

**Egypt Postage Prepaid Military Datestamps 1941-47**

**Comment by Alistair Kennedy**

The list discovered by Robin Startup and reproduced in Newsletter 186 is very useful, but only makes sense if the date is read as 12 August 1942 rather than 1941! It includes several 'S' offices which were not open in August 1941, and conversely excludes some which were open then. It also includes formations which were not in Egypt in August 1941 - for example the 44th Division (131st, 132nd and 133rd Brigades) did not arrive in Egypt until July 1942.

I would also point out that the formations listed for EPP nos.12, 27, 33, 50, 52, 65, 75, 91 and 102 should read Armoured Brigades or Divisions (as for EPP 86), and for EPP 16 should read 7th Motor Brigade.

"LEA" presumably indicates "Lost by enemy action".

Most of the Postal Unit War Diaries held in the Public Record Office make no mention whatsoever of datestamp numbers. However, there are occasional exceptions, and for a period of nine months, 5th Lines of Communication Postal Unit was surprisingly informative about EPP datestamps used at APO S202 (Alexandria)

5.7.44	EPP 68	withdrawn for repair	EPP 35	brought into use
5.10.44	EPP 35	"	EPP 75	"
30.11.44	EPP 75	"	EPP 60	"
26.1.45	EPP 60	"	EPP 15	"
w/e 12.3.45	EPP153	"	EPP 124	"
10.4.45	EPP 124	"	EPP 48	"

As the reason given for withdrawal was in each case "for repair", it seems that the Egyptian datestamps were not strong enough to cope with the volume of work in a busy office.