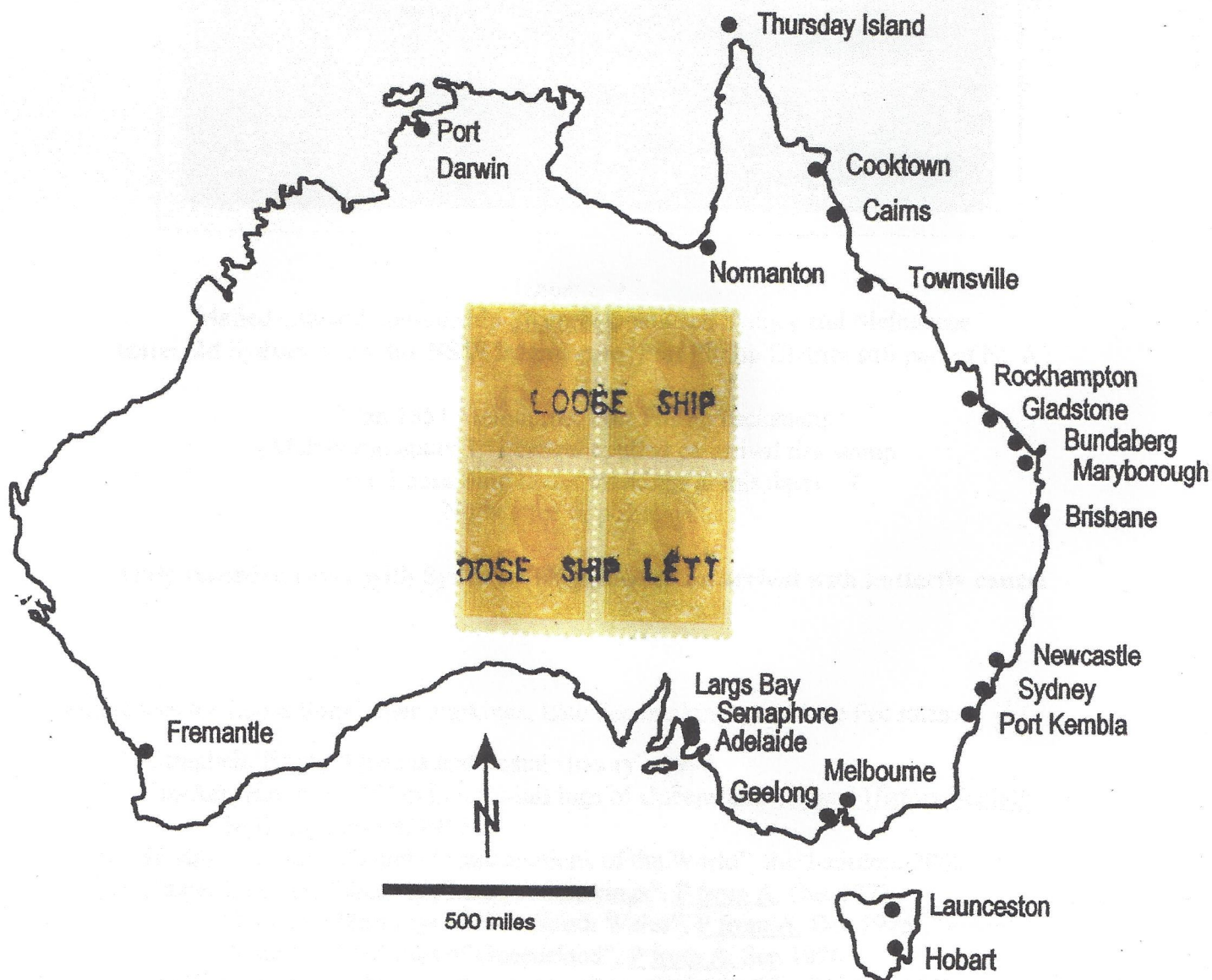


LOOSE SHIP LETTERS OF AUSTRALIA

Letters posted onboard ship or at a dockside letter-box entered the postal system at the ship's first port of call. Beginning in the late 1860s, Australian ports began using "Loose Ship Letter" markings on this mail which often bore stamps of foreign countries and sometimes required a late fee or postage due. In January 1894 the Universal Postal Union established a Paquetbot system requiring such mail to be handstamped at the first port of call with a town datestamp and a Paquetbot handstamp. As we shall see, many Australian ports did not comply, continuing to use Loose Ship Letter markings well into the 20th century. This exhibit greatly expands upon the Loose Ship Letter markings listed in Roger Hosking's "Paquetbot Cancellations of the World", updates the period of use for each marking and analyzes the applicable postal rates.



**These 22 Australian ports used Loose Ship Letter markings.
All are represented in this exhibit.**