



The Egypt Study Circle display
to The Royal Philatelic Society London
Thursday 17 November 2022.

To mark the centenary of the discovery
of Tutankhamun's tomb.



The Egypt Study Circle

Founded in 1935 by Dr William Byam RDP, FRPSL and 23 others.

A club for everyone interested in any aspect of Egyptian philately.

Four or five friendly meetings a year in London and Derby,
with occasional meetings and dinners at international exhibitions.

Four issues of our magazine *The Quarterly Circular* each year.

Two on-line/postal auctions per annum.

Library.

Facebook page with Zoom meetings coming soon.

Membership from only £15 per annum.

Contact the Secretary, Mike Murphy, at egyptstudycircle@hotmail.com

Website: egyptstudycircle.org.uk

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The tomb of Tutankhamun was discovered in the Valley of the Kings by the Egyptologist Howard Carter on 4 November 1922, but was not opened until 26 November, after his sponsor Lord Carnarvon arrived. It was the only largely intact royal burial ever discovered, and contained over 5,000 objects.

To celebrate the centenary of the discovery, the Egypt Study Circle is presenting a display to The Royal Philatelic Society London. A wide range of material is shown from the early fifteenth century, right up to date, including pre-stamp mail, stamps, postal history, postal stationery, revenues and more. We hope you enjoy this eclectic display and are inspired to collect Egypt.

Jon Aitchison RNCP, FRPSL. Chairman of the Egypt Study Circle.



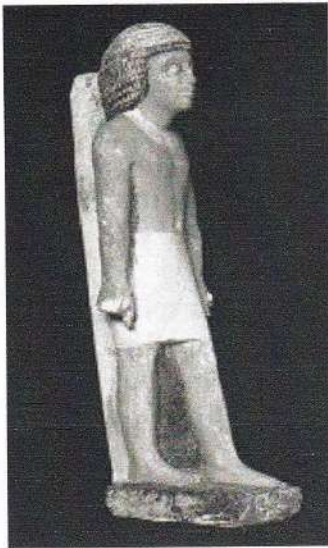
Having opened the sarcophagus, Howard Carter is seen working on the inner coffin.

Frame 1. The British 1972 stamp commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb.



On 26 April 1972, the British Post Office issued a set of three stamps marking significant anniversaries. The three pence letter-rate stamp commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb and helped publicise the major 'Treasures of Tutankhamun' exhibition at the British Museum that year. This small display shows the stamp used on a variety of first day and other covers.

**Frame 1. Harvard – Boston Expedition, Giza, 1905 to 1947
& The Howard Carter Connection. Richard Wheatley FRPSL.**



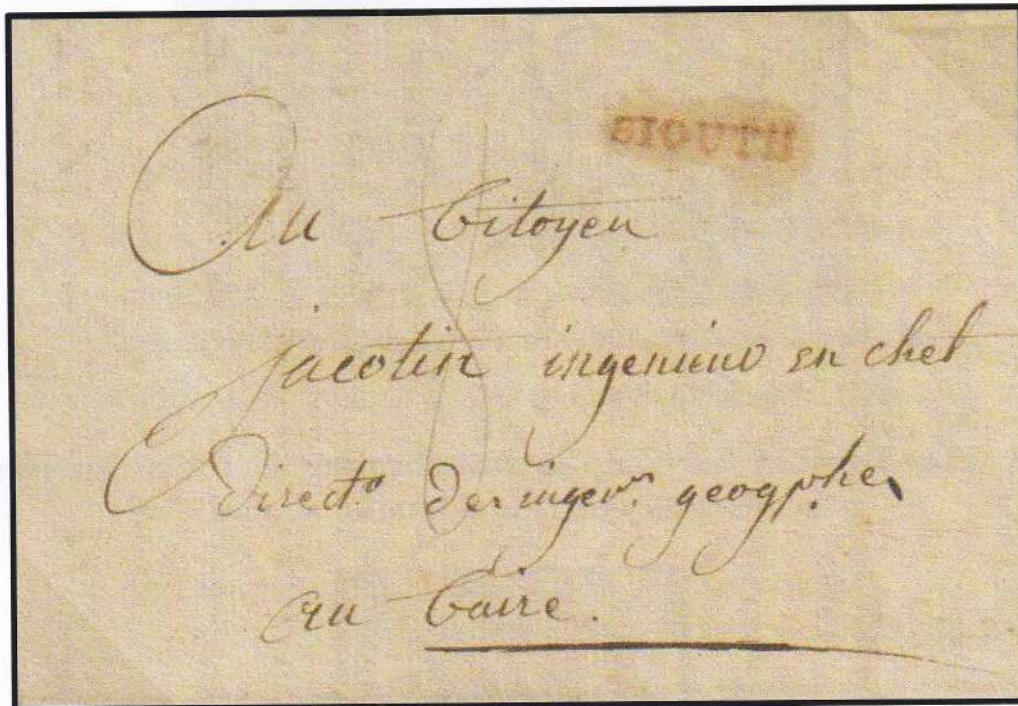
During the 35 years of digging on the Giza Plateau, the Harvard – Boston Expedition unearthed many ancient artefacts, which were shared with the Egyptian Antiquities Service on a 50/50 basis.

In 1915 a small limestone statuette was found which was named on its base Mesty, overseer of the boat nets. This statuette was stolen from Dr Reisner, who was in charge of the Expedition. Three years later, from information provided by Howard Carter, it was recovered after a payment of £E125 had been made to a Greek antique dealer. (See page 4 of the display for the full story).

Dr Reisner died in Egypt in 1942 and due to wartime conditions it was decided to close the camp down. This was ably done by the Doctor's secretary Evelyne Perkins and by 1947 the whole site was just a memory.

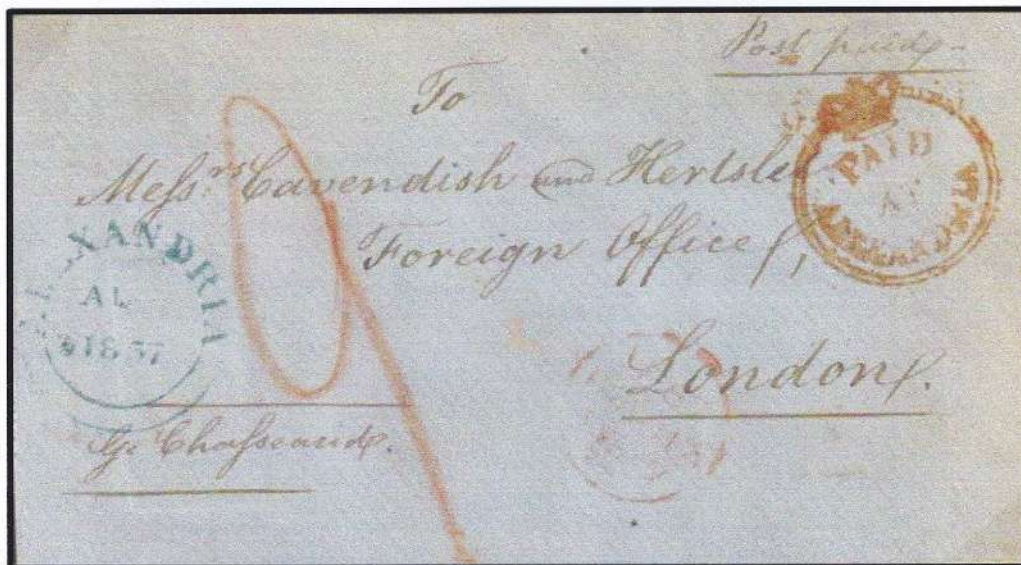
The statuette Mesty which had been stolen and was eventually returned with help from Howard Carter.

**Frames 2 & 3. Pre-stamp mail 1492-1743, Napoleonic post,
Thomas Waghorn and forwarding agents. John Davis.**



This paid letter from Siouth (Asyut) to Cairo is unusual in that it is struck in red.

Consisting of pre-stamp entires from a 1420 letter, Venice to Alexandria, through the centuries to 1798, when Napoleon invaded Egypt and created a postal system for the benefit of the 156 *savants* he took with him. There follows mention of Mohammed Aly who gained control, as governor, of Egypt within the Ottoman Empire. He allowed Thomas Waghorn to supervise mail across the Eastern Desert to the Nile and thence up the Mahmoudia Canal to Alexandria. It enabled mail to avoid the Cape route and saved many weeks transit, leading to the Egyptian Transit Company and the forwarding agents' activities.



Crown Paid at Alexandria, only around twenty are known to exist.

By long standing treaties with the Ottoman Empire six countries created postal systems within their consulates, mainly at Alexandria but also at Port Said, Suez and Cairo. Great Britain, Austrian, French, Greek, Italian, and Russian consular mail are shown, in some cases even before the country emerged as a unified state – see Tuscany.

Frame 7. British Consular Service stamps used in Egypt, 1908 to 1948.

Richard Wheatley FRPSL.



This display shows the usage of the King Edward VII and King George V Consular Service stamps on Egyptian Court documents. In Egypt, Britain had consular representation in the three main towns of Alexandria, Cairo and Port Said. In the beginning cancellations did not contain the date, that being inserted in manuscript, however, from about 1922 the date was incorporated into the handstamp.

These documents exhibit the wide range of services that the Consulate carried out, for example: Page 6. A form for Oath and Probate dated 18 November 1918, giving conditional approval providing, “--- no portion of the assets --- are paid to any beneficiary who is living during the war in Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey or Bulgaria”.

Page 6/7. Two documents pertaining to the same person. A Last Will and Testament and his Death Certificate in 1922. Page 11. To obtain a debt from the Palestinian Government a Power of Attorney was issued in 1925.

Page 16. In 1948 a person had died in Egypt leaving a large estate for which the Consulate granted an Estate Jurisdiction, the fee was paid by 10 x £50, 2 x £10, 2 x £3 and 1 x 3-shilling stamps, all affixed to the reverse of the document.

Illustrated item: One of the £50 King George V consular service stamps, on the reverse of the form on Page 16. Note how the rubber date-stamp has started to distort.

Frame 8.

The Posta Europea Service.

G. Paul Green.



Posta Europea, a private post, had regular services between Alexandria and Cairo. It was founded in the 1820s by an Italian, Carlo Meratti, and upon his death it passed to his nephew Tino Chini who expanded it, named the concern Posta Europea and introduced hand stamps. In 1848 another Italian, Giamo Muzzi joined the business, further expanding the service so that by 1859 it had fourteen more post offices.

By 1856 Posta Europea had a monopoly on all postal services in Lower Egypt and in 1862 an edict from the Viceroy made it an official monopoly. In 1864 Muzzi wrote to the Viceroy proposing the issue of postage stamps. The idea appealed to him and resulted in the Viceroy buying the operation. On 2 January 1865 Posta Europea became Poste Egiziane with Muzzi as Postmaster General. The use of Posta Europea cachets was phased out with the introduction of stamps on 1 January 1866.

Frame 9.

Posta Europea.

John Davis.



Intaglio (negative) seal from Roda, possibly unique.

Before the 1866 issue of postage stamps, the interim is known as the Khedivial Post and negative seals were used. This example from Roda is thought to be unique. Emil Brugsch was the deputy to Gaston Maspero as Head of Antiquities and Curator to the Egyptian Museum.

Frame 10.

First Issue.

John Davis.



Combination cover with First Issue and French forty centimes of Napoleon III.

Egypt's First Issue of postage stamps was printed by Pellas Bros. of Genoa and, following on from the Posta Europea, the first postmarks, apart from the retta, were in the Italian language. Watermarked with a pyramid and sun, often upside down, and with the side of the pyramid visible from one direction or the other, the stamps themselves also differ in that the design is produced so that some are the inverted version of the others. This is referred to as the 'orientation'. The inland postage rate was one piastre, the only value issued without watermark.

Frame 11.

Second Issue.

John Davis.



A block of twenty of the twenty paras of the Second Issue of the 1867 printing.

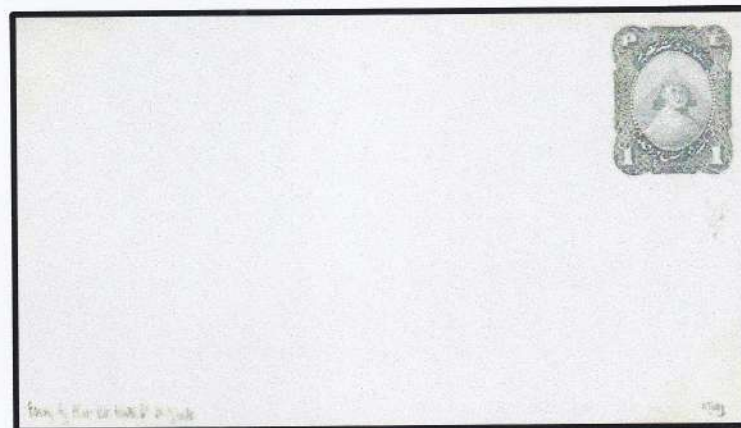
Egypt's Second Issue was printed lithographically by Victor Penasson and company in Alexandria, designed by Barkhausen and engraved by Hoff, the latter two from Silesia. Watermarks of a crescent and star were impressed on the back of each stamp, though they do exist impressed on the face. Engraved four times for each value, they were printed in sheets of 200 but so far plating has not been possible because of the lack of large blocks. 'Reconstructing' blocks of four has become an obsession! This is the first pictorial issue and what could be more Egyptian than a pyramid and the Great Sphinx? Issued in 1867, they were re-printed in 1869 with slight differences in colour.



The third issue was put on sale 1 November 1872. It was printed by the Government Printing Works, Boulac, Cairo in two parts. The First Printing, 1873-1874, is known as the Penasson, as Penasson supplied the materials and supervised the production. The Second Printing, 1874-1879, was done by the Government Printing Works.

For the First Printing, all values were printed by typography. Additionally, two of the values were also printed by lithography, the 20 paras and 1 piastre. The perforation was $12\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{2}$ and $13\frac{1}{2}$. For the Second Printing, all values were also printed by typography. However, the quality of both stamps and perforations had significantly declined, which clearly differed from the First Printing. The perforations were $12\frac{1}{2}$, $13\frac{1}{2} \times 12\frac{1}{2}$ and $12\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{2}$. All values were produced in 1874, except for the 5 paras and 1 piastre, which were printed in 1875.

This exhibit is based on the study and collection of Dr. William Byam.



As is customary when an issue of postage stamps is proposed, stamp printers produce designs for consideration by the Post Office, often in a variety of colours. Examples were also printed on envelopes for use as postal stationery. Some were recess printed involving the engraving of dies, such as those by the National Bank Note Company of New York, which are particularly attractive. None of these essays translated into issued stamps.

By 1871 a replacement for the Second Definitive Issue of 1867 was desired but the essays by Penasson of Alexandria were rejected as being too close to the 1867 design. A further essay with some modifications was approved for the Third Definitive Issue of 1 January 1872.

Frame 18.

Post Offices of Egypt's Dams.

Mike Murphy.



Without the Nile, Ancient Egypt could not have existed and modern Egypt would never have flourished. Control of its life-giving waters provided by the annual flood has been crucial through the country's history. Dams/barrages/barriers of all sorts have been built to divert the water to where it is needed. Dam builders and the communities developing around the new infrastructure required communications, and so the Egyptian postal service supplied post offices at each main centre. This exhibit examines postal arrangements, and particularly the development of postmarks used, from the major dams - Aswan, Assiut and the Delta Barrage, to the very much more elusive - Isna, Nag Hamadi and Zefta.

Frames 19-23.

The Simon Arzt Story.

Richard Wheatley FRPSL.



The earliest recorded Simon Arzt datestamp, 6 August 1934, with correct franking.

Simon Arzt arrived in Port Said in 1869, the year that the Suez Canal was opened. Gradually he expanded from just cigarettes to a store that catered for tourists, selling everything from picture postcards, jewellery, watches, perfume, cameras, and cigarettes. Prices were fixed, so no haggling, which appealed to travellers. His advertising appears mostly on picture postcards, with some gorgeous scenes, which are now collectors' items. The business moved to the quayside in June 1932 and two years later a post office was opened on the first floor, with its very own postmark. The company went out of business in the 1960's due to wars in the area and long distance aircraft journeys which reduced the number of tourists. The distinctive empty building is now owned by Egypt's Ministry of Public Business and work has now started on a \$4.7 million renovation.

Frames 24 & 25.**The No Value Stamp.****Richard Wheatley FRPSL.**

On the fourth issue there is a large white flaw in the ladder under the stamp in position 10 on the lower pane.

Frame 1. The stamps: This is the so-called miri stamp, meaning “Governmental”, for the lettering on the stamp says Service de L’Etat. They were printed by De La Rue for franking official mail. There were four issues of stamps, one set of four surcharges and three periods of use. All the stamps are a chestnut brown colour, printed by typography and have a comb perforation 14 x 13¾. There was an annual order for 2,400,000 stamps. After their withdrawal on 2 September 1914, the remainder of the stamps were overprinted locally the following year and used for fiscal purposes.

Frame 2, Use of the stamps: From 1893 one stamp would frank a letter irrespective of size, weight, or even if it was registered. Then in 1907 they were instructed to use an ordinary stamp overprinted O.H.H.S. This procedure lasted for two years when they were told in 1909 to use the No Value stamp again, but with an ordinary stamp overprinted O.H.H.S. for registered mail. In 1914 each Government department was issued with a steel handstamp for franking their mail and the No Value stamp gradually went out of use.

Frames 26 & 27.**Early Egyptian Airmails, 1918-1926.****Laurence Kimpton.**

Cover to Persia posted at Cairo in September 1922. Flown on the RAF Cairo-Baghdad airmail service.

Egypt’s location on the air routes from Europe to Asia and Africa made it of considerable importance to the development of early airmail communications. Egypt became a British protectorate in 1914 and during the First World War had been the base for British operations against the Ottoman Turks. Therefore at the end of the war in 1918 the Royal Air Force had a large presence in Egypt and so became responsible for developing air transport services which included the carriage of mail. The display shows covers flown on the pioneer RAF flights from Egypt to India in late 1918 and from England to India via Egypt in early 1919. It then shows covers flown on RAF flights between Cairo and Baghdad in 1919 and on the EEF Emergency Airmail flights within Egypt in the same year. The development of the RAF Cairo-Baghdad airmail service between 1921 and 1926 is then described, illustrated by covers flown from and to Egypt.

Frames 28 & 29.

Egypt Flight of the Graf Zeppelin LZ127.

G. Paul Green.



The flight commenced 9 April 1931 and as with all Zeppelin flights, it carried mail. On the Egypt flight the mail was almost certainly all philatelic or souvenir. Formal acceptance of mail from the contracting states of Austria, Danzig, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Netherlands, Saar and Switzerland was arranged but mail from elsewhere needed a German stamp. Mail posted before the flight received a Friedrichshaven datestamp and mail posted on board had a Luftschiff cancel, both in red, and all mail received a Cairo arrival mark of 11 April.

The second leg was a round flight to Haifa and back to Cairo on 11 April that carried mail for Palestine. The airship did not land as intended so mail letters were forwarded by the Egyptian Post Office and postcards returned to Friedrichshaven for forwarding. For the return flight of 11-13 April, the Egyptian Post Office overprinted the current airmail stamp 50m for postcards and 100m for letters, but ordinary stamps could be used. Special posting boxes were provided at Cairo, Alexandria, Port Said and Suez where mail was cancelled with a special datestamp.

Frame 30.

Farouk and the Palace Post.

Mike Murphy.



During his reign from 1936 to 1952, King Farouk made major use of three great nineteenth-century palaces within Egypt - Abdin and Koubbeh (Qubba) in Cairo, and Ras el-Tin in Alexandria, when summer heat in the capital drove the court to the Mediterranean coast. This exhibit endeavours to explore the postal arrangements used by the monarch and his retinue throughout this period, examining especially the postal markings on both incoming and outgoing mail dealt with by each palace. Today all three, though no longer royal, continue to play a role of splendour in housing VIPs and state guests of President Sisi.

Frame 31. Egypt's AR (Advice of Receipt) Service. Richard Wheatley FRPSL.



A classic example of the use of the AR service – to a Detective Agency! 1932 February 13, letter from Port Said to Paris.
3 x 20 milliemes stamps, each paying a rate: UPU surface letter, registration fee and AR fee.

Advice of Receipt, or in French *Avis de Reception*, is a postal service to confirm to the sender the delivery of a registered letter. This service is of particular value to the police, lawyers, courts and anyone who needs proof that a registered letter has actually been delivered. At the 1878 UPU Congress in Paris, the AR service came into being. From 1 April 1879 the sender of a registered letter to any UPU member country "was enabled to obtain proof of its delivery on payment of an additional 1 Egyptian piastre (10 milliemes)" which was the Egyptian UPU letter rate, registration fee and AR fee. On display are items of inland and UPU mail which have been used for this service during the various rate periods. In addition, there are a selection of the forms that were returned confirming delivery.

Frames 32-36. Embossed Postal Stationery Envelopes. Jon Aitchison FRPSL.



1906 UPU pre-paid reply envelope essay.

Egyptian postal stationery is a big subject so this display is restricted to the first fifty years of envelopes with directly printed stamps. From 1887 until 1937, they shared a common feature, which was that they were all embossed. No subsequent issue had embossing. Nearly all were printed by De La Rue with the exception of the final three types which were by Harrison and Sons. Before the first issues appeared, some printers produced essays as samples of what might be achieved. Between 1865 and 1871, Provost and Penasson produced essays which pre-date all Egyptian postal stationery and the first issue of such envelopes, their inclusion is therefore important as the genesis of the genre.

Frames 37-39.

Officially Resealed Mail.

Jon Aitchison RNCP, FRPSL.



This exhibit examines the various ways that mail was officially sealed in transit, whether opened deliberately, accidentally through water immersion such as in ship wrecks, or to secure packages when damaged. It starts with use of Interpostal Seals, the enigmatic circular seals so often attributed to other purposes. It then looks at official sealing labels for Government departments and finishes with the first two printings of what became the Post Office standard types for over one hundred years. There is no philatelic mail from this subject area so most examples are shown on commercial covers. Some scarce mint sheets are also shown.

Frames 40 & 41.

Egyptian Meter Marks.

G. Paul Green.



The 1920 U.P.U. Congress agreed that franking machines could be used for international mail from 1 January 1922. The Egyptian Post Office acquired a Moss machine for the National Bank of Egypt in Cairo from 27 February until 31 March 1922 but it was found unsatisfactory. A fixed-value machine, it had five denominations used singularly or multiply to cover any postage rate. Until this cover turned up it was thought that no commercially used example of the 4m value had survived.

From 1 January until 25 May 1934 a Nessim machine was introduced at Cairo post office for use by the public, but was little used. From 1933, machines manufactured by Roneo Vickers, Neopost, Francotyp, Pitney Bowes, Hasler and Satis were introduced that allowed the value to be changed so that only one impression was necessary for the postal rate. The value die on these machines incorporated the King's monogram, which had to be removed when Egypt became a republic.

Frames 42 & 43.

Salt Tax Stamps.

Richard Wheatley FRPSL.



Block of four £E5 De La Rue Salt Tax stamps with sheet locating pin in the bottom margin.

Salt was an important commodity to the ordinary people, with distribution to the villages carried out by salt sellers. To regulate the business the Government had Salt Tax stamps printed in 1892 and four years later the first Salt Sellers' Licence stamps appeared. The system was quite simple. The seller went to a post office to buy Salt Tax stamps and stuck them onto a salt requisition form. The stamps were cancelled by the post office and the form was exchanged for the salt at a Government salt warehouse. The seller's profit came in a 20% commission, which was paid to him in extra bags of salt – see the used Salt Tax Requisition forms. On display are proofs of the Salt Tax stamps along with examples of each of the three issues, followed by the two issues of Licence stamps. There were five types of the requisition forms and these are all shown in used condition. This system came to an end in 1900 due to the high price of the salt. From then on the Government farmed out the collection of Salt Tax and the stamps were sold off to stamp dealers. Due to the double size of the stamps, they are very popular with postmark collectors.

Frame 44.

Great Bitter Lake Association (GBLA).

Andy Gould FRPSL.



Following the 1967 Six-Day War between Israel and Egypt and its allies, the Suez Canal was closed, leaving 14 cargo ships and their crews from eight nations trapped in the Great Bitter Lake. Every six months the shipping companies sent out replacement crews to look after the ships. After a while the ships' captains formed the The Great Bitter Lake Association to regulate an unofficial marketplace that had sprung up between the crews and to bring some order to their makeshift community. It was also a social committee with sporting events hosted each week by a different vessel. After a while, the GBLA started feeling like something bigger than just a club, more like its own little nation, and felt that they should have their own stamps. By 1974 most of the ships were no longer seaworthy and in 1975, eight years after the start of the Six-Day War, the ships finally left the Great Bitter Lake. Twelve needed to be towed out.

Frame 45.

The Eye of Horus.

Dennis Doren.

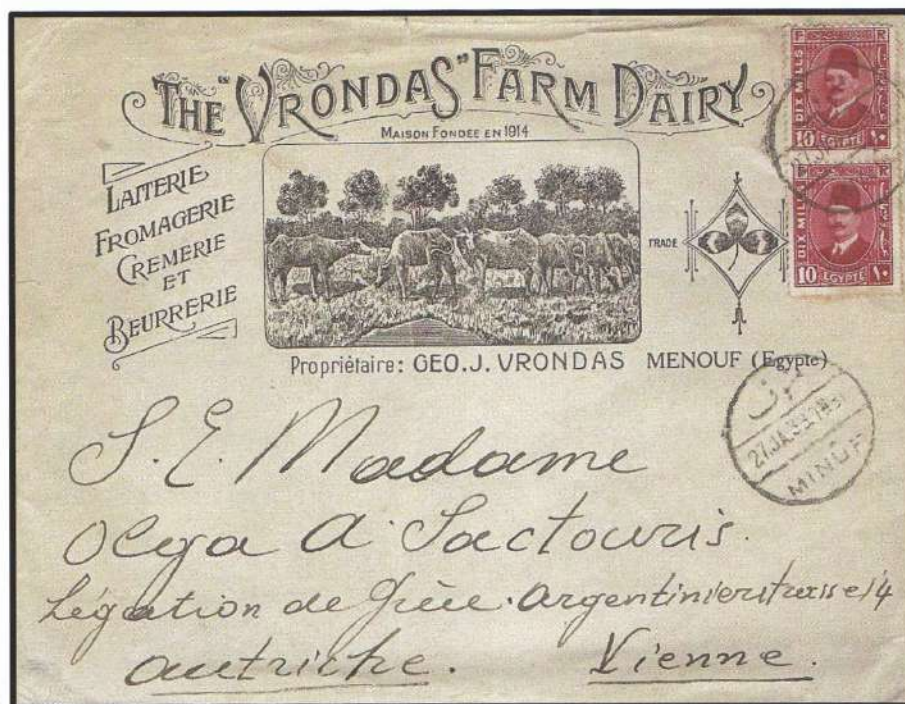


A powerful health and healing symbol, the Eye of Horus was first introduced in Egyptian philately with the 1937 15th International Ophthalmology Conference issue. It has since adorned many other Egyptian stamp issues, some of which are presented in this exhibit. The Eye of Horus is also widely used as an amulet and on Egyptian souvenirs and jewellery.

Frames 45 & 48.

Printed advertising envelopes.

Jon Aitchison FRPSL.



This display examines Egyptian illustrated, printed advertising envelopes from the 1890s until the early 1950s. They were used to promote companies, their products, services, events, publications and to put their premises on the map. Some had propaganda purposes whilst others utilised the iconography of ancient Egyptian monuments. They often depicted cutting-edge technology of the time that looks very dated today. In fact this display portrays the economic and social history of Egypt for the first half of the twentieth century through these visibly engaging envelopes.