

XIV

The Third Issue

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The Third Issue was put on sale on January 1st 1872. It was printed by the Government Printing Works, 'Khedive's Paper Factory and Printing House', in Bulaq, Cairo. All values were stereotyped in sheets of 200 and in addition, the 20pa. and 1pi. were lithographed from stones made from transfers from the typographic plates. Perforation was $12\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{3}$ and $13\frac{1}{3}$ Only the 5pi. of the first printing had a tête-bêche variety.

A second printing, from new plates made from the original dies, was prepared in 1874 and put into use in late 1874 and early 1875 as requisitioned. Perforation was $12\frac{1}{2}$, $13\frac{1}{3} \times 12\frac{1}{2}$, and $12\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{3}$ Only the 20pa. and 5pi. were devoid of tête-bêche varieties, the sheets of the other values having from one (2pi. and $2\frac{1}{2}$ pi) to ninety-two inverted stereotypes (5pa.).

The $2\frac{1}{2}$ pi. value of 1874 was surcharged 5 paras and 10 paras as a provisional measure shortly before the Third Issue was replaced by the Fourth (De La Rue) Issue. The Fourth Issue was put into use on April 1st 1879 but stamps of the Third Issue remained valid for use until October 31st.

Essays for the Definitives

The conception of the Third Issue seems to have begun with hopeful printers rather than the Egyptian Post Office. Mindful, we may assume, of the short life of the First Issue (18 months), they prepared essays as early as 1869. Prevost and Riester, who failed in their bids for the contract to print the First and Second Issues, produced essays in the same design concept as the First Issue (Fig. 1). As types, most of them are only scarce, by no means rare, but since they were printed on a variety of papers (including envelopes) and in various colours (I have seen seven different), specific combinations could well be rare.

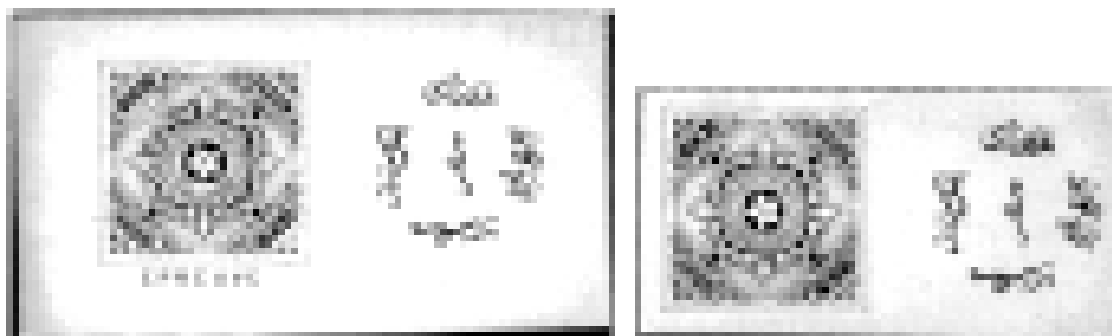




Fig.1 Prevost and Riester essays.

As with his essays of the First Issue, Prevost prepared examples with and without Arabic overprint and with the intended overprint alongside; the basic design was either XX PARA or 20 PARA, the latter being somewhat scarcer. The overprint was in all cases inscribed 'twenty paras' in Turkish. Riester also confined his

essays to the 20-para nomination with and without Arabic overprint. Unlike Prevost, whose essays were all printed as single subjects, Riester printed his in blocks of four (many of them have since been cut up into singles). Like the Prevost essays, the Riester overprints were in various colours besides black.

Renard, a new contender, produced an essay having the sphinx and pyramid in a central vignette, much resembling the Second Issue but having an Arabic overprint in black (Fig. 2). It was prepared as imperforate singles (usually with no margins) and as envelopes (postal stationery), in several colours and only with a denomination of 20 paras. The Renard essays are considerably scarcer than those of Prevost or Riester.



Fig. 2 Renard essay

In 1871 it became apparent that existing stocks of the Second Issue would not last much beyond the end of the year and either a new printing or a new issue would be required. On June 3rd the Postmaster General, G. Muzzi, wrote to Cherif Pasha, President of the Council, to ask how to proceed¹. He included his opinion, 'I think it is indispensable to change the colours, and in order to assure protection against forgery, I think it advisable to vary, if only slightly, the lithographic design by altering the details, while leaving it in the main unchanged'. He also proposed the addition of a 2½-piaster stamp which was needed 'at all Post Offices since the Austro-Egyptian Postal Agreement came into force'. Only six weeks later Muzzi wrote again, this time to inform Cherif Pasha of the contract he had made with the Khedive's Paper Factory and Printing House for the delivery of 8,300,000 stamps by mid-December.

In view of this correspondence, the status of the following two groups of essays (Charles Skipper and East, and Penasson) is ambiguous. They are generally attributed to the year 1871, but there was clearly not enough time between the two letters quoted for such essays to be prepared. They may have been speculative essays, like those already described, or they may have been submitted to the Khedive's Printing House to solicit a sub-contract or other collaboration.

Charles Skipper and East prepared an essay engraved on steel² that was the most skilfully produced (Fig. 3). It was printed die-proof fashion on pieces of paper of larger size, bearing in addition a large numeral '2', and by lithography from a stone of six subjects. Several colours (including dull black) were used and some essays were perforated, some left imperforate. They are more often encountered as singles with small margins, but all are probably derived from the larger pieces. All are very scarce. However, the original die was uncovered after the bombing of London in World War II destroyed the printers' premises. Dr. Byam had impressions taken from it in deep black, which he used to accompany Christmas greetings to the members of the Egypt Study Circle in 1946. It is recorded that 50 copies were prepared²; there was no residue of undistributed examples in the sale of the Byam collection. Another essay by Skipper and East shows the head of Ceres, and was not made specifically for Egypt, although it was sent there as a sample of the firm's

work. It was printed in a block of six on the same sheet of paper as the sphinx-and-pyramid design and exists both recess-printed and lithographed.



Sphinx and pyramid design

Fig.3 Essays by Charles Skipper and East



left recess

right litho

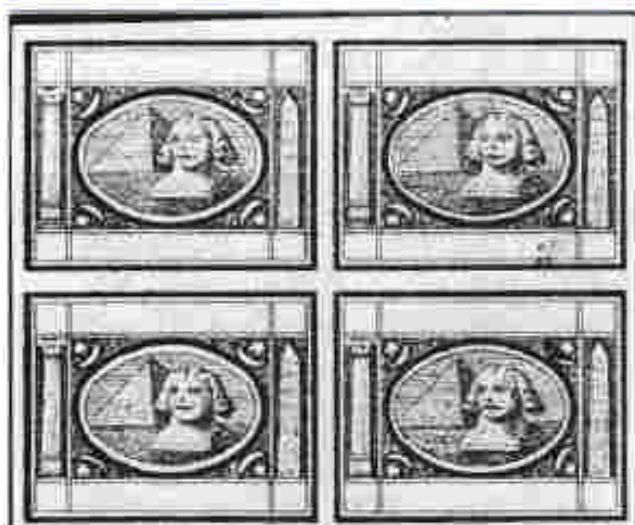
V. Penasson is credited with five essay designs, each of which showed the sphinx and pyramid and much resembled the Second Issue (Fig. 4). One of them had blank panels at top and bottom and may have been an incomplete version of the second one which had inscriptions on a background of fine horizontal lines. These were lithographed, and multiples are known in which four types can be discerned³, much like the stamps of the Second Issue. They are found both imperforate and perforated. The third Penasson essay was recess-printed and is found as imperforate singles or impressed on envelopes. All three of these essays come in a variety of colours (I have seen as many as six different) and on white or tinted paper. The tinted paper examples are much the scarcer.

The last two essays (Fig. 5) so closely resemble each other and the eventually issued stamps that it suggests that Penasson may have been commissioned to prepare the dies that were used by the Government Printing Works in the manufacture of the plates.



Fig. 4 Essays by Penasson.

Fig. 5 Final essays by Penasson.



Both appear to be lithographed; the one is known in rose-red or black on white paper, the other in black on thin green paper (also reported to be printed in green⁴). Each is rare and probably unique. They differ principally in the inscription in the top panel, which in one is the same as that on the Second Issue and in the other is reworded and corresponds to the Third Issue stamps.

The 1872 Printing

No correspondence between the foregoing printers and the Egyptian Postal Administration is known. At one time it was believed that the contract was awarded to Penasson and the stamps issued in 1872 were known as the 'Penasson printings'. Ibrahim Chaftar Bey discovered the previously mentioned internal correspondence¹ in postal archives that established that the printing of the Third Issue stamps was in fact contracted to the Government Printing Works. It has been surmised, but not established, that Penasson was engaged to supervise the printing and the preparation of the plates and especially of the lithographic stones, but there is no documentary support for this view and it has been cogently disputed³. Much of what is known today has therefore had to be deduced from studies of the issued stamps.

Seven values, 5, 10, and 20 paras, and 1, 2, 2½, and 5 piasters, were printed and issued. The more or less contemporary reports of them in the philatelic press were confusing, some asserting that they were lithographed, some that they were typographed. When the initial dust had settled it was concluded that they were all typographed and the listings in the general catalogues stated this for several decades. The subject was reopened in 1948 in a study by Dr. Byam⁵ supported by documents found by Chaftar Bey¹ and augmented in 1956 by Byam⁶ and in 1972 by Major MacArthur⁷. It is to these three philatelic students that the deductions in the following paragraphs must be largely credited and it is in their writings that the arguments and details of evidence are to be found.

Colours⁸

Using the *Stanley Gibbons Colour Guide* for comparison, the colours are:

5pa.- dull chestnut to deep red-brown (ferric oxide pigment)	1pi- rose-red to deep rose-red and deep carmine red indigo (lithographs only),
10pa.- dull violet or reddish violet	2pi- yellow (lead chromate pigment)
20pa- Prussian blue, indigo (lithographs only), pale blue (lithographs only) (The pigment in all cases appears to be iron-cyanide "Prussian blue")	2½pi- slate violet (pale to deep)
	5pi- bright green (a mixture of lead chromate and Prussian blue pigments)

The two colours of the 10 paras deserve further comment. The 'dull violet' is a matte shade and the stamps often have a fuzzy appearance. The reddish violet colour is in a slightly shiny ink, which gives a sharp impression (Fig. 6). However, most of the reddish violet stamps have a speckled appearance due to tiny white spots. They resemble lithographs superficially, but are undoubtedly typographed

Fig. 6 Different impressions of the 10 paras.



Paper and Watermark

The paper has a slightly rough surface and is distinctly off-white, in some cases approaching pale beige. It contains Egyptian and Indian cotton fibres and was undoubtedly manufactured by the Khedive's Paper Factory⁷. The thickness varies between 0.10 and 0.14mm (mostly 0.11 to 0.115mm). The watermark is an outlined crescent and five-pointed star, arranged to appear once on each stamp. Unlike the previous issue, it is a true watermark. The points of the crescent and the star are slightly rounded. The watermark is nearly always upright on the 1872 printings but it is sometimes poorly centred. Inverted watermarks have been recorded for all values including the lithographs, except for the 2pi.

Dies, Plates and Stones

The oval vignette is made up of a multitude of thin lines and it would have been extremely difficult to produce such a design, especially the cross-hatching, by directly engraving a die for surface printing. However, if a vignette die were first engraved in reverse (i.e., with incised lines) and then hardened it could have been impressed into soft steel to produce an image corresponding to the stamps. In contrast, the inner corners about the oval and the scrollery forming the background of the top panel of the 1pi. are made up of thin colourless lines which would have been most difficult to engrave in reverse. Charles Fox, in an unpublished work, concluded that the vignette was therefore engraved first and then transferred to soft steel on which the remainder of the designs were engraved.

Only for the 1pi was the die a single unit. For the other denominations the dies consisted of a central part common to each and a separate die for the denomination panels and a part of the frame. These were assembled together and locked in a frame for the casting step. The mating of the sections differed slightly from value to value, an effect that can be seen in the widths of the vertical white gaps at either side of the centre sections, in the strength or weakness of the impression of the P of POSTS and nearby areas, and in the slight splitting of the framelines in many of the subjects (Fig. 7), especially at the top. Prominent plate flaws^{6,10,11}, arising during casting or subsequently, abound (Figs. 8, 9, 10). Typographic plates of 200 subjects were then made up from individual stereotypes cast from moulds taken from the dies.



Fig. 7 Differences in the mating of the central and side parts of the composite dies, and split frames (5 piasters).



Fig. 8 Some plate flaws on the 5 paras: 'Colonel Blimp'; spots on pyramid; gash above 5.

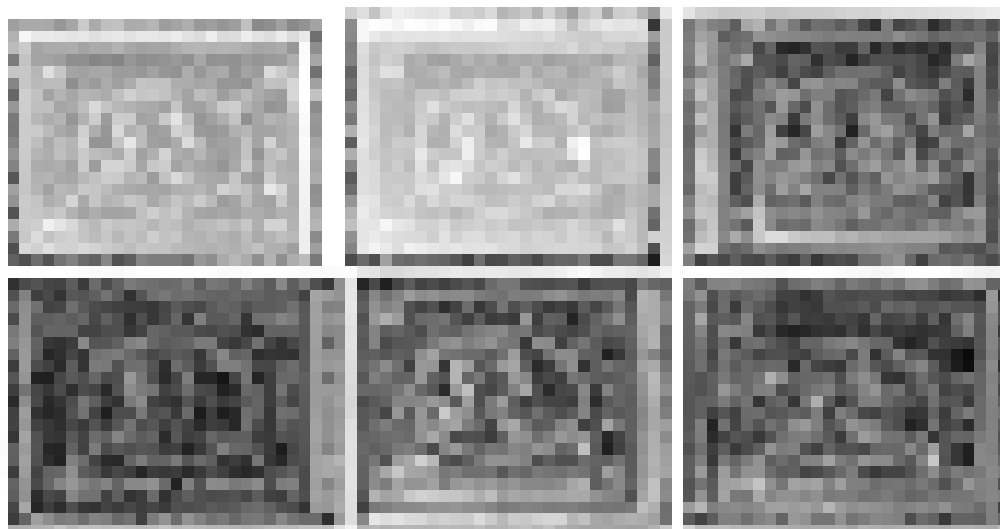
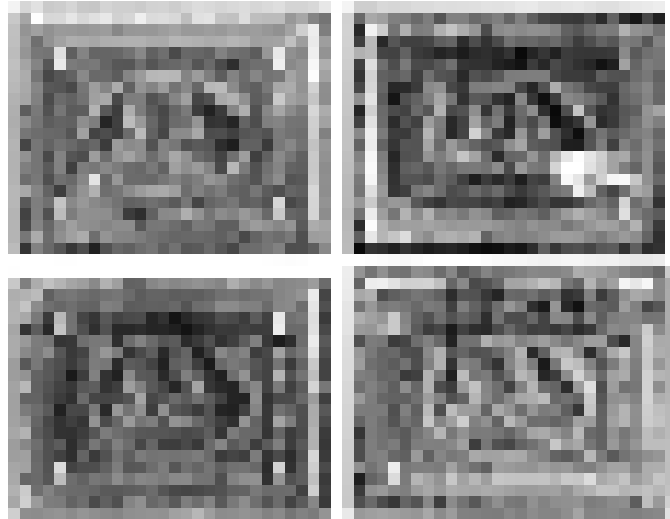


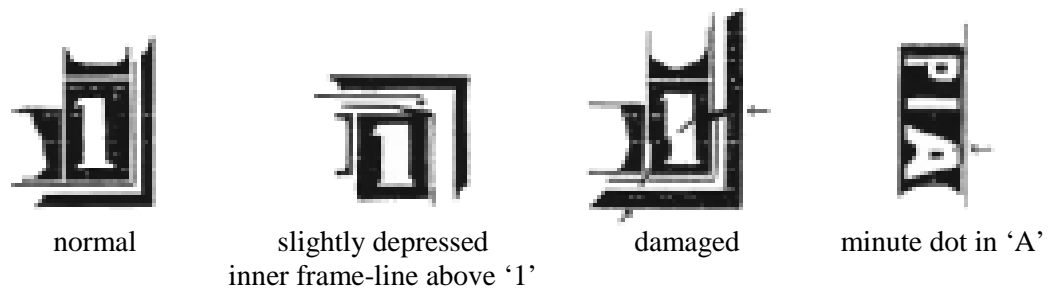
Fig. 9. Plate flaws on the 10 paras (on PARA; on right of vignette); plate flaws on the 20 paras ('thunderbolt'; various white spots).

Fig. 10 Plate flaws on the 1 piaster; top two: white spots bottom two: frame flaws.



Although the archival documentation and the characteristics of the stamps establish the existence of only one die for the 1pi., it was once proposed that one or more daughter dies may have been utilized. These would have been made by impressing the master die into a soft metal. The observation that gave rise to this supposition is the existence of a 'cracked corner' flaw (Fig. 11) on roughly one-fifth of the typographs^{5,7,9}, with different degrees of development. The variety exists in multiples (strips and blocks) and also se tenant with the normal stamp. Although it is convenient to refer to it as a crack, it is not a simple one as it consists of a colored line crossing the colourless part of the design and a colourless line breaking colored parts as though material had been dragged from one part into another. Furthermore, the numeral '1' is misaligned at the break crossing it.

Although the evidence, and especially the archival records, do not support the daughter-die supposition, some sort of intermediate in the production of the 400 stereos required for two plates must be assumed for practical reasons as well as to account for cracked-corner varieties. Subsequently, Major MacArthur identified at least one more type of intermediate; the lettering in the bottom panel appears blotted and the letters tend to run together (various degrees of development). It has a sub-variety on which the thin frameline above the upper right value tablet is bent downwards (Fig. 11). He has concluded that a small group of moulds (perhaps five) was prepared and made of flong (a papier-mache-like composition of paper and plaster) which can be used for repeated castings (moulds made of plaster are generally not reusable). Deterioration of a mould as casting progressed provides a convincing explanation of the observations.



Type and litho versions of the cracked 1.

Fig. 11 The cracked-corner and blotted bottom lettering varieties of the 1 pi.

However, an alternative that is also consistent with the evidence is that a small group of intermediate stereotypes was first cast and that each was then used to make moulds to be used for casting the printing stereotypes, thus greatly facilitating the production of the 400 stereotypes. As with the flong-mould hypothesis, deterioration of such type-metal stereotypes (which would subsequently have been destroyed) during the multiple casting operation might account for the progressive development of the observed flaws. There must have been other intermediate flong moulds or stereotypes, each with its own identifying features, but the intrinsic flaws on some of them must have been so small that they cannot be distinguished with certainty against the general printing irregularities. No evidence of sub-types of the other denominations has yet been reported.

The 20pa. and 1pi. denominations were produced lithographically as well as typographically. The necessary stones were made from transfers from the typographic plates. The lithographed version of the 1pi. will be considered first; the more complicated 20pa. is considered separately.

The cracked-corner variety is considerably commoner among the lithographs. The difference in frequency implies that there were two typographic plates of which only one contained the variety and was the one from which the lithographic stone was derived. Of a different nature are the many examples of flaws that occur in only one position^{10, 11} (Figs. 8, 9, 10). These must have arisen mostly from the casting process, trapped air bubbles, debris in the moulds, etc. (intrinsic flaws), or from subsequent careless handling of the stereotypes (extrinsic flaws) or of the stone. The more prominent ones are desirable items for collecting and are listed in the Zeheri catalogue. Most such flaws on the typos can be matched with lithographic counterparts and thus provide convincing evidence that the stones for the 1pi. were made from pulls from the typographic plate. The plate positions of many of them have been determined by Major MacArthur (although not yet published) and they are the same on both the typos and lithographs. This fact shows that the typo pull was transferred *in toto* and was not cut into sections that were reassembled in random order (in contrast to the 20pa.). The scarcity of multiples, of which the largest is only a block of 10, has limited the study of the 1pi. even though the plate position of most singles can be determined from irregularities in the perforations (see Perforations below).

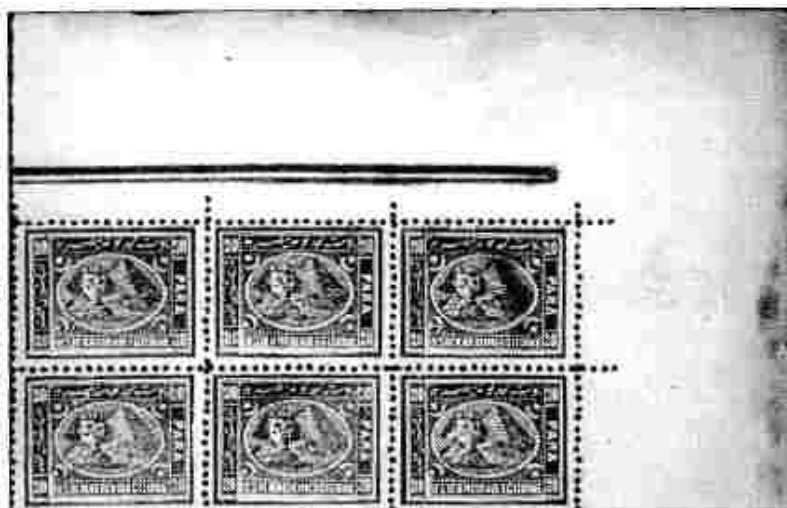
The philatelic evidence implies the existence of only one typographic plate for each value other than the 1pi. with the possible exception of the 5pa. Each plate had a buffer bar, which printed as a thick bar of colour, usually accompanied by a thin parallel one on the inner side on the sheet margin at the edge where the printing roller left the plate (Fig. 13). The other sheet margins were blank. The bars are found in the top margin only for all values but the 5pa. for which some sheets have the buffer bar along the right side instead. It has not been determined if the two states represent two plates, although it would in principle be possible to do so by studying the constant plate flaws. Large part-sheets exist and the uncertainty may yet be resolved.



Substitution of stereotypes may have occurred in some instances, but only with the 20pa. has substitution been definitely established. A substitution may have been made with the 10pa., but the evidence is so far inconclusive¹². The existence of indented framelines (Fig. 12) on the 1pi. and

Fig. 12 Indented frame, and flaw on right face of pyramid.

Fig. 13 The buffer bar characteristic of the 1872 stamps.



5pi. suggests the possibility that they might have arisen from use of a tool when replacing an adjacent stereo. However, the same result could be attributed to disassembly of the formes for cleaning.



Fig. 14 Position 97, the inverted stereo, of the 5pi

A tête-bêche variety exists only for the 5pi.; the stereo in position 97 was inserted upside down. For many decades the variety was mistakenly assumed to belong to the 1874 printing until it was examined critically by Ibrahim Chaftar in the 1950s. Only two examples are known and it is unlikely that any more will come to light after a hundred and twenty years¹³. A used horizontal tête-bêche pair is in the Royal Collection of the United Kingdom; the other example is an unused vertical pair and is the only one available to collectors. However, single copies from the inverted stereo, rare as they are, are easily identified because the bottom frameline is split and is damaged below (POS)TE K(HEDEVIE) (Fig. 14). Such copies can be expected to have an inverted watermark.

20 Paras

We have now to consider the lithographed 20pa. which is the most complex stamp of the issue. Owing to the especially numerous and prominent plate flaws, even though no block larger than 12 is known, the 20pa. has been more intensely studied than the other values and the typographs have been completely plated by Major MacArthur. The number and magnitude of the flaws and the variations of the lithographs strongly suggest that this was the first denomination to be dealt with and provided the printing works with the practice it needed to produce the other values more efficiently and in better quality.

The observable facts are these:

The lithographed stamps come in three markedly different shades, indigo, a light and somewhat milky blue, and Prussian blue, whereas only the Prussian blue appears on the typographs.

Most of the major plate flaws on the typos and many of the minor ones are duplicated on the lithographs.

A substantial part of the lithographs have the bottom framelines and sometimes other sides redrawn whereas others remain unaltered.

The many identifying plate flaws are found in both states of the lithographs.

A small fraction of the lithographs in the light blue shade have a much inferior impression in which the entire design is flecked with tiny white flecks (Fig. 15) (this has been likened⁶ to 'the sphinx and pyramid as seen through a snowstorm').

The sheet positions of identifiable subjects of the typographs do not correspond to those of the lithographs.



Fig. 15 A 'snowstorm' lithograph

From these facts one can deduce that there were two (possibly three) lithographic stones or that one stone was taken out of the press part-way through the printing and every subject on it was retouched before printing proceeded. The former hypothesis seems more likely, but in either case one can consider that two stones or two states were involved. They are designated Stone A and Stone B. The 'snowstorm' stamps could conceivably represent a third stone, but it is simpler to account for them on the basis of ink composition. Lithographic ink has a special requirement; it must adhere to the colored areas on the treated stone, but not stick to any other part. An ink suitable for typography would not necessarily have these characteristics, which are determined primarily by the medium rather than the pigment. If the procedure at the printing works followed trial and error, the first batch of ink may have had poor adhering qualities, consequently producing stamps with white spots where the ink did not stick. If this was noticed during the printing, a revised formulation of ink could have been prepared before more stamps were printed. This hypothesis could account for the fact that the 'snowstorm' stamps are much scarcer than other lithographs.

With most of the lithographs, Stone A and Stone B stamps can be distinguished by the state of the bottom frameline. On the lithographs of Stone A (as well as the typographs) the bottom frameline is partly split by a slightly diagonal gash. On Stone B stamps each subject was apparently individually touched up on the stone by redrawing the bottom frameline and in instances where other sides showed damage, those also. The usual result was framelines of uniform thickness, in some cases showing slight extensions at the corners. A selection of married typographs and lithographs from both stones is shown in figure 16. Although distinction between the stones is usually fairly easy, one should be alert to the fact that some subjects of Stone A also have the split largely or entirely filled in (a feature inherited from the stereo in the typograph plate).

Three subjects are known that have a constant flaw in the form of smudged areas (Fig. 17). The first to be discovered was found in the Tapling Collection by John Gilbert



Fig. 16 'Married' typographs and lithographs.



over EUIE
over IE EG
Fig. 17 Examples of lithographic 'touching'.

and became known as the 'Gilbert retouch' because it was thought to be a case of repair of damage by stippling⁶. This explanation has since been abandoned and these flaws are now believed to be the result of inadvertently touching the wet transfer or the stone with a finger or a tool, probably at the time the framelines were being touched up. They are prominent, desirable, and very scarce varieties; the few known come from Stone B.



Fig. 18 Retouched P of POSTS

It is a general characteristic of both the typographs and the lithographs that the left end of the lower inscription panel is defective and most of the letter P, as well as the left edge of the scrollwork above it, is missing. An attempt was evidently started to rectify this fault by retouching Stone B. The image was restored (Fig. 18) on positions 8, 9, and 10 (thus the upper right corner of the sheet) but the work proceeded no further, presumably because the full magnitude of the task was soon realized. (The sheet positions were determined by Major MacArthur from irregularities in the perforations.) These retouches are of similar rarity to the 'touches' mentioned above, but their prominent visibility increases the demand for them considerably. Consequently, they have been faked using the simple expedient of drawing in the missing features with blue ink. Examination

with a glass will usually show up the fakery; the ink is unlikely to be a perfect match. Furthermore, the faker is likely to have used a typographed stamp to work on and that is a certain giveaway.

An exceptionally interesting feature of the 20pa. is the existence of a substituted stereo. Position 117 developed a severe break in the right frameline during printing and the stereo was removed and replaced before printing continued (Fig. 19). Curiously, the lithographic subject corresponding to stereo no. 117 on the typo plate has the Gilbert touch on Stone A and the repaired P on Stone B. The substituted stereo is not known in lithographed form.

Fig. 19 Position 117 of the 20 paras before and after substitution (the characteristic feature of the substituted stereo is the slightly bent frame-line at upper left).



Distinguishing Lithographs from Typographs^{6,14}

As a general characteristic, lithographic impressions are quite flat since the stones have a smooth surface. There is therefore no indentation into the paper (reverse embossing). The ink in the broader areas is evenly spread and is not visibly piled up into a small, irregular ridge at the outlines. Typographs, in contrast, commonly show the result of the plate biting into the paper, making shallow channels of the lines, in extreme cases detectable on the back as low embossing, especially on stamps with gum. The ink of the broader areas flows somewhat to the edges where it accumulates as a more heavily inked border. This is called ink squash. A magnifying glass is usually needed for detecting it. Only with very lightly applied typographic impressions are these characteristics absent.

On the 1pi. the background of the top panel consists of fine scrollwork. The lithographs show this more or less clearly, whereas all but the very earliest impressions from the typographic plates have a nearly solid background. This feature is a consequence of the fine lines becoming filled with ink crusts. In extreme cases many other thin, white areas are filled in also. A blotted impression is thus a sure sign of a typograph and a sharp, clean impression is highly likely (but not certainly) to be a lithograph. The ink of the lithographs is often slightly glossy compared to the softer texture of the typos.

With the 20pa., Stone B lithographs are usually evident at first glance owing to the redrawn framelines. Another defining feature may be the colour; the intense indigo and the light blue stamps are always lithographs. The majority of the lithographs, however, have much the same colour as the typographs. Those that also have an unrepaired bottom frameline are the most difficult to classify, but with experience, the general characteristics of lithography should be sufficient for identification. It helps to be shown a few undoubted lithographs and typographs by an experienced collector. After such a demonstration the novice is often surprised at how easy identification can be.

One should always question dealers' and auction describers' identifications of a 20pa. or 1pi. as a lithograph. The majority have no expertise and more often than not they are misled by wishful thinking. The commonest error is to represent a smudged or overinked stamp as a lithograph, whereas such impressions are actually characteristic of typographs. There are good literature resources for in-depth information about the characteristics of typography (relief printing) and lithography¹⁵.

Perforation

The normal perforation for the 1872 stamps is $12\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{3}$ and $13\frac{1}{3}$ all around. The compound perforation is the commoner (the ratio appears to be about 3:1, except for the $2\frac{1}{2}$ pi.). The machines perforated one line at a stroke and a sheet would therefore require 32 strokes to perforate every stamp on four sides. The procedure appears to have been that the horizontal rows (21 strokes per sheet) were first done on the $12\frac{1}{2}$ machine and the sheets were then passed to the $13\frac{1}{3}$ machine for perforating vertically (11 strokes). Since the $13\frac{1}{3}$ machine had only half as much work to do, its excess time would have been used to perforate a smaller quantity of sheets horizontally as well.

The $2\frac{1}{2}$ pi. is a special case; in perf. $13\frac{1}{3}$ it is a major rarity and is the rarest Egyptian stamp that is not an error or variety. Major MacArthur has determined that the few known copies come from the lower part of the sheet and the fact that all copies are in an unusually pale shade suggests that there was only one sheet involved. His hypothesis is that the $2\frac{1}{2}$ pi. and the 5pi. were perforated in one session during which all the normal horizontal perforating by the $13\frac{1}{3}$ machine was confined to the 5pi. On one sheet of the $2\frac{1}{2}$ pi., it is theorized, a few horizontal lines escaped perforating by the $12\frac{1}{2}$ machine, a not uncommon occurrence with line perforators. The omission was rectified with the $13\frac{1}{3}$ machine which had already done the vertical rows. Although some catalogues list this stamp used as well as unused, I have yet to see a genuine used example. Forgeries exist but are generally easy to detect because they are in the usual deeper shade, or are even made from a stamp of the 1874 printing, recognizable by its plate characteristics.

As an exception, stamps are sometimes found with other combinations of gauge such as $12\frac{1}{2} \times 12\frac{1}{2} \times 12\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{3}$. These would be the result when a missed row of perforations was rectified. Sometimes other gauges, such as 12, are encountered. These are presumed to be faked perforations, made to restore a side from which the original perforations had been cut off.

Not all missed rows were caught, and consequently, stamps imperforate in one direction could exist 16, but only the 20pa. lithographed is known imperforate between. Singles imperforate on one or more sides are

most probably normal stamps with one or more sides clipped. Fully imperforate stamps exist and the same caveat applies to them. No imperforate pairs have been recorded, but some singles with enormous margins, and examples tied to cover, have a high probability of being legitimate.

An important feature of the perforations is that the spacing and alignment of the holes are irregular⁷, especially with the 13½ machine. This fact allows most single stamps to be assigned to their positions in the sheet if reference rows of perforations are available for comparison. These have been copied photographically from a full sheet of the 10 paras and are reproduced in Fig. 20. In using them, it is important to keep in mind that directions may be reversed, for it appears that the sheets were turned around before the last row in each direction was perforated⁷.

Two other consequences of use of a line perforator should be mentioned. The spacing between the rows was variable. There are thus fat stamps and small ones. Corner stamps are especially likely to be fat and are tempting subjects for the faker's snippers. Double perforations, resulting from failure to move the sheet before the perforating head fell a second time, have not been recorded on the 1872 stamps, although they are fairly common on those of the 1874-75 printings.

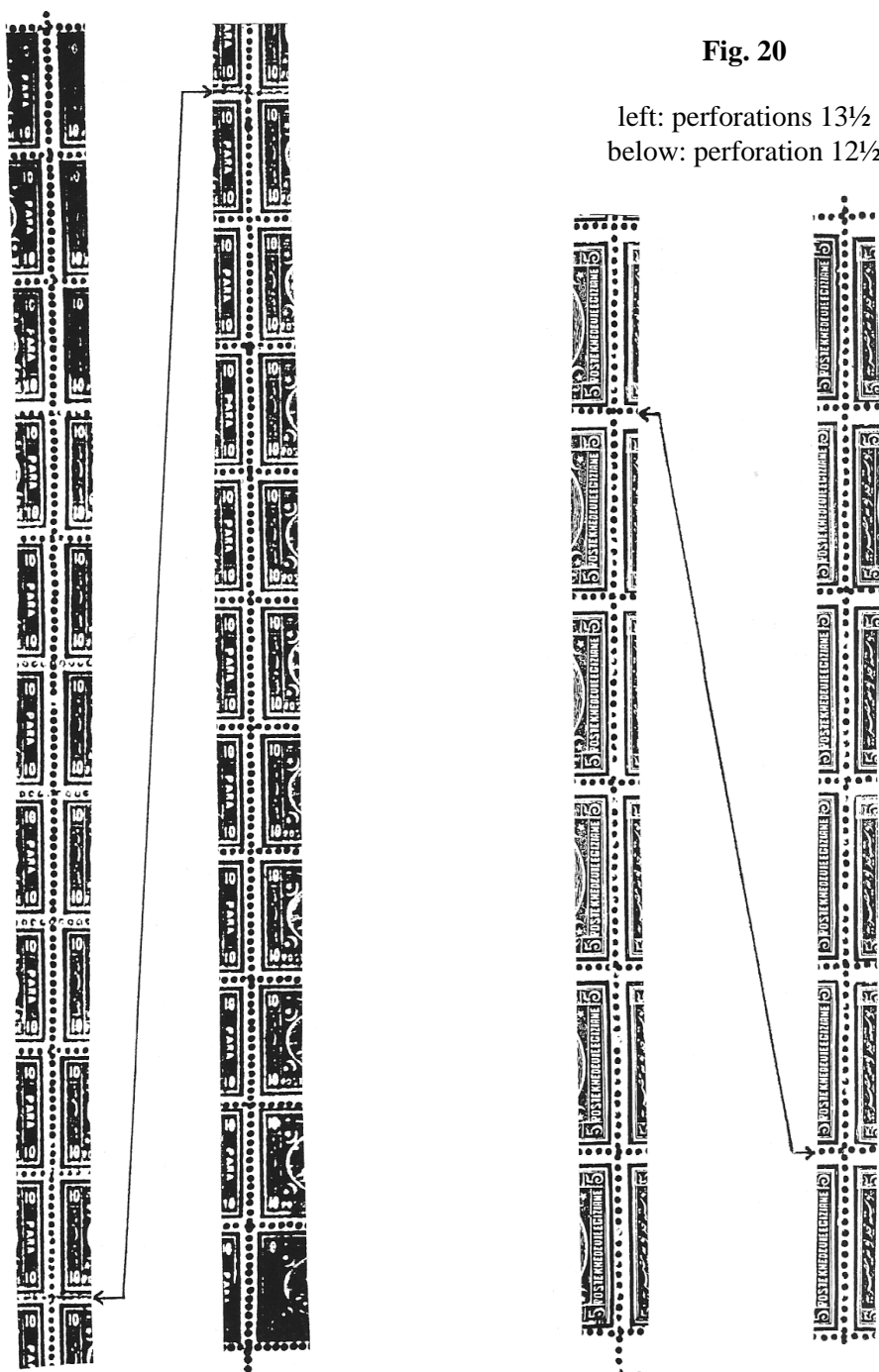


Fig. 20

left: perforations 13½
below: perforation 12½

Gum

The gumming took place before perforating, for practical reasons, and was presumably done by hand. The gum is colourless to pale brownish and varies in thickness. Dr. Byam noted some instances of sheets having been gummed after perforating, with the consequence that some gum exuded through the perforation holes. These may have been sheets that were insufficiently gummed initially.

Date of Issue and Quantities

The new issue was announced by posters in Arabic, English, French, and Italian, displayed in each post office, with samples of the forthcoming stamps affixed. The English version is shown in Fig. 21-The new stamps were placed on sale on January 1st 1872 as promised and no instances of prior use have been reported. Only the lithographed version of the 20pa. appears to have been distributed initially and Dr. Byam reported⁵ having seen no typographs postmarked earlier than April 6th.

The order for 8,300,000 stamps was delivered in two consignments, a small one in December 1871 and the bulk of the order (6,790,000) in March. It is reasonable to conclude that the earlier consignment included only lithographs of the 20pa. and that the typographs were delivered in March. A typographed 1pi. has been reported⁵ used on January 1st, so both versions of this value must have been in the first delivery.

The quantities supplied in the initial consignment are not recorded, but the March delivery consisted of the following:

Denominations	Sheets	Stamps
5 paras	3600	720,000
10 paras	4100	820,000
20 paras	2200	440,000
1 piaster	22,000	4,400,000
2 piasters	1800	360,000
2½ piasters	100	20,000
5 piasters	150	30,000

It is reasonable to assume that the first delivery consisted of roughly the same proportion of denominations.

The orders to Mr. L. Guarnieri (Secretary, Alexandria General Management), dated March 14th 1872, for taking delivery included the stipulation, 'That the lithographic stones as well as the proof copies and the sheets you have rejected are handed over to you'. The report documenting the completion of the contract was sent to Postmaster General Muzzi Bey on March 21st 1872. It stated, 'that the stereotypes in lead of all the seven values have been ... by mutual consent . . . destroyed by fire'. It also stated, 'Only the seven steel dies have been put into a wooden box ... closed and sealed ... which was handed over to the Official of the above-mentioned Ministry [Ministry of Finance], with all the stamps; . . .'

Bisection

The 1pi. and 2pi. are known bisected and used for half their face values. These were apparently not authorized from Cairo, but were an emergency measure when new supplies of the needed values had not arrived at some of the Consular offices in time. The

2pi. was bisected at Galipoli in July 1874 and also at Scio (Chios). It is known on piece only. The 1pi. was bisected diagonally at Gedda and Scio for use in conjunction with a whole stamp to make the new 1½pi. UPU letter rate in July 1875. That of Gedda is known on part-cover, but I do not know of a complete cover. Byam⁶ records bisection of the 1pi. at Salonicchi also Multiples

Multiples

The existence of the 5pa. and 10pa. in sheets or part-sheets has been mentioned. Smaller blocks, including those with sheet margin attached, are not difficult to find. Next in scarcity comes the 20pa., of which a substantial number of typographs in unused blocks perf. 12½x13½ exist in sizes up to 16 (Byam collection). Some have sheet margins attached, including sheet corners. Blocks in perf. 13½ are rare, as are used blocks of any sort (a used block of 8 was in the Palace Collections). Lithographed blocks are very rare and I know of only one.

The piaster values are all scarce to rare in blocks and the largest of the lpi. appears to be 10 (Palace Collections). Several used blocks are known. In perf. 13½ I know of only one block of 4 (this is a very scarce and underpriced stamp even as an unused single). Of the lithographs, the only known block is a damaged one used at Suakim. Very few blocks of the 2pi. and 2½pi. seem to exist and are mostly of 4, but a block of 20 of the 2½pi. was in the Palace Collections. The 2½pi. perf. 13½ is known only as singles. The 5pi. was known in nothing larger than pairs until a block of 8, perf. 12½x13½, turned up in a Robson Lowe auction in 1983¹⁷.

Egyptian General Post Office.

—◆ N O T I C E ◆—

New issue of Postage labels.

H. H. the Khedewy has been graciously pleased to sanction the issue of new Descriptions of Postage labels. The respective value of the new labels will be 5, 10 & 20 Paras & 1, 2, 2½ & 5 Piasters.

These labels will be put in circulation on the 1st of January next and will be exclusively adopted from the 1st of February 1872. Their promiscuous use with the present ones will be freely admitted up to this latter date after which the old postage stamps, ceasing to be of any value whatever can be exchanged for those of the new issue at the Post-Offices of the realm during the whole of February and March 1872.

After the 1st February letters, patterns or printed papers bearing postage labels other than those of the new issue (and not bearing any of the latter) will be considered as totally unpaid.

Should however there be any postage labels of the new issue on the correspondence in question such correspondence will be treated precisely as if no postage labels other than those of the new issue were attached to it.

These regulations will be strictly enforced.

The present notice is to be kept affixed at the entrance of each office during the aforementioned period (that is to say from the 1st of January to the 31st March 1872) together with a fac-simile of the new postage labels.

Alexandria, December the 19th 1871.

*The Postmaster General
Murzi Bey*

Fig. 21 Official announcement

The 1874-75 Printings

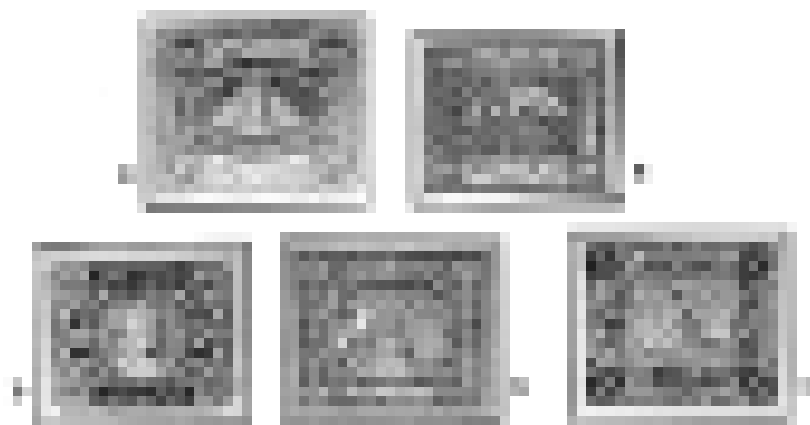
Two years after the Third Issue was introduced, stocks ran low. Essays were submitted from abroad (Fig. 22), but a new printing of the old designs was ordered from the Government Printing Works on 2 Gamal Awal 1291 (18 June 1874). A total of 12,300,000 stamps were contracted for 13. They were delivered in two consignments; the invoice for the first consignment, dated October 7th 1874, listed the following quantities:

Denominations	Sheets	Stamps	Denominations.	Sheets	Stamps
10 paras	6000	1,200,000	2½ piasters	2500	500,000
20 paras	6500	1,300,000	5 piasters	450	90,000
2 piasters	4000	800,000			

The 5pa. and 1pi. were not yet ready, but the account of expenses¹⁸ states that the order was completed on 22 Moharram 1292 (1 March 1875) and was to be paid for in instalments over the next two years. The Postal Administration sent the following circular¹⁹, dated October 10th 1874, to every post office:

Subsequent to the reprinting of the series of postage stamps, carried out by order of the Ministry of Finance, this Administration being at present abundantly supplied with stamps of which it was previously lacking, you will be able, therefore, from now on, to apply for all the seven series of postage stamps that the Office is in need of.

The 8,410,000 stamps remaining to the order were presumably divided between the 5pa. and 1pi. in the same proportion as in the first printing, about 1:6. It is notable not only that the total quantity was 50% larger than the order for 1872, but that the quantity of the 2½pi. was more than ten-fold larger. The need for this denomination had increased because of the Italy-Egyptian and Anglo-Egyptian postal agreements. The former set the postage for simple letters to Italy at 2½pi., and the latter had various rates according to destination, one of which was 5pi. and thus payable by two copies of the 2½pi. The delivery of the 5pa. and 1pi. stamps was presumably made in March as the records state and that date is consistent with the earliest dates of use that have been seen. (There must have been a substantial stock of the first printing of these two values still on hand to justify the content of the October 10th circular.)



a - Carlo Borrani (Florence), 5 April 1874, lithographed.

b - Bernardi Wagner & Co. (Milan), 11 April 1874, lithographed.

c - Continental Bank Note Co. (New York), 1874 bicoloured, recess

Fig. 22 Essays submitted in 1874.

The 1874-75 stamps were printed from new plates made from the original dies. The entire order was completed by typography; there were no lithographs nor any suggestion that lithography was even considered. There were several other differences from the 1872 stamps besides those associated with new plates.

Colours

The 1874-75 stamps were not announced as or considered to be a new issue and the colours were evidently intended to be the same as before. The facts, however, are that only two values, the 2pi. and 2½pi., were quite unchanged. The 5pa. and 5pi. differed slightly in shade and the 10pa., 20pa., and 1pi. were actually different colours entirely. Use of the *Stanley Gibbons Colour Guide* leads to these descriptions:

5pa. - dull red brown (light to deep)
 10pa. - pale slate to deep slate
 20 a. - slate-blue to grey-blue and azure
 1pi. - scarlet to vermilion (shades)
 2pi. - yellow to chrome yellow (shades)

2½pi. - slate-violet or reddish slate-violet
 (The reddish slate-violet 2½pi. is a new shade and rather rare; it occurs much more frequently in the 1878-79 provisionals.)
 5pi. - yellow-green to bright green

The colour of the 10pa. has been consistently described as 'lilac' (or shades of it) in the general catalogues for many decades, yet I have never seen a single example having a trace of lilac, mauve, or purple. Either the initial listings simply assumed it must be lilac since it was a reprinting of the 1872 lilac stamps, or the ink used was unusually unstable to aging, perhaps being lilac in 1875 and having changed to slate during the ensuing century. However, the colour is not different between unused and used stamps, nor between fresh, carefully conserved stamps and those that have been exposed to light, heat, humidity, saliva, and coffee. Similar remarks apply to the 20pa. of which most copies are closer to grey than blue. The azure shade is a light sky-blue, and is more often seen used than unused, and is scarce either way.

Paper and Watermark

The paper appears much the same as that used in 1871 and the same dandy-roll was evidently used for the watermark. However, the paper is thinner and is nearly always less than 0.11mm (but occasional examples on thick paper turn up). The thin paper may have a bearing on the oily, translucent appearance of a large proportion of the stamps. The oily appearance is not of itself a property of the paper however, for even the 'oiliest' stamps have white, opaque paper between the stamps, as well as in the sheet margins. The oily medium of the ink is the cause of the translucency when it is absorbed by the paper and diffuses slightly beyond the printed areas. The effect is not consistent throughout the printing and the variation is probably due to differences among the batches of ink, which would have had to have been made up many times during the printing.

The yellow-green 5pi. stamps are usually oily and the image is fairly fuzzy. The bright green shade is less inclined to have such a fuzzy, oily appearance and was evidently printed from a different batch of ink.

The watermark is often badly centred, so much so that in extreme cases one or even two rows of stamps are without watermark. This is known on the 20pa., 1pi., and 2pi. On the latter, it was the top row that missed the watermark and vertical tête-bêche pairs with one stamp unwatermarked can be found.

Inverted watermarks are only slightly less common than upright and with the 5pa., with which nearly half the stereos were inverted, there is no detectable difference.

Plates

The new plates were made up as before, by clamping 200 stereos in a forme. However, although the stereos were made from the same dies, there were differences, some important, others small but useful.

The 5pa. stamps have the most outstanding important difference: the centre and the side panels were assembled upside down and every stamp is in effect an error. When the sphinx is upright the inscriptions are inverted. The fact that this gross error was not noticed and corrected before printing says a lot about quality control and supervision at the Khedive's Printing House. The error, however, can be commended on one aspect: it removed the possibility of uncertainty in distinguishing the 1874-75 printing from that of 1872!

The die for the 2pi. apparently underwent a small touch-up before the stereos were cast. At the left end of the top panel, the last Arabic letter should have a pair of dots below the horizontal stroke, but on the 1872 stamps there is instead a clearly defined inverted V (Fig. 23). This was corrected on the die.

The 2½pi. die was not touched up, but it suffered minor damage to the shading of the left face of the pyramid (Fig. 24) at about the level of the eye. The fact that this feature does not show up on any of the other values which shared the same centre die implies that the plate for the 2½pi. was the last to be made.

The die of the 5pi. also shows slight damage, but it is in the side panels and thus could not have affected any of the other denominations. The thin frameline above the upper right numeral 5 is bent downward slightly and the inscription panel at the left has a small spur protruding from its upper right corner (Fig. 25).

Whereas the 1872 sheets had a plain buffer bar on one side only, all the 1874-75 plates had an ornamental border completely surrounding the setting (Fig. 26).



Fig. 23 2 piasters, top inscription.

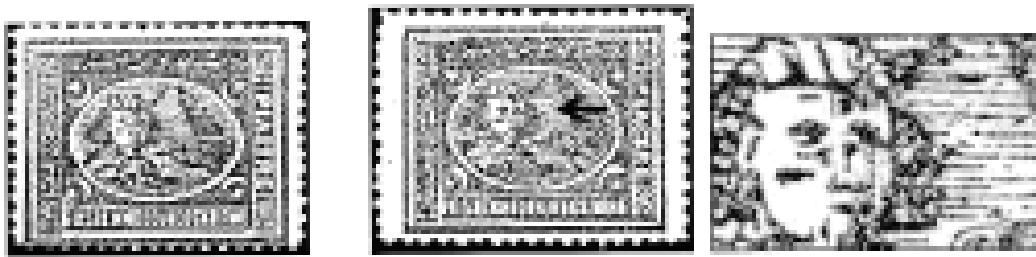


Fig. 24 Vignette of the 2½ piasters.



a - 1872 (white spot before P of PIASTRE) top frame-line usually split.; b - 1874 (white spot very faint or absent; left inscription tablet deformed at top right; top frame-line thinner and not split). Fig. 25 Die characteristics of the 5 piasters.

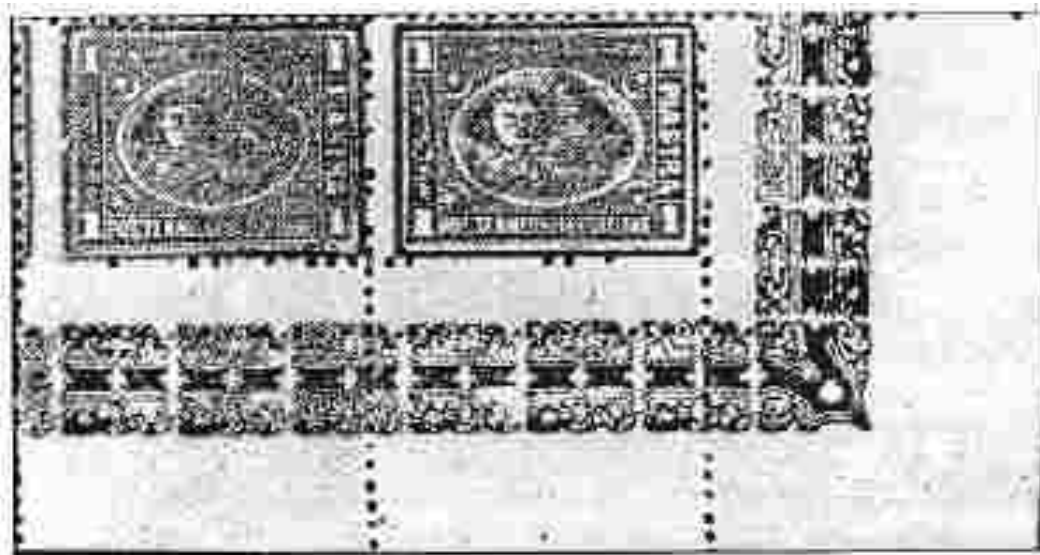


Fig. 26 Sheet border of the 1874-75 printings.

Tête-bêche Varieties

In contrast to the 1872 plates, inverted stereos, the cause of tête-bêche pairs, occurred widely in the 1874-75 plates. Only the 20pa. and 5pi. plates had no inverted stereos. The 2pi. and 2½pi. had one inverted stereo each: position 8 (thus the top row) of the 2pi. and position 154 of the 2½pi. These can be collected as horizontal or vertical pairs (equal scarcity).

The 10pa. was printed from two plates (settings), one of which had no inverted stereos. The second plate had nine inverted stereos: positions 31, 32, 33, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, and 145. Both horizontal and vertical tête-bêche pairs are thus possible, the horizontal being one-third as frequent.

The 1pi. required a large number of printing surfaces and Byam6 recorded four settings, corresponding to four reassemblies of the stereos after cleaning or replacement of damaged subjects:

Setting A. - position 114 alone inverted

Setting B. - twelve inverted stereos: the entire top row plus 114 and 121

Setting C. - three inverted stereos: 38, 58, and 152

Setting D. - ten inverted stereos, including numbers 1 to 9 and one other.

(However, Dalwick²⁰ states that there were 19 inverted stereos, numbers 1 to 9 and 191 to 200. The uncertainty is connected with the reported presence in the Royal Collection of the United Kingdom of a sheet having ten inverted positions.)

It can be seen that horizontal tête-bêche pairs would be about one-quarter as frequent as vertical, assuming that each setting produced an equal number of stamps. Setting A was presumably the first, for the sheet shows none of the indented frame-lines caused by tools used to dislodge the stereos. Setting A was perforated 13 $\frac{1}{3}$ x12 $\frac{1}{2}$, whereas Settings B, C, and D were perforated 12 $\frac{1}{2}$, at least for the most part.

Lastly, we come to the 5pa., with which vertical tête-bêche pairs are the norm. There appear to have been two plates or settings, one of which was represented in the Byam collection by a complete sheet having 88 vertical and four horizontal tête-bêche pairs; almost every other row was inverted. The other plate is said to have had 88 vertical tête-bêche pairs also, but only two horizontal. However, Mehanny Eid²¹, writing in 1951 while in possession of a full sheet, expressed his belief that only one plate was used, whereas McNeille²² described evidence for two plates. A block of 80 in his collection corresponded to the top eight rows of the sheet described by Dalwick. A used block of 6 (2x3) in my own collection has only the upper left stamp inverted and does not fit the pattern shown by Dalwick, but does fit into the sheet illustrated by Eid.

A full elucidation of the 5pa. will probably never come about, but the mostly consistent pattern of alternate rows inverted rather than a random scatter of the two orientations suggests a purposeful arrangement. Whatever the explanation may turn out to be, it is a fact that horizontal tête-bêche pairs and normal vertical pairs are extremely scarce. It is not improbable that with both the 5pa. and lpi. substitutions may have been made (probably involving reassembly) as printing progressed so as to convert one setting into another, thereby giving the illusion of more plates than there really were.

Plate Flaws and Substitutions

A case of two successive substitutions at the same position has been detected 23 with the 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ pi. (Fig. 27). Stereo 102 developed a disfiguring break in the bottom frameline and was eventually replaced. In the process, the tool used to loosen stereo 102 damaged stereo 101 causing a semicircular indentation on the right side of the latter. The new stereo 102 was not satisfactory; the lower right value tablet printed very weakly. After some sheets were printed with it, a second substitution was carried out, this time with damage to stereo 92, in the row above it, which sustained an indentation in its bottom frameline. The second replacement was evidently satisfactory.



On position 102



on position 92



On position 101

Fig. 27 Original subject 102 and indented frame lines resulting from substitution.

There may have been substitutions of other denominations, many of which show one or more stereos with indented frames. A detailed study of constant plate flaws could in principle detect them, but nothing of the sort has been published.

The 1874-75 printings have fewer plate flaws of the prominence of those on so many of the 1872 stamps. On the other hand, the impressions are overall so coarse that it is questionable whether small plate flaws can be detected with any reliability owing to the proliferation of ink blobs, irregularities and white speckles. This is a great hindrance to plating studies even though complete sheets may be available. Some proclaimed plate flaws, such as PIASYRA for PIASTRA on the 1pi., are probably non-constant artefacts of the inking.



There are many true plate flaws affecting the framelines; a selection of them is shown in figure 28. An especially obvious plate flaw involves the lower right value tablet of the 5pi. and the frameline to the right of it (Fig. 29a). Its position is fixed in row 16 by a block of 5x5 with bottom sheet margin, yet the flaw does not show on the sheet of the 5pi. in the Palace Collections of Egypt. Presumably, then, it is an extrinsic flaw and developed during printing. An unusually fine internal flaw occurs on position 1 of the 2½pi. in the form of a sharply defined gash in the pyramid (Fig. 29b).



Fig. 29

Fig. 28 Some frame flaws.

a – 5pi., broken value tablet

b – 2½pi., gashed pyramid

Among the many flaws, major and minor, on the 1pi., there are indented framelines of the sort made by make-ready tools (Fig. 30). Two of them occur on the top side of the adjacent positions 8 and 9 and thus could not have resulted from action taken on an adjacent stamp; they may have been connected with cleaning and reassembly. Several other indented frameline flaws exist, but their sheet positions have not been determined. Examples also occur on the 5pa. and 10pa¹⁰

Risen spacers are a special type of variety. When the thin pieces of metal used to obtain proper spacing between the stereos come loose, they may work up to printing level and take ink. The result is a line of colour between the stamps (Fig. 31). Such varieties are known on several denominations of both the 1874-75 and 1872 stamps.



Fig. 30 Indented frame lines on the 1 piaster.



Fig. 31 Risen spacers: 5 paras, left; 1 piaster, bottom right.

Perforation

The same perforating machines were used for the 1874-75 stamps as before, but they were used differently. The result was that the low values, 5pa. to 1pi., were perforated $12\frac{1}{2}$ or $13\frac{1}{3}\times 12\frac{1}{2}$, the high values $12\frac{1}{2}$ or $12\frac{1}{2}\times 13\frac{1}{3}$, and the 2pi. additionally $13\frac{1}{3}\times 12\frac{1}{2}$ (it was thus the only one to come in three gauges). The relative scarcity of used examples implies that there was not a large difference in the quantities produced in the different gauges, except for the 5pi., which is moderately rare perf. $12\frac{1}{2}\times 13\frac{1}{3}$. The situation with the unused stamps is considerably different owing to the substantial perturbation caused by the sale of remainders in 1888. The majority of the unused stamps come from the remainders and the population of the gauges in them was the principal determining factor rather than the original production quantities. Consequently, the 20pa. and 2pi. perf. $12\frac{1}{2}$ and the 1pi. perf. $13\frac{1}{3}\times 12\frac{1}{2}$ are abnormally scarce unused compared to used.

The 5pi. perf. $12\frac{1}{2}\times 13\frac{1}{3}$ unused is even rarer than used.

The perforation of the 1874-75 stamps has usually been termed 'rough', which does, indeed, fit the majority of the stamps, but by no means all. This might have come about from deterioration of the perforating heads, but I believe an important factor was an attempt to shorten the tedious process of perforating by stacking several sheets and perforating them together. The top sheet would be pierced more or less cleanly, but the cutting would have been progressively less clean-cut as the pins penetrated through the stack and many blind perforations would have resulted. In extreme cases, the bottom sheet might not be penetrated at all, instead receiving only indentations where the pins pressed without cutting.

The 5pa., 20pa., and 1pi. exist in pairs imperforate between and the 5pa., 1pi., $2\frac{1}{2}$ pi., and 5pi. exist imperforate between the stamp and sheet margin. All values exist as apparently imperforate singles, but only a few of them have large enough margins to be fully convincing (I have seen reasonably convincing examples of the 5pa., 10pa., 1pi., $2\frac{1}{2}$ pi., and 5pi.). The 5pi. is known in a used imperforate pair, the only imperforate pair of this issue of which I am aware. Several values are known with double perforation and probably all of them exist that way.

Date of Issue

No public announcement of the new stamps was made and the new printings were evidently integrated with existing stocks. Consequently, dates of issue can only be determined from postmarks²⁶. The earliest so far recorded, disregarding perforations, are:

5pa.	11 Mar. 1875	2pi.	2 Dec. 1874	10pa.	Aug. 1875	$2\frac{1}{2}$ pi.	15 Nov. 1874
20pa.	4 Feb. 1875	5pi.	2 Nov. 1874	1pi.	11 Apr. 1875		

These dates should not be regarded as final.

Distinguishing the 1872 Printings from those of 1874-75

Distinction is trivially easy with the 5pa. owing to the inverted and transposed side panels of the 1875 stamps. The 10pa. and 20pa. are of such different colours that there should be no possibility of a mistake. The 1pi. stamps also differ in colour, but some people have difficulty in distinguishing between rose-red and vermilion. That should still cause no problem, for the gauge of the perforations of 1872, $13\frac{1}{3}$ and $12\frac{1}{2}\times 13\frac{1}{3}$, is not the same as in the second printing.

The three higher values may be more difficult, but only for those perf. $12\frac{1}{2}\times 13\frac{1}{3}$, the one gauge common to both printings. Distinction on the basis of clean-cut vs. rough perforations is not reliable, but the die characteristics are definitive²⁴ (Figs. 23, 24, 25). Oily paper nearly always indicates a stamp of 1874-75. If one has a marginal piece, the ornamental border of the second printings is decisive.

Dates of postmarks are of little or no value unless they are before October 1874, when they clearly identify an 1872 stamp. The 1872 stamps remained in use concurrently with the 1874-75 printings up to the end of the issue, as late as 1879.

The gauge of perforations on 1874-75 stamps is often difficult to measure if the perforations are rough. If a gauge does not give an unambiguous reading, it can be helpful to take a good measuring rule and count the number of holes (or teeth) in 2 centimetres.

Bisection

The 20pa. is reported to have been bisected for use as a 10pa. stamp to pay the greeting-card rate, but I have never seen an example. The 2pi. was bisected at Gedda for one mailing, in April 1875 (Fig. 32). Cancellations are in blue and lack the year slug. Examples exist on fragment and on full covers. Byam6 also records bisection of the 1pi. at Smirne.



Fig. 32 The 2 piastre bisected at Gedda

Multiples

All values of the second printing are easily obtainable in fresh, unused multiples, but not in all perforations. This situation is a result of the sale of remainders in 1888; even complete sheets of each value have survived. The 20pa. is a rarity perf. 12½ in a block of four and the 1pi. compound perf. and the 2pi. perf. 12½ are very scarce in blocks. I have not heard of a block of the 5pi. in compound perforation.



Used blocks are in general much scarcer, but even the 5pi. exists in used blocks (an irregular block of 15 used at Alexandria is illustrated in the catalogue of the Byam sale). Many apparently used blocks (and some singles), however, are actually remainders with forged or favour cancellations. These are usually of Type I for Alexandria with a somewhat battered circle and the date expressed in one line instead of three, or Type IX, which was not introduced until after the Third Issue was withdrawn. The latter usually has a blank date-band; an example is shown in Figure 33. (The remainders also included a quantity of the 1872 10pa. and perhaps the 5pa. as well as the surcharged provisionals.)



Fig. 33 Cancellations used on remainders.

Uses

The several denominations of the Third Issue had the same purpose as those of the First and Second Issues, except for the new 2½pi. value, use of which on postal treaty letters has already been mentioned. With the formation of the UPU, a new use for the 2½pi. came into being on July 1st 1875: the UPU letter rate, 1½pi., combined with the registration fee of 1pi., could be neatly paid with one stamp. However, when the UPU letter rate was reduced to 1pi. on April 1st 1878 the 2½pi. no longer had a purpose.

The 5pa. was intended for use on newspapers and although hundreds of thousands must have been used in that way, extremely few have survived intact. They were not customarily affixed to bands, but were stuck on the banner head of the paper itself. Since newspapers were rarely saved in archives, examples so used are rarities. Another use for the 5pa. came about with the Anglo-Egyptian Postal Agreement. The usual rate for a letter from internal Egypt to the British Isles was 4pi. 5pa. (Fig. 35). The 1872 5pa. is commoner than the 1875 5pa. used for this purpose because the rate was superseded by the UPU rate on July 1st 1875.

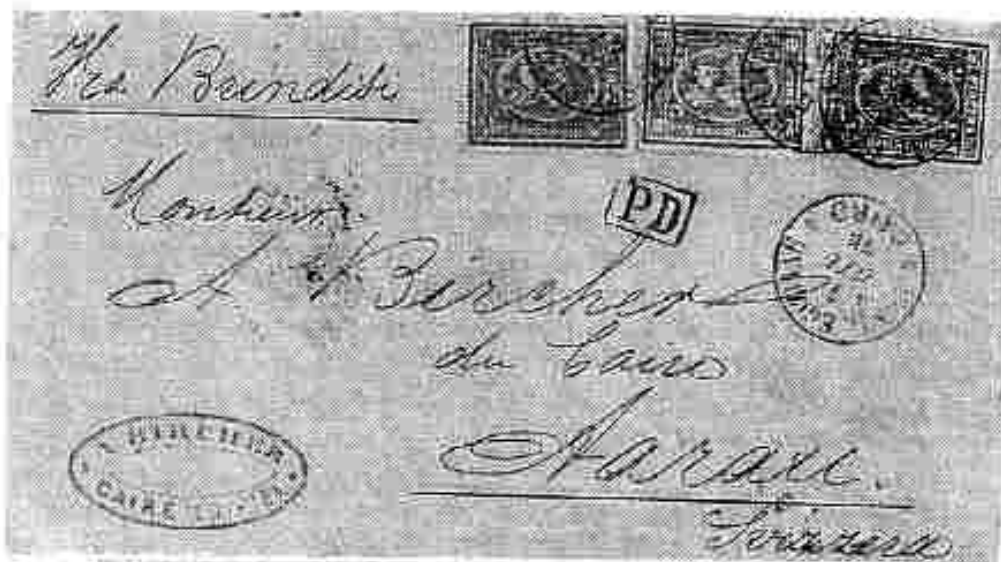
The 10pa. continued in use for unsealed printed matter such as greeting cards²⁵, but acquired another use under the postal agreements: the rate from internal Egypt to India was 3pi.10pa. and the printed matter rate by the Italian Post to places reached by it was 15pa.

The 20pa. paid no ordinary postal rate for much of the life of the Third Issue, but was needed to pay fees for receipts for money orders, etc. (Fig. 34). Examples so used are quite rare and I have seen only the 1872 20pa. With formation of the UPU, the 20pa. paid the foreign rate for printed matter up to 50g. After April 1st 1878 a rate of 20pa. for local letters within either the Alexandria or Cairo postal districts was introduced. Examples of all these uses are rare. The commonest use of the 20pa. is on UPU letters, used with a 1pi. to make up the 1½pi. rate. Pairs used on internal letters and on UPU letters from April 1st 1878 are not especially uncommon.

The 2pi. stamps were originally useful to frank double-weight letters or single-weight letters travelling between internal Egypt and the Consular offices. They were also needed to pay the registration fee on internal letters until April 1st 1878. On that date the internal registration fee was reduced to that of the UPU fee, 1pi., and a 2pi. stamp could be used to pay it combined with the postage. The 5pi. was primarily needed for unusually heavy letters. However, under the Anglo-Egyptian Postal Agreement, 5pi. paid the rate for a single letter from internal Egypt by the British Post to USA. Examples of the 5pi. used on cover, alone or in combination, are rare (Fig. 36).



Fig. 34 The 20 paras used alone.



2pi. 35pa. Italian treaty rate for letters to Switzerland 15 pa. printed matter treaty rate to Italy 4pi. 5pa. letter treaty rate to England Fig. 35 Uses requiring a 5 para stamp.



Fig. 36 The 5pi. rate to USA under the Anglo-Egyptian Postal Treaty.

Mixed franking is known with stamps of Great Britain and with Italy prior to the respective postal agreements and with stamps of Greece and France. Mixed franking with Russian ROPiT stamps was in principle possible, but I know of no example.

The Third Issue was used for two months only (January and February 1872) in the Consular offices along the coasts of Syria, Cilicia, and Thessaly (Iaffa, Bairout, Tripoli, Latakia, Alessandretta, Mersina, Lagos, Cavala, Volo, Salonichchi) and throughout the life of the issue at Costantinopoli, Galipoli, Dardanelli, Scio, Metelino, Smirne, and Rodi (Chapter XXX). On the Red Sea it was used at Gedda, Suakim and Massawa. From 1874 it saw use in the Territorial offices in internal Sudan (Wadi Halfe, Barbar, Dongola, Kartum, Kassala, Gedaref). Except for Costantinopoli, and perhaps Smirne, Metelino, and Gedda, the cancellations of all these offices on Third Issue stamps are very scarce to very rare.

The usual cancellations are circular date-stamps, but the retta can be found on all values and is not very scarce. Intaglio seals (Cairo, Massawa, Suakin, Minuf, Fashn and Gedaref) are rare. Adventitious cancellations include those of foreign ports (Fig. 37), such as Brindisi, and manuscript cancellations (generally illegible). One travelling post office date-stamp, reading AMBULANTE / ALES-CAIRO (or vice versa), was in use, but it is a rarity on stamps. Somewhat commoner is the date-stamp of the floating office on the Khedivial Mail Line steamers, reading POSTE EGIZIANE / UFFIZIO NATANTE, but it is a rarity on cover.

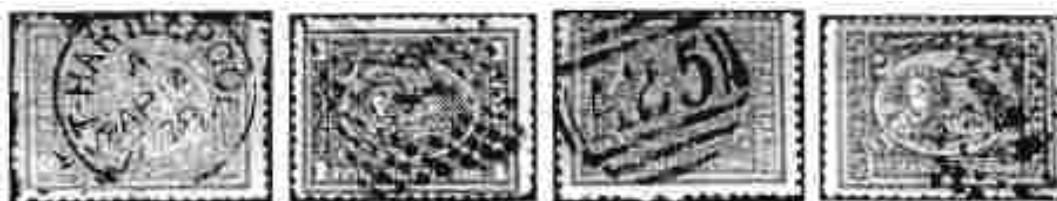


Fig. 37 A selection of adventitious cancellations.

Forgeries

Forgeries of Third Issue stamps are abundant but are easily recognized. Most of them were made for the cheap approval or packet trade a very long time ago, principally by Fournier of Geneva and Spiro of Hamburg (Fig. 37). Although they have a superficially good resemblance to the genuine stamps, they differ in watermark (i.e., lack of it), perforation, shade, cancellation, and details of the design. On one of them, the sphinx, looks more like George Washington! The cancellations are generally mute lozenges or ovals of bars or rectangles, but some exist with credible circular date-stamps in Type V (Porto Said).



Fig. 38 Common forgeries, including a cover with a genuine stamp, but forged date-stamp.

The Surcharged Provisionals

Towards the end of 1878, when a contract had already been made with Thomas De La Rue & Co. for future supplies of stamps, a decision was reached to surcharge the substantial existing supply of the 2½pi. stamps with new values, 5pa. and 10pa. The reason for the decision has not been explicitly recorded. However, the need for a 2½pi. stamp had virtually disappeared when the UPU letter rate was reduced from 1½pi. to 1pi. (and thus the registered letter rate from 2½pi. to 2pi.). The stock of not needed 2½pi. stamps could be made more useful by converting them to the denominations needed for newspapers (5pa.) and greeting cards (10pa.). The latter, especially, would be in heavy demand at the forthcoming New Year festival and the new stamps from De La Rue would not be ready by then.

Essays. Guide Marks and Printing Stones

An essay for each value was prepared, inscribed in French and Arabic (Fig. 39), arranged to fit the oval of the vignette, with vertical lines to obliterate the original denomination and small guide marks in each corner. It was applied to a few copies of the 2½pi. stamps by lithography and one or more impressions were struck on paper or card. Examples are known in red and in black; both are rare. I know of no multiples. This essay did not show up well on the dark stamps and was rejected in favour of a far more prominent surcharge (Fig. 40).

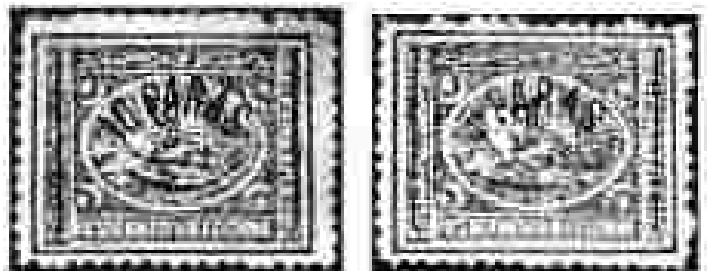


Fig.39 Essay

The Government Printing Works in Boulaq undertook the surcharging by lithography, but records of the details are not known. From the existing stamps, which include complete sheets, a little of the procedure can be deduced. The printing stones must have consisted of 200 subjects which were accurately placed and aligned. The corner stamps of the 10pa. show small, L-shaped guide marks at the outer corner (some of the guide marks are incomplete and consist of only one leg of an L). The same type of mark occurs at the middle of the sides of the sheet. They thus define each quarter-sheet of 50 subjects and occur on positions 1, 5, 6, 10, 91, 101, 105, 106, 110, 191, and 200, but, surprisingly, not on position 100. Position 200 has not only a partial guide mark at its lower right corner, but also one at its upper right corner. The 5pa. normally has no guide marks anywhere (but see below).

The 200 subjects are quite uniform in appearance and small characteristics of individual subjects are easily obscured by the general coarseness of the printing. However, it is a reasonable assumption that single drawings (or engravings) for each of the two values were prepared and then replicated by imprinting them on lithographic transfer paper which was used to transfer a matrix of subjects to an original stone. It would have been very tedious to take 200 impressions of each value; a more practical procedure would be to make original stones of, say, 5 or 10 subjects, and then to transfer impressions from them in sufficient number. It was once proposed⁶ that the printing stone was made up of four transfers of 50. That view has been modified by investigations by Charles Minett that he was unable to publish before he died but that were reported in a paper read by Major MacArthur before the Egypt Study Circle in 1976. Minett was able to discern that each vertical column has its own minute characteristics and that an intermediate stone must have had ten horizontal impressions laid down twenty times on the printing stone. Major MacArthur has suggested that the long strips of transfer paper may have been cut in half in order to facilitate handling, thereby requiring guide marks between the fifth and sixth positions. This explanation assumes that most of the guide marks were subsequently erased from the printing stone of the 10pa. and all of them from the 5pa.

There is a mysterious aspect to the corner guide marks. Although the 5pa. normally has no such marks in any position, some stamps exist with guide marks in all four corners (Fig. 40); they are very scarce. Such stamps are not present in the complete sheets that have survived, but most of them are found used. Furthermore, stamps with four guide marks are found with either upright or inverted surcharge and the latter appear to come from complete sheets with inverted surcharge. The examples that I have seen have the surcharge cantered to the upper left, making parts of four guide marks visible at the lower right (i.e., one from each of four subjects). In the sheets of the basic stamp, one stereo (no. 154) is inverted and so gives rise to a tête-bêche variety. A sheet with surcharge upright would thus contain one stamp with inverted surcharge, but with a frequency of occurrence of 1 in 200 it would be a rarity. Stamps with inverted surcharge and four guide marks are not rare enough to be consistent with a single inverted stereo as the sole source. Some 10pa. stamps exceptionally exist with parts of guide marks in two, three, or four corners, but some of the marks consist of only a short line instead of an L.

It has been speculated that the stamps with four guide marks come from a trial printing, perhaps of proof status⁶. The ordinary 5pa. stamps, without guide marks, must then have come from a subsequent printing, utilizing either the same stone after the guide marks had been erased, or a fresh stone. Similar remarks apply to the 10pa. The available evidence does not allow a decision to be made, but it is obvious that erasing four guide marks per stamp on a stone of 200 subjects would have been discouragingly tedious. Major MacArthur mentioned seeing an example of the 5pa. with four guide marks showing evidence of a creased transfer, a feature that does not exist on the sheets of the stamps having no guide marks. He suggested that the creased transfer might have been replaced before the bulk of the stamps were surcharged, but it is also possible that the stone on which it appeared was not used for the bulk of the stamps.

The guide marks were certainly on the original drawing or engraving ('die') to mark the position of the stamp design relative to the surcharge (the essay also has such guide marks). The possibility that the stamps with guide marks are forgeries is remote. The surcharges seem to be an exact match with those without guide marks; they are always on genuine stamps and a number of them have indubitably genuine cancellations. For the upright surcharges there would have been no incentive for forgery as the value would not be increased.

Fig. 40 Stamps with four guide marks, and 10 paras with guide mark at lower left.



Fig. 40 Stamps with four guide marks, and 10 paras with guide mark at lower left.

Perforation and Watermark

The basic stamps came from a stock consisting of sheets perforated 12½ and sheets perforated 12½x13½; the latter gauge is much less common on the surcharged stamps. The watermark is properly upright, but it is not scarce inverted. The combination of perforation and watermark thus leads to four distinct varieties. The inverted stereo on the basic stamp led to tête-bêche pairs in each perforation. These are quite rare; on many sheets, especially of the 5pa., the inverted stamp was removed because it had an inverted surcharge (presumably this was a case of misguided philatelic surgery applied to remainder sheets). The Zeheri catalogue (1972 edition) gives an estimate that only five tête-bêche examples of the 5pa. are known 30 (only perf. 12½ is recorded). The frequency (or infrequency) of examples in major auctions is consistent with this estimate and suggests that perhaps 10 to 15 examples of the tête-bêche 10pa. may exist.

Both values are known imperforate as singles. The sheets were perforated on a line machine and wide and narrow stamps, as well as short and tall ones, were produced, but most examples are suspect since large stamps can be trimmed to make convincing imperforates. On the other hand, some sheets missed having an outer edge perforated, so that a row of stamps remained imperforate between the stamp and sheet margin. I have seen the 10pa., otherwise perf. 12½; it is a rare variety. Gibbons catalogue (Middle East, 4th edition, 1990) implies that imperforate pairs exist for both values.

Errors and Plate Varieties

Inverted surcharges arose both from the inverted stereo of the basic stamp and the sheets fed into the press upside down, as shown by examples from corners of the sheet³². They are known in both perforations. Surcharges misplaced horizontally or vertically also exist (Fig. 41). The degree of misplacement is not great on issued stamps (maximum about one-quarter of the width or height); drastic misplacements (Fig. 43) are offered from time to time, but they are either printer's waste or forgeries (never with genuine cancellations).

Fig. 41 Misplaced surcharge.



Fig. 42 Misplacement on printer's waste or forgeries (the cancellation is forged).



A double surcharge of the 10pa. in a block of four perf. 12½ was in the Gougas collection (Robson Lowe auction, Basel, February 28th 1973, lot 957). I have seen only the catalogue illustration, in which one impression seems to be only lightly inked. If it is genuine, it might have resulted from one pass through the press being improperly inked.

The sheets of the basic stamp came from three states of the plate, differing because of substitution of defective stereos. Sheets from all three states were surcharged and the plate flaws of the substituted positions (92, 101, 102) therefore exist surcharged^{10,33} (but not necessarily in every nuance) as well as the plate flaws common to all three states. The 'gashed pyramid' variety (position no. 1) is especially popular, but it is somewhat rare because the surcharge usually covers the flaw.

The only significant plate flaw of the surcharges themselves occurs on position 103 of the 5pa.³⁴. The ball of the 5 is partly hollow and roughly resembles a question mark (Fig. 43) (rare; not found on all sheets).

Fig.43 Hollow ball on the five.



Shades and Multiples

There is a range of shades, but most of the stamps are dull violet. Less common is a pal(dull violet and still less common is a deep purple. The scarcest shade is a dark reddish violet; this shade rarely occurs on the unsurcharged stamps and may have come from < batch of ink used in the tail-end of the printing (November 1874). Examples arc occasionally found in the grey colour of the 10pa. definitive; they are changelings.

Multiples of the provisionals are not really scarce in either perforation and large(blocks, even full sheets, can be found. The sheets typically have the stamp from the inverted stereo removed. Singles or multiples with attached ornamental border are also not especially difficult to find.

Date of Issue, Quantities and Use

The date of issue is controversial. All catalogues state January 1st 1879, but examples are known dated in late December 1878 (they are rare). Because of heavy demand for mailing greeting cards for the New Year, it would have been logical to have supplies on hand at least a few days in advance. The scarcity of early dates could be a consequence of the custom to mail greeting cards exactly on New Year's Day (which was not a post-office holiday in Egypt). Along with all the other Third Issue stamps, they were withdrawn from sale on April 1st 1879 when the De La Rue stamps were introduced, but stamps already purchased were officially acceptable for postal use until the end of October (some may nevertheless have been used later because of tolerance or oversight).

The quantities printed or sold have not been unambiguously disclosed, but an official report³⁵ by the Chief Cashier of the Post Office dated August 17th 1876 gives the quantities of stamps in stock at that time and the average monthly consumption:

Denomination	Stock	Monthly use	Estimated duration
5pa.	1,226,355	26,822	3 years 10 months
10pa.	1,316,145	17,494	6 years 3 months
2½pi.	438,435	3,431	10 years 2 months

At that date, the Third Issue had less than 3 years before replacement.

The remainders sold in 1888 included 56,070 5pa. stamps, 66,850 10pa. stamps, and 27,970 2½pi. stamps, but these quantities apparently embraced both the provisionals and definitives of 1872 and 1875 of the 5pa. and 10pa. (no breakdown was given in the announcement). From these figures one can roughly estimate that ca. 320,000 2½pi. stamps were surcharged; this figure is not inconsistent with an archival record stating that 340,000 were surcharged. The quantities of the two denominations were probably equal.

Covers franked with either provisional are excessively rare. I know of only one cover franked with a single 10pa. (surcharge inverted, postmarked at Alexandria on January 1st 1879), one franked with a block of four to pay the letter rate (used at the Consular Office at Scio on January 26th) and one to England bearing one 10pa. and two Spa. provisionals augmented with a 20pa. definitive. The only other example of the 5pa. on cover bears eight copies; it was posted at Gedda and addressed to Bombay. Even stamps on small fragments are rare. I know of an imperforate Spa. tied to a small piece of newspaper, and another fragment. The rarity is a result of two factors: newspapers and greeting-card envelopes were generally not saved in archives and the stamps were on sale for little longer than three months. Cleverly faked covers appear on the market from time to time.

The great majority of the provisionals were used in Alexandria (date-stamp Types V and VII) or Cairo (date-stamp Type V); postmarks of other offices are quite scarce. Presumably these stamps were distributed only to those offices that had occasion to requisition supplies of 5pa. and 10pa. stamps during the currency of the provisionals (the definitives were not withdrawn and supplies of them may have been adequate at most offices). Nevertheless, some copies reached the Consular offices and I know of examples cancelled at Gedda, Metelino, and Scio. The internal postmarks I have seen are Fescne, Ismailia (blue), Mansura, Porto Said, Slut, St. Schutz, Suez (blue), Suez Stazione (blue), Tanta, Tell el Barud and Zagazig.

The 5pa. saw use on newspapers, on which the stamps were applied before the newspaper was printed and positioned so as to receive part of the date-line of the paper printed on the stamp as a form of tie-print (usually only the year, 1879, shows) (Fig. 44). Such stamps also bear the circular date-stamp of Alexandria.

The retta is occasionally found cancelling the provisionals, but such use is rare. Arrival cancellations applied at foreign ports are also rare (I have seen that of the Austrian post office in Constantinople).

Forgeries and Remainder Cancellations

A date-stamp of Type I, long obsolete by 1879, is sometimes found on the provisionals; the dates are impossible and it was probably a resurrected device used to cancel remainders. Cancellations of Alexandria in Type IX, which had not yet come into use in 1879, are also found on remainders, struck in black, grey-black, or purple. The date line is sometimes blank.

Forgeries are of three kinds: forged inverted or misplaced surcharges, a sophisticated forgery of the 5pa. surcharge on an otherwise genuine tête-bêche pair³⁶, and forged surcharges on forged stamps (Fournier) (Fig. 45). All are well enough done to fool the unwary. The tête-bêche forgery takes advantage of the difference between the value of the basic tête-bêche pair and the overprinted one, which has a catalogue value more than ten-fold as much. The Fournier forgeries were made for the approval, packet, and space-filler trade. The forgeries can be detected by the usual means, careful comparison of dimensions and shapes. The curve of the underside of the flag of the '5' is a particularly helpful aspect to examine (Figs. 45 and 46). On the Fournier forgeries it is nearly straight. Many of the forgeries have a forged cancellation as well and this may be the quickest way to recognize them. Fournier forgeries sometimes have fanciful grids as cancellations. A widespread forged cancellation exists for Cairo, date-stamp Type V (POSTS EGIZIANE with serifs); it has been used to forge covers bearing genuine stamps³⁷. The cross-bar of the A of CAIRO is markedly lower than the genuine and the circular rim has a sharp break below the C. This forged cancellation has also been applied to other stamps, even including printer's waste of the Second Issue 1pi. It also occurs on apparently genuine printer's waste of the provisionals with severely misplaced surcharge.



Fig. 44 An example of a newspaper date-line as a tie-print.

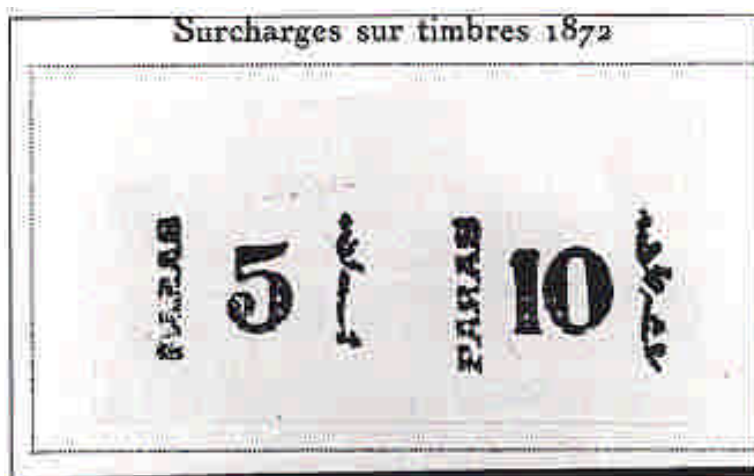


Fig. 45 Fournier forgeries.

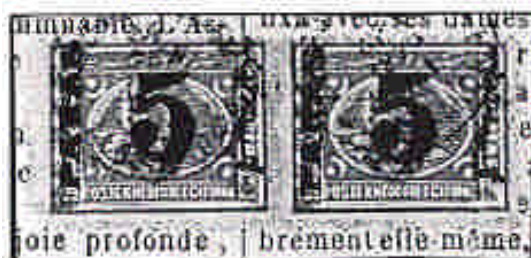


Fig. 46 A dangerous forgery, tied to piece with a nearly illegible date-stamp of Alexandria.

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