

## PARCELS BY AIR FROM SANDAY

FIRST IN HISTORY OF  
INLAND MAILS

### North Ronaldsay's Anxiety Relieved

BRITAIN'S first official inland parcels air mail operated yesterday morning, as an emergency measure, between Sanday and Kirkwall. Highland Airways Ltd. carried about half a ton of letter and parcel mail from that island to Kirkwall in time for the mail to be sorted and the parcel portion of it despatched by s.s. St. Ola from Scapa at 10 a.m. The letter portion was held for despatch with the ordinary air mail at 1.30 p.m.

Mr. Alexander Cameron, head postmaster at Kirkwall, told The Orcadian that the mails carried from Sanday to Kirkwall by the Highland Airways' local machine, piloted by Mr. Adam Smith, were parcels and letters that had been taken by boat from North Ronaldsay to Sanday the previous day (Tuesday). But for the air service, these North Ronaldsay mails would have had to lie in Sanday till today, when the next steamer leaves there for Kirkwall, and that would have meant that they would not have left Kirkwall for the South till tomorrow.

The plane stationed at Kirkwall set out yesterday morning for Sanday at 8.15 a.m. and was back in Kirkwall within half an hour.

Behind this half-ton accumulation of mails from the small island of North Ronaldsay lies a story of storm isolation. North Ronaldsay's motor boat, which carries the mails between the island and Sanday, had been unable to make the passage since Saturday, December 12. The Post Office made an arrangement for the Kirkwall plane of Highland Airways to relieve the North Ronaldsay situation on Tuesday, but that arrangement was upset by the motor boat setting off for Sanday. This, however, did not facilitate the mail service, as the parcels and letters were still no further from home than the neighbouring island of Sanday, from which no boat is due to leave till today.

Had the North Ronaldsay boat not set off with the mails on Tuesday, the plane would have collected North Ronaldsay inward mails from Sanday, delivered them to the North Ronaldsay Post Office, and returned direct to Kirkwall with the North Ronaldsay outward mails. The carrying out of yesterday's air service scheme therefore overtook what work had been arranged for Tuesday.

This is the first time in the history of the British Post Office that an aircraft has been used for an inland parcel mail service. Yesterday's flight was carried out in moderately good winter flying weather, with strong winds prevailing.

## HIGHLAND AIRWAYS Ltd.

### SANDAY EMERGENCY FLIGHT

Report by the 'Orcadian Newspaper' on the first emergency flight by Highland Airways on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1936 to carry mail and parcels on behalf of the Post Office. The large amount of parcels was due to it being just prior to Christmas and many contained seasonal poultry.

#### Christmas Mail Work in Kirkwall.

For the second year in succession the Scout Hall, in Mill Street, has been converted into a temporary parcels sorting office. A special telephone line links this sub-office with the head office. Motor vans reverse almost into the hall and the system of working the parcels mails appears to be almost as perfect as one could expect at a specially planned mails depot. The Scout Hall came into use, this Christmastide, on Saturday evening and will continue to be used by the Post Office till after the New Year rush is over.

Seven temporary postmen have been engaged for the seasonal work. The Kirkwall fleet of three vans and one motor cycle delivery unit—another van is in reserve—are running many miles extra this week. Postmen, sorters and extra helpers are working till almost 10 p.m. each evening.

The Christmas parcels mails show an increase on last year to the extent of 5 per cent. Last year's increase on the previous year was 12 per cent. The traffic as a whole is greater this year, the traffic to the South being most heavily increased. This is presumably due to the new parcel rate of 15 lbs. for 1s. Ducks, rabbits, geese, turkeys and fowls, which in previous seasons went by freight services, are now going by post.

Tuesday's despatch to the South, from Kirkwall, included 290 bags, sent to Aberdeen on s.s. St. Magnus, and 180 bags, sent to Thurso on s.s. St. Ola, a total of 470 parcel bags outward that day.



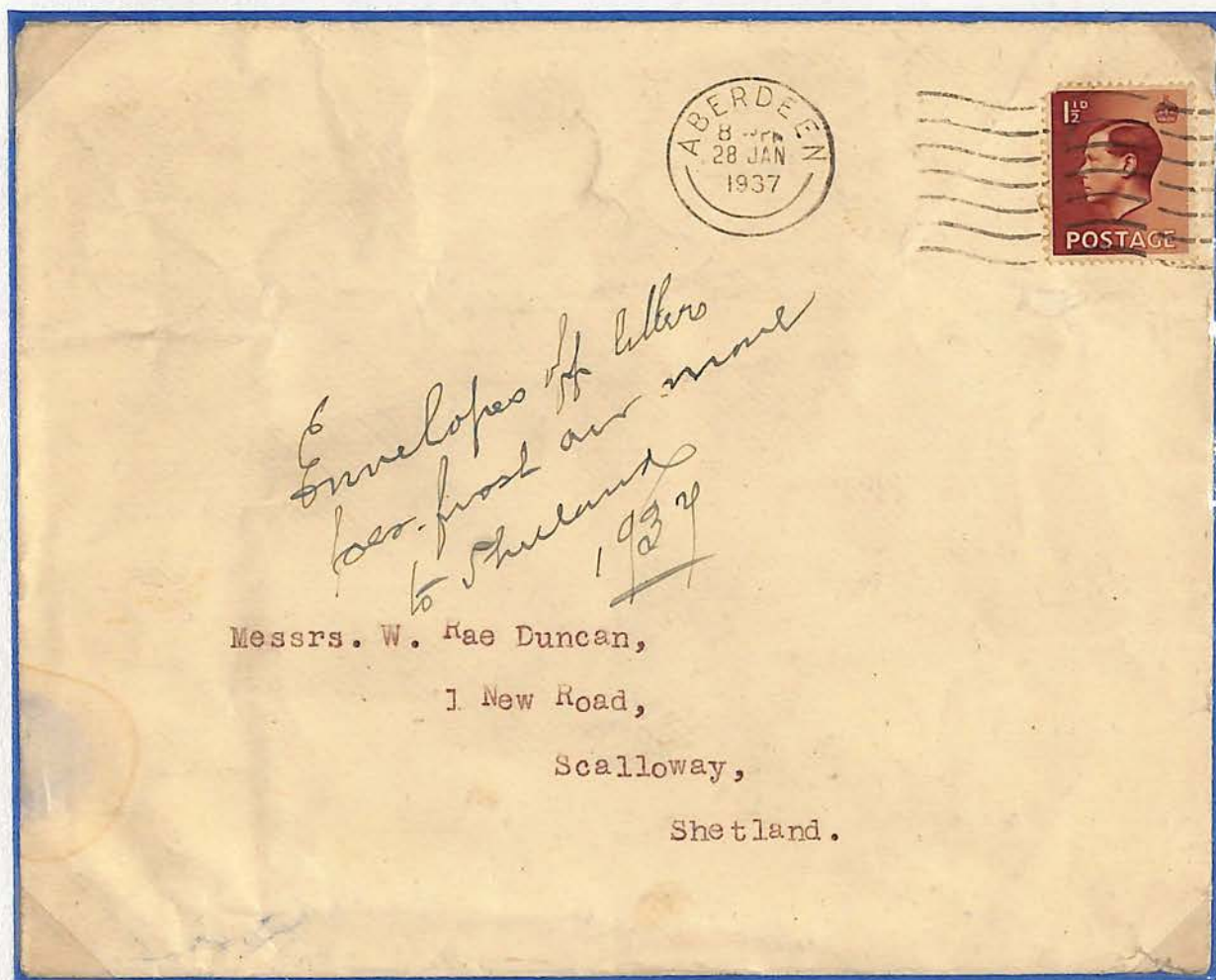
ALLIED AIRWAYS Ltd.

(Gander Dower)

SHETLAND EMERGENCY FLIGHT

29<sup>th</sup> January 1937

During January 1937 there were a series of storms which prevented sea transport between the Shetland and Orkney Islands. Due to the amount of mail that had accumulated the GPO chartered Aberdeen Airways Ltd. to undertake an emergency flight to and from the Shetlands. This took place on the 29<sup>th</sup> when James Gordon Hay flew 989lb of mail from Aberdeen to Thurso in G-HDFI where it was transferred to G-ACAN piloted by H. Vallence.



This cover appears to have been the top of a bundle, due to the manuscript inscription. It is known that the islanders collected the envelopes for resale, the handwriting is that of a Mrs Jessie MacWhirtie who had advertised locally for these covers. Mrs MacWhirtie was the aunt of the collector Dr. Mckensie (author of errors on stamps)



Second Sanday  
Emergency Flight

28<sup>th</sup> January 1937

Inter Island Southbound Flight  
Sanday - Kirkwall



On this date Capt. E.E. Fresson flew from Kirkwall to Sanday and back via Westray and Rousay. A full report is given in the accompanying newspaper cutting of Friday 29<sup>th</sup> January 1937.

## PLANE SOLVES MAIL PROBLEM

**H**IGHLAND AIRWAYS, LTD., operators of the daily air mail service between Inverness, Wick, and Kirkwall, were brought into service yesterday by the Post Office to work off storm arrears of mail deliveries and collections in local islands of the Orkney group.

Following the previous day's mail service of letters to Stronsay, Rousay, Westray, and Sanday Islands were served yesterday.

Letters and parcels were taken to Rousay, and 60lbs. of letters only to Westray and Sanday.

### NO EXTRA CHARGE

As with the daily air mail from Inverness to Wick and Kirkwall, no extra charge is levied on letters or parcels carried by air in the Orkneys, and there is nothing to identify a letter or parcel with what is to these little communities their first air mail.

Mr Alexander Cameron, head postmaster at Kirkwall, stated yesterday that the parcels and letters flown to Rousay had accumulated during the past four days.

Parcels and letters were yesterday brought in from Rousay, and letters only were brought from Sanday and Westray.

A flight was also made yesterday to Longhope, in the Orkney south isles with passengers who had been unable to go to their work there since last week-end.

No mails were carried, as the post office secured the services of a tug to take the storm accumulation of Hoy, Melsetter, and Longhope mails to Stromness, and return the inward mails from those places.

**ABERDEEN AIRWAYS Ltd.**

**(Gander Dower)**

**SHETLAND EMERGENCY FLIGHT**

**29<sup>th</sup> January 1937**



By the end of January, the mails for Shetland had accumulated in Aberdeen and the Post Office chartered Aberdeen Airways to clear the backlog. They were flown to Sumburgh in Shetland via Thurso, the first leg of the flight in the D.H. Dragon G-ADFI and then on to Shetland in Dragon G-ACAN.

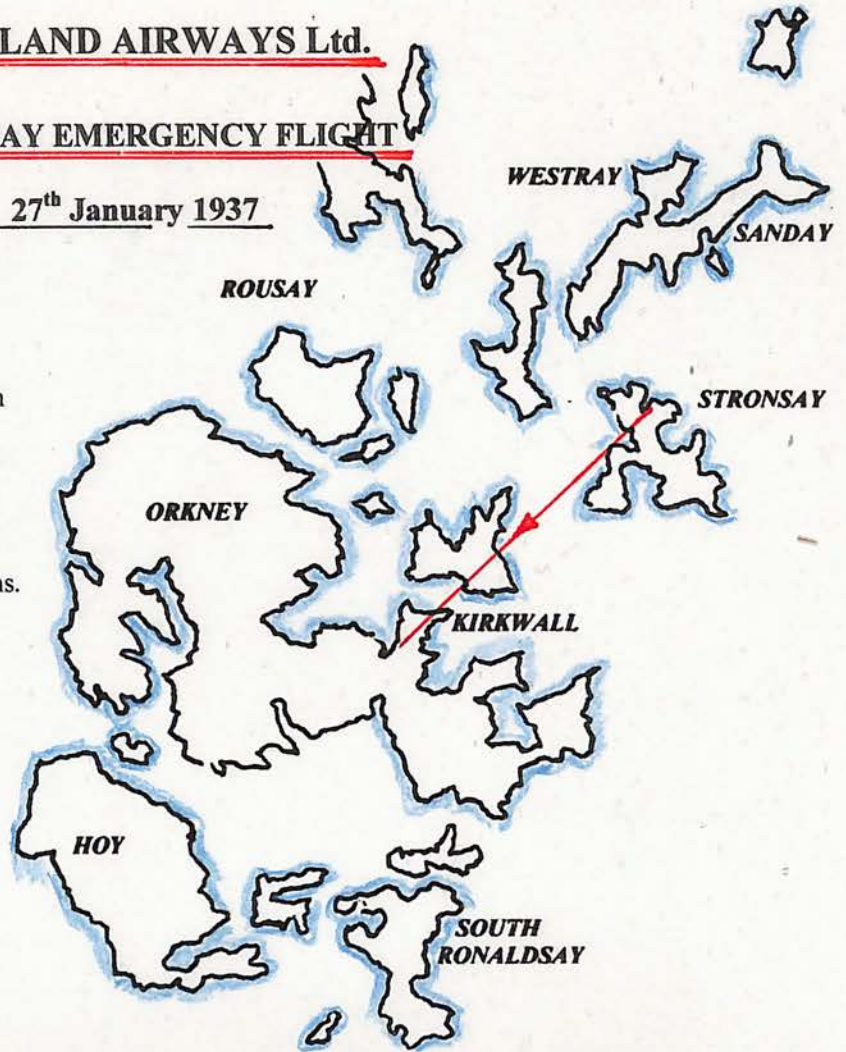


HIGHLAND AIRWAYS Ltd.

STRONSAY EMERGENCY FLIGHT

27<sup>th</sup> January 1937

Commercial cover to the director of education at Kirkwall, carried on the return flight from Stronsay on the 27<sup>th</sup>. It has been endorsed by Adam Smith who piloted his Dragon Rapier G-ADAJ through appalling weather conditions.





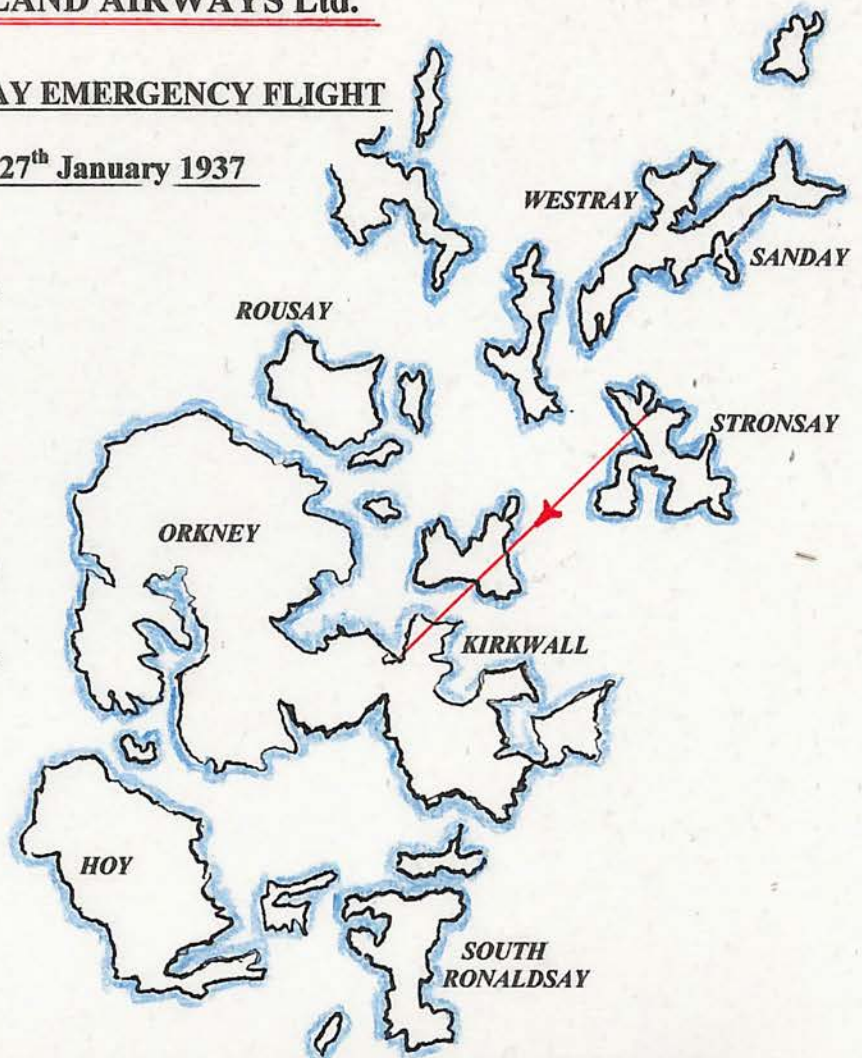
## HIGHLAND AIRWAYS Ltd.

### STRONSAY EMERGENCY FLIGHT

27<sup>th</sup> January 1937

On the 27<sup>th</sup> January 1937, Adam Smith, piloted a Highland Airways Dragon Rapid G-ADAJ from Inverness to Stronsay, via Kirkwall in appalling weather conditions.

Mail for Sanday was also carried but no landing could be made and the mail was returned to Kirkwall. Mail from Stronsay (as per this cover) bears date stamps between 22<sup>nd</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. This example has been endorsed by both the pilot and head postmaster at Kirkwall.



45/1/37  
First Air Mail from the Island of  
Stronsay, Orkney, carried by De  
Haviland Rapide, G-ADAJ.

*Adam Smith.*  
Pilot, Highland Airways.  
*a. Cameron*  
Head Postmaster, Kirkwall.



*W. R. MacKintosh, Esq.,*  
*Publisher*  
*The 'Orkadian' Office,*  
*Victoria Street,*  
*Kirkwall.*

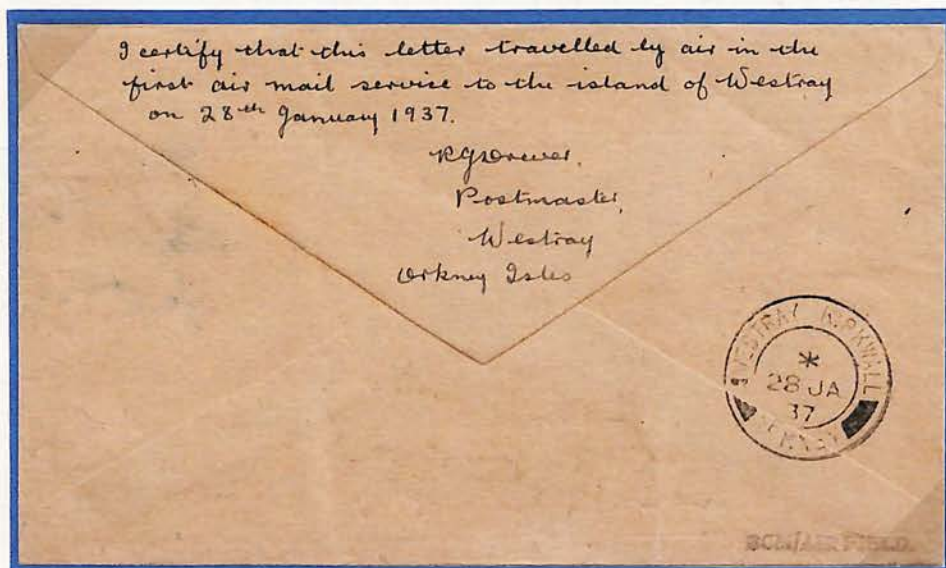
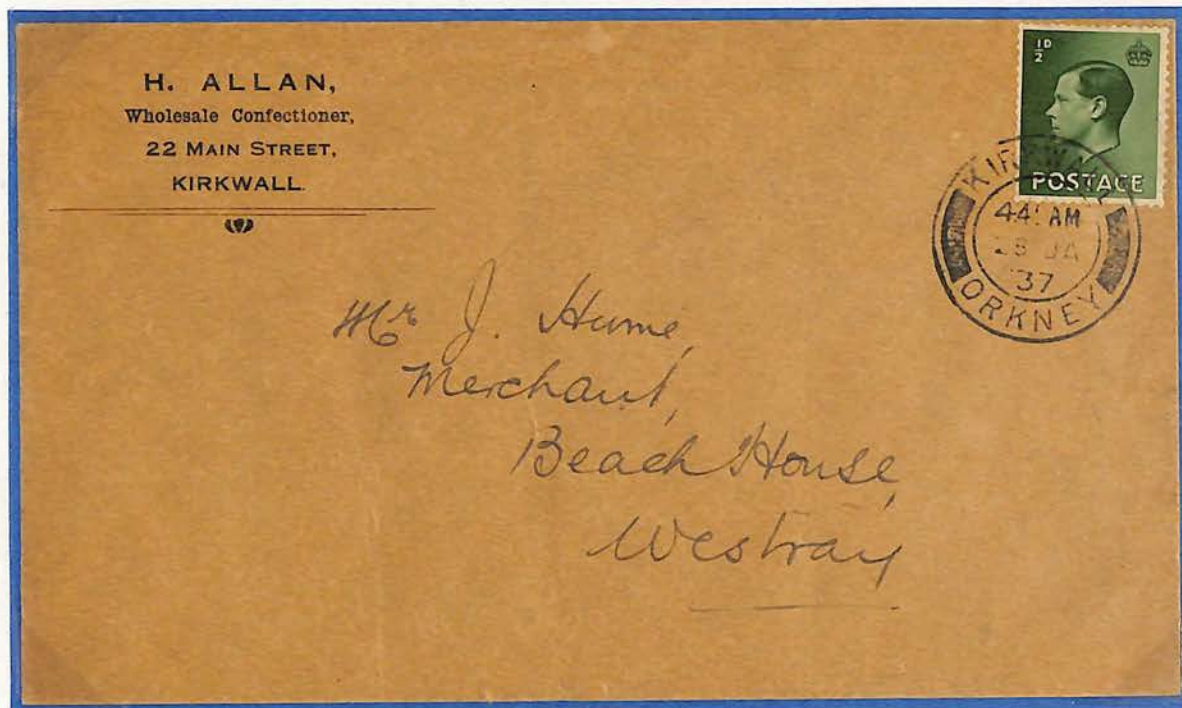


HIGHLAND AIRWAYS Ltd.

SECOND SANDAY

EMERGENCY FLIGHT

28<sup>th</sup> January 1937



Commercial cover carried on the Sanday flight as far as the isle of Westray  
where it was offloaded and endorsed by the post master.

## Second Sanday Emergency Flight

28<sup>th</sup> January 1937

Bad weather was continuing in the North of Scotland and a second flight was chartered by the Post Office. Captain Fresson flew from Kirkwall to Sanday and back calling at Westray and Rousay on route. This example from Sanday is one that had been held up since the 25<sup>th</sup>.



Messrs R. Garden Ltd  
Merchants  
Kirkwall



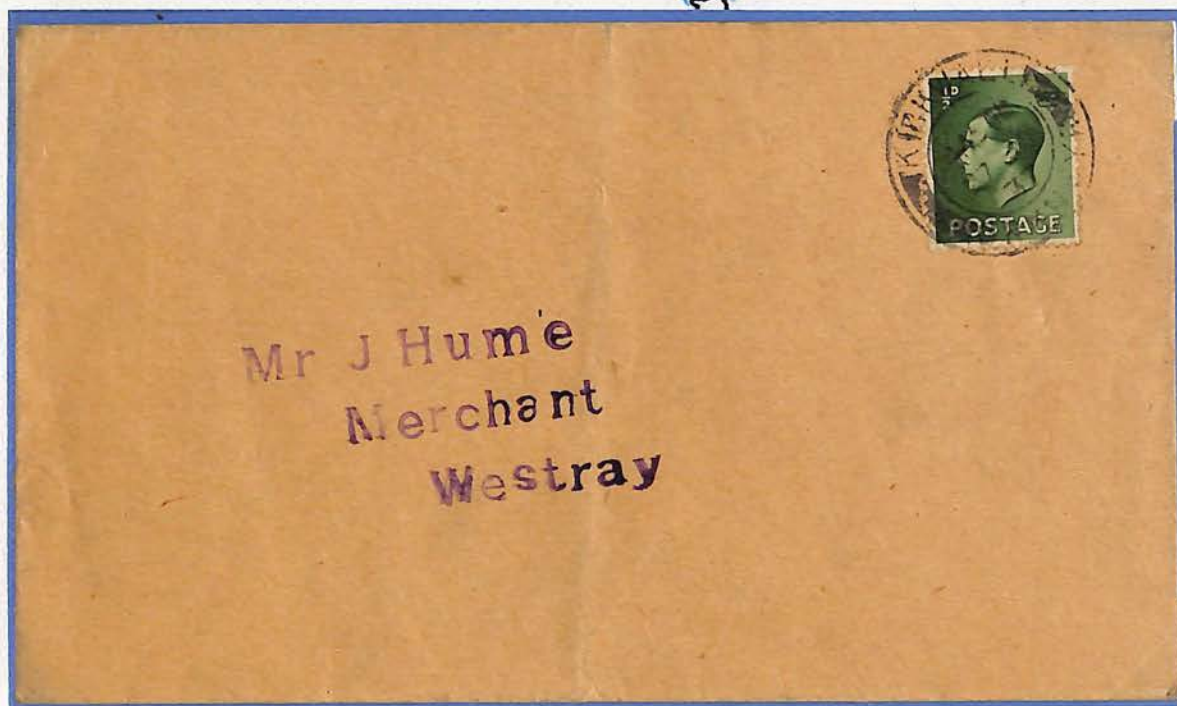
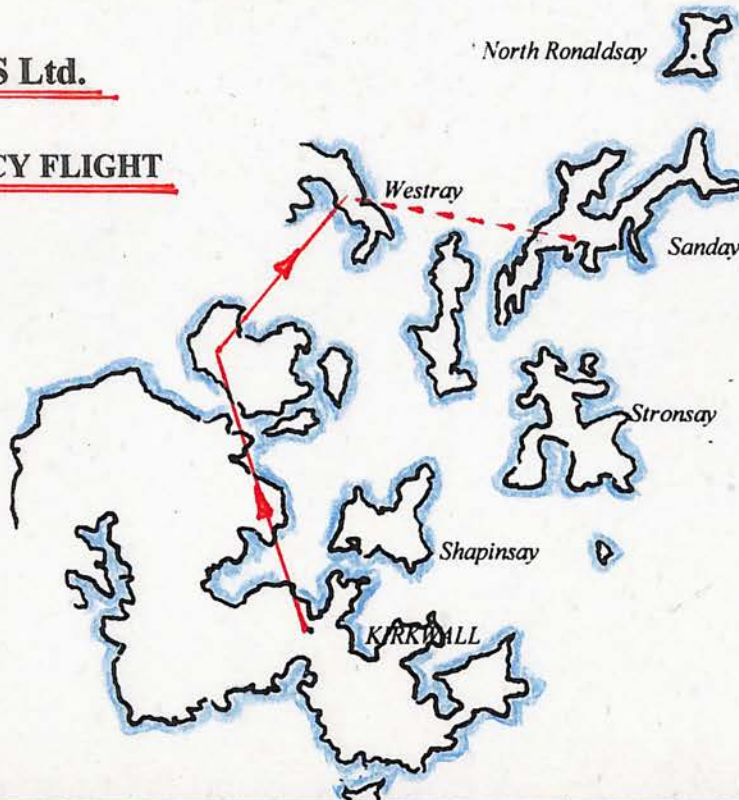


## HIGHLAND AIRWAYS Ltd.

### SECOND SANDAY EMERGENCY FLIGHT

28<sup>th</sup> January 1937

On the 28<sup>th</sup> January 1937 Capt. Fresson flew a De Havilland Dragon to Sanday in heavy snowstorms calling at Rousay and Westray where this item was received. It has been endorsed by the Postmaster at Westray.



I certify that this letter travelled by air in the first  
air mail service to the island of Westray on  
28<sup>th</sup> January 1937.

respects,  
Postmaster,  
Westray  
Orkney Isles

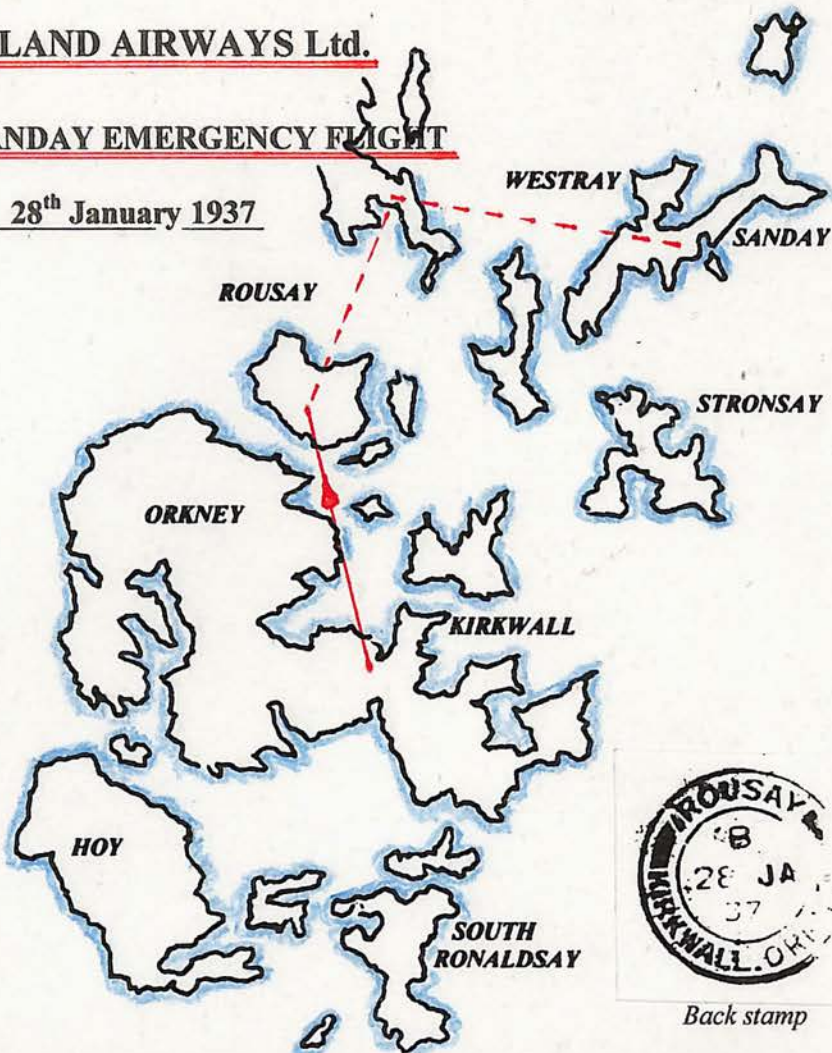


## HIGHLAND AIRWAYS Ltd.

### SECOND SANDAY EMERGENCY FLIGHT

28<sup>th</sup> January 1937

On 28<sup>th</sup> January 1937 a second emergency flight was made to Sanday as bad weather still continued and impossible to carry mail by sea. Capt. Fresson flew to Sanday an back calling at Westray and Rousay. Although 90kg of letters and parcels were conveyed examples are rather scarce. This cover carried to Rousay although philatelic bears the endorsement of the head postmaster, Kirkwall and that of Capt. Fresson



Back stamp



First Air Mail to the Island of  
Rousay, Orkney, carried by De Havilland  
Dragon, G-ACIT

Pilot, Highland Airways.

Head Postmaster, Kirkwall.



# HIGHLAND AIRWAYS Ltd.

## SECOND SANDAY EMERGENCY FLIGHT

28<sup>th</sup> January 1937

North Ronaldsay

Bad weather was continuing in the North of Scotland and a second flight was chartered by the Post Office. Capt. Fresson flew from Kirkwall to Sanday and back calling at Westray and Rousay this example being a philatelic souvenir signed by both Fresson and the Head Postmaster at Kirkwall.





**HIGHLAND AIRWAYS Ltd.**  
**SANDAY EMERGENCY FLIGHT**

**28<sup>th</sup> January 1937**

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 29, 1937**

Cover posted in Lady a parish on  
the island of Sanday

# PLANE SOLVES MAIL PROBLEM

**H**IGHLAND AIRWAYS, LTD., operators of the daily air mail service between Inverness, Wick, and Kirkwall, were brought into service yesterday by the Post Office to work off storm arrears of mail deliveries and collections in local islands of the Orkney group.

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## NO EXTRA CHARGE

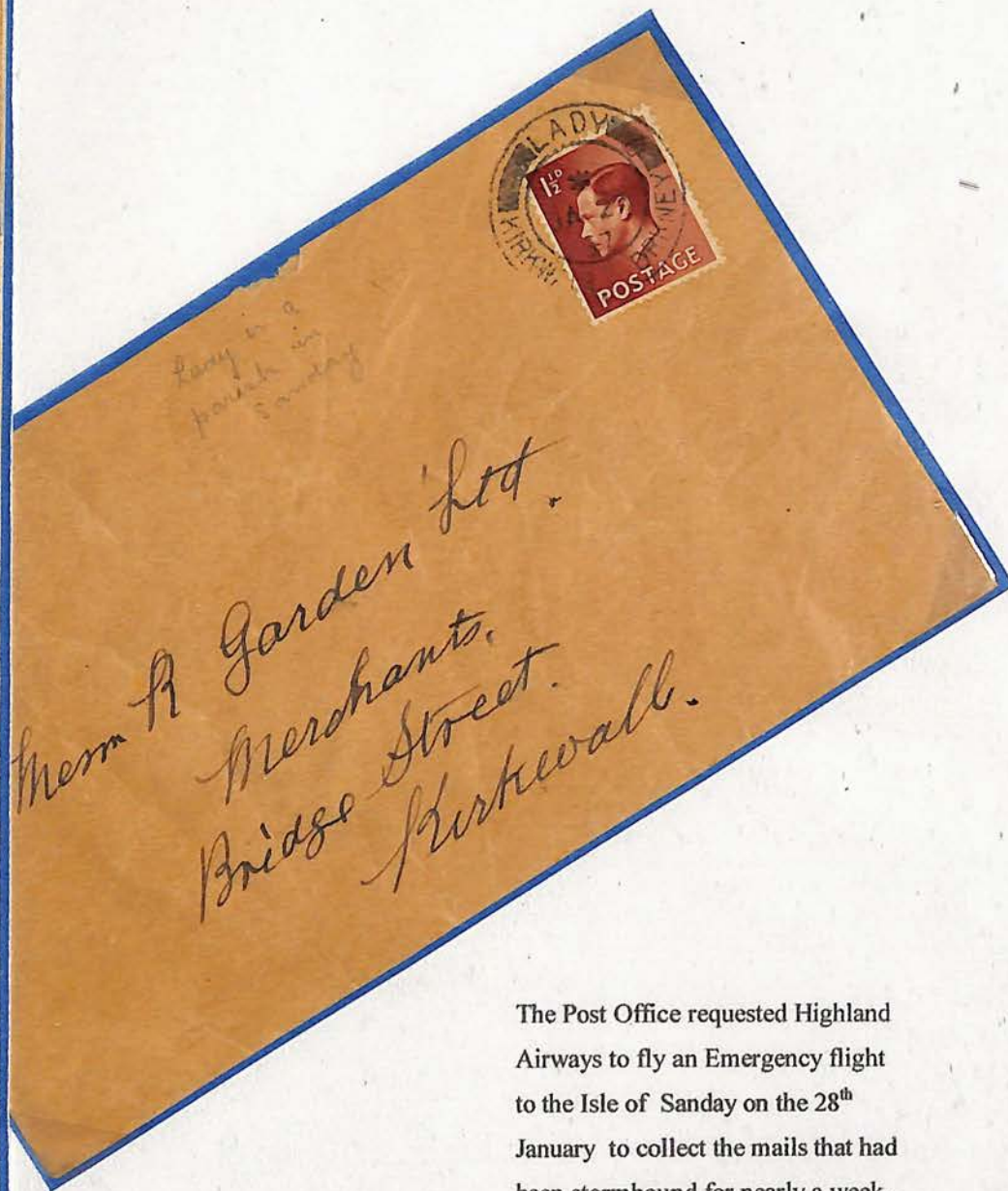
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Mr Alexander Cameron, head postmaster at Kirkwall, stated yesterday that the parcels and letters flown to Rousay had accumulated during the past four days.

Parcels and letters were yesterday brought in from Rousay, and letters only were brought from Sanday and Westray.

A flight was also made yesterday to Longhope, in the Orkney south isles with passengers who had been unable to go to their work there since last week-end.

No mails were carried, as the post office secured the services of a tug to take the storm accumulation of Hoy, Melsetter, and Longhope mails to Stromness, and return the inward mails from those places.



The Post Office requested Highland Airways to fly an Emergency flight to the Isle of Sanday on the 28<sup>th</sup> January to collect the mails that had been stormbound for nearly a week.



ABERDEEN AIRWAYS Ltd.

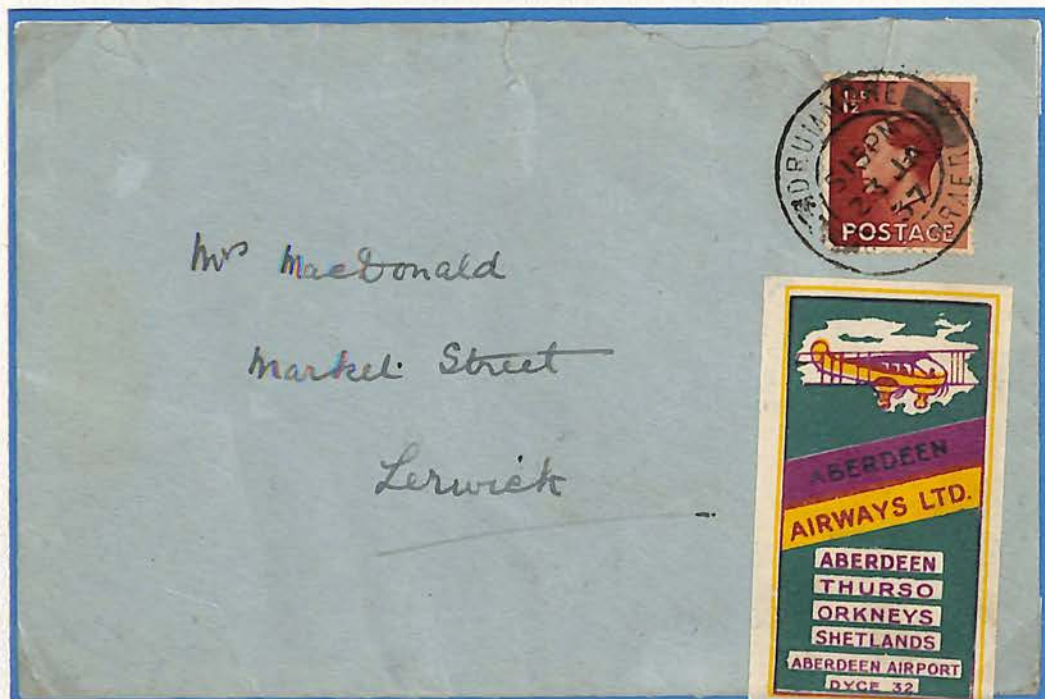
(Gander Dower)

SHETLAND EMERGENCY FLIGHT

29<sup>th</sup> January 1937



During January 1937, the weather was so bad that the normal sea links to the Shetland Isles could not be maintained and mail began to pile up. After it had been stormbound for a fortnight, the Post Office chartered Aberdeen Airways Ltd., to make an emergency mail flight to relieve the situation.





ABERDEEN AIRWAYS LTD.

SHETLAND EMERGENCY FLIGHT

29TH JANUARY 1937



Commercial covers dated  
22nd & 24th January 1937  
which were carried on  
the emergency flight. It  
is probable that the ad-  
vertising labels were  
added at a later date.



**ABERDEEN AIRWAYS Ltd.**

**SHETLAND EMERGENCY FLIGHT**

**29<sup>TH</sup> January 1937**

If undelivered please return to  
THOS. COOK & SON, LTD.  
HEAD OFFICE -  
BERKELEY STREET, PICCADILLY,  
LONDON, W. 1.

WHENEVER AND WHEREVER YOU TRAVEL  
USE  
COOK'S TRAVELLERS' CHEQUES.

E.J.F. Clausen Esq.,  
Greenfield House,  
Berwick,  
SHETLAND ISLES.

*Henry Vallance*  
*J. Gordon Hay*



Cover carried from Aberdeen to Thurso in Dragon G-HDFI  
(Capt. F.O. Gordon Hay), and then in Dragon G-ACAN  
(Capt. H. Vallance). Their signatures and publicity label being  
added at a later date. Note, the T.C. perfin on a coil stamp.

ABERDEEN PRESS AND JOURNAL, SATURDAY, JANUARY 30, 1937.

## NORTH-EAST IN GRIP OF FRESH STORM

### ISLANDS OF SNOW ON UPPER SIDE AND DONSDIE

Two inches of snow fell in the evening. The rain added. Banners fell. A white depth yesterday increased throughout the day. The road as

about Buchan. Considerable number of cars, Byth and the completely

not closed, but that cars and fittings made

normal quite a lifters would

have been at the Firth of Forth herring fishing this week, but they have been held up by the storm. No white fish have been landed at Peterhead for the past fortnight, and in the previous week there were supplies on only one day.

#### AT FRASERBURGH

There was a fall of about four inches at Fraserburgh. In the outlying district there was a good deal of blowing and some of the side roads were blocked, but bus traffic was being carried on.

Fishing operations have been at a standstill for a week. A heavy sea runs at the harbour entrance, and half a dozen Aberdeen trawlers and five cargo steamers have been stormbound since the 18th inst.

Owing to drifting the Tomintoul-

Aberdeen Airways, Ltd., have no mail contract to Orkney and Shetland, but in response to a telephone message from the Aberdeen postmaster yesterday a seven-seater Dragon machine was got ready.

The pilot, Mr James Hay, set out on the journey north at one o'clock. The flight was distinctly hazardous. In addition to snowstorms, he encountered a strong cross wind, but reached Thurso in the good time of 1½ hours. There Mr Hay was relieved by Mr Henry Vallance, who is in charge of the regular airliner which plies between Thurso and Orkney.

Mr Vallance started off for the Shetlands. Unfortunately, Sumburgh wireless station was out of order. His troubles were increased owing to the fact that the ground at Sumburgh was under water. Conditions were so bad that he had to fly about 200 feet above the water most of the way.

He succeeded in making a landing at Sumburgh about 4.30 in the afternoon.

#### CAR HEADLIGHTS

After ten minutes, Pilot Vallance set out with another load of mail for Thurso. Again he had to fly low. He reached Quanterness, Orkney, two miles from Kirkwall, at 5.30. In order to permit him to land, people there had to manoeuvre three cars into position so that the headlights could play on the landing ground.

The mails which he carried were later transferred to Kirkwall, and will, weather permitting, be brought to Aberdeen to-day.

With a slight improvement in the



ALLIED AIRWAYS Ltd.

(Gander Dower)

Shetland Emergency Flight

29 January 1937



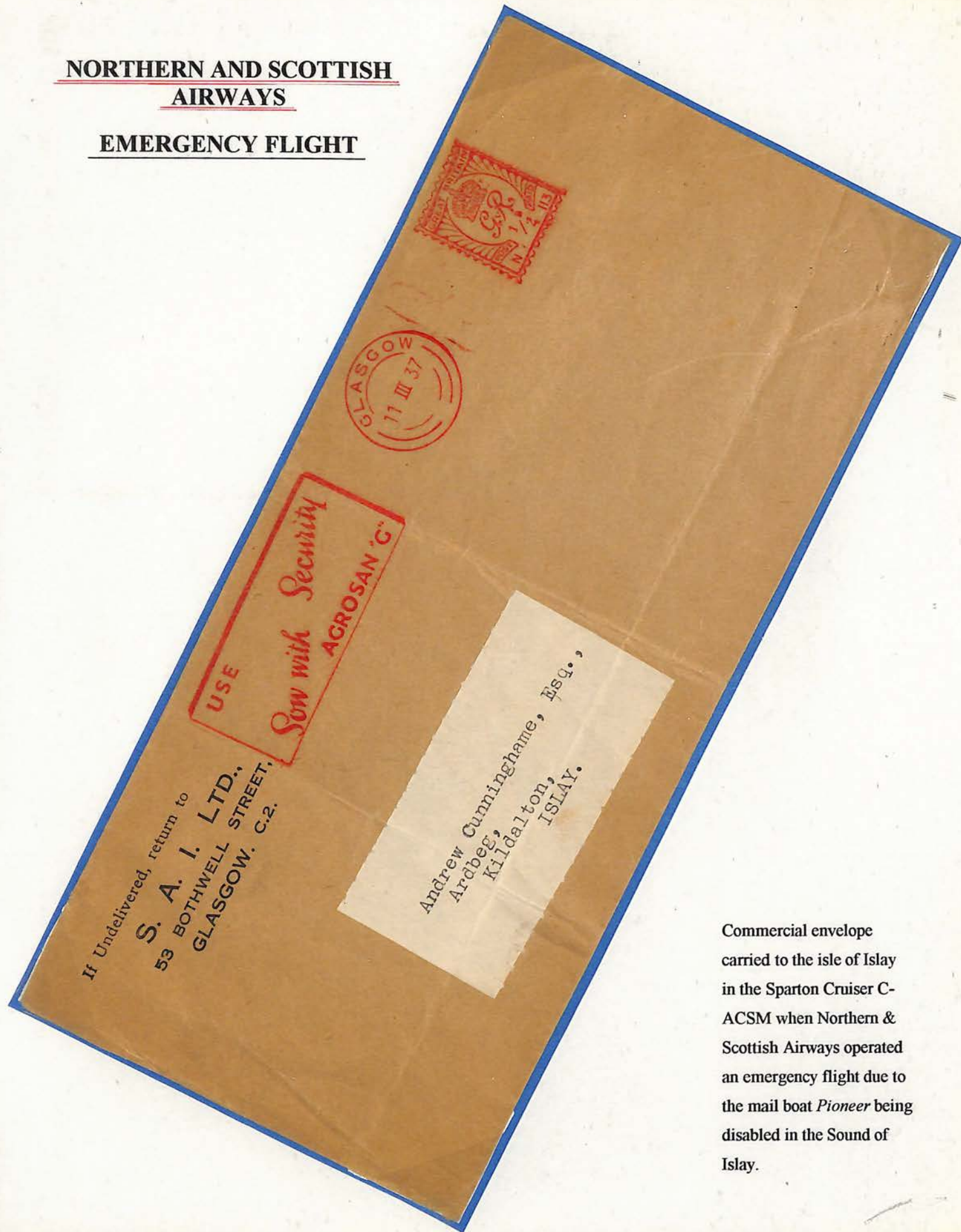
Isle of Lewis - Shetland Isles

Cover carried on the emergency flight by Aberdeen Airways Ltd. on the 29th January, the mail for Shetlands had been accumulating for a fortnight due to the extremely bad weather preventing the mail ship making the crossing. This particular cover has come from the Isle of Lewis on the western isles (Stornoway) by mail boat, across country to Aberdeen and thence flown to Sumburgh on Shetland.



NORTHERN AND SCOTTISH  
AIRWAYS

EMERGENCY FLIGHT



If Undelivered, return to  
**S. A. I. LTD.,**  
53 BOTHWELL STREET,  
GLASGOW. C.2.

Andrew Cunninghame, Esq.,  
Ardbeg,  
Kildalton,  
ISLAY.

Commercial envelope  
carried to the isle of Islay  
in the Sparton Cruiser C-  
ACSM when Northern &  
Scottish Airways operated  
an emergency flight due to  
the mail boat *Pioneer* being  
disabled in the Sound of  
Islay.



NORTHERN AND SCOTTISH AIRWAYS

EMERGENCY FLIGHT

ISLAY - CAMPBELTOWN

MARCH 12th, 1937



Under bad weather conditions ,with snow on the ground, the aircraft a triple engined Spartan Cruiser, G-ACSM, manned by Chief Pilot Captain David Barclay and Wireless Officer Hughes departed from Renfrew at 9.01am and returned at 12.21pm having completed the four runs (240 miles in 3 hrs 20 mins, which included four take offs and landings,) The total weight of mail was 943lbs carried in 43 bags. Only a small philatelic mail was carried, 43 covers over this stage.



AIR MAIL CARRIED BY NORTHERN and SCOTTISH AIRWAYS LTD of RENFREW.

12th MARCH, 1937

First occasion on which Mails have been officially  
carried by Air between Renfrew, Cambeltown and Islay

Itinary of Flight and other particulars

In consequence of the Mailboat "Pioneer" being disabled and driven to a dangerous anchorage off shore in the Sound of Islay, NEGOTIATIONS WERE COMPLETED BETWEEN OFFICIALS OF THE G.P.O. AND THE DIRECTORS OF NORTHERN AND SCOTTISH AIRWAYS, RENFREW to carry mails by air between Renfrew/Islay, Islay/Campbeltown, Cambeltown/Islay and Islay/Renfrew on Friday 12th March.

Under bad weather conditions, with snow on the ground, the aircraft, a triple engine Spartan Cruiser, G-ACSM, manned by Chief Pilot Captain David Barclay and Wireless Officer F. Hughes, departed from Renfrew at 9.01 on the morning of 12th March, 1937 and returned to Renfrew at 12.21 p.m. having completed the four runs - 240 miles 9 in 3 hours 20 minutes, including four departures and four arrivals. Forty-Three bags of mail were carried, making a total weight of 943 lbs, details as follows:-

<u>Renfrew/Islay - 90 miles - 32 minutes.*</u>		<u>Number</u>	<u>Weight</u>
		<u>Mail Bags</u>	<u>Mail</u>
Dep. Renfrew 9.01	Arr. Islay 9.33	26	571 lbs.
<u>Islay/Campbeltown - 30 miles - 25 minutes.*</u>			
Dep. Islay 9.45	Arr. C'Town 10.10	1	13 lbs.
<u>Campbeltown/Islay - 30 miles - 15 minutes.*</u>			
Dep. C'Town 10.15	Arr. Islay 10.30	12	293 lbs.
<u>Islay/Renfrew - 90 miles - 66 minutes.*</u>			
Dep. Islay 11.15	Arr. Renfrew 12.21	44	66 lbs.
		43	943 lbs.

\* The difference in flying time over the same distance is accounted for by the direction of the prevailing wind.

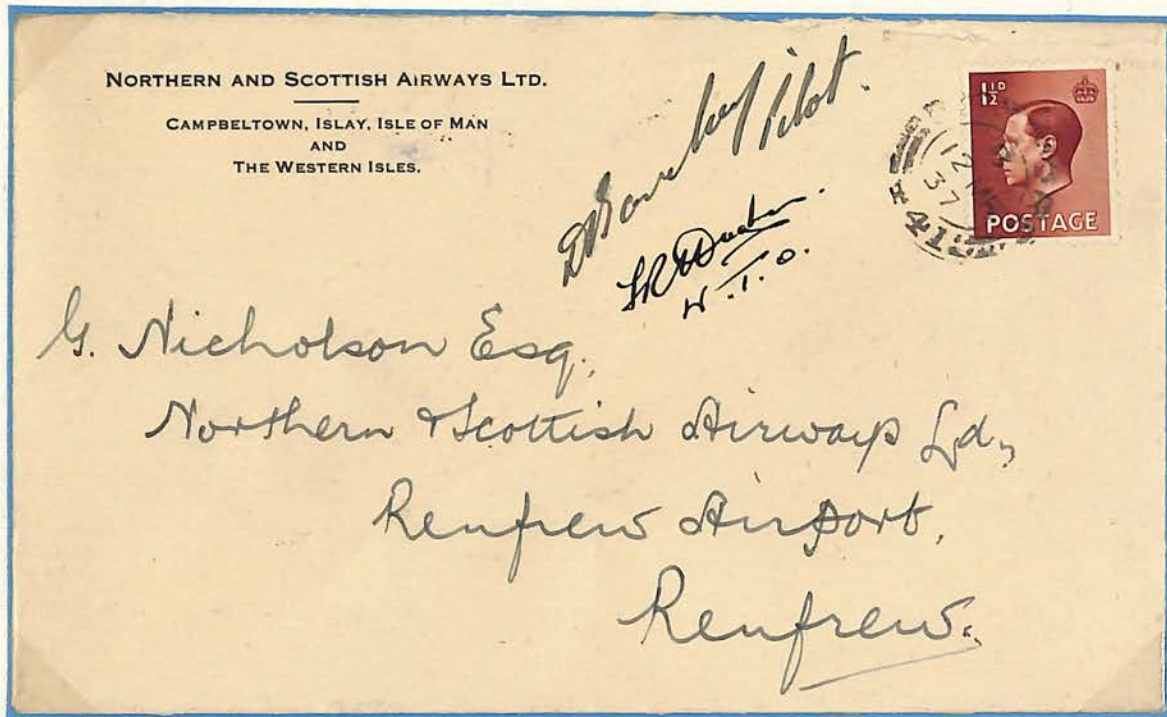


NORTHERN AND SCOTTISH AIRWAYS

EMERGENCY FLIGHT

ISLAY - RENFREW

MARCH 12th, 1937



One of fifty covers carried on the return flight.





NORTHERN AND SCOTTISH AIRWAYS

EMERGENCY FLIGHT

RENFREW - ISLAY

MARCH 12th, 1937



George Nicholson, Esq.,  
Messrs. Northern & Scottish Airways Ltd.,  
Glenegedale Airport,  
Islay.

*W. Barclay*  
*Pilot*

*H. T. O.*  
*H.T.O.*



ex Pegasus

This was the first occasion on which mails have been officially carried between Renfrew, Cambeltown and Islay. It was sanctioned due to the mailboat 'Pioneer' being disabled and driven to a dangerous anchorage off shore in the Sound of Islay.



# NORTHERN AND SCOTTISH AIRWAYS EMERGENCY FLIGHT



*Mails being unloaded  
at Renfrew*

*Unloading at Renfrew*

W. Gairdner (Director)  
Capt. D. Barclay (Chief Pilot)  
Wireless Officer Hughes  
C. Lubb (Chief Engineer)



*Loading at Renfrew*



NORTHERN AND SCOTTISH AIRWAYS

EMERGENCY FLIGHT

RENFREW - CAMPBELTOWN

March 12th, 1937.



Loading the 26 bags of mail (571lb) flown  
from Renfrew to Islay and Campbeltown.



PHONE. SUTTON COLDFIELD 1748  
PERSONAL CALLS OUTSIDE BUSINESS  
HOURS. SUTTON COLDFIELD 2311

FRANCIS J. FIELD,  
AIR MAIL CONSULTANT  
LICENSED VALUER  
AND  
EXPERTISER

SUTTON COLDFIELD,  
Nr. BIRMINGHAM,  
ENGLAND.

.....193.....

FIRST OFFICIAL AIR MAIL  
TO NORTH RONALDSHAY. (Orkneys).

This cover is one of about 16 that exist (with special cachet, autograph and correct backstamp) from the first emergency mail flight direct to the island. Mails on the emergency flight of two years ago were flown only to Sanday and forwarded by boat.

This flight of 17th. Dec. 1938 was officially sanctioned to enable the islanders to receive in good time a proportion of their Christmas mails, and return despatches were flown to Kirkwall.

Several thousands of covers were on board but, before their significance was realised, the stamps had been torn off as everyone in the Orkneys is saving used stamps for sale to help finance an extension to Kirkwall hospital.

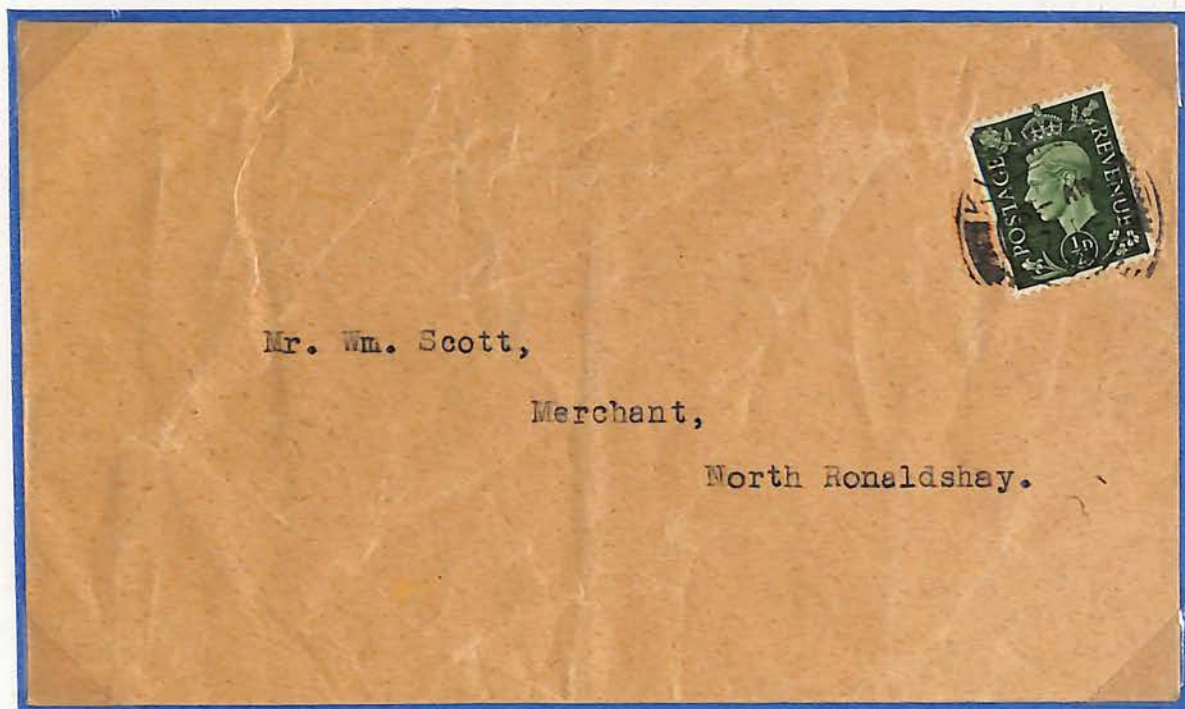
Details will be published in the March "Aero Field".

Appointments to view collections, etc., may be arranged in London or Provinces  
FEES. Valuation, 5% of value of stamp, lot or collection, minimum 2/6 (6oc)  
Expertising, 1/3 (3oc) per stamp. Collections, etc., by arrangement.



**SCOTTISH AIRWAYS**  
**EMERGENCY MAIL FLIGHT**  
**NORTH RONALDSHAY - KIRKWALL**

Mail for North Ronaldshay was normally conveyed by boat from the Isle of Sanday. Owing to extremely bad weather mail had accumulated at Kirkwall and Sanday and the GPO chartered Scottish Airways Ltd. to carry it. In all 253kg of mail was carried on this return flight to Kirkwall, but examples of it are very rarely seen.





## ALLIED AIRWAYS Ltd.

(Gander Dower)

### SHETLAND EMERGENCY FLIGHT

29<sup>th</sup> January 1937

8

THE ORKNEY HERALD, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1937.

#### 'PLANE'S RISKY NIGHT LANDING AT KIRKWALL

#### Flight to Shetland and Back in Snowstorm

##### CAR HEADLAMPS ENABLE PILOT TO LAND

Mr Henry Vallance, a 21-year-old pilot with Aberdeen Airways, Ltd., carried out a daring flight from Thurso to Shetland with almost 1000 lbs. of mails on Friday. Flying a Dragon machine he had to fight a gale, which was accompanied by heavy flurries of snow, and on his return flight darkness added to his difficulties.

Between 5 and 5.30 p.m. Kirkwall people heard the plane circling overhead, its white, red, and green lights showing in the darkness. A heavy snow shower was falling at the time and there was considerable anxiety as to how the pilot was going to make a safe landing. Relief was the general feeling when it was learned that the plane had landed safely at Quanterness. Three motor-cars, with head lamps turned on the landing field made the pilot's task less risky. Mr Vallance had carried a bag of mails for the south from Shetland and this was rushed to the s.s. St Magnus which was on the point of leaving Kirkwall Pier.

Newspaper cutting giving a full report on Allied Airways Ltd. emergency flight to the Shetland Isles, flown by Henry Vallance.

##### Pilot's Story.

In an interview with the "Orkney Herald" Mr Vallance who remained at Kirkwall over night, gave the following account of his flight.

"One of our machines a Dragon, piloted by Jimmy Hay came up from Aberdeen with the mails for Shetland, and at Thurso the mails were transferred to my machine. There were 989 lbs. of first-class mail. I took off for Shetland at 5 minutes to 3 and reached Sumburgh Aerodrome non-stop about 4.30, a flight of an hour and a half. The weather was quite good. The wind was against me and there were occasional troublesome snow showers. The visibility was good, however. On the return flight I left at 20 minutes to 5 and landed at Quanterness, Kirkwall, at 5.30. Coming back the wind was in my favour. I encountered a very nasty snow shower over Kirkwall. I had to circle the town a number of times until it passed over.

"It was getting quite dark when I was at Start Point, Sanday, but it wasn't absolutely black when I reached Kirkwall. The sky was fairly clear between the snow showers.

"I was in touch with Kirkwall Radio Station and I informed them I intended to land at Quanterness, and was reassured that cars would be there to give me light for my landing. When I was over the landing field I saw that the cars were there all right, one pointing down wind, one at the western boundary of the aerodrome and the third indicating the wind-sock. I did not have much trouble landing. The ground was quite good and the snow helped matters a lot by showing up the ground.

"I brought one bag of mails back with me and it was put aboard the St Magnus.

##### Landing Field Liable to Flood.

"When I went to Sumburgh I didn't intend coming back that night. I intended to remain there overnight, but the officials there informed me that the landing field was liable to flood completely during the night and it would be dangerous to leave the machine there. The ground there, too, was unsuitable for parking the machine, being too soft to get the pickets in. So I really had no option but to fly back."

Mr Vallance's account is a little too modest. Other views were that in the conditions he brought off a very fine piece of flying and his night landing was particularly well carried out.

The three cars taken out to assist Mr Vallance were supplied by Messrs Mackay & Wallace, Castle Street, who were informed by the radio station of Mr Vallance's intention to land at Quanterness.

Mr A. C. Grant, West Castle Street, car driver with Aberdeen Airways, told how while at tea he switched on his wireless set at random and heard Mr Vallance trying to get in touch with Kirkwall Radio Station. Mr Grant's wireless is kept tuned in for the 'planes. He immediately 'phoned the radio station and asked where the 'plane was bound for. On being informed that Mr Vallance was going to land at Quanterness he went to Messrs Mackay and Wallace's Garage and joined the cars that were going to the 'drome. The cars were on the scene in good time.

Mr Vallance, who is a native of Govan, Glasgow, was a student at the College of Aeronautical Engineering Brooklands and Chelsea, and took up flying with Brooklands Aero Club. After passing the usual tests and acquiring his pilot's certificate he joined up with Aberdeen Airways, Ltd. He has been 4 years with the company and is at present stationed at Thurso. He carries out the daily Thurso-Stromness run.



# Opening O £50,000 £ Is Dela

—BY MARSHY P

A MARSHY playground is ho  
the new £50,000 school a  
February 1, was originally p  
which teaching would start i  
was learned yesterday tha

## PLANE SOLVES MAIL PROBLEM

**H**IGHLAND AIRWAYS, LTD., operators of the daily air mail service between Inverness, Wick, and Kirkwall, were brought into service yesterday by the Post Office to work off storm arrears of mail deliveries and collections in local islands of the Orkney group.

Following the previous day's mail service of letters to Stronsay, Rousay, Westray, and Sanday Islands were served yesterday.

Letters and parcels were taken to Rousay, and 60lbs. of letters only to Westray and Sanday.

### NO EXTRA CHARGE

As with the daily air mail from Inverness to Wick and Kirkwall, no extra charge is levied on letters or parcels carried by air in the Orkneys, and there is nothing to identify a letter or parcel with what is to these little communities their first air mail.

Mr Alexander Cameron, head postmaster at Kirkwall, stated yesterday that the parcels and letters flown to Rousay had accumulated during the past four days.

Parcels and letters were yesterday brought in from Rousay, and letters only were brought from Sanday and Westray.

A flight was also made yesterday to Longhope, in the Orkney south isles with passengers who had been unable to go to their work there since last week-end.

No mails were carried, as the post office secured the services of a



SHETLAND EMERGENCY FLIGHT

29TH JANUARY 1937

E ORCADIAN, THURS

**MAILS TO SHETLAND  
BY AIR**

**EMERGENCY FLIGHT OF  
ABERDEEN AIRWAYS PILOT**

Mails were flown from Aberdeen to Shetland, and from Shetland to Orkney on Friday. Two pilots and planes took part in this work. Flying Officer J. Gordon Hay, of Aberdeen Airways, Ltd., conveying the consignment from Aberdeen to Thurso in the De Havilland "Dragon" liner, G-HDFI, whilst Pilot Henry Vallance, in the "Dragon," G-ACAN, belonging to the same company, carried out the Thurso-Shetland, and Shetland-Orkney parts of the contract. Snow showers and high winds were encountered on the way from Aberdeen to Thurso. The Thurso-Shetland section of the flight was accomplished in more favourable conditions, but the Shetland-Orkney part had to be completed in darkness, with snow showers rendering visibility poor at times.

**Pilot Interviewed.**

Interviewed by reporters at Kirkwall on Friday evening, Mr. Vallance, the 21 years old pilot, said: "Jimmy Hay flew the 989 lbs. of northward mails from Aberdeen to Thurso, where I was stationed for the Pentland Firth daily service to Orkney. The mails were transferred to my plane, and I left Thurso at five minutes to three, direct for Sumburgh. I reached Sumburgh at 4.30 p.m., and found the aerodrome flooded, except for a narrowish strip on the south side. A landing was easily effected, however, and a Lerwick motor mail van relieved me of my cargo. The van had brought with it one mail bag for me to take south, this being a supplementary mail, following the despatch of the main Shetland mail by steamer during last night. If returning south, I was to try to catch up the steamer at Kirkwall and put this bag on board.

**Flood Danger to Craft.**

"My intention really had been to stay the night in Shetland, as dusk was falling when I got there. At Sumburgh, however, the wireless station men told me not to stay overnight, as the aerodrome was liable to be entirely flooded during the night. Further, the ground is too soft to get airplane screw pickets fastened satisfactorily. I had no option, therefore, but to go up again and make for Orkney. I left after only five minutes on Shetland soil.

"The northward flight from Thurso had been through quite good weather, occasional snow showers making visibility poor. Between the showers, however, visibility was good. I was in touch with the Air Ministry's mobile radio station at Kirkwall all the time, and was talking also to the Ministry's station at Sumburgh. I depended mostly on the Kirkwall station, though.

Newspaper cutting from the

"ORCADIAN" Thursday 4th Feb 1937

**Snowstorm and Darkness.**

"Darkness was complete before I reached Kirkwall, despite the fact that I had the wind in my favour coming south and made remarkably good progress compared with the northward flight, when, of course, my machine had been loaded almost to capacity. From Start Point lighthouse, Sanday, right on to Kirkwall, I had whirling snow as well as darkness to contend with.

"For some time I had to circle round about or over Kirkwall, and then when the snow ceased I landed at Quanterness, just fifty minutes after leaving Sumburgh.

"To enable me to land at Quanterness, three motor cars had been placed on the field in such a way that their lights shone—one showing up the wind-sock, one revealing the aerodrome boundary, and the other's lights pointing downwind.

"The snow-covered ground was a great help in making this landing in darkness. My mails from Shetland, a light consignment, compared with the northward cargo, were quickly taken off to Kirkwall, and put on board the St. Magnus, which, I was glad to see, had still not sailed.

"We anchored my plane for the night with the screw pickets and that was that."

**Groundsman's Part.**

Mr. A. C. Grant, the Kirkwall car driver for Aberdeen Airways, Ltd., stated to the reporters that Highland Airways, Ltd., had a car in readiness at their Wideford Aerodrome, in case Mr. Vallance should wish to land there. Mr. Vallance's wireless instructions, however, had been to expect him at Quanterness. "I kept myself in touch with his progress during the afternoon," he said, "by means of the radio receiver provided for that purpose. As soon as I heard his final conversation with the radio station at Mayfield, I telephoned the station, confirmed my instructions, and proceeded to arrange the motor cars on the field. We had to wait ten minutes or so while a bad snow shower passed over, the plane meanwhile circling somewhere above the storm. We could hear it most of the time, but of course, could not see its lights. Then when the snow stopped, the plane glided down and landed. We got rid of the mails and then screwed down the machine for that night.

**Pilot's Career.**

Mr. Henry Vallance, a Govan, Glasgow, man, secured his early training at Brooklands and Chelsea College of Aeronautical Engineering, subsequently taking up flying at Brooklands Aero Club, under whose tutors he qualified as a pilot. On returning to Scotland, he joined Aberdeen Airways, Ltd. It is four years since he became associated with the flying side of aviation, and he is only twenty-one years of age.



## HIGHLAND AIRWAYS Ltd.

### THIRD NORTH RONALDSHAY

#### EMERGENCY FLIGHT

THE ORKNEY HERALD, TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 1947.

5

Teacher and pupils

The first flight was on charter by the Post Office, and Capt. Fresson took 700 lbs. of mail out, fetching back 460 lbs. He also took from the island Miss Isobel Scott, an Edinburgh University student, and Miss Jean Dawson, of Aberdeen University.

In the second outward flight Captain Fresson conveyed Miss Margaret Lennie, Nearhouse, Tankerness, the North Ronaldshay assistant teacher; Mr David Taylor, the Kirkwall cattle dealer; and Corporal John Swanney, North Gravity. Corporal Swanney, who has nine years' service in the R.A.F., and was 3½ years' a prisoner of the Japanese, has been stationed in Shetland. Proceeding on leave to North Ronaldshay, he was stormbound three days in Shetland and then nine days in Sanday. He transfers shortly to Leuchars, Fife.

On the second inward flight, the plane brought the following pupils of Kirkwall Grammar School:—Jane Scott (15), Cavan, and 32 Dundas Crescent, Kirkwall; Rona Thomson (14), Peckhole, and of "Rognvaldshay," Finstown; Ida Scott (16), Cavan, and 32 Dundas Crescent, Kirkwall (sister of Janet); Sibella Thomsons (15), Neven, and 2 Willowburn Road, Kirkwall; John Thomson (14), South Ness, and 55 Albert Street, Kirkwall; Thomas Tulloch (15), North Ness, and 29 Albert Street, Kirkwall; and William Tulloch (15), Upper Linay, and 29 Albert Street, Kirkwall.

Miss Sibella Thomson now leaves school to work in the house of a Kirkwall doctor.

On the third outward flight there were no passengers, and the following seven travelled to Kirkwall on the return journey:—

Miss Mary Tulloch, Kirbest, the Orkney poultry instructress for the North of Scotland College of Agriculture at Kirkwall; Miss Mary Tulloch, Sandbach, a servant at Messigate Farm, Tankerness, and her sister, Miss Bella Tulloch, who works in the office of Messrs George Bain, painters, Kirkwall; Miss Netta Tulloch, Milldam, in the employment of the Pearl Assurance Coy., Kirkwall; Mr Peter Swanney, North Gravity, civilian apprentice clerk at Kirkwall Police Station; Mr William Rendall, a Papa Westray man, newly resigned from the Lighthouse Service and recently stationed in North Ronaldshay; and L.A.C. Peter Swanney, R.A.F., returning to Plymouth after being home on leave.

## Destroyer and Aircraft Aid Storm-Beleaguered Islanders

By destroyer and aircraft two storm-beleaguered islands were relieved from Kirkwall last week. On Thursday afternoon the destroyer Nepal left with two months' supplies of food for Fair Isle, and, by a superb piece of flying on Tuesday, Capt. E. E. Fresson brought passengers and mails to and from North Ronaldshay, which had been cut off for eighteen days.

### SKILFUL USE OF FLOODED AIRFIELD

Three times on Tuesday Capt. E. E. Fresson brought his D.H. Rapide aircraft into the small, flooded landing field at North Ronaldshay, the island's first contact with the outside world for eighteen days. The landings and take-offs were spectacular, spray thrown up by the aircraft practically blotting it from sight. And they were exceeding skillfully made. Taking a Rapide in and out of the little field—originally made for the slower D.H. Dragon aircraft—would have been difficult under good conditions; and Tuesday's conditions were far from good.

Capt. Fresson, who is North of Scotland Area Manager of British European Airways, flew without a wireless operator and doing his own radio work, in order to save weight. When he arrived over the aerodrome on his first flight he found on the dry patches of the field hundreds of the North Ronaldshay sheep which had been forced by the weather from the beaches, where they usually live. He had to circle the island till the islanders drove away the sheep.

Apart from mails and parcels there were 16 outward and 3 inward storm-stayed passengers. This necessitated three trip, accomplished in about three hours.

Parcels of fresh meat were received, for which the recipients were exceedingly grateful, and also supplies of baker's yeast, which had become exhausted on the island.

Extract from the Orkney Herald of the emergency flight by Capt. Fresson on the 14<sup>th</sup> January



# MISSED BOAT— MAIL BY AIR

By GORDON BISHOP.

ISLAY had its first mail by air from Glasgow yesterday when mailbag missed the boat.

Northern and Scottish Airways have been trying for almost a year to complete negotiations with the Post Office for an air mail contract between Glasgow and the Western Isles.

Yesterday they were requested by the Post Office to fly to Islay a bag of mail which had missed the boat.

The Post Office, however, had to send the mailbag as freight.

*St. Bork. 4 Sept 1936*  
**SHIP**

*Daily mail dated 5 Sept*  
**Happy  
Clyde a**

**S**HIPYARDS on the Clyde parts of the North, which was empty despair, are in trade than they have known.

Clydeside has welcomed the river a ship a day, the fourth place at the yard of Lobnitz and

The order-books of the bigger than in the past six years, and to approach that of 1930, a peak period.

## Mail Missed Boat— Sent by 'Plane

An aeroplane was used yesterday for the first time to carry mail to the remote island of Jura, in the Inner Hebrides.

The mail would normally have gone by Western Isles steamer, but 18lb. of letters were not discovered until after the steamer had sailed.

Post Office officials, anxious to maintain the normal service, got into touch with the Northern and Scottish Airways at Renfrew Aerodrome, and the delayed mail was flown to the island of Islay and carried from there to Jura by ferry.

A Post Office official said yesterday: "This is the first time we have used an aeroplane to carry mail to any of the islands, and fortunately our experiment was successful."

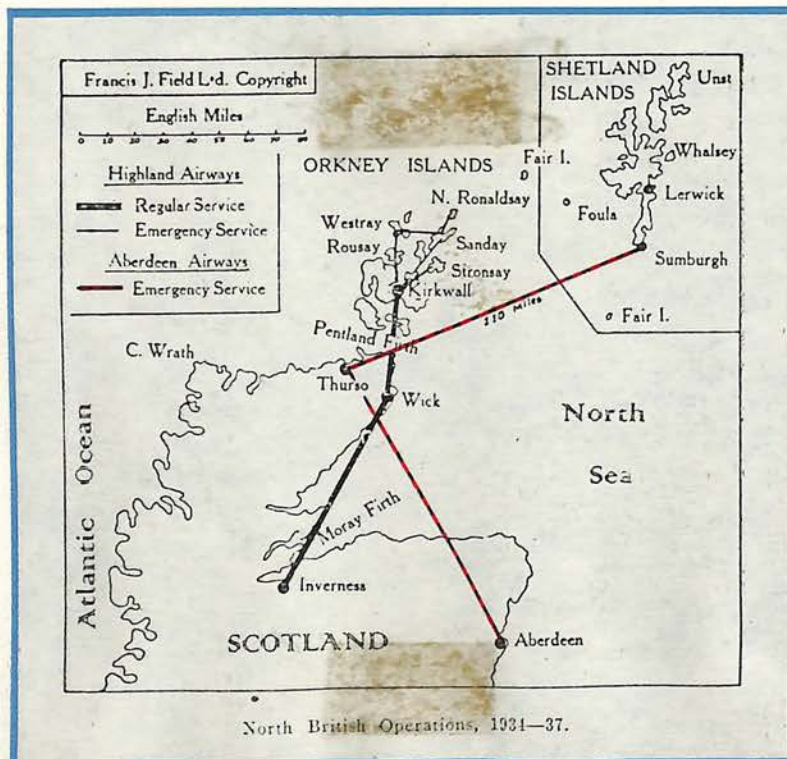
*WSA*



ABERDEEN AIRWAYS LTD.

SHETLAND EMERGENCY FLIGHT

29TH JANUARY 1937



Mail that had laid stormbound for a fortnight was flown to Sumburgh by Aberdeen Airways on the 29th January. 989 lbs of mail left Aberdeen bound for Thurso, flown by J.Gordon Hay it was then transferred to G-ACAN piloted by H.Vallance and flown to the Shetlands.

Note that the cover is at the printed paper rate.

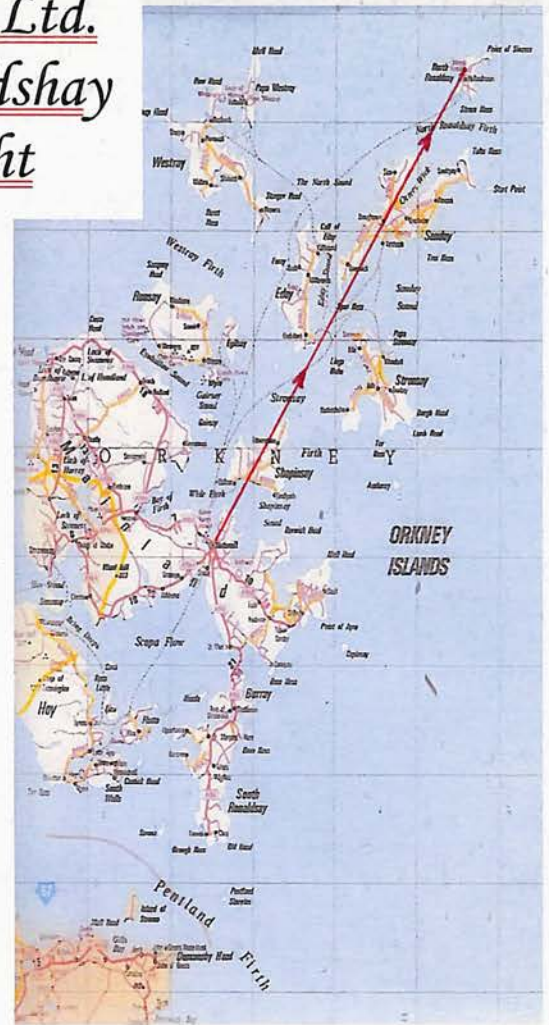


# Highland Airways Ltd. Third North Ronaldshay Emergency Flight

A commercial cover posted in Paisley on the 27<sup>th</sup> December 1946, but due to the prolonged period of bad weather the mail was held until the 14<sup>th</sup> January 1947 when Capt. Fresson flew the mail to North Ronaldshay. Very few of the items of mail have been traced.



Arrival Back stamp



Cover endorsed by the Sub Postmaster W.Scott.





HIGHLAND AIRWAYS Ltd.

THIRD NORTH RONALDSHAY

EMERGENCY FLIGHT

14<sup>th</sup> January 1947

IF UNDELIVERED PLEASE RETURN TO  
**McVITIE & PRICE, LTD.**  
The St. Andrew Biscuit Works,  
— EDINBURGH, 11. —



*Carried by Air  
mail, emergency flight,  
to North Ronaldshay  
14/1/47.*

*W. Scott  
Sub. Postmaster.*

**McVITIE  
& PRICE'S**

**"DIGESTIVE"  
BISCUITS**



Commercial cover carried on the flight to North Ronaldshay, this particular item had been held for six days awaiting a change in the weather.



"THE AERO FIELD"  
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5/- PER ANNUM  
(U.S.A. \$1.-)



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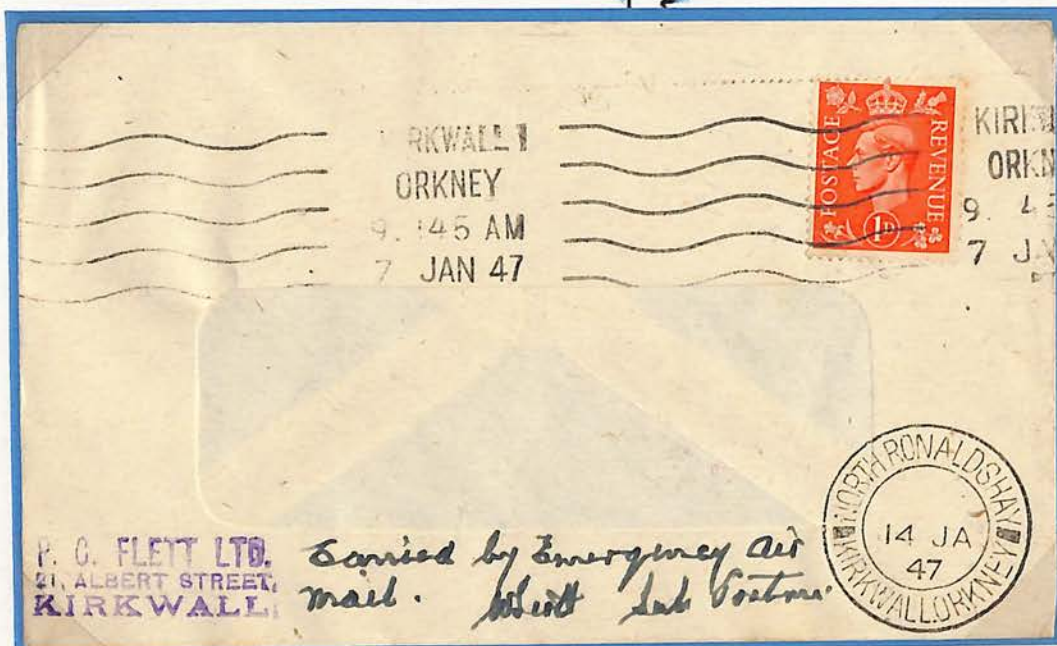


**SCOTTISH AIRWAYS**  
**THIRD NORTH RONALDSHAY**  
**EMERGENCY FLIGHT**

14<sup>th</sup> January 1947

Inter Island Cover

Mail had once again to be flown to North Ronaldshay due to the continuing bad weather. Examples are not common as less than twenty have been recorded.

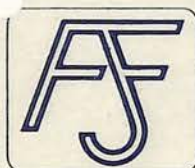






Midland Bank Ltd., High Street. Account 344206

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Airpost Experts, Philatelic Dealers and Publishers

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ENGLAND

33465

M...r...P.A.. Lister, ..... 20 April... 19 83..

....97. Albany. Park. Avenue., ENFIELD HIGHWAY, EN3. 5NX.....

<u>British Indlands</u>	written-up on album leaves	
<u>1917-18</u>	two ppc's (b&w) of hydroplanes at Lake Windermere	No 32-00
<u>1937</u> , Jan., 28:	Sanday-Kirkwall emergency mail flight	Got 25-00
	Jan., 29: Aberdeen-Shetlands emergency	? 18-00
	Nov., 23: Aberdeen-Shetland by Allied Airways	No 16-00
<u>1938</u> , Dec. 17:	Kirkwall-Sanday-North Ronaldshay emergency flight	30-00 ?
<u>1941</u> , Dec. 20:	Stornoway-Glasgow by Scottish Airways	✓21-00
<u>1945</u> , Aug. 21:	Stornoway-Glasgow by Air Letter Service; violet cachet	20-00
<u>1947</u> , Jan. 14:	Kirkwall-N. Ronaldshay emergency	50-00 ?
	Feb. 10: Renfrew-South Uist first All-Up	✓12-00
<u>1948</u> , March 8:	Glasgow-Islay first All-Up	✓15-00 PL
	June 14: Glasgow-Tiree first All-Up	✓18-00 Bob
	Oct., 4: Glasgow-Barra first All-Up	✓18-00

£84

PLISTER  
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Enfield Highway

10/24/03 ...  
10/26/03 ...

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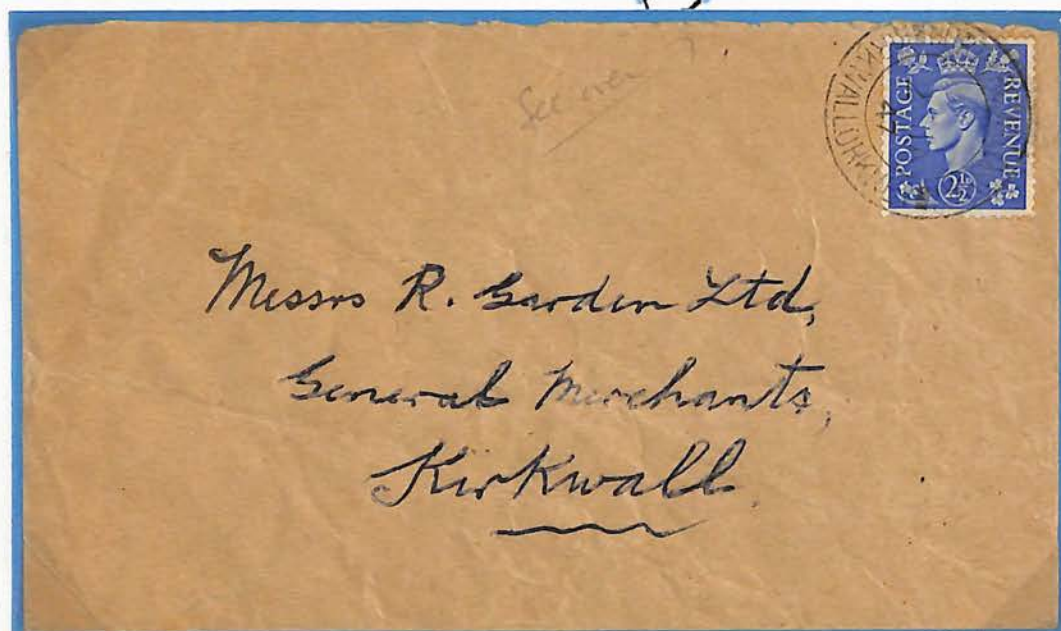
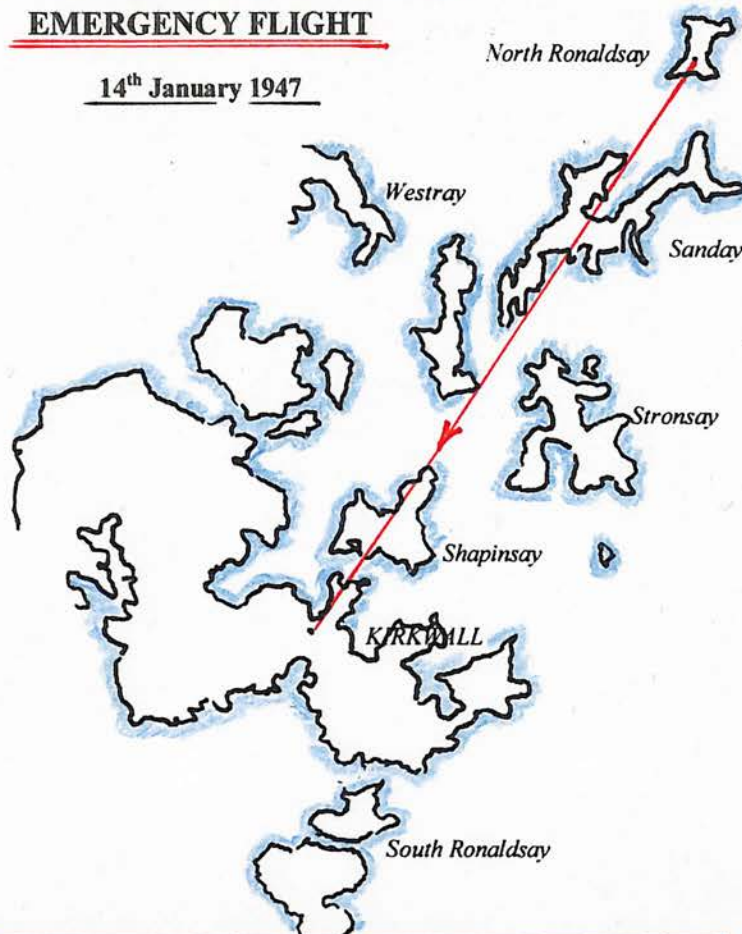


SCOTTISH AIRWAYS  
THIRD NORTH RONALDSHAY  
EMERGENCY FLIGHT

14<sup>th</sup> January 1947

Return Flight

Mail was carried both to and from North Ronaldsay, Textbooks state that no examples have been seen of the return flight, however to date three examples are known. This example being dated the 2<sup>nd</sup> January hence it had been held up for 12 days prior to the flight.



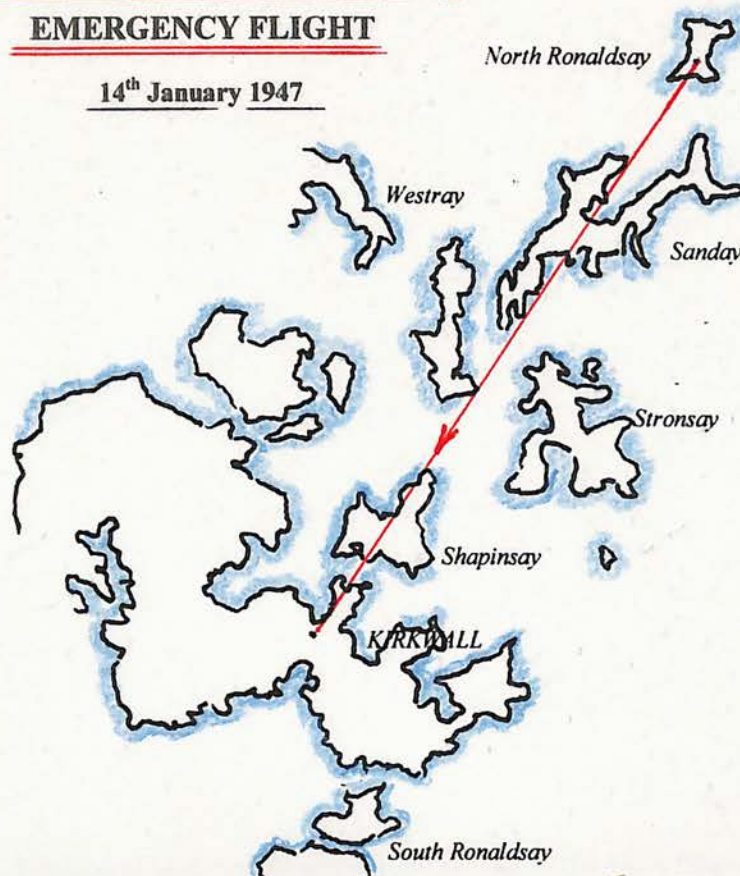


SCOTTISH AIRWAYS  
THIRD NORTH RONALDSHAY  
EMERGENCY FLIGHT

14<sup>th</sup> January 1947

Return Flight

On Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January, Capt. Fresson flew between Hatston, Kirkwall and North Ronaldshay carrying mail and passengers to a community cut off by storms for over two weeks. He made the incredible landing on the curved shore of the loch, and took off again from the water covered grass in very high winds. To date only three examples have been traced of mail carried on this return flight.

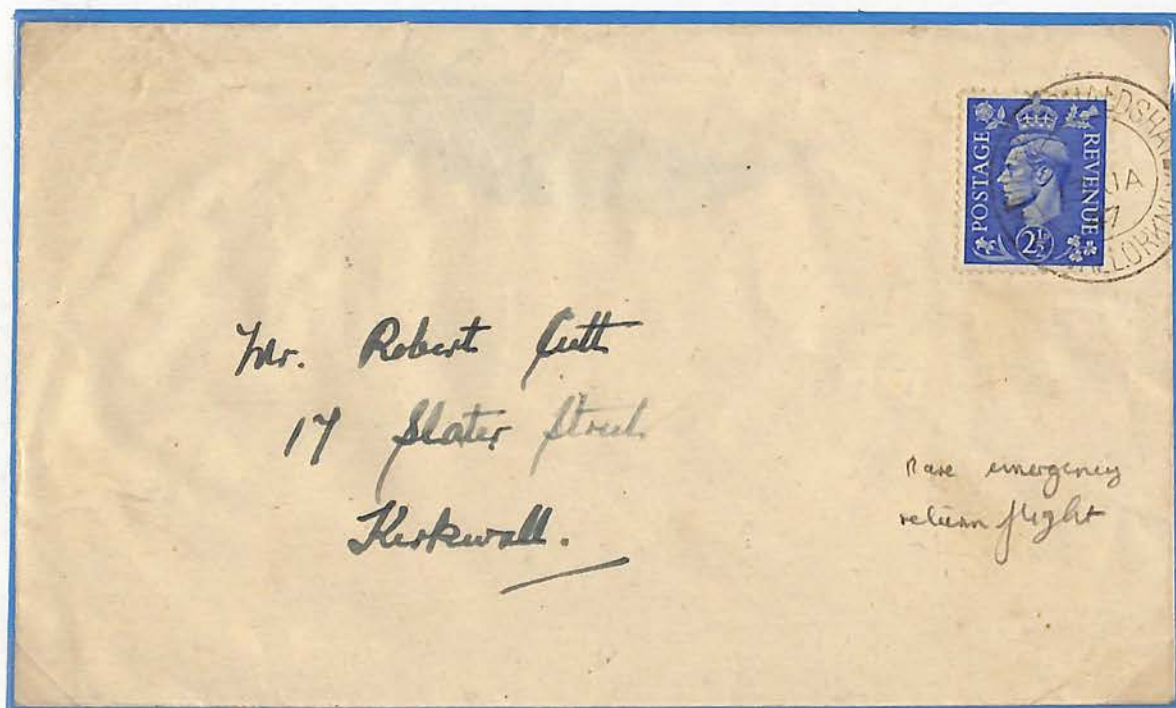




# Highland Airways Ltd. Third North Ronaldshay Emergency Flight

## Return Flight

On Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January, Capt. Fresson flew the mail and passengers that had been held up at Hatston, Kirkwall to North Ronaldshay. He made the incredible landing on the curved shore of the loch, and took off again from the water covered grass in very high winds, carrying a very small amount of mail of which to date only three examples have been traced of which this is an example.



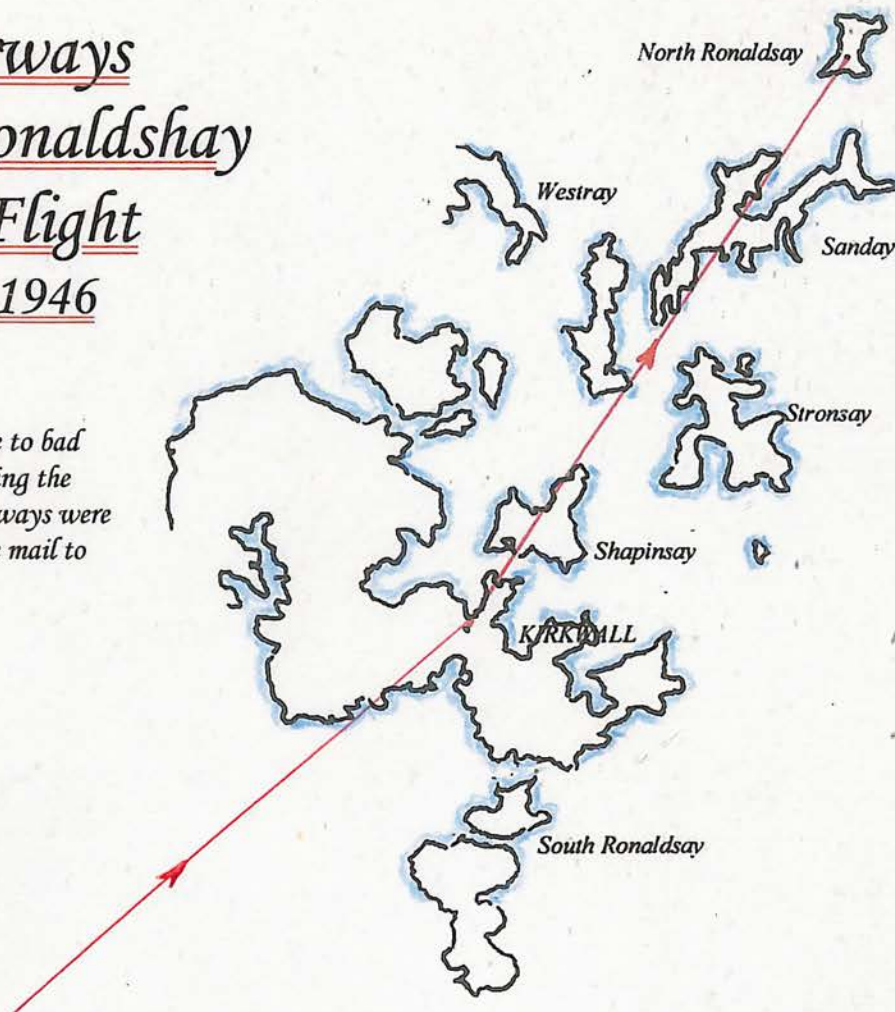


# Scottish Airways Second North Ronaldshay Emergency Flight 11<sup>th</sup> January 1946

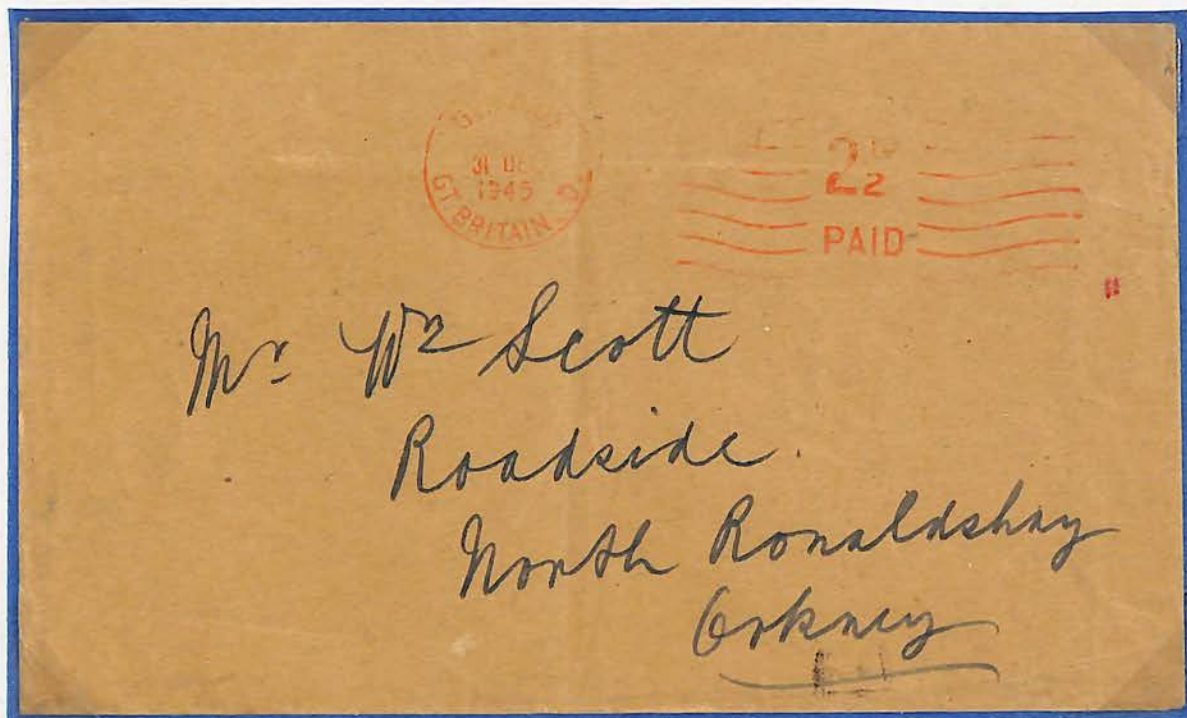
Mail had accumulated once again due to bad weather since 31<sup>st</sup> December, preventing the ships from docking, thus Scottish Airways were chartered by the Post Office to fly the mail to relieve the situation.



Arrival back stamp



## Mainland to North Ronaldshay Northbound Flight



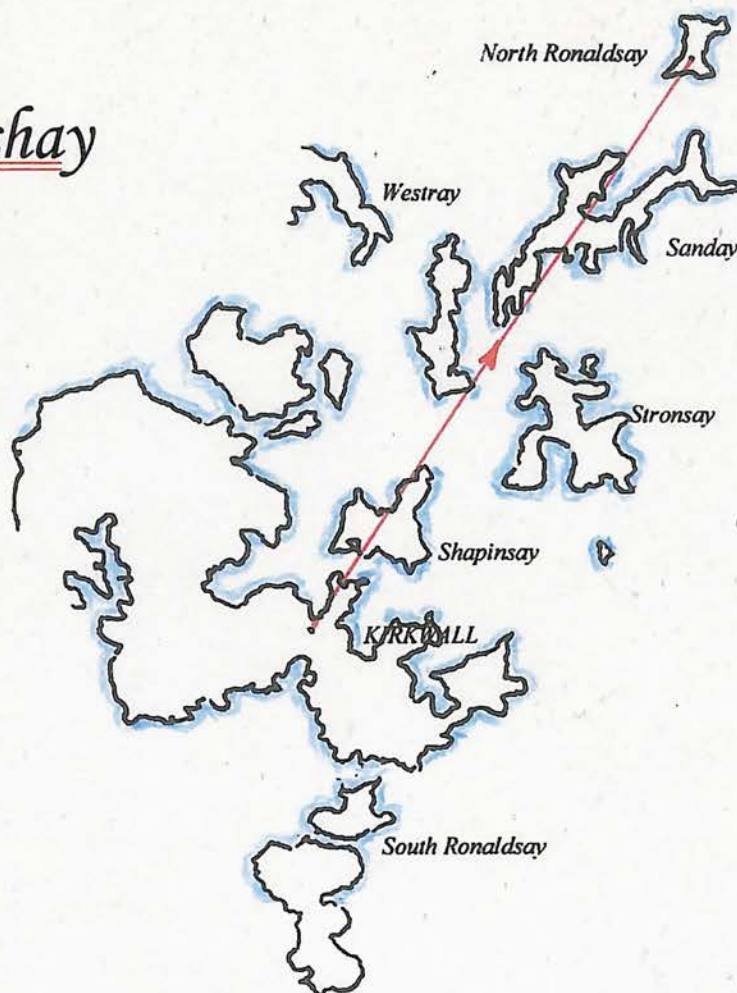


# Scottish Airways Second North Ronaldshay Emergency Flight 11<sup>th</sup> January 1946

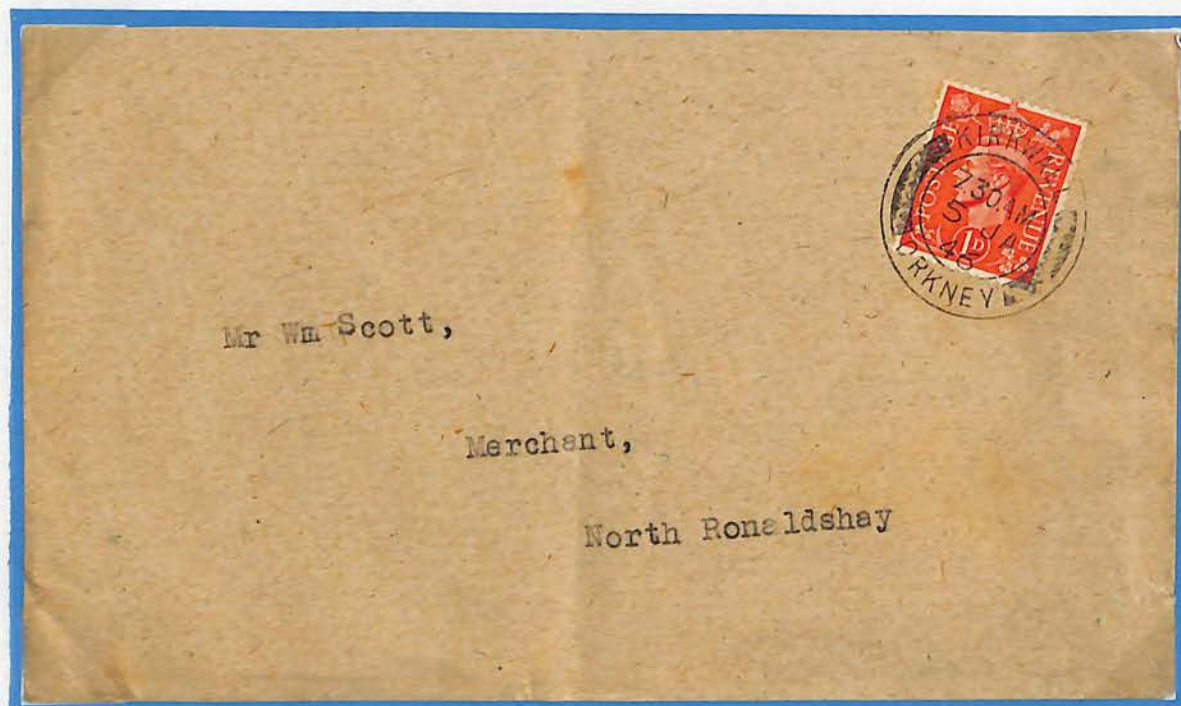
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Arrival back stamp



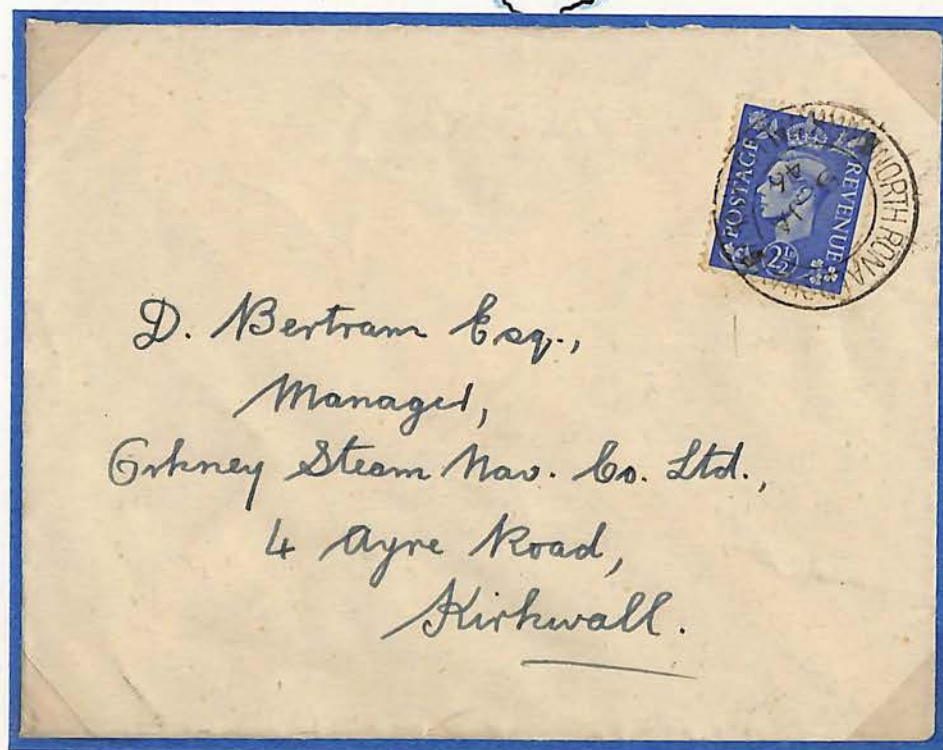
## Inter-Island Northbound Flight





SCOTTISH AIRWAYS  
SECOND NORTH RONALDSHAY  
EMERGENCY FLIGHT

Cover carried on the return flight from North Ronaldsay. It has not been back stamped but clearly shows the cancellation of the 5<sup>th</sup> Jan 46. The mail had been accumulating on the isle since the beginning of the year and was not conveyed until this flight of the 11<sup>th</sup> January.







D. RATTAR,  
LERWICK

SUMBURGH AERODROME, SHETLAND

Highland Airways De Haviland "Rapide" photographed at Sumburgh