

**THE FIRST ISSUE OF EGYPT 1866**  
**VARIETIES AND CURIOSITIES BY**

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Prof. Dr. Peter A.S. Smith wrote an exhaustive study on “Plate Flaws and Retouche’s of Egypt with comments of their and pricing”. This study appeared in L’Orient Philatelique No. 117 pages 609-628 and No.120-121 pages 735-751 and No. 120 pages 120-121.

With the aim of extending these studies, I show on the following pages ‘varieties and curiosities on stamps of the first issue of Egypt which ate in my own collection.

This additional study has not been easy particularly for the 1 p.t. value because Dr. Peter Smith based his study for this value on examining three quarters of the complete proof sheet in. 150 out of 200.... the complete left hand side and the lower half of the right side of the complete pane. Nevertheless, some nice flaws passed his clever observation.

Some of the mentioned flaws are already known, some may not be spectacular but no doubt others are worth mentioning as major varieties in the future Zeberli catalogue. The decision on such opinion varies because it may sometimes fall under “De gustibus non est disputandum”.

Through the aid of the photo-copies of the plate proofs of ‘he “First Issue of Egypt” which are kept in the library of the Philatelic Society of I was able to locate the various flaws described. Some items which were not found in these photocopies. I temporarily considered them as curiosities until other collectors may find similar items to prove that such variety happened sometime after successive printings and then they can be considered as definite varieties. In locating the position of these varieties it is important to mention that although the sheets of all values of the First Issue contain stamps yet there is variance in their make-up. The 1 piastre is printed on the sheet in two horizontal panes of 100 stamps (10 x 10). These two panes are placed side by side with a white space measuring 12¾ mm. between them. In all other values i.e. 5 pa, 10 pa, 20 pa, 2. pi, 5 pi and 10 pi, the printed pane is intact i.e. 20 x 10 stamps without any separation. Consequently the position of each variety will be mentioned as No. 1-200 for all values with the exception of the 1 p.t. where the position will be mentioned as No. 1-100 left pane and No. 1-100 right pane. In this procedure I followed Dr. Peter Smith because it seems to me more accurate, although it differs from that adopted by Robson Low’s catalogue of Egypt<sup>(2)</sup> where the position of flaws on the 1 p.t. is described from 1-200.

Some additional details in description are inevitable in order to identify properly the position of semi-similar flaws e.g. “PE joined”, “broken frame” etc.

**1 - 5 PARAS**

I. - 1) Photo No. 1 position 172 shows that the smooth continuous attachment between ص (Sadd) and ر (RE) of the left word مصريه (Masriya) is interrupted by a small protuberance. There is also a small dot above أ (Alef) of the lower word باره (Parah). The stamp is perforated 12.5 / 12.5 / 13 / 12.5.

I. - 3) Photo No. 2 shows the last left character ه (He) of the lower word باره L to be totally filled with colour i.e. there is no white space in the circle. This variety appears in about 6 positions. The illustrated stamp may be position 140 due to the presence of a small coloured dot in the margin outer of the middle left frame. It shows a nice curiosity as there is a dot above the central word مصر (Masr) and thus changes the pronunciation of the word from Masr to Madr. This dot is not found on the proof sheet. The stamp is perforated 12.5 / 1:3.

1. - 3) Photo No. 3 depicts an interesting curiosity where there is a small circle attached to the outer left side of the last left character ه (He) of the upper word بوت (Postah). The stamp is apparently imperforated right side but perforated 13 bottom i.e. 12.5 / imperf. / 13 / 12.5.



Ph.1



Ph.2



Ph.3



Ph.4

## II - 10 PARAS

II. - 1) Photo No. 4 position 21 shows the ر (Re) of the middle word مصر to be broken in its lower turn. The ڄ (Ghe) of the right word تمغای (Tamghai) is not attached to the next character أ (Alef) due to a break. The perforation is 13 / 12.5 / 12.5 / 12.5.

*(N.B. On the photo-proof, there is a faint attachment and no doubt through wear, this slight attachment has been lost).*

II. - 2) Photo No. 5 position 166 has two breaches in the horizontal stroke joining م (Meem) and ص (Sadd) of the middle word مصر. The loop of ص of the same word is also broken in its lower outer right side. The م (Meem) of the left word is defected and not attached to latter ص (Sadd) next.

The perforation is 12.5 / 12.5 / 13 / 12.5.

*(N.B. The white patch obliterating RA of PARA in the upper right corner is not present on the photo-proof).*

II. - 3) Photo No. 6 position 176 shows a breach in the lower left loop of ص (Sadd) of the word مصر and thus simulates ه (Ha). This variety appears also in positions 142 and 145 on the photo proof. It is interesting that my stamp bears the c.d.s. of Costantinopoli.



Ph.5



Ph.6

### III - 20 PARAS

III. - 1) Photo No. 7 position 140 shows a major variety. The two numerals “2” and “0” in the lower left corner are attached together due to the presence of a large white patch which joins their upper sides. This flaw is never repeated on the sheet. The perforation is 12.5 / 13.

III. - 2) Photo No. 8 position 11 shows a white coloration below and to the left of the lower right circle containing “ PARA “, below and to the left of “A”.

III. - 3) Photo No. 9 position 46 shows just a small dot left instead of the inverted comma which is placed above and to the left of the upper word i.e. tail missing of the inverted comma. In addition there is a break in the middle of the last serpent - like character یه (Yeh) of مصریه

*N.B. The inverted comma with trace or without tail exists on many stamps of the 3rd and 8th. rows*



Ph.7



Ph.8



Ph.9



Ph.10

## IV - 1 PIASTRE

### IV. - 1) The "PE" Joined.

This variety was included in lot 271 of Byam's sale ('). In Zeheri Catalogue (1967) a small hint about it is given (No. 3 page 31 line 11).

There are about 15 variants for this attachment in the complete sheet of 200 stamps. They could be differentiated by: (a) position of PE either in the top left or lower right corner of the stamp (b) the shape of the attachment or its clarity (c) other peculiarities in the design .or overprint of each stamp. All these help to locate each position.

IV - 1. a) Photo 10 position 57 left pane, PE in the upper left corner is largely joined (perhaps the most prominent attachment on the sheet). The terminal left side of the lower frame is missing about 2 mm.

IV - 1. b) Photo 11 position 60 Left pane, PE in the lower right corner is attached, The uppermost 2 mms. of the left frame are missing.

1 V - 1. c) Photo 12 position 5 Right pane; in the upper left corner, PE is slightly joined. The ر (Re) of the lower word غروش (Ghoroush) extends to the middle turning of its neighbour, و (Waw) forming a small protuberance.



Ph.11



Ph.12

The perforation is 13 /-12.5.

IV - 1. d) Photo 13 probably position 82 left pane, "PE" in the lower left corner is joined. In addition the م of مصريه is defected and thus changed to ن i.e. the (victorious) variety. (For this نصریه variety see additional study under paragraph IV-5 page 211.



Ph.13



Ph.14

#### IV. - 2) The broken “1”

This variety was mentioned both in Byam’s Sale <sup>(1)</sup> (Lot 266 and 268), and Cotta’s Sale <sup>(2)</sup> (Lot 123).

Photo No. 14 position 89 Left pane shows this variety where the “1” in the upper right corner is broken in its front due to invaded colour. There is also a small nick in the upper horizontal strike of غ (Ghe) of the lower word غروش

#### IV. -3) The shaved مصريه

Photo No. 15 position 51 right pane shows that the word مصريه has been shaved along all the upper letters i.e. the outermost side in the left horizontal overprint.

(N.B. Two similar shaved varieties but on غروش were mentioned by Dr. Peter Smith, see L’O.P. No. 118 page 741 Fig. 33 and 34).

An interesting additional variety in the same stamp is that two pearls are missing in the lower left side of the encircling design. This is very well seen in my stamp because the overprint غروش is misplaced to “the right whereas in the photo proof of the” Philatelic Society of ‘Egypt these two missing pearls cannot be seen to advantage as they are masked by the overprint.

#### IV. - 4) The broken or missed frame.

There are some broken frames in addition to that mentioned in Zeheri Catalogue (page 28 No. 4 d which is position 37 left pane and which features also in Cotta sale <sup>2</sup>).

IV -: 4. a) Photo 16 position 51 left shows a break about 1 mm. in length in the upper 1/3 of the outer right frame. There is also a small nick in the middle tail of ی (Ye) in تمنای . The stamp is unused and perforated 12.5: / 13.



Ph.15



Ph.16

IV - 4. b) Photo 17 position 65 left pane shows a similar break. For differentiation the outer 3rd pearl, in the upper right corner’ encircling “1” and at its outer foot, is white because it is devoid of the small coloured semi-circle inside. Letter “P” in the lower right side is attached at its top with the vertical white line next to it.

IV - 4. c) Photo 18 position 91 left pane: the lower 2/5 of the outer left frame is distorted and missing particularly in the lower 1/5. The head of “P” in the lower right corner is almost white and is attached in its extreme top with its neighbour vertical line, thus resembling two legs.

An additional and perhaps more interesting flaw in the same stamp is that the horizontal lower bar of غ in غروش is broken near its terminal end, thus leaving a dot which being placed above بر (Ber) changes the pronunciation of this last word to بز (Bez). The stamp is perforated 12.5 / 13.



Ph.17



Ph.18

*N.B. For additional missed frames see IV-1. a) photo 10 and IV -1. b) photo 11.*

IV - 5) *The نصریه (victorious) variety.*

Zeheri catalogue (1967) mentions on page 31 this variety and gives a photo.

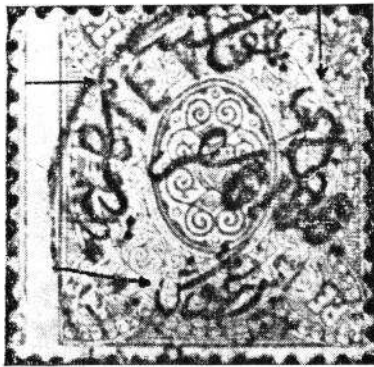
Consulting the photo proof sheet, it is evident that No. 1 left pane shows clearly this variety.

However this variety may be formed through wear of the already deformed م of مصریه in some stamps i.e. when the circle of م is not quite intact, its upper portion is detached and thus forms a dot which combined with the lower semi-circle left simulates the character ن. To prove my assumption I show the following different stamps.

IV - 5. a) Photo 19 position 2 left pane shows this نصریه variety. There is also a break in the middle terminal turning of ی (Ye) of and another similar break in of تمنای The stamp is perforated 13 / 12.5 / 13 / 13.

IV - 5. b) Photo 20 shows another نصریه variety. This stamp differs from both IV-5. a and No. 1 left pane. It is on entire and I was unable to locate its position.

*N.B. Photo 13 mentioned before under IV-1. d page 209 shows a third similar variety.*



Ph.19



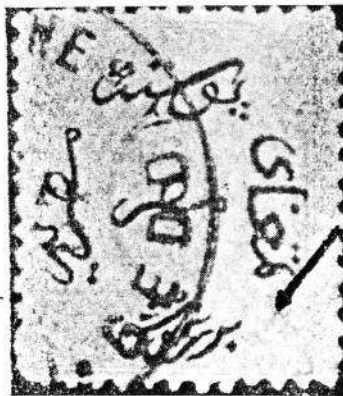
Ph.20

IV. - 6). Photo 21 position 29 right pane shows the lower dot of پ in as a geometrical faint square i.e. it is not a solid dot as usual. In addition the م of تمنای is cut horizontally along all its upper curve.

IV. - 7) Photo 22 shows the lower horizontal bar of E in the lower right corner to be obliterated by coloration and thus resembles "F". I believe it is a curiosity. It is interesting that the stamp bears the c.d.s. of Gedda.



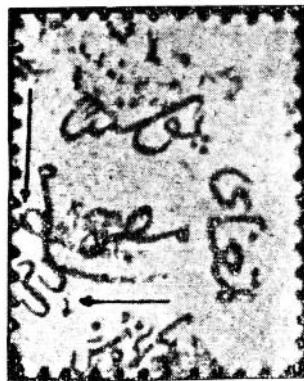
Ph.21



Ph.22



Ph.23



Ph.24

## V - 2 PIASTRES

V. - 1) Photo No. 23 position 19 shows the following There is a break in ر (Re) of the central word مصر. Another larger break in ر (Re) of the left word مصرته, also the first character of the same word is slightly misshaped in its lower part. My stamp may be a rarity if we take into consideration that this variety is never repeated on the sheet and the perforation is 12.5 / 15. V. - 2) Photo No. 24 position 39 shows two flaws in the left word مصرته : (a) the upper turn of صد is defected, (b) instead of two dots under ي (Ye) there is only a trace of the upper one. The stamp is badly misplaced and perforated 13 / 13 / 12.5 / 12.5.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

1) Dr. William Byam Collection Egypt sold by Robson Low Ltd., London on 24th and 25th October 1961.

## ONE PIASTRE

Lot 266 A fine strip of early printings with full original gum (86-90), one stamp slightly thinned and damaged by heavy mountain-, one shows the broken "1" (5 stamps).

Lot 268 A strip of late printings from the left pane (88-90) with gutter margin at right and one showing the broken "1" mint but heavily mounted and centred to upper right (3 stamps).

Lot 271 Varieties no stop after "P" and "PE" joined, both with original gum but slightly soiled. (2 stamps).

2) Charles Cotta Collection of Egypt sold by Robson Low Ltd., London on 27th January 1965.

Lot 123 5 pa. grey (99) broken frame at left, unused and used, 20 pa. blue (141) part of overprint missing at top, unused, another unused perf 13 one side, and a used copy with a misplaced overprint, and 1 pi mauve used (8 stamps) including (23) with distorted figure "1", (67) with broken frame (2 stamps), (169) with broken frame (2 stamps), (196) with broken letter (2 stamps) and another with a frame break; a good lot of varieties. (13 stamps).

*Note by the author.*

*Concerning the varieties of 1 p.t. included in Lot 123 the following are additional notes: No. 23 with distorted figure “1” is No. 13 on the left pane. It was termed by Dr. Peter Smith as the “winged” “1” (L’O.P. No. 118 page 739 Fig. 29).*

No. 67 is position 37 left pane (Zeheri No. 4 d).

No. 169 with broken frame. This is No. 89 left pane and described by me under IV. 2 page 209. In Robson Low catalogue there was a typing error in describing this stamp as it is actually the broken “1” and not the broken frame.

No. 196 is position 96 right pane where the first left upper hook of ب (Be) of, ب Berr of the bottom word is missing. (see L’O.P. No. 118 page 738 Fig. 25 the 6th stamp of the lower row.).