

XXII

Issues after Abdication

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The ordinary and commemorative stamps are the subject of this chapter. Issues for the several special services are taken up in the appropriate chapters.

Ordinary Stamps

Bar Overprints

The background of the first post-revolution stamps, the bar overprints¹, is described in Chapter XXV. Stamps having the portrait of King Farouk were overprinted with three horizontal bars situated to obliterate the portrait (Fig. 1); stamps previously unoverprinted, as well as some that had received the "King of Egypt and Sudan" overprint, were utilized². Supplies were made available from April 20th 1953 but unoverprinted stamps were officially valid until May 23rd. In the interim, private individuals sometimes applied their own obliterating bars, by pen or other means.



Fig. 1 The 3-bar overprints.

The simplicity of the overprint was not only an invitation to forgery or errors, such as double overprints, but also to creation of rare, unissued varieties. The situation is further complicated by the fact that it was permitted to submit stamps to the Post Office to have them obliterated; apparently it was possible, with the right influence, to have the same stamps returned to the submitter, rather than equivalent values. An extensive study of large quantities³ has established with reasonable certainty that only the following stamps were genuinely overprinted and sold to the public:

1937-40 (Boy King) 3 and 6m.

1939-51 (Marshal) 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 13, 15, and 17m., 20m. grey, 22, 30, 50, 100, and 200m., 50 PT, £E1

1952 K of E & S 2, 6, 10, 13, 40, and 200m.

However, Kemdjian⁴, who was present when the bar overprints were in use, reported that the 15, 17, 20, and 22m. with K of E & S and bars were genuine, but were not sold over the counter.

Errors in the form of double, or even triple, overprints exist, but most of those on the market are forgeries. Of these there are two kinds: with one, a forged overprint has been added to a stamp having a single genuine overprint, and in the other, both overprints are forged. Genuine errors arose primarily in an effort to obliterate the portrait properly after the first overprint was applied out of position (in some cases the bars were even applied *à cheval*). Double overprint errors properly used on cover are rare and desirable, but one must beware of contrived covers with forged errors.

Forged bars on unoverprinted stamps and forged K of E & S overprints on stamps with genuine bar overprints⁴ have been used to make unlisted varieties.

The overprinting of the low values (1m. to 22m.) was done by three different groups⁵: the Survey Department, the Imprimerie Nationale, and the Railway Administration Printery. The higher values were overprinted only by the Survey Department. There are small differences detectable by diligent study. Hass³ has identified two formes used for the values 30m. to 200m.; one of them was used for all of these values, but the other was used for part of the 30m. overprinting only. No record seems to have been kept of the quantities overprinted. Thompson⁶ has reported that on the low values, vertical strips show small variations in the bars, but horizontal strips do not. The overprints are platable, although with difficulty, and this possibility provides a protection against forgeries; however, the detailed information needed for plating is not easily available to the individual collector. The control numbers of the basic stamps that have been seen overprinted have been cataloged by Mazloum⁵.

Possible essays in the form of a large **X** or rectangular block exist, but their status is uncertain.

Definitive Issues

1953 Series

The first definitives of the Republic appeared over nine months beginning on January 23rd 1953. The low values featured either a farmer (*fellah*) or a soldier, the values from 30m. to 50m. showed the Sultan Hassan Mosque, and the 100m. to £E1 showed the famous bust of Queen Nefertiti, thus indicating a sharp break with the former portrait series. However, there were still large stocks of paper bearing the royal watermark and the administration looked the other way and frugally used it up. All values had control number A/53. A misunderstanding over the spelling of Defense/Defence caused a change in the inscription on the soldier design.

The 10m. "Defense" is known imperforate vertically, and the 4, 10, 30, 50, and 100m. exist with inverted watermark⁷. The 30m. exists with a double impression, apparently resulting from movement of the paper in the press. The £E1, the only value to be printed in two colors, exists with mis-registration of colors to varying extents; the effect can be quite prominent.

In little more than a year, the five low values in the farmer design were replaced with a more politically correct subject, a brightly cheerful and youthful farmer. The stamps were issued between September 1954 and 1955 and had control numbers A/54 and later. The 1m. imperforate was sold and used at Daher; four sheets of the 2m. were found with the right column of ten stamps completely imperforate and the adjacent column imperforate at the right side only⁴. The 4m. and 5m. exist so severely off center that EGYPT appears at the bottom instead of the top (the bottom row of each has EGYPT missing).

In the same year, the 10m. in the soldier design was issued in booklet form, having four panes of six stamps, each pane having selvedge on all sides. This was the last stamp booklet issued in Egypt (as of 1998); it is fairly scarce.

1957 Series

On October 8th 1957 a definitive series in totally different designs began appearing: 1m. and 10m. In a subtle shift, the English EGYPT replaced the French EGYPTE. The royal-watermarked paper having evidently been used up, a new watermark⁸ was introduced: the eagle of Saladin and the words *gumburiya misr* in Arabic, all-over multiple (Fig. 2). It was used on the 1m. and 10m. only and was replaced on January 1st 1958 with a similar watermark without *gumburiya* (Fig. 3); a 5m. was added to the set on February 1st. The control number was A/57 for each value, both watermarks. Each exists with inverted watermark. Essays for this issue are inscribed in French (Fig. 4).

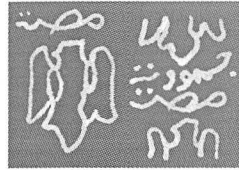


Fig. 2
1957 watermark.

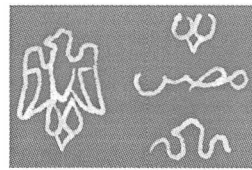


Fig. 3
1958 watermark.



Fig. 4 Essays for the 1957 stamps.

1958: UAR

Political events overtook the expansion of this fledgling set and the birth of the United Arab Republic was reflected in a set of new designs, 1m. to 35m., inscribed UAR / EGYPT. The dates of issue were:

1m. - 2 June 1958	5m. - 23 Aug.
2m. - 20 May	10m. - 10 May
3m. - 15 Mar.	35m. - 30 Aug.
4m. - 16 Apr.	

All had control number A/58 and all exist imperforate. The watermark was that introduced earlier in 1958; it is known inverted on the 1, 2, 3, and 4m.

An unusually interesting plate flaw occurred on the 4m. A prominent dot just to the right of the Arabic numeral of value had the effect of converting '4' to '40' in position 83. This noticeable and unacceptable error was corrected by touching out the dot, leaving a white spot, part way through the printing.

1958 55m. on 100m.

An urgent need for a 55m. stamp to meet the increased registration fee led to a provisional surcharge, 55m. on 100m., on January 20th 1958. In the process, the expression of the name of the country was changed by including in the surcharge UAR and *gumhuriyat al mutahaddat al 'arabiyat*. Position 99 of a large part of the printing had a broken R, appearing as UAP. On a few sheets, the surcharge was misplaced and examples may be found with the Arabic part at the bottom of the stamp, or completely missing. Three control numbers were used: A/53, ~~A/53~~ A/54, and A/55.

1959 Watermark

In a further political development, the year 1959 saw a revision of the inscription on the stamps from UAR / EGYPT to just UAR, along with yet another change of watermark, this time to multiple U.A.R. and the Arabic equivalent, *geem, 'ain, meem* (Fig. 5). Stamps of



Fig. 5 The 1959 watermark.
two sizes: width of UAR ca. 45mm. or
35mm., the smaller being introduced
in the 1960s

identical design were issued in Syria, the other end of the UAR axis, but they were distinguished by having the denominations expressed as P. (piasters) instead of M. The 1, 3, and 10m. were issued on August 30th 1959, followed by a 4m. on January 30th 1960, a 2m. on May 30th, and a 5m. on June 30th. All exist imperforate and the 5m. is known with inverted watermark. The set was completed to the 500m. with stamps of new designs:

15m. – 30 Dec. 1959	55m. – 29 Oct. 1959
20m. – 29 Feb. 1960	60m. – 30 Aug. 1960
30m. – 29 Oct. 1959	100m. – 29 Feb. 1960
35m. – 30 Apr. 1960	200m. – 30 Nov. 1959
40m. – 30 Nov. 1959	500m. – 30 May 1960

All values exist imperforate and the 40m. is known with inverted watermark. The red on the bicolored 500m. is in some cases markedly displaced.

A £E1 denomination was not issued, apparently because a substantial supply of the previous issue was on hand. This supply was overprinted in red with the new national name by the Survey Department and issued on February 22nd 1960.

Postal Authority Press

The year 1961 brought a major change; printing was transferred from the Survey Department to the Postal Authority Press. The first stamps from the new press were four values, 1m. blue, 4m. yellow-olive, 10m. in a new design (eagle of Saladin), and 35m. slate blue, all issued on August 31st. The paper was unwatermarked, the first such instance among Egyptian stamps. The only outward difference from the Survey Department's stamps was the abandonment of control numbers. In their place, the date of printing and a serial number were printed in black on the sheet margin, using European numerals (Fig. 6). From the 1980s, many issues have blank margins.

A 4m. showing a mosque lamp was added in 1963, incorporating the year in the design, to meet the demand created by the custom of sending greeting cards. There is a

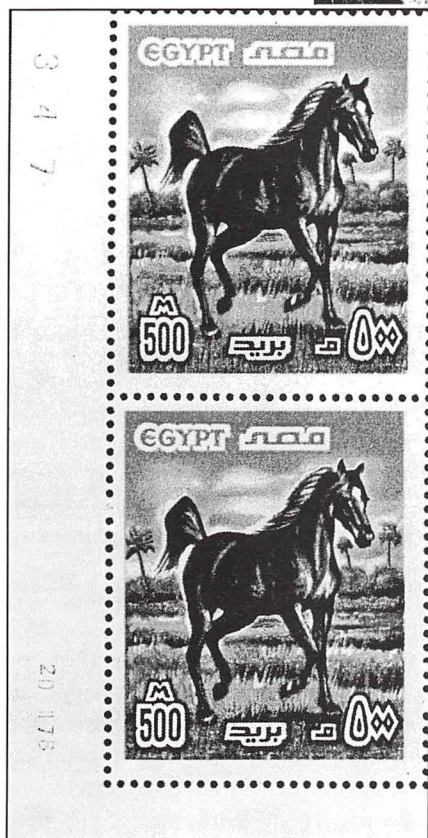


Fig. 7 Error, ١٩١٣ instead of ١٩٦٣ (above, right).

Fig. 6 Serial no. 347 and date, 20 11 78, in the margin (left).

nice plate flaw in position 63: the Arabic year is expressed as “1913” instead of “1963”, because the flag of the Arabic ‘6’, which resembles European ‘7’, is missing, converting the number to a ‘1’ (Fig. 7).

1962 Watermark

In 1962 yet another watermark was introduced, the fourth in seven years. It consists of a large eagle, arranged in tête-bêche rows, thus neatly avoiding the vexation of inverted watermark errors (Fig. 8). On high values it

appears sideways. It was used when a set of new designs, from 1m. to 500m., was issued between January 1st and July 1st 1964, but first appeared in 1962 on commemoratives.

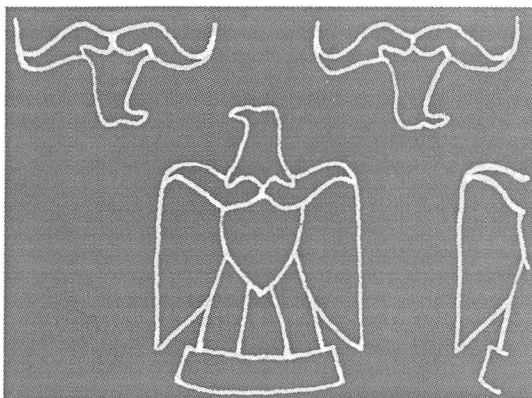


Fig. 8 The 1964 watermark.

1967 and 1969: New Values

Two values, 20m. olive and 55m. violet, were added in 1967 (August 15th and November 1st), printed on unwatermarked paper. They had a short life, for on December 27th 1969 the same values were issued in larger size, new colors (brown-purple and grey-green, respectively) and printed in recess. They are the first use of recess printing in Egypt. The 10m. underwent a deliberate, officially announced, change in shade about 1969. It was originally printed in bright green and dull chocolate; the new shade was light dull green, the dull chocolate remaining the same⁹.

1970: New Designs



Fig. 9 Recess-printed essay.

A multicolored set of definitives was brought out in 1970 in completely new designs, using unwatermarked paper for the values below 200m., which were issued on May 1st. The £E1 was issued on June 15th; it had a new design, a head of the Pharaoh Khafraa, and had the eagle watermark. It was printed by a pleasing combination of recess printing and photogravure. On January 31st 1971, 200m. and 500m. denominations showing a large portrait of President Nasser were issued, also printed in recess and photogravure on watermarked paper. An essay exists, probably arising from preliminary experiments with the newly acquired recess-printing facility (Fig. 9). It exists with and without bars through the value.

1971: Soldiers' Mail Stamp

A special stamp for use on letters to and from soldiers was also issued in 1971, on unwatermarked paper, in a reduced denomination, 10m., as a special concessionary rate. Examples properly used on cover are extremely difficult to find. However, the restriction seems to have been removed at a later date and examples have been seen used on ordinary mail (a single paid the rate for greeting cards, two copies paid the normal letter rate).

On May 1st 1971 two low values having a Nasser portrait, 20m. and 55m., were issued on unwatermarked paper. These were the last definitives of the UAR.

1972: "AR EGYPT"

Beginning January 1st 1972 stamps with the new national name, AR EGYPT (Arab Republic) began to appear in new or redrawn designs, from 1m. to £E1. The low values were printed by photogravure and the values 200m. to £E1 in a combination of recess and photogravure. Curiously, all were on unwatermarked paper except the 100m. (issued October 1st), and a later color change, 5m. bister (issued July 23rd 1976), both on paper watermarked eagle.

1978: New Designs – "EGYPT"

Beginning in 1978 a set of new designs with yet another change of national name, a reversion to EGYPT, began to appear. The 1978 printings were on watermarked paper: 1, 5, 10, 20, 50, 55, 100, and 200m. on July 23rd. Printings on unwatermarked paper began to appear in 1978 (100m.) and 1979 (5, 10, 20, and 50m.), and a new value, 70m., was added on August 22nd, also unwatermarked. The 1m. came out unwatermarked in 1985. A new value, 80m., was issued on February 10th 1982, unwatermarked. Two high values, 500m. and £E1, were issued February 27th 1978 on watermarked paper and are not known unwatermarked.

1985: “Milliemes” supplanted by “Piasters”

The life of the 1978–85 set was cut short by inflation and in 1985 the millieme had become an impracticably small unit of currency. A new set denominated in piasters (=10m., abbreviated “P.” on the stamps) began to appear on March 1st (1, 2, 3, 8, and 11p.) followed by a 5p. dark violet and a 15p. on May 1st. The inscription continued to be simply EGYPT, and the paper was unwatermarked. Additional values and color changes were gradually issued:

5p. lemon	15 Dec. 1990	35p.	7 July 1985
10p.	1 Oct. 1989	30p. and 50p.	5 Feb. 1990
20p. dark green and yellow	1 Apr. 1986	£E1	8 Feb. 1990
20p. yellow-green	1 Apr. 1986	£E2	1 Dec. 1989

A new design for the 20p., a jug, was issued on February 1st 1990. The values through 35p. were issued unwatermarked, but there is some uncertainty about the watermarks because some paper was watermarked so faintly that it appears unwatermarked. There may therefore be revisions to the listing of this set.

In late-1990 the same designs began to appear in a smaller size, 21x25mm instead of 25x30mm, unwatermarked: 10p. – 20 Nov. 1990, 30p. – 1 Sep. 1991, 50p. – 11 July 1992 (further additions may reasonably be expected). In 1993, inflation having reached a new level (£E1 = ca. 35¢ or 23 pence), higher values became needed. On April 1st 1993 £E1, £E2, and £E5 were issued. The designs showed heads from ancient Egypt and the paper was unwatermarked. The £E5 is the highest denomination so far to appear on Egyptian stamps, but it is nevertheless equivalent to only about 300 milliemes of the era before inflation, when £E1 = £1 0s. 6d. = \$5.

Missing color varieties have been recorded on the 10p.; on one, the blue is entirely or partly absent, and on the other, the purple (frame, vase, inscriptions) is entirely absent.

Many of the definitive stamps were issued in varying shades, some of which are fairly prominent. Most of them have been recorded by Defriez¹⁰. The Postal Authority Press generally used a perforating machine gauging 11 and 11½, but in some cases, 13 and 13½ were used. At least one stamp has been seen in two different perforations, but the full picture is not yet clear.

Commemoratives

The avalanche of commemorative issues that has dominated the philatelic scene since the 1950s has included Egypt, but to its credit, Egypt has kept most issues to low, utilitarian denominations, except for souvenir sheets (but even these have not had excessively high denomination). These many issues need not be described individually here since they are for the most part adequately treated in the general catalogs. Like the ordinary definitives, they were printed by the Survey Department until 1961, and thereafter by the Postal Authority Press. They were subject to the same changes of watermark. In this section, only a few commemoratives, those that have unusual varieties, will be considered.

Arab Postal Union

A set for the Arab Postal Union, issued January 1st 1955, has a plate flaw on the 5m. that is prominent because it alters the Arabic inscription in the central band (i.e., the colorless lettering). The normal inscription has two dots over the right Arabic word, whereas the variety has three. The same variety occurs on the 5m. overprinted later the same year for

the Arab Postal Union Congress. There are also three major overprinting errors: 5m. with inverted overprint; 5m. in pair, one without overprint, and 37m. with double overprint (known used, and rare).

Boy Scout Jamboree

The Boy Scout Jamboree set of 1956 exists imperforate (status unknown). The imperforate sheet stamps are rare enough to indicate that only one sheet of each value was prepared. They can be distinguished from stamps from the imperforate souvenir sheet if they are in pairs.

1957: "Evacuation" Overprint

An overprint was applied in 1957 on the 1957 Resistance commemorative to mark the evacuation of Port Said. Plate proofs of the overprint in black exist. An error variety, in which the European portion of the two-line overprint is missing, also exists.

1957: Al Azhar Overprint

In 1957 the stock of three of the previously unissued Al Azhar commemoratives, omitting the 6m. (Chapter XLI), was overprinted in red with the year date in Arabic and put on sale (the control number, A/42 was crossed out with bars in red) (Fig. 10). The overprint on the 15m. exists with moderate vertical displacement. A sheet of the 10m. was evidently passed through the press when the plate was essentially uninked, leading to an error: the previously unissued stamp without overprint. There are minute flecks of red detectable on most specimens, however.



Fig. 10 Al Azhar, overprinted ٥٧/١ in the margin, ١٣٧٦ on the stamps.

Tomb of Aggressors

The 1957 Tomb of Aggressors stamps were issued after the Republican watermark was already in use, but the 10m. carmine exists printed on paper with the royal crown and *fe'* watermark. It is scarce enough to suggest that only one sheet may have been produced. All known examples are unused and it is not known how they came on the market (the former Cairo and Montreal dealer, Sfakianos, handled them not long after they were issued).

1958: Industrial and Agricultural Fair Overprints

The 1958 overprinted stamp for the Industrial and Agricultural Fair has two varieties. The overprint is normally red, but examples exist with it in red-brown. A double overprint also exists; one impression is weak, but both are quite complete and the error may have resulted from an attempt to improve the weak one with a stronger impression. A triple overprint also exists and seems to be scarcer than the double. The basic stamp in brown was produced imperforate, without overprint, for proof purposes. The issued overprinted stamp exists imperforate.

Republic of Iraq

The 1958 commemorative for the Republic of Iraq exists imperforate; the examples come from a sheet that was incompletely perforated, such that the three columns of stamps on the left side of the sheet were left imperforate.

Arab Petroleum Congress

The 1959 Arab Petroleum Congress stamp exists imperforate as the result of a genuine error. The left-hand five columns of one sheet missed perforation, and the column adjacent to them was perforated on only three sides. Thus, 25 imperforate stamps and five partly perforated were produced.

National Charter

The 1962 stamp to commemorate the proclamation of the National Charter was printed in blue and sepia, with a denomination of 10m. However, stamps in nearly the same design exist in rose and green, and in purple and olive, denominated 20m. They are fiscal stamps and differ from the postage stamp in the inscription at the bottom: the year, 1963 and Arabic, instead of THE CHARTER (Fig. 10). These fiscals are sometimes mistaken for essays and are offered at quite unwarranted high prices.



Fig. 11 The postage and fiscal versions.

Arab League

The 1960 stamp to commemorate the Arab League was issued jointly for Egypt, Syria, and Yemen, using the same design, but with the black inscriptions giving the denomination and the name of the country differing. One sheet escaped the black printing and thus 50 stamps have neither denomination nor country indicated. Although this error can be considered as an error of Egypt, it is actually an error of Syria, for the sheet was among those prepared for that country.

Dag Hammarskjöld

The 1962 Dag Hammarskjöld commemorative stamps have many minor flaws, which allow the stamps to be plated¹¹.

St. Catherine Monastery

The 1966 stamp showing St. Catherine monastery has a plate flaw on one stamp of the sheet, in which the top of the letter O in MONASTERY is missing, causing it to resemble U. The inscription is small, however, and not sharply printed, so that the variety is easily overlooked.

International Television Festival

The 1966 International Television Festival stamp exists with the yellow color entirely missing. The error occurred on the bottom two rows (10 stamps) of one sheet.

1968 Boy Scout

On the 1968 Boy Scout stamp there is a plate flaw causing an error in the year date on position 36. Instead of reading "1918-1968", it reads "1918-19", the last two digits being omitted (Fig. 12).

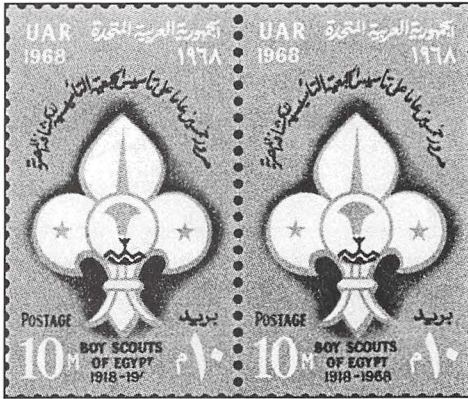


Fig. 12 "1918-19" error(left stamp).

By 1980 the Postal Authority began to use lithography instead of photogravure. This led to new marginal markings which consist of "postal printery" in Arabic and L-shaped bars in each of several colors used for the multicolored stamps.

Varieties on Later Commemoratives

The last commemorative varieties to be taken up are perhaps the most spectacular.

The 20m. stamp of 1980 for the Cairo International Fair exists with the Arabic figures of value entirely missing (Fig. 13). This error occurs on position 40 of alternate panes. It is known used as well as unused and is much scarcer in the former state.

The 1982 8p. "R. Koch" commemorative has the dates expressed as 1882-198 (i.e. '2' missing on one position on the sheet).

The 1985 International Dentistry Conference 5pi. stamp shows an error consisting of an omitted numeral 1 in the year, which reads "985" instead of "1985" in position 48 of part of the printing (Fig. 14).



Fig. 13 Omitted Arabic denomination.



Fig. 14 "985" error.

The 50pi. souvenir sheet issued in 1991 for the Fifth African Games, printed in red, green, blue, yellow, sepia, and gold, exists as an error with the red entirely missing. As a result, the red circle of the Olympic symbol and the left crescent framing the central pyramid are absent and the athletic sphinx and the flame are yellow instead of vermilion (Fig. 15). The 1991 50pi. for the CAIRO 91 stamp exhibition exists with the blue-gray color omitted.

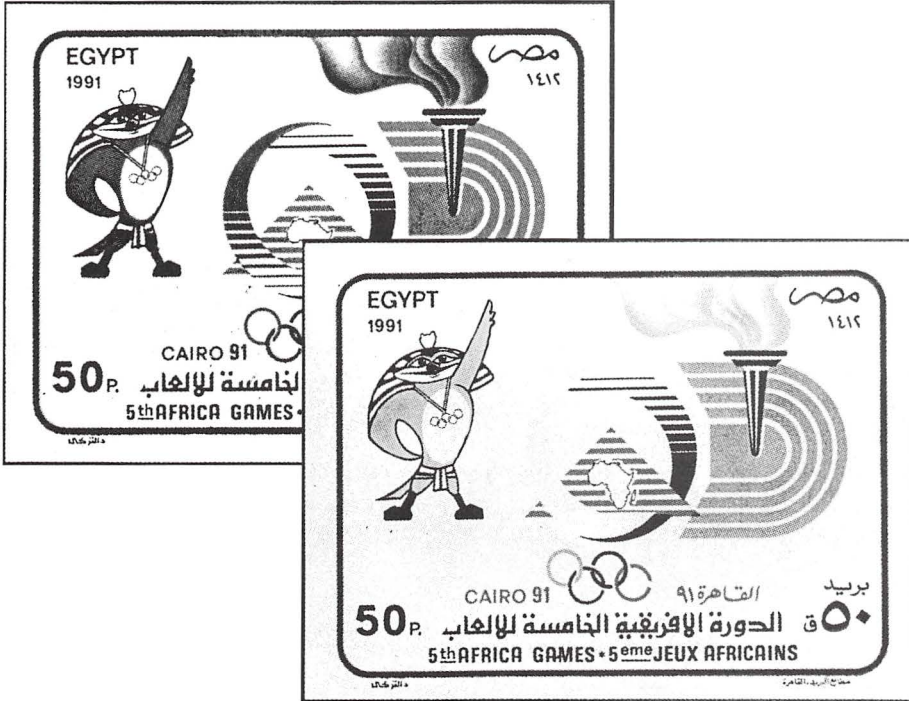


Fig. 15 Omitted red color.

A similar error, the yellow omitted (lower left Olympic ring) exists on the 1994 Olympic Centennial stamp.

Finally, the 15pi. commemorative of 1994 for the Egyptian Sedimentological Congress and the 1985 commemorative for the 75th Anniversary of the Egyptian Olympic Committee exist with a perforation error caused by the perforating comb having missed the last stroke, leaving the top row of the sheet imperforate between stamp and margin (and the sheet margin therefore uncut by vertical perforations). If, as is presumed in the first case, and the left row in the second, only one sheet was subject to these errors, there are but five example of each.

There are certainly more varieties on recent stamps than those listed here, for it often takes a considerable time for them to be recorded in the philatelic press. Varieties of perforation (imperforate and partly perforated), and color missing from multicolored stamps, are especially likely to turn up. The multicolor lithographed stamps are especially prone to exist with missing or weak color components.

It is interesting to note that the year of issue was customarily expressed on

commemorative stamps in European and Arabic, both using AD chronology until late 1973. Thereafter, the Arabic year has been expressed in AH chronology.

Note on Watermarks

The three watermarks used from 1957 to 1962 were unsymmetrical vertically and horizontally, allowing sideways, inverted or reversed orientations. Such errors are known for many of the issues in this period; they are scarce to rare.

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