

THE FORGERIES "SALAMA" OF 1866 ISSUE

By

IBRAHIM CHAFTER**Introduction**

We are trying today to describe in particular the forgeries "Salama" of the first issue of Egypt, printed by Pellas Brothers of Genoa. These stamps are pretty well imitated and are printed on the official watermarked paper.

In fact, we are not the first to deal with the question of the forgeries of the said issue. Some studies have already been published either in the local philatelic press or abroad and referred to some guiding points on the subject. However, they failed to gain the entire approval of the specialists in the philatelic world as far as the question of precision is concerned. Our work is the summary of researches extended over a long period of time covering many years. Our descriptions are brand new and sure. They are accepted with enthusiasm by all philatelists interested in the matter.

Before going further in our discussion, we would like to draw the attention to the fact that the details we are intending to produce here, should not invite some collectors – unwarned - to believe that they could judge them-selves the genuineness of the stamps of the said issue.

Far from it, this information can merely put them on their guard and we advise them, in case they meet material deserving survey, to address themselves either to trustworthy dealers, to international philatelic experts, or to the experts committees of the philatelic societies such as ours, the Royal Philatelic Society of London or the Collector's Club of New York.

PAPER OF THE ISSUE:

The paper used for the issue in question was furnished by Messrs Bondi of Turin. During the same period, this firm supplied also the paper required for the Italian issuer. However, the quality made for the Pellas Bros., who were entrusted with the job, although of handmade quality "à la cuve", was a moderate one : badly "gummed" and caused serious deceptions during the operation of printing.

The dimensions of the sheets were around 45 cms x 325 cms and could contain 200 figurines (20 x 10). Of light grey yellow colour, they became abnormally narrower when moistened for lithography printing. This major defect was also the main reason for the bad centralisation of the vignettes as the perforation comb was at a fixed advancement and the sheets were narrowed differently

During the complicated steps of printing the values, of 5 - 10 and 20 paras, the 2 - 5 and 10 piasters, an enormous quantity was damaged. With less stock of paper in hand for the printing of the piaster stamps (1,200,000) figurines, Pellas Bros. courageously printed the last value, typographically, on commercial paper, half glazed and without watermark.

Following an exchange of correspondence between Muzzi Bey, Postmaster General of the Egyptian Postal Administration and Pellas Bros. the remaining stock of the watermarked paper (unused and refused sheets) was returned to the Administration.

Out of the said stock came the sheets used for the printing of the forgeries "Salama". It seems that the Postal Administration have allowed its personnel to make use of these sheets as draft paper for routine work.

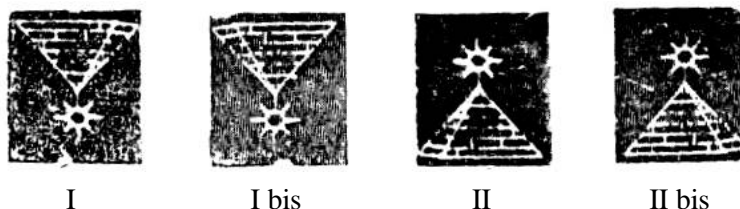
COMPOSITION OF THE SIX VALUES (5 - 10 - 20 paras & 2 - 5 - 10 piasters)

One only original drawing was engraved on stone for each of these values. The workmen then placed at random the drawings in order to form a vertical column of 10 figurines which, repeated horizon-tally 20 times, formed the plate of 200. On the four sides of the sheet, inscriptions were printed, thus leaving no space around, unwatermarked, to allow the eventual obtaining of figurines without water-mark.

The lack of attention which allowed the placing of designs, up and down, without distinction, produced what is called “tête-bêche.”, i.e. pairs, the design of each unit is inverted in comparison to the other unit. The result was inverted vertical and horizontal “tête-bêche.”. and the rarest of which is that of the 5 piasters. as only one existed on the plate.

Moreover, the surcharge was applied inverted on certain sheets when compared with the essay sheets. However, as Dr. W. Byam once stated, who can say that the essay sheets have got the surcharge on the right side ?

Finally, when one notices that the sheets themselves were either printed on the right or the inverted side, in other words, either on the side ready to receive the printing or the side opposed, it is easy to understand the fantastic task of classifying the lithographic specimens of this issue, first, in view of their right or inverted design, then in view of the right or inverted surcharge and of their watermark : on the right side Type I ; inverted Type I bis, inversed to the right as a result of printing the sheets on the inverted side Type II and finally inversed to the right but inverted Type II bis.



BIRTH OF THE FORGERIES “SALAMA”

It appears that, around the year 1890, a certain Salama had the idea of fabricating the forged stamps of the first issue on watermarked paper which he had acquired from some officials of the Postal Administration at that time at Alexandria. Stanley Gibbons Monthly Journal Vol. 1 pages 244, 287, related the adventure of the said Salama with Messrs. Stanley Gibbons firm as Follows:

“In 1891, there was an audacious, but fortunately abortive, attempt to counterfeit the stamps of this issue, the intending forger having obtained twenty sheets of the watermarked paper and also all “the dies to cancel the postal stamps since the beginning of the European post up to 1882, with all that is necessary for dating, etc.”

The possessor of these forger’s desiderata communicated with Messrs. Stanley Gibbons, Ltd. Alexandria, February 23rd, 1891.

I hereby propose to you a very serious affair, and worth your attention. I possess about twenty sheets of paper watermarked like the postal stamps of the first issue (1866); each sheet can contain one hundred stamps, which makes two thousand in all. In case you are not a buyer, tell me whether you will have them re-imprinted for me, and what price you want for the two thousand. However, I have to impress you that I only want re-imprinted the five and ten piastres and the five piastres error, with the inscription “ten piastres” in Arabic.

The writer then went on to say that he had the cancellation dies, etc., as above quoted.

In consequence of the prompt action taken by Messrs. Stanley Gibbons, the Acting Postmaster General of Egypt was enabled to trace their correspondent and obtain from him the paper and dating stamps : the former was destroyed, and the latter were defaced.”

But, it seems that Salama was more malicious than the official people as, around 1913, he cheated the good faith of a good number of the Cairo philatelists well known at the time, among others the late Henri Cantel

Bey, a high official of the Public Security Department, Leonce Colucci Bey of the Ministry of Public Health, Albeit Eid, son of the Consul of Belgium in Cairo E. Angeloglou, Chief Accountant of Cigarettes Dimitrino and others. He sold them pieces and blocks of the first issue, forged by him.

While classifying his acquisition in his famous collection (¹) Albert Eid noticed the fraud and, following a serious dispute with Salama, the latter finally confessed and admitted that he had used for his fabrication of the said stamps original paper used by some officials at the Postal Administration as draft paper. For the good faith of Cantel Bey and Colucci Bey, the affair was a deception. Salama begged A. Eid not to lodge a complaint against him.

The affair was concluded when Salama accepted to deliver to Eid all his stock and material against reimbursement of his expenses.

Nevertheless, Salama had still his hiding place and, following the departure to Europe of mobilised Eid in 1914, he sold to some Cairo and Alexandria dealers and collectors the balance of his stock.

On the other hand, during the collapse of Belgium, a good part of the forged stamps belonging to Eid, taken with him when he left Egypt and confined to an untrustworthy friend, was found between the hands of Brun and the dealer Victor Robert of Paris. Eid could recover the stamps after proving the forgery of the figurines (²)

In short, the forgeries "Salama", for the time being, are circulating throughout the world. However, the serious philatelists can easily identify them.

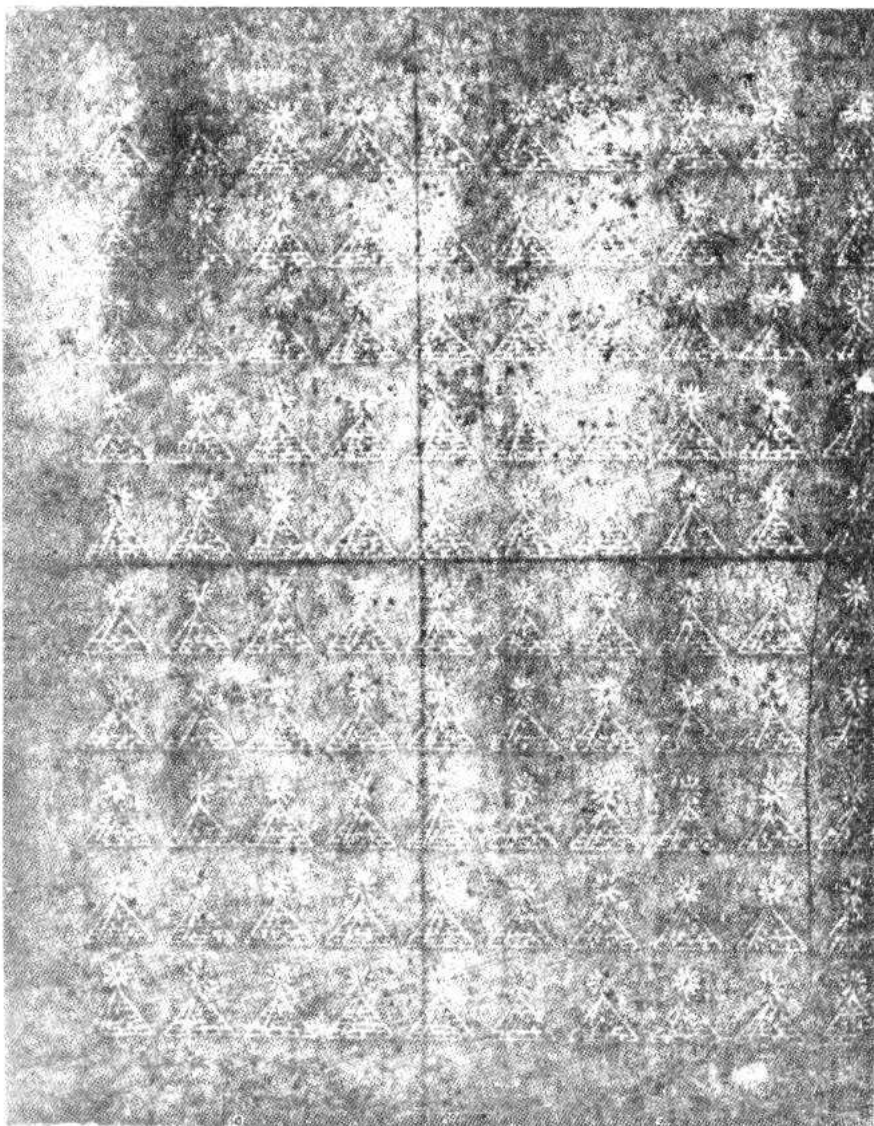
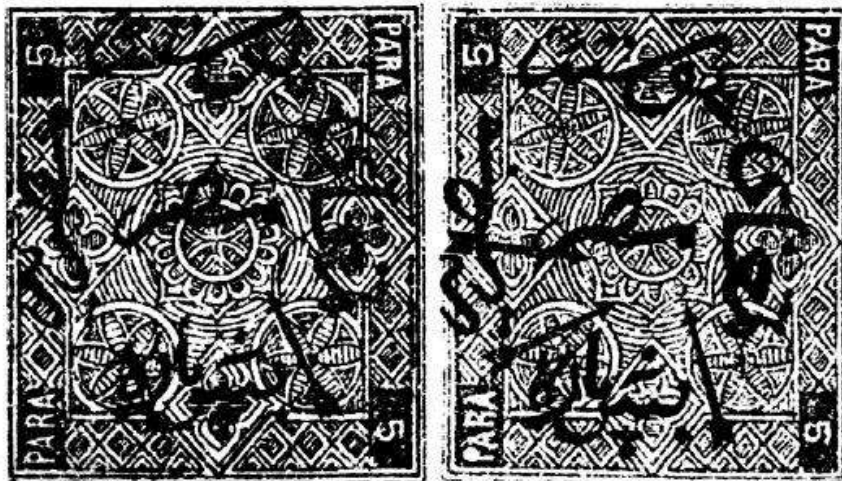


Photo d'une demifeuille filigranée de (émission de 1866 (100 unités 10 X 10). La feuille entière est de 200 unités (20 X 10). (Reproduit de la revue 'STAMP REVIEW d'Octobre 1938).

Salama forged the 5 and 10 paras ; the 2, 5 and 10 piasters, the error of the surcharge of the 10 piasters on the 5 piasters. He found it useless to forge the 20 paras and the piaster which were being sold at that time very cheaply in packets of 100. The forgeries “Salama” are sometimes printed on the watermarked margins and are often imperforated.

He also fabricated a 5 paras value with surcharge of the 5 piasters and a 10 piasters value with the surcharge of 5 piasters.



5 PARAS 1866 AUTHENTIQUE

Le dessin central en forme de croix est entouré d'ornements en forme de fers de cheval réguliers.

FAUX SALAMA du 5 PARAS

Les ornements en forme de fers de cheval sont irréguliers et deux sont interrompus, l'un d 5 h. et l'autre d 9 h ; de plus, celui de 7 h. est pointu.

FORGERY OF THE 5 PARAS



Herewith are shown an enlargement of the genuine 5 paras and another of the forgery Salama. Are also shown two enlargements of the surcharge, one genuine and the other forgery.

In our description we shall not worry the reader with too many details, we shall only indicate those details, the presence of which is considered as an unmistakable identity.

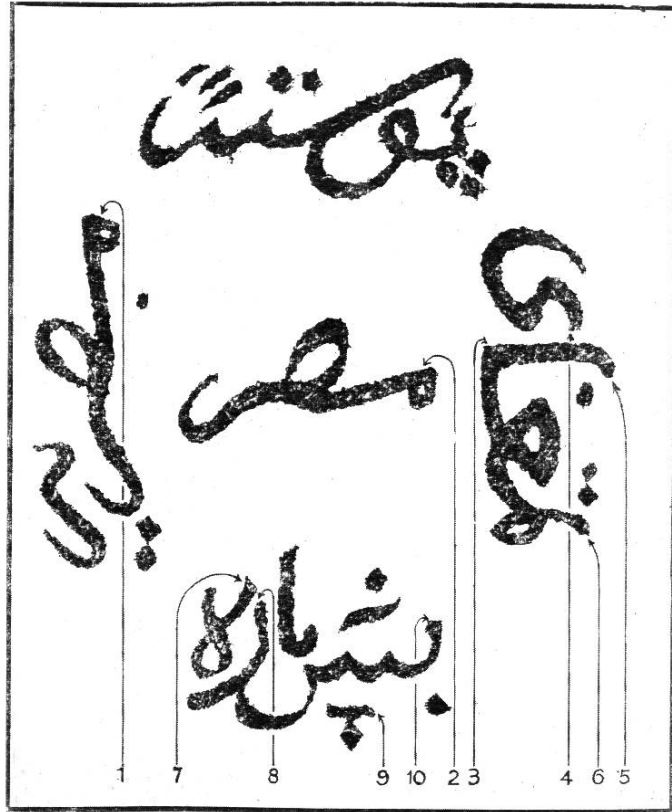
In the genuine 5 paras of 1866 issue, the central design has the form of a cross surrounded by ornaments in the shape of a horseshoe very regular, while on the forgery Salama these ornaments are irregular and two are interrupted, one at 5 o'clock and the other at 2 o'clock. Moreover, that of 7 o'clock is pointed.

There are also two photos of the surcharge of the 5 paras, the one at right is the genuine, that at the left is the forgery “Salama”. Thanks to the arrows, they are self explanatory. We draw the attention to the signs 1 2 3 4 and 5.

FORGERY OF THE 10 PARAS

As to the 10 paras, the character referred to by an  arrow referring to the value of the stamp in Arabic, is cut off obliquely to the left, while on the forgery Salama  the upper part of the same character is leaning to the right.

Regarding the floret of 3 petals situated in the central inferior circle, the petal of the middle has the form of a regular pear with the sharp end down. On the forgery Salama, the said petal is crushed and lean to the left.



SURCHARGE du 5 PARA AUTHENTIQUE



SURCHARGE du FAUX SALSMA 5 PARA



10 PARAS 1866 AUTHENTIQUE

1. Le caractere arabe **ل** de la surcharge de la valeur en arabe. **ون باره** est coupe en biseau a gauche.
2. Dans le fleuron d trois petales situe daps le cercle central inferieur, la petale du milieu est en forme de poire reguliere avec la pointe en bas



FAUX SALAMA du 10 PARAS

1. Le caractere arabe **ل** de la surcharge de la valeur en arabe **ون باره** est penche franchement vers la droite.
2. La petale centrale en forme de poire est ecrasee et penche vers la gauche.

We show hereunder a photo of the genuine 2 piastres and another of the, forgery “Salama”.

In our description, we shall leave aside a lot of details, highly technical, and try to attract the attention as stated on the outset of our study to an unmistakable sign of identification.



2 PIASTRES 1866 AUTHEIQTIQUE

Dessin du fond grave distinctement clair contrast. Couleur tirant sur le jaune ;or jaune-orange.



FAUX SALAMA DU 2 PIASTRES

Dessin du fond pas clair du tout, empate Sans contraste. Co uleur tirant sur le jaune-vert sale; jaune-citron

The genuine 2 piastres is engraved lithographically very distinctively with traits appearing with much contrast. The colour of the stamp is between yellow-gold and yellow-orange.

For the forgery “Salama” the design of the ground is not clear and blotted with no contrast. Two other pictures of the 2 piasters surcharge are made vis a vis. On the genuine 2 piasters, the surcharge is made typographically while on the forgery “Salama” it is made lithographically.



*SURCHARGE DU 2 PIASTRES
AUTHENTIQUE*

Partant de la gauche, une ligne
imaginaire verticale tangente
de la boucle du premier caractere
N'INTERCEPTE PAS l'arc
place au dessus

*SURCHARGE DU 2 PIASTRES
FAUX SALMA*

Partant de la gauche, une ligne
imaginaire verticale tangente
de la boucle du premier
caractere INTERCEPTE au
milieu l'arc au dessus

Furthermore, if we draw up an imaginary vertical line on the first character, beginning from the left, of the word غروش , which touches the ringlet ش of the following is noticed

A. GENUINE

The said line does not intercept the arrow placed above (which represents 2 of the 3 dots of the character ش

B. FORGERY

The said line intercepts a good part to the left of the arch placed above (which represents 2 of the 3 dots of the character ش

FORGED 5 PIASTERS

We show hereunder a photo of the genuine 5 piasters and another of the forgery “Salama”.

The genuine 5 piasters is engraved distinctively and the ground is very clear. The central medallion and the filling in of the four corners including the interior of the four circles where inserted in white the figure 5 and the characters P.E. are in good contrast with the remaining part of the design (which is darker).

The big internal oval is larger than the big external oval.

As to the forged 5 piasters “Salama”, the design is not clear at all and is blotted making no contrast on the whole surface.

Moreover, the big internal oval is larger from one side than the other while it should be of equal largeness from all sides.

This characteristic is the unmistakable mark of difference between the forged and the genuine. This is very important to recognise especially the error of the forged 5 piasters “Salama” with the forged surcharge of 10 piasters.



5 PIASTRES 1866 AUTHENTIQUE

Dessin du fond grave distinctement clair, contraste, les parties verticales gauche et droite de l'ovale interieur sont plus larges. que ceux paralleles de l'ovale exterior.



5 PIASTRES FAUX SALAMA

Dessin du fond mal grave sans contraste, traits epais ; les parties verticales gauche et droite de l'ovale interieur sont d'une epaisseur inegale, la droite epaisse tandis que la gauche est plus fine, comme les parties de l'ovale exterior.

Two other photos of the 5 piasters surcharge are made vis a vis. The different numerical arrows 1 to 7 show the characters to compare between the forged and the genuine surcharges.

We draw the attention to the arrows Nos. 1 3 5 6 and 7.

Arrow No. 3 shows the beak of the character **س** which appears going down in the genuine and going straight in the forged.

Arrow No. 5 represents a trifle dot which is very often present on the genuine 5 piasters and always missing from the forged.

Arrow No. 6 represents the accent **و** on the **ش**. Its end directed downward on the genuine while it is directed upward on the forged.

Finally, arrow No. 7 shows the third dot on the **ش**. It has a rather quarterly form on the genuine while it appears in the form of a star with four dots on the forged.

THE FORGED 5 PARAS “SALAMA”

A. WITH SURCHARGE OF 5 PIASTERS

Salama forged the 5 paras (ground) and applied on it the forged surcharge of 5 piasters. The design of the ground is easy to recognise through the characteristics mentioned on page 113 of the *L'O.P.* No. 125 viz : ornament in the form of a horse shoe irregular 2 interrupted one of 5 h and the other of 9 h, that of 7 h is pointed.



SURCHARGE DU 5 PIASTES 1866 AUTHENTIQUE



SURCHARGE DUFAUX DU 5 PIASTES

The 5 piasters surcharge is that referred to in the preceding pages.



*FAUX SALAMA DU 5 PARAS
AVEC
FAUSSE SURCHARGE DU 5 PIASTRES*

*FAUX SALAMA DU 5 PARAS
AVEC
FAUSSE SURCHARGE DU 10 PIASTRES*

B. WITH SURCHARGE OF 10 PIASTERS

The same 5 paras (ground) was utilised for the forged surcharge of 10 piasters. Naturally, it is easy to discover that the ground is forged according to what we have already stated sub (A). As to the surcharge of 10 piasters, it is forged according to what we are going to state now.

THE FORGERY "SALAMA" OF 10 PIASTERS

Now we come to the most difficult of the forgeries "Salama" the 10 piasters.



*FAUX SALAMA DU 5 PIASTRES
AVEC FAUSSE SURCHARGE DU 10 PIASTRES*

*REPRODUCTION DES, 10 SURCHARGES
AUTHENTIQUES DU 10 PIASTRES 1866*

It is the piece which met the best of success in its forgery. The workman to whom Salama entrusted the job was able to approach closely the colour, and the execution of the engraving was very neatly done. Finally, the surcharge was so good that it could deceive the superficial examiner.

However, with all this effort, they could not arrive to imitate perfectly the original.

We give hereunder 2 photos, one of the genuine 10 piasters, the other of the forgery "Salama".

By the way, the genuine specimen has been selected intentionally. It is a unit of the 6th horizontal row of 20 from the sheet (20 x 10). It is known that this row has the first character م of the word مصريّة broken at its ringlet with the exception of No. 9 which is complete in an extended form. The presence of this broken character is already a good sign of authenticity.



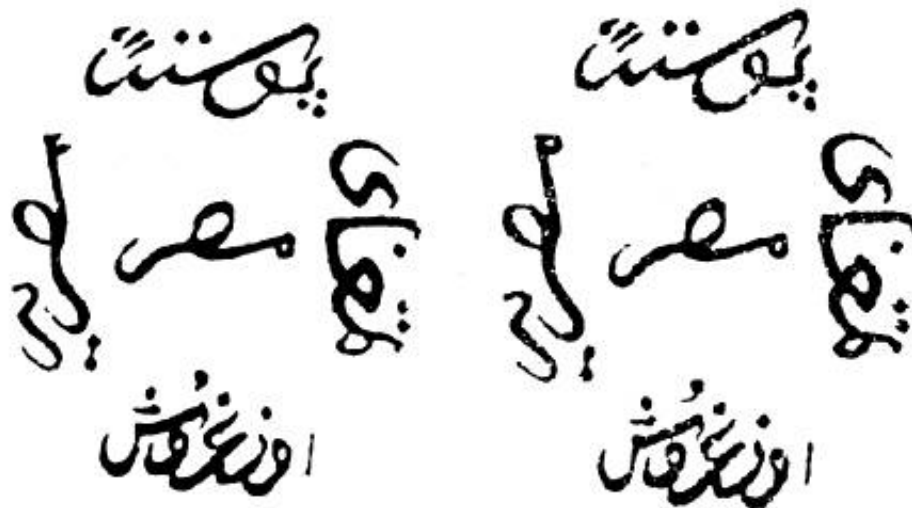
10 PIASTRES 1866 AUTHENTIQUE



FAUX SALAMA DU 10 PIASTRES

The engraving of the ground of the genuine 10 piastres, very complicated, is well done, the traits are fine and very clear. As to the figures and the P.E. of both corners, up and down, they are clear. It is known that when one E has the top incomplete to the left (piece detached) the other downward E must be complete. The P which accompanies the incomplete E has its ringlet regular E has the joint of its ringlet going down.

Although the engraving of the forged 10 piastres is nearly similar to the genuine, nevertheless it does not respect the details of the design. It is more unclear and the traits are thicker. Concerning the characters RE and the figure 10, they are not well engraved and unravelled.



*SURCHARGE DU 10 PIASTRES
AUTHENTIQUE*

*SURCHARGE DU FAUX
10 PIASTRES*

Two other photos of the surcharge, one genuine and the other forged are made vis A vis.

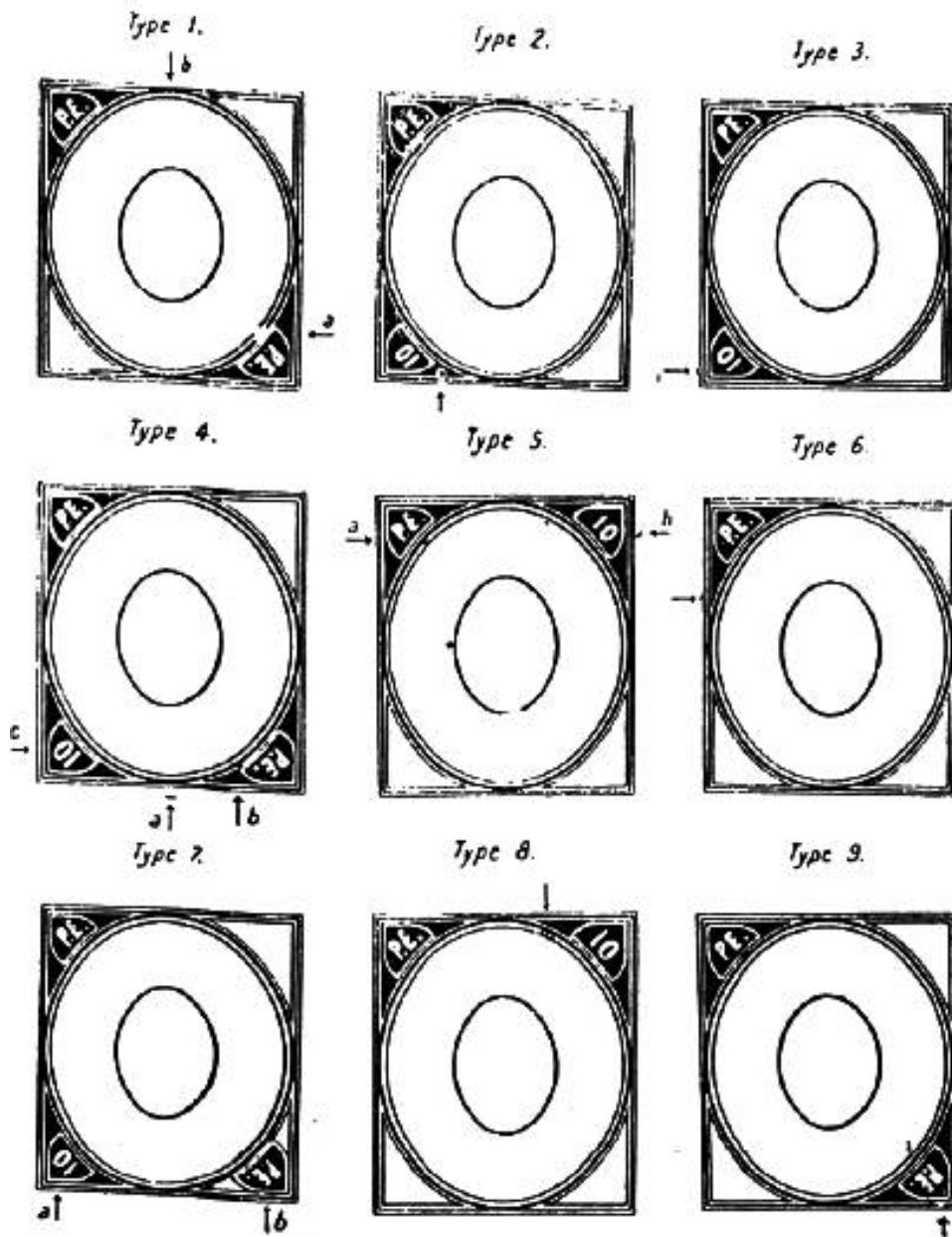
We have also given a reproduction of the column of 10 representing the 10 different forms of the surcharge which, in principle, are repeated 20 times longitudinally on the sheet of 200. There are certain differences between one unit and the other but, basically, the surcharge of the unit under examination must correspond, in its broad lines, with one of the 10 surcharges of the column.

Before all, excepting a very small number, all the surcharges of the plate has the م in the word *مصرية* opened at their ringlets. As already stated, the 6th row with the exception of one unit has the ringlet broken.

In general, all the characteristics of the surcharges of the issue whether forged or genuine given by us on pages 114 to 116 of the "L'O.P." No. 125 of April last are valid for the whole set because they are identical with the exception of the inscription of the bottom which denotes the value.

The text of the value *أون غروش* is well centred and never surpasses the lower edge of the design or any other edge. However, all the surcharges of the whole issue are well centred in comparison to the design of the ground one has never heard of a decentred surcharge. This remark is very important as the surcharges of the forged Salama, being arranged without order, are mostly appearing decentred in comparison to the ground.

The vowel accent *و* on *و* the has nearly no tail. In case it is found, it is always going downward while on the forgery "Salama" there is always a tail and it goes upward.



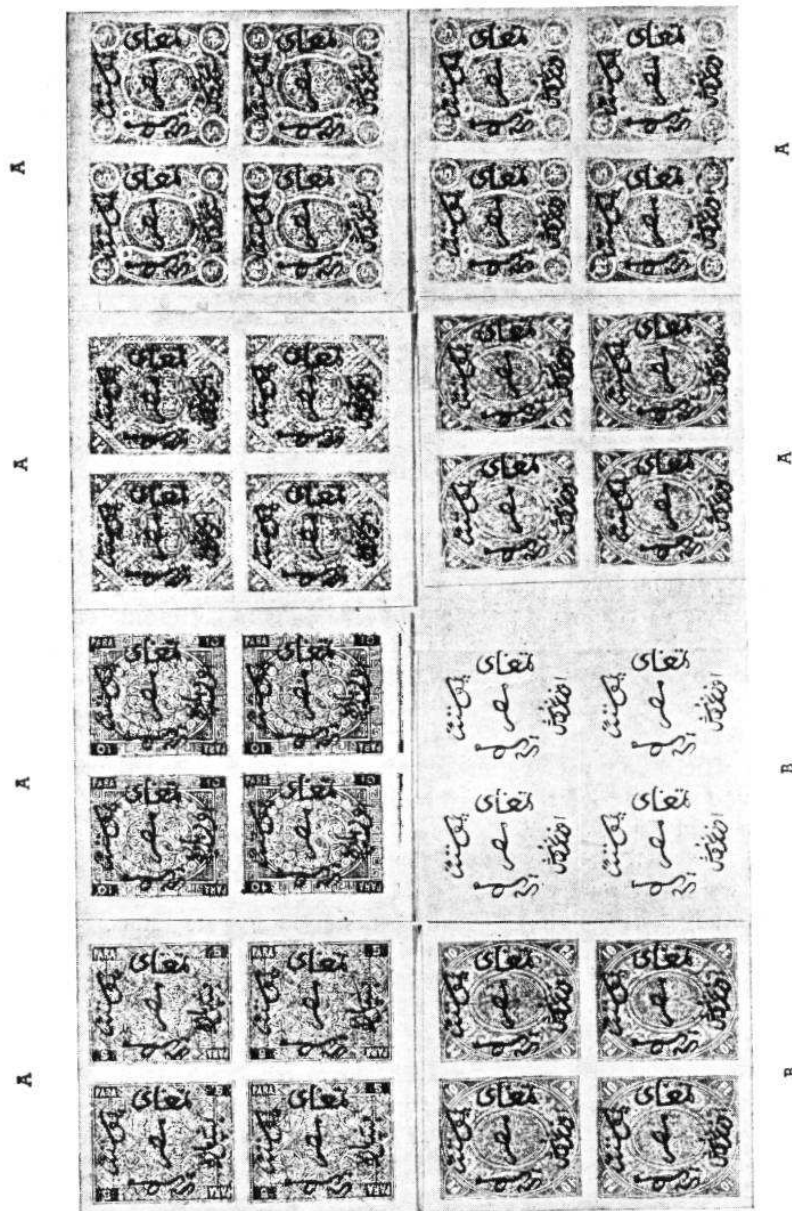
10 PIASTRES THE NINE TYPES.
 10 PIASTRES 1866
 CARACTERIMSTIQUES DU DESSIN DES 9 TYPES
 (Dr. W. BYAM)

DESCRIPTION OF THE 9 TYPES OF THE 10 PIASTRES

- Type 6 : Design inverted. Small detached coloured fragment just outside left lateral frame line a short distance above lowest point of left upper outer triangle.
- Type 7 : Design upright. «0» of «10» in left corner is flattened along the aspect facing the lower border of the stamp.
- Type 8 : Design upright. Three minute coloured specks on white oval frame line opposite point midway between upper inner angles of the two, white triangle enclosing «10» in right upper corner of design.
- Type 9 : Design inverted. Break in lower inner coloured frame line directly below right extremity of «P»
- Type 10 : Unknown as all twenty impressions have been removed from the printing stone. Actual types on row 10: 1-2-(3)-4-5-6-7-8-(9)-1-2-5-(4)-7-(6)-8-9-3-1-2. (The numbers enclosed in a circle are inverted).
- Type 1 : Design upright.
 a) Break in coloured oval frame line, causing white spot beneath the foot of «P». in right lower corner.
 b) Wide breach in centre of upper outer frame line.
- Type 2 : Design inverted. Circular white flaw to right of white line enclosing «10» in left lower corner.
- Type 3 : Design inverted. Outward bulge of left outer frame line level with lower part of white line enclosing «10» in left lower corner.
- Type 4 : Design inverted.
 a) Horizontal bar of colour below centre of lower border, extending slightly to right.
 b) Minute break in outer white triangle around «P.E.» in right lower corner level with angle of inner triangle by foot of «E».
 c) Deformed opening of «0». in left lower corner.
- Type 5 : Design upright.
 a) Minute break in white oval frame line opposite centre of upright limb of damaged «E»
 b) 'Small comma shaped coloured fragment outside the design level with upper portion of «0» in right upper corner (this flaw is not seen on poor impressions).



*REPRODUCTION DES 9 TYPES DU
 10 PIASTRES ET DE CERTAINS
 LOTS DE LA VENTE Dr. W.
 BYAMROBSON LOWE LTD OCT.
 1961*



EN PARTANT DE LA GAUCHE:

A. FAUX SALAMA EN BLOCS:
5, 10 PARAS; 2, 5, 5 AVEC
SURCHARGE DU 10; 10
PIASTRES.

B. BLOCS DE QUATRE
AUTHENTIQUE SURCHARGE
DU 10 PIASTRES, 10 PIASTRES
(EPREUVES).

Ex Collection.: IBRAHIM
CHAFTAR

To facilitate the research work, we give hereunder a design of the 9 types of 10 P.T and their characteristics as included in the magisterial study of Dr. W. Byam.

We also give a reproduction of the 9 stamps of P.T. 10 selected by him to represent each type, also other photos of nice pieces of his sale (Robson Lowe - October 1961).

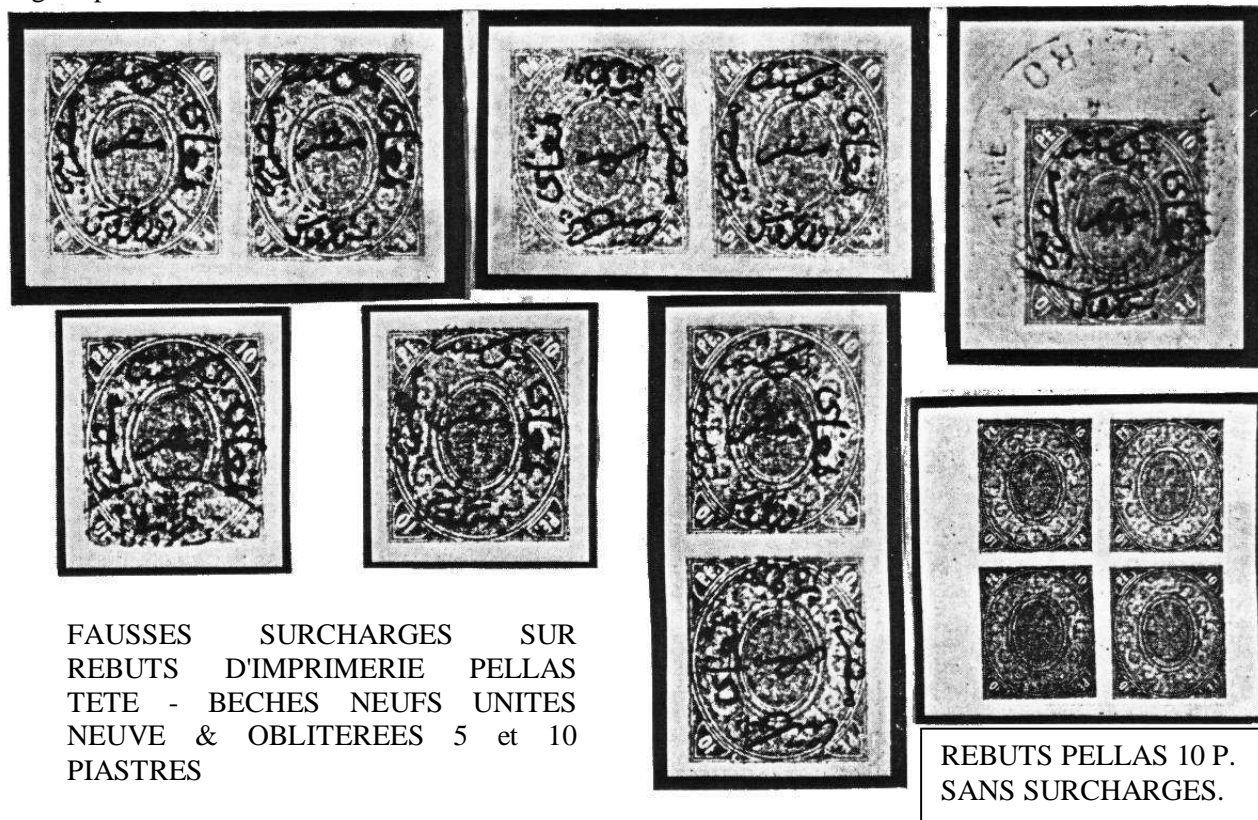
As final recapitulation, we give the forgeries Salama in blocks of 4, a block of 4 of the surcharge and another block of 10 P.T.

PELLAS PRINTING WASTE WITH FORGED SURCHARGES

Our old philatelists, Mackenzie Low and Dr. W. Byam, have well referred in their writings to some Pellas printing waste, officially returned to Egypt, which were used by forgers to fabricate very dangerous forgeries - because made on official watermarked paper - but failed to describe specifically the said forgeries.

Now that we have just terminated our study on the forgeries Salama - printed on virgin official paper without impression - we think it opportune to speak about the Pellas printing waste already bearing the ground impression of the 10 piasters.

Such non-surcharged Pellas waste exists in the collection of Egypt. It is in clear brown ardoise colour ; in singles, pairs and blocks.



Ex-Collections P. de Ferrari, Marquis de la Renotiere ; Mostapha Fathy Pacha; Ibrahim Chaftar.

The kind selected by the forgers are those with a dark blue green colour. they are found in singles, horizontal or vertical pairs, perforated 13, partly imperforated or imperforated at all. They are the sheets, or parts of sheets, printed in dark blue green which got the forged surcharges.

I have found among the huge and universal collection "Ferrari" of Egyptian stamps, bought at the auction sale in Paris by Mostafa Fathy Pasha, a nice specimen of these forgeries of 10 piasters 1866.

Following my repeated instigations, Angeloglou, in accord with Ceysens, bought this historic collection. In addition to the part which I reserved for myself after the partition, I received, as a gift, a good part of these forged stamps.

Mr. Ceysens has reserved:

- 1 One horizontal pair imperf. between, watermark d., perf. 13 surcharge of 10 p.t.
2. One horizontal pair perf. 13 of which one stamp with 10 P.T. surcharge and the other 5 P.T. surcharge watermark 2.
3. One vertical pair "tête-bêche.", 10 P.T. surcharge watermark 2, imperf.

I have got for myself:

1. One "tête-bêche.", vertical with 10 P.T. surcharge, imperf., watermark d.
2. One "tête-bêche.", horizontal with 10 P.T. surcharge, imperf., watermark 2.
3. One "tête-bêche.", horizontal pair of which one stamp of 10 P.T. the other one a 5 P surcharge imperf., watermark 2.

Moreover, I have previously got several singles of 10 P.T. either mint or used with surcharges of 10 P.T. or with surcharges of 5 P.T. The used ones bore a seal struck in black "CAIRO very dangerous".

The sheets of the album did not show any sign to the effect that Ferrari had ever noticed the forgery of these sheets. However, the international catalogues have listed these errors with fantastic quotations. Yvert and Gibbons did not drop them from their catalogues except only around 1920/22. It is to be noticed that the sale

catalogue of the Ferrari's collections did not mention them. We give herewith a reproduction of the three "tête-bêche." and of some singles bearing the forged surcharges in question. We also show a block of 4 without surcharge of the Pellas printing waste.

With the explanations already given to disclose the forgery Salama of 5 P.T. the forged surcharges and the forgery 10 P.T. Salama, it will be easy to see that the unknown forgers who manipulated the Pellas printing waste were not in any way clever. The surcharges were very badly made to meet a serious study.