

Egypt Postage Prepaid Military Datestamps 1941-47 ***by **R.M.Startup**

The book under the above title by the late F.W.('Jim') Benians, published by the National Philatelic Society, brought together a wide range of information about these intriguing datestamps, and also posed questions, mainly through the lack of official information.

Recently I had the pleasure of discovering a copy of the official datestamp allocation list dated 12 August 1941, from the British Army Postal Directorate MEF to the 2 NZEF Postal Directorate, and found in a bundle of New Zealand files that had, amazingly, escaped destruction.

This list is repeated below - in it I have translated the British APO codes to Division or Brigade designations (based on the British Postal Standing Orders*) though I am unsure what LEA represents. Comparison of the list with Benians' book will raise further queries, but it is clear that there was movement of the datestamps between the forces - this list shows the position at one particular date. The New Zealand 'office*' allocations are those written by the NZ DADPS.

EGYPT POSTAGE PREPAID datestamps - allocation as at 12 August 1941

No.	Office	Location
1		Ind APS
2		Ind APS
3		Ind APS
4	spare	Base 4
5	Z42	RAF APO
6	S202	Alexandria
7	GE1	GHQ MEF
8		Aust APS
9		Aust APS
10	S204	Port Said
11	spare	Base 4
12	4th Brigade	
13		Ind APS
14	spare	5 L of C PU
15		Ind APS
16	7th Brigade	
17	S240	4 Air Formation PU
18	Base 4	
19	spare	Base 4
20		Ind APS
21	S206	Amiriya
22	1 NZGH	NZ APS
23		Ind APS
24	S209	Moascar
25	Base APO	NZ APS
26	S209	Tel-el-Kebir
27	9th Brigade	
28	NZ Club, Cairo	NZ APS
29	S201	Abbassia

30	(NZ) APO 1	NZ APS
31		SA APS
32		
33	10th Division	
34	S222	Kantara East
35	spare	44th Division
36		Ind APS
37		SA APS
38		LEA
39		Ind APS
40	S215	Qassassin
41	Spare	5 L of C PU
42		SA APS
43	S216	Mena
44	S223	Khatatba
45		Aust APS
46	Spare	NZ APS
47		LEA
48	S220	Aboukir
49	7th Division Supply	Ind APS
50	131st Brigade	
51	8th Brigade	
52		
53		SA APS
54		SA APS
55		SA APS
56	44th Division	
57	S214	Tahaq
58		Aust APS
59		SA APS
60	spare	5 L of C PU
61	S203	Mustapha Bks. Alexandria
62		SA APS
63		SA APS
64		Polish APS
65	23rd Brigade	
66	133rd Brigade	
67		SA APS
68	S219	Buselli
69	30th Corps Supply	
70		SA APS
71		SA APS
72	S207	Geneifa
73		SA APS
74	GE2	(GHQ)
75	24th Brigade	
76	spare	Base 4
77	spare	Base 4
78	10th Corps Supply	
79	GE3	GHQ Maadi
80	S218	Helmieh
81		Free French APS

82		Polish APS
83		SA APS
84	S208	Port Tewfik
85	30 th . Corps	
86	7th Armoured Division	
87	spare	NZ APS
88	Z 43	(RAF)
89	Base 4	
90	spare	Base 4
91	1st Brigade spare	
92	Spare	NZ APS
93		SA APS
94	Spare	NZ APS
95		SA APS
96	132nd Brigade	
97	Spare	Base 4
98		Polish APS
99	12th Division	
100		SA APS
101		SA APS
102	8th Division	
103	Base 4	
104		SA APS
105	spare	Base 4

On March 1942 the allocation of the datestamps with the NZ APS

22	No.1 NZ General Hospital, Helwan
25	No.1 NZ Convalescent Depot, Sidi Bishr
28	NZ Forces Club, Cairo
30	FPO 1, Maadi
46	spare
87	Chief Post Office, Cairo
92	No.2 NZ General Hospital, Garawia
94	No.3 NZ General Hospital, Helmieh

Datestamp 91 had been returned to 4 Base APO on 26 February 1942 as unserviceable. 25 and 92 were held as spares from early April 1942 by NZ Chief Post Office, the units concerned having left Egypt.

(we are grateful to Mr.Startup for giving us the opportunity to reproduce the above list, the first official allocation of these datestamps that has ever been available to postal historians.

Without going into the comparison of the list above with that of Jim Benians, or the list given by Proud's Vol.III, there appears to some confusion as to APO numbers allocated to datestamps 24 and 26, the former being given APO S209 - Moascar, and the latter APO S209 - Tel-el-Kebir, as both cannot be right b209 was at Tel-el-Kebir, whilst the APO at Moascar was S205.

It is interesting to note that only datestamps from 1 to 105 had apparently been allocated by August 1941. Later datestamps up to 155 were issued. ED.)

***** An article by Alistair Kennedy in FPHS Newsletter 188 challenges some of the findings so the two articles should be read together.**