

End of a Dream: The Ill-fated 1935 Trans-Tasman Jubilee Flight

A presentation to The Royal Philatelic Society London



Neil Donen FRPSL
6 May 2021

The Presentation

- Pre-flight
- The Flight
- Mail from Australia
- Mail from New Zealand
- *“The mail that never was!”*
- *End of the Dream*

Pre-flight

Pre-flight

- IA 1935 All-Empire Air Mail Scheme
- The Australia-New Zealand contract
- 28/29 April announcement + rates
- Souvenir envelopes
- New Zealand air mail stamps to Australia
- New Zealand mail for flight (9 May)

Postage Rates

Trans-Tasman air mail (each way per ½ ounce)	7d
Return surface mail: New Zealand – Australia	1d
Australia - New Zealand	2d
Internal air mail Australia (per ½ ounce)	3d
Registration fee	3d
Air mail New Zealand – Britain (plus TT fare)	2s 1d
Return mail from NZ High Commissioner	2s 3d

Souvenir Covers

NZ – larger
(Chocolate or
Blue Script)



Australia –lightweight.
(White, Blue, Old Gold)



NZ – FFC covers to
England



New Zealand Air Mail Stamps



Joint agreement for sale in both countries – 4th May.

NZ: on sale in a few major centres on day of issue

Australia: on sale in State capitals (except Perth) +
Launceston & NZ Tourist Bureaus

First occasion NZ stamps on sale at foreign post office*

Design: James Berry.

Photo depicting DH-86 prototype.

Only issued stamp showing it.

(Actual flown plane DH-86A)

Bell Block airfield – New Plymouth

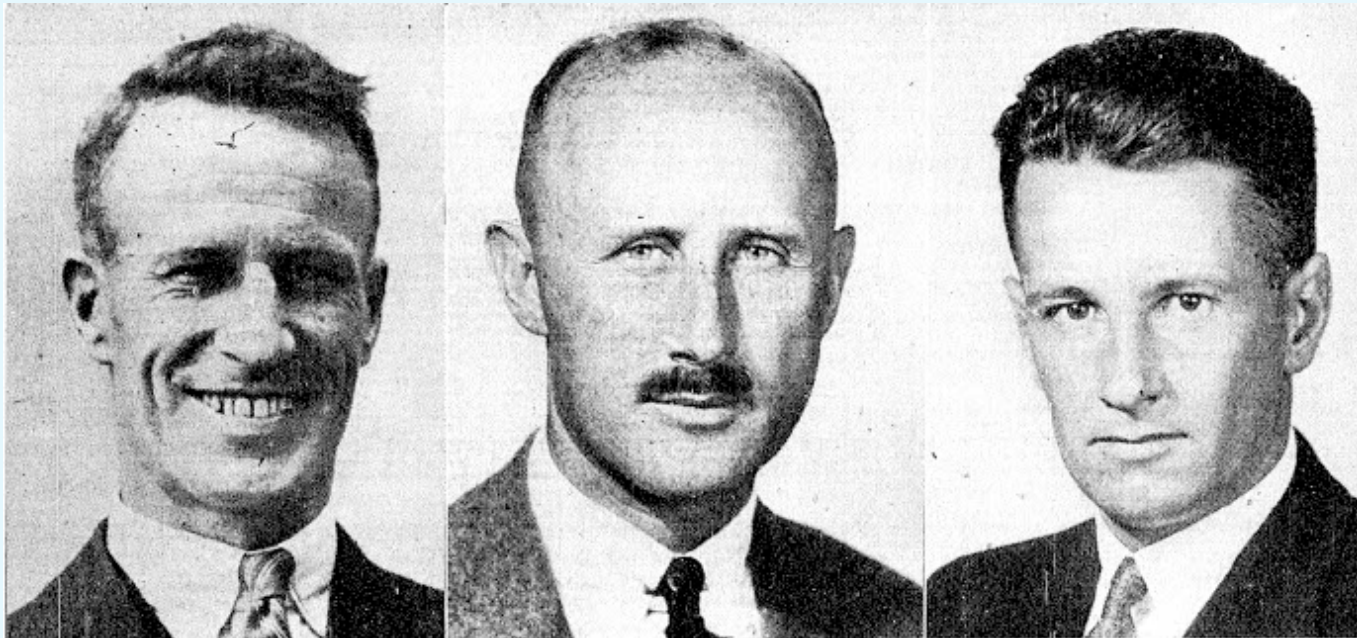
The Flight

The Plane



SIR CHARLES KINGSFORD SMITH AND "SOUTHERN CROSS".

The Crew

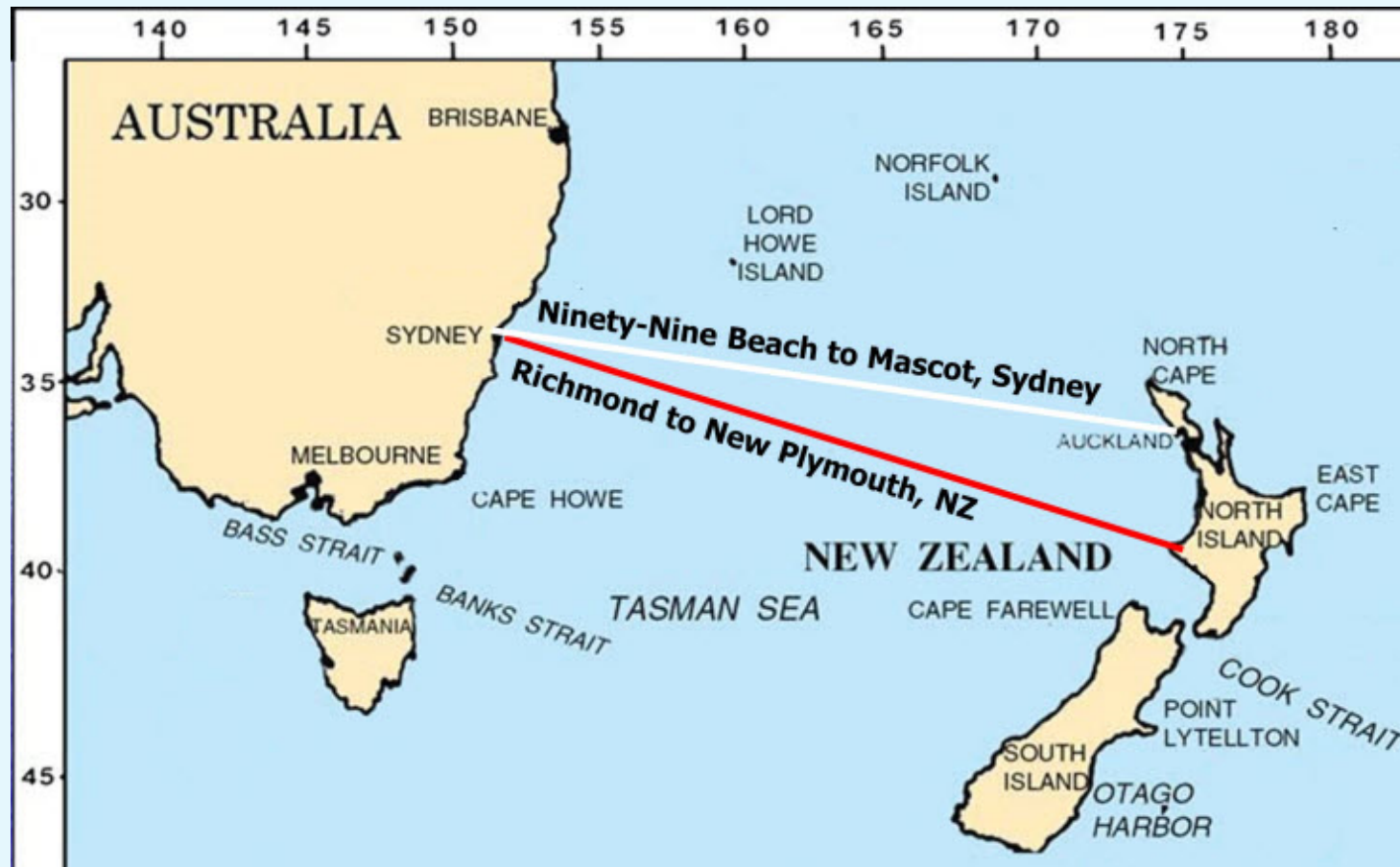


Charles
Kingsford Smith

P.G. ("Bill")
Taylor

Bob
Stannage

Proposed Two-way Flight



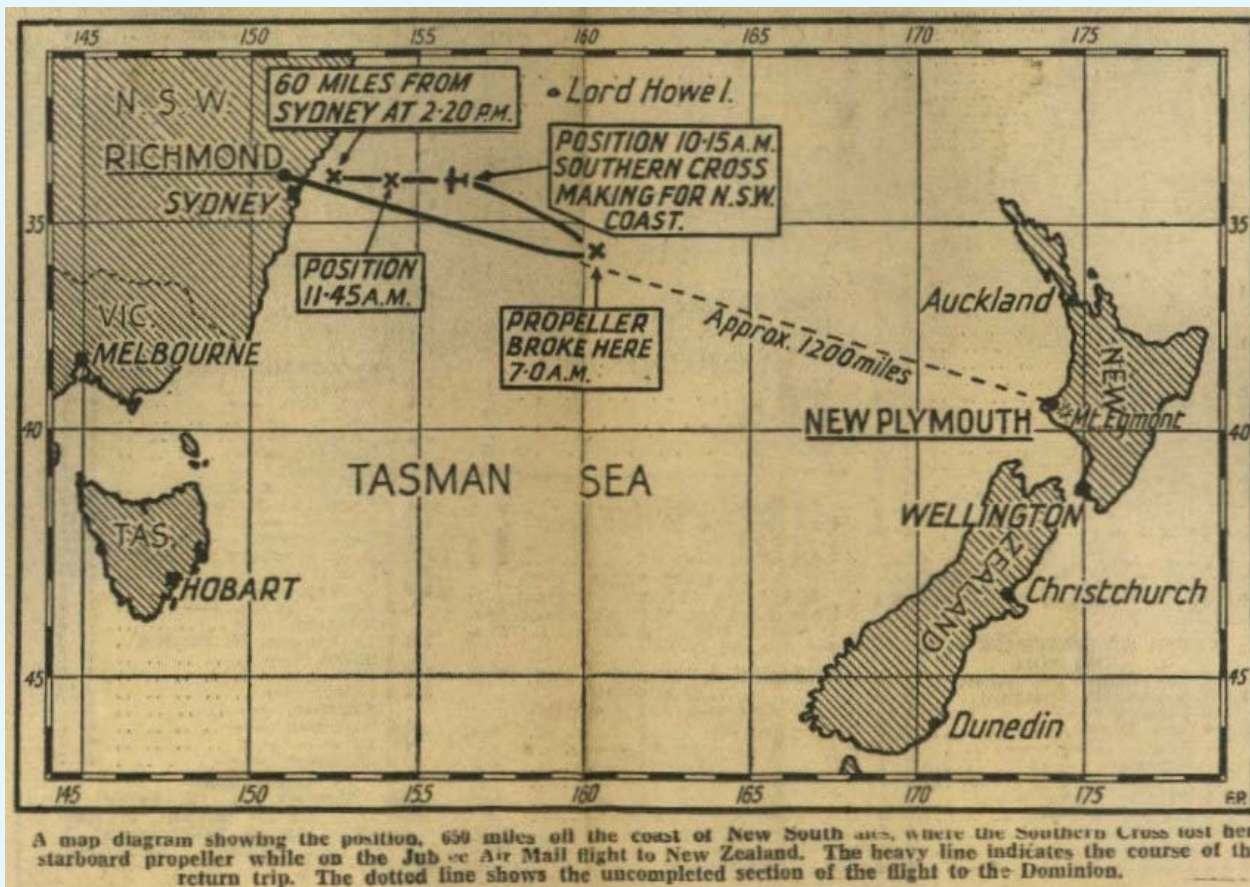
The Mail



- NZ mail to Australia (9 May)
- Departure date delayed (15 May)
- Additional 7 mailbags added
- Total mail items flown 28,279
- All mail flown in *Southern Cross*
 - 2nd plane cancelled

Kingsford Smith was paid 4d per mail item carried

The Actual Flight



0020 – Departed Sydney

1250 – Mail jettisoned

1600 – Arrived Sydney

7 mailbags saved



Click on image
to see Taylor drama

*Mail from
Australia*

Saved Mail

Posted From	Mail Lost		Mail Saved		
	Regular	Registered	No. Bags	Regular	Registered
Sydney	21,927	977	0	0	0
Melbourne	~2,463	426	2	~150	1
Brisbane	163	2	3	635	87
Adelaide	811	218	1	85	8
Perth	124	18	0	0	0
Hobart	88	4	0	0	0
Launceston	0	0	1	58	34
Total	~25,576	1,645	7	~928	130

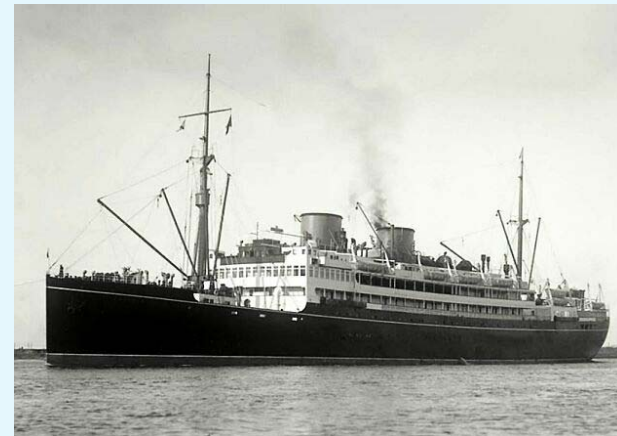
Mail from New Zealand in Sydney mailbags ~7,200 items
 21 mailbags flown ~400lbs (14 lost)

Mail from Australia



**Wellington Receiving cancel:
"Gold Standard"
for mail from flight**

Saved mail carried to New Zealand
on TSMV Wanganella
Departed Sydney 18 May
Arrived Auckland 22 May – train
Arrived Wellington 23 May



Mail from Australia

Two mailbags from **Melbourne** survived
One sent to Christchurch, second to Dunedin
Exact numbers unknown. Estimate 150-200

Both covers sent at one-way air mail rate 7d



To Christchurch

To Dunedin



Mail from Australia

Return Trans-Tasman air mail rate 1s 2d

Australia – New Zealand flight: Required Australian stamps

New Zealand – Australia flight: Stamps from either country valid*



Mail from Australia

All air rate 10d (7d + 3d) x 2
Wellington “receiving” cancel
back & front
Signatures of crew



Registered air mail 10d (7d + 3d)
(overpaid 1d)
More signatures

Mail Delivery in New Zealand

Postal archives lost in 1959 fire

Form letter from Director-General
to Postmaster

Letter courtesy of Allan Tunnicliffe, NZ

DOMINION OF NEW ZEALAND.

General Post Office, Wellington, C.I.
23rd May, 1935.

P. & T. 1935/2025.

MEMORANDUM for

The Postmaster,

Wairarapa
Mr J. Dunbar
Wairarapa
Trans-Tasman air mail.

The enclosed letter was saved from the
~~letters were~~ air mail despatched from Australia to New Zealand by
the "Southern Cross" on the 15th instant. The number
of letters saved was less than 1,300 in a total despatch
of 29,000.

The letters which were not lost will bear some
value from the stamp collectors' point of view, and it
is desired that the ~~letters~~ letter forwarded herewith be
specially delivered, if possible to the addressee
personally.

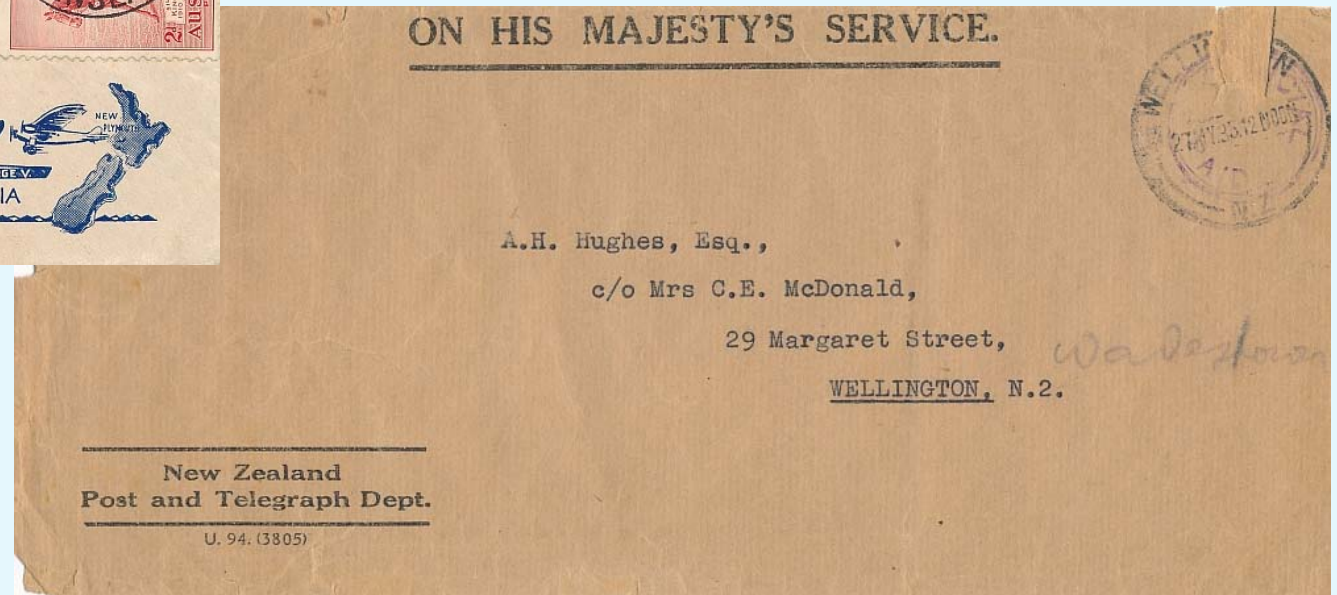
Encl.

F. J. Shanks
for Director-General.
one

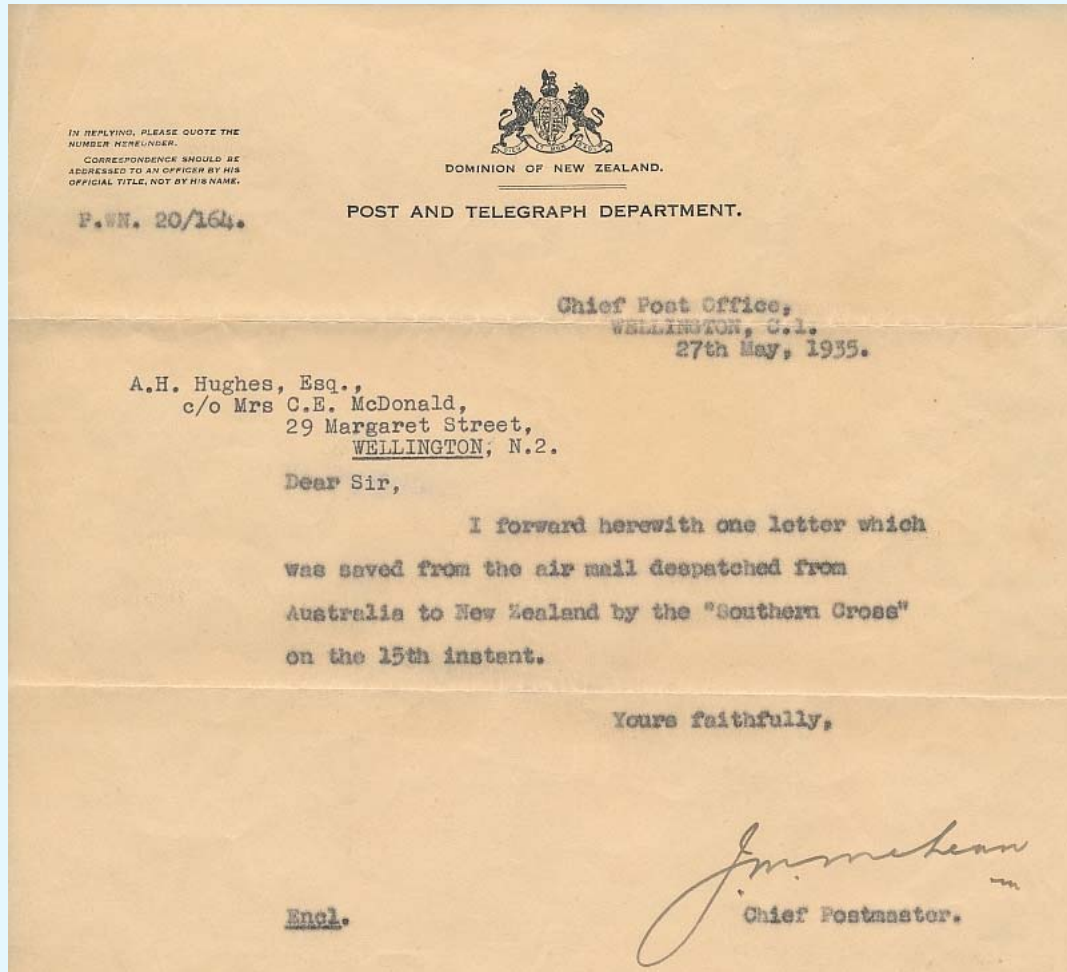
Mail Delivery in New Zealand



Personalised delivery
of saved mail



Mail Delivery in New Zealand



Form letter from Chief Postmaster - Wellington



*Mail from
New Zealand*

NZ Flight Mail by Ship to Australia

Mail departed New Zealand 17 May

Wellington *SS Monowai* 2,000 items

Auckland *SS Monterey* 11,000 items

Arrived Sydney 20 May



No transit cancel for onward air mail

Mail to Australia



One way: Air mail (7d).



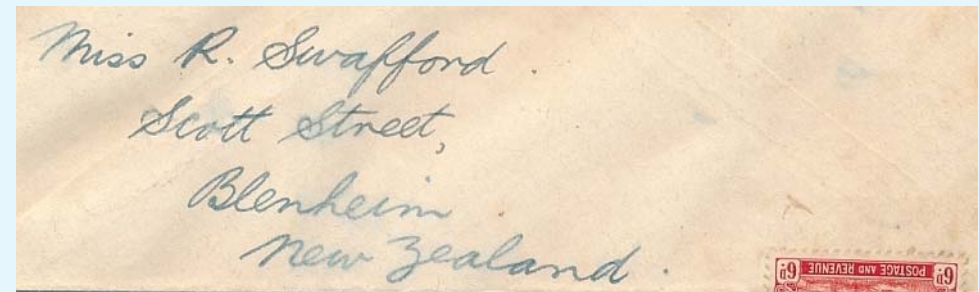
Return (7d + 2d).

New Zealand Air Mail to Britain



Air mail one-way 2s 1d

Return mail via NZ High
Commissioner 2s 3d



Onward New Zealand Air Mail

Air mail to India

Mailed Christchurch 14 May
Rate: 7d (TT) + 1s 2d (Aus-India)
Redirected



Air mail to Japan

Mailed Wellington 15 May
Rate: TT = 7d. Air to Japan = 10d

Singapore Jusqu'a marking
By sea from Singapore

*“The mail that
never was!”*

Lost Mail



Responses from Australian and New Zealand Post Offices

'Per Favour' Covers

Ernest Crome



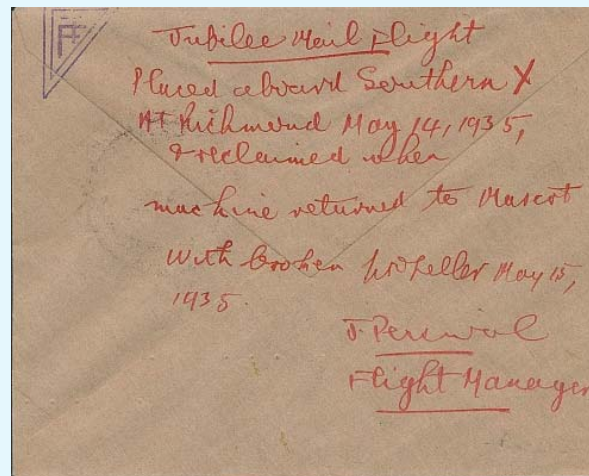
One of 10 'per favour' covers carried and signed by crew of Southern Cross



aerophilatelist



Faith in Australia relief flight



'Too Late'



Cancelled Melbourne 14 May 1935
Overnight train to Sydney
Arrived after departure

'Too Late'

Missed sailing of 9 May



JUBILEE AIR MAIL FLIGHT.

NORTHERN ADVOCATE, 7 MAY
1935, PAGE 4

Postings to be made in Australia may be sent under cover "Postage Paid" to Sydney Post Office and may be prepaid in New Zealand or Australian stamps.



Sydney Postmark 20 May
Receiving cancel -
Green Meadows 28 May



Myths (& Mail Sent from Brisbane)

Destination	By Regular Mail 11 May 9pm			By Air Mail 13 May 7am		
	Ordy.	Reg.	Wt.	Ordy.	Reg.	Wt.
Auckland	72	10	2lb 14ozs	6		1lb 3ozs
New Plymouth	25	0	1lb 6ozs	2		1lb 1½ozs
Wellington	155	76	8lb 2ozs	9	1	2lb 5½ozs
Return flight	367			32		
Christchurch	102	2	2lb 7ozs	6		1lb 2½ozs
Dunedin	18	0	1lb 5ozs	4		1lb 2ozs
Total	739	88		59	1	

Myth

The seven late mailbags of 14 May

*End of
the Dream*

End of the Dream, But

July - *Southern Cross* sold
- KS presents proposal to NZ govt.

August - NZ govt. stops discussions

November - KS disappears on flight

1st sale of NZ stamps at foreign POs

1st prepayment of return mail
- Australia and New Zealand



End of a Dream

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