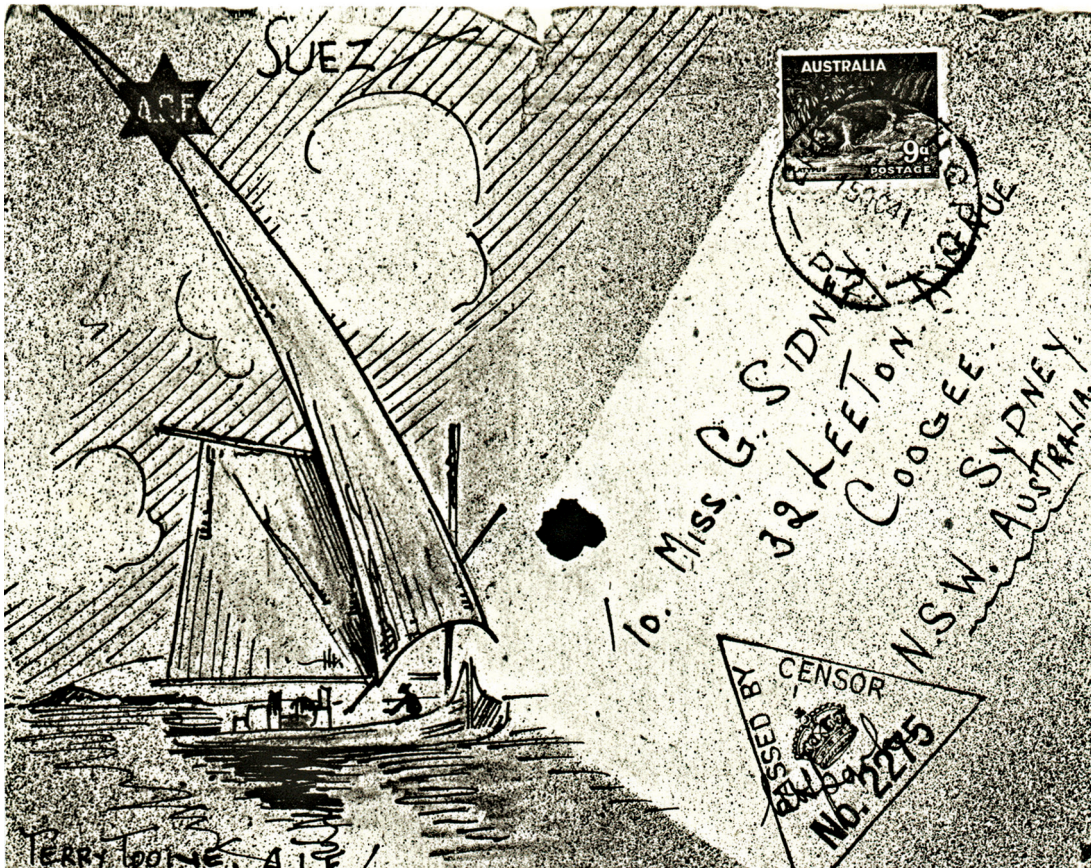


FIGURE 283 : Pictorial envelopes produced at Tobruk by Terry Toone and G.W. Gee. Collection : Andrew Brockett.

## Mail Rates - Australia/Japan

Date	Letter Per ½ oz.	Letter each additional ½ oz	Postcards	Portion by air
10/12/34	10d	9d	5d	Australia/ Singapore



FIGURE 135 : From 10 December 1934 Australia/Tokyo by sea and air.

1936 – 27 March

### Sea/Air Service Japan/Australia via Hong Kong

From 27 March 1936 Imperial Airways (IAL) Far East operated a scheduled air service Hong Kong to Penang. Mail from Japan however was carried by sea – Japan to Shanghai, by CNAC to Hong Kong and thence by air to Australia.