

Egypt : the British Military Postal franks

A GUIDE FOR COLLECTORS WITH TENTATIVE PRICING.

Compiled by "DELTA." (possibly Seymour Thompson)

Introduction.

The author by way of setting a fashion in cataloguing these "seals," which are so much more sought after in used condition either on or off cover, has com-plied the following tables, always, however, with the reservation that the value of these labels is a matter of negotiation. The third column is for fine covers with rhomboid cancellation in black, canteen numbers, and M.P.O. or P.O. cancellation. Red rhomboid cancellations usually come from Abu Suweir and naturally some canteen numbers are scarcer than others. A letter may be posted at any M.P.O. in Egypt after the canteen number and rhomboid have been added, and consequently the number is not always a reliable guide to the original source of the letter. Covers have been seen without canteen number: the M.P.O. and P.O. cancellation is sometimes substituted for the rhomboid, where this has been omitted or is too faint. No attempt has been made to separately value minor varieties. "Used" in the second column means on or off piece. Used copies of the first two issues are still quite common.

In estimating the values the writer has been guided not only by the quantity printed but the estimated number retained and available to collectors. As time goes on there will be a growing tendency to preserve the covers rather than mutilate them and the seals will be kept by the soldiers' relatives rather than destroyed. All these factors will combine to keep the supply and demand well balanced and very soon there will be a much freer circulation of this material than has hitherto been the case.

Should this catalogue prove acceptable an attempt will be made to keep it up to date in accordance with the most recent advices. It is hoped in this way to keep prices under control.

It will be appreciated that the labels in mint condition are not postage stamps in the sense that they are procurable at any post office, because they are not as a matter of fact procurable except by a British soldier serving in Egypt at the W.A.A.F. shop or at canteens, but the leading stamp collectors have adopted them and include them in their collections in their collections. The collection of canteen numbers for each issue is an interesting, development with considerable scope.

It is rumoured that steps are being taken to stop supplies to soldiers in excess of their legitimate demands. New issues, subject to such restrictions, would soon rise to fancy prices. No Jubilee collection that does not contain at least one of the jubilee seals can be considered quite complete.

PART I. - For GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

1 piastre. November 1st, 1932. Medallion type, Designed by Lt.-Col. Fraser. Printed by Hanbury, Tompsett & Co., of Willesden. Inscribed Postal Seal.

Perf. II Single line.
M.I.

			Fine Mint		Used		Cover	
			s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Red and blue (500,000)	....	....	2	6	0	8	3	6
(a) Proof, imperf.	....	....	25	0				



August, 1933. As last but inscribed "Letter Seal." In panes of twenty with margins all round. Perf. II.

M2.

			Fine Mint	Used	Cover
			s. d	s. d	s. d
Red and blue (516,000)	....	....	2 6	0 8	3 6
(a) Proof, imperf.	....	....	25 0		

June 1st, 1934. Sphinx type. Designed by Miss, Waugh, of Cairo, and printed by Harrison & Soils. Inscribed "Letter Stamp." Printed in sheets of eighty, made up into books of loo, five panes of twenty, five rows of four. Perf. as noted. Margin to left only.



M3.

			Fine Mint	Used	Cover
			s. d	s. d	s. d
Car.-lake p. 15x14 comb (250,00)	....	....	0 4	0 4	1 6
Resumed July 1 st . (450,000)			0 4	0 4	1 6

M4.

			Fine Mint	Used	Cover
			s. d	s. d	s. d
Green December 3 rd , 1934 p14x15 (250,000)	....	....	1 0	0 9	2 6

M5.

			Fine Mint	Used	Cover
			s. d	s. d	s. d
Blue, May 6th. 1935, overprinted diagonally in red "Jubilee Commemoration 1935," p14 (27,000)	....	....	30 0	35 0	40 0
(a) Broken "U" (about 1,600)			60 0	70 0	£6

N.B.- First-day covers May 6th, 7th, or 8th according to location : last day December 31st, 1935. Several minor varieties of all types have been noted but these are not separately valued.



PART II, FOR Christmas CARDS.

3 milèmes. Design Camel and Pyramids, by Sergt. W. F. Lait, R.A.S.C., and printed by Messrs. Walker Co., Amalgamated Press, Cairo, Perf. 11½ rough. In books of too, in five panes of twenty, five wide, with margins all round. Issued annually end of November.

			Mint	Used	Cover
	1932.	Mx1			
			s . d	s . d	s . d
Black on azure (41,857)	....	....	10 0	12 6	15 0
	1933	Mx2			
Chocolate (53,736)			3 6	4 0	4 6
	1934	Mx3			
Dark blue (62,865)			3 0	3 6	4 0
	1935	Mx4			
Orange-vermilion (est. 65,000)			0 6	0 9	1 6
(a) pale vermilion (est. 20,000)			1 0	1 3	2 0
	1935	Mx5			
As M3 (above) overprinted in black in two lines, " Xmas, 1935 3millemes (10,000)			*7 6	15 0	20 0

* At the time of going to press no statistics are available as to the number likely to reach philatelists; it is thought they may be largely held by officers, in which case covers should command high price.

As a basis of negotiations prices are slightly in excess of actual market transactions.

The author acknowledges his indebtedness to the *Philatelic Journal of Great Britain* and *Gibbous' Stamp Monthly* for the statistics here used.