

## West Africa Air Mail – New additions



**10th May 1923.** In the years after the First World War the French airline Latecoere developed the route from France to South America via Dakar. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1923 a survey flight left Casablanca arriving at Dakar on the 5<sup>th</sup> May. The aircraft returned on the 10<sup>th</sup> May and arrived back in Casablanca on 22<sup>nd</sup> May (a long time – did something go wrong?)

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In March 1936 the Imperial Airways/Elders Colonial aircraft *Daedalus* had to be withdrawn from service and was replaced by a much slower aircraft called *Achilles*.

**13<sup>th</sup> March 1936.** Dorking to Ibi. Carried on flight WAS 7 by *Achilles* from Khartoum to Kano. *Achilles* got into Kano 4 days late (22<sup>nd</sup> March) and was replaced by *Delia* having made 1 ½ southbound and 1 northbound flights.





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There is growing evidence to suggest that the last Aeromaritime flight got to Pointe Noire on the 24<sup>th</sup> June 1940 and returned to Dakar on the 26<sup>th</sup> June.

**26<sup>th</sup> June 1940.** Accra to the UK by Aeromaritime. The cover bears 5d postage the Air Mail rate to Sierra Leone as it could fly no further.



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26<sup>th</sup> January 1943. Kaduna to Ireland. Probably carried on the Catalina *Altair Star* flight 6W155 which left Lagos on the 13<sup>th</sup> February 1943. Passed by Nigerian Censor, opened by UK Censor (7618) and released by Irish Censor. Does anybody have any idea what the scribbling on the UK Censor label is all about?





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Between late June 1940 and 11<sup>th</sup> July 1945 there was no 1/- 3d Air Mail Letter service between the UK and West Africa.

**25<sup>th</sup> March 1943.** UK to the Gold Coast. 1/- 3d postage paid but stamped '1/3 per 1/2 oz Air Mail Letter Service NOT available'. Instead the cover was sent by Surface Mail and took 46 days !



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The Flying Boats did not stop at Accra or Takoradi so Air Mail from the Gold Coast to the UK at this time had to go via Freetown or Lagos.

**16<sup>th</sup> September 1943.** Aboso to the UK. Endorsed as received on 16<sup>th</sup> October meaning that it is likely that the cover was on flight W250 leaving Lagos on 5<sup>th</sup> October flown by BOAC Sunderland G-AGIB arriving at Poole on the 9<sup>th</sup> October. The cover was 20 days before it even left West Africa.





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From 16<sup>th</sup> April 1944 BOAC started to fly mail between Whitchurch and Lagos using Dakotas.

**19<sup>th</sup> April 1944.** Freetown to the UK. Carried on the second BOAC flight arriving at Whitchurch on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1944. Opened by Sierra Leone Censor QQ/36. The cover would have first been have to be sent to Bathurst because the aircraft did not stop at Freetown.



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