

EGYPT STUDY CIRCLE.

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Increase in the subscription to the Egypt Study Circle.

Owing to the increased cost of production of the Quarterly Circular it has been found necessary to increase the annual subscription to the Circle to £1-0-0 per annum as from 1st January, 1951.

Exchange Packet.

Mr Hurt has written us as follows :-

“ The first packet was started in circulation early in November on a list of 18 members. Though the total value of this packet is £424-4-10 only five members contributed sheets.

Further packets therefore must depend on support from sellers, many members should have good duplicate material for sale. Sheets should be sent to the Packet Superintendent by the end of February or earlier. Several members have written to express their appreciation of the first packet which one has described as the best he has seen. “

BRITISH MILITARY CAMPAIGNS IN EGYPT, 1882 & 1885.

By Lieut. Colonel J. R. Danson, M.C; T.D..

The war in Egypt in 1882 lasted for just over 2 months, viz:- from the 11th July on which day the bombardment of Alexandria by the British fleet commenced, until the 24th September by which date all enemy troops had surrendered.

The following are the principal dates.

1882. 11th July Bombardment of Alexandria commenced.
- 17th - Sir Archibald Alison arrived at Port Said as G.O.C. in C. On the same day the Staffordshire Regt. And 17th Coy.R.E. disembarked at Alexandria and a Bn. Of Royal Marines arrived from Cyprus.
- 18th - A Bn. Of K.R.R. landed and the seamen and marines under Capt. Fisher R.N. were relieved.
- 24th - A Bn. Of D.C.L.I. and 1/2 Sussex Regt. Arrived at Alexandria.
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In the meantime, on the 16th July the Khedive Mohammed Tewfik issued an order dismissing Arabi Pacha from his post as Minister for War, and in reply, on the 21st. Arabi issued a proclamation denouncing the Khedive.

The Egyptian forces under Arabi were all in the Delta and the British plan was to hold as many of the enemy as possible outside Alexandria by means of reconnaissances in force from that place; to move the greater part of the force to Ismailia in secret and endeavour to capture Cairo as quickly as possible. Arabi would then be cut off in the Delta, where he and his followers could be collected at leisure if they did not surrender,

Arising out of this plan, on the

1882. 27th July. H.M.S. "Orion" entered the Suez canal and moved towards Ismailia.
- 5th. Aug. A reconnaissance in force under Sir A. Alison was made towards Kefr-El-Dauer.
- 10th. Aug. Troopship "Orient" arrived at Alexandria from London.
- 14th. - - "Holland" - - Alexandria with cavalry.
- 15th. - Sir Garnet Wolseley arrived at Alexandria and took command.
- 20th. - Suez Canal seized by the British Navy.

- 21st Aug. Sir Garnet arrived at Ismailia. On the same day Nefisha and Serapeum were occupied, and the Indian Contingent arrived at Suez.
- 22nd. — Whole Railway and Sweet Water Canal between Suez and Ismailia in British hands.
- 23rd. — All fighting troops on shore at Ismailia.
- 24th. — Magfar occupied.
- 25th. — Tel-El-Maskhuta captured.
- 25th. — Kassassin occupied at dawn.
- 9th. Sept. H.Q. and force including Indians concentrated at Kassassin.
- 13th. — Capture of Tel-El-Kebir. On the same day Belbeis was occupied at noon and Zagazig was occupied by Indian troops.
- 14th. — Cairo occupied, Arabi surrendered at Abbassiyeh.
- 15th. — British & Indian Troops entered Cairo in force.
- 17th. — Tanta occupied.
- 24th. — All rebel troops surrendered.
- 25th. — Khedive made triumphant entry into Cairo.
- 30th. — Grand parade before the Khedive.
- 21st. Oct. Sir Garnet Wolseley sailed for England and force reduced to 10,000 men.

The official history of the Campaign mentions that a detachment of the Army Postal Corp accompanied the expedition but gives no details of its composition or where it functioned. It has, however, been ascertained that in 1877, Colonel H. L. De Plat Taylor C.B. Commanding the 24th Middlesex (Post Office) Volunteers suggested that part of his Bn. should be used to form an Army Postal Corp in the event of war, but it was not until July 1882 that anything was done.

When it was decided to send an expedition to Egypt Co. Taylor was authorised to select 2 officers and 100 other ranks to be enlisted into the Army Reserve, and Major Sturgeon and Capt. Viall, together with 50 other ranks, were immediately called up to proceed to Egypt.

The detachment sailed on 8th August 1882 and landed at Alexandria on the 21st August. They established Field Post Offices at Alexandria & Ramleh, but on the 23rd August they left for Ismailia, where they arrived on the 26th.

The base post office set up at Ismailia functioned from 28th August and a service to the front was organised.

After the battle of Tel-El-Kebir on 13th September, the detachment moved up to Cairo; on the 7th October they embarked for England.

W. C. Hinde has in his possession a Printed Post Office Notice dated 11th Aug. 1882 entitled "Postal Arrangements for British Forces in Egypt". A copy of this is attached hereto.

From this circular it will be seen that the postal rates (if prepaid) were as follows :-

Letters 2½d per ½ oz.

Postcards 1d. Each

Newspapers ½d each no exceeding 2 oz, in weight & ½d for each additional 2 oz.

Printed Papers and Books ½d per 2 oz.

Unpaid letters would be charged double postage on delivery.

But letters sent to or by N.C.O's, soldiers, and seamen in H.M. Service would be privileged to pass for a postage of 1d. each provided postage was prepaid and the letters did not exceed ½oz. in weight.

To enjoy this privilege senders had to comply with the regulations laid down in the post office guide. A copy of these regulations is attached hereto.

The following stamps of Great Britain current at the period have been recorded as used in Egypt during the period August-October 1882 :-

½d green

1d. Red (S.G. 166)

1d lilac.

2½d blue, plates 21 (rare) 22 and 23.

Envelope stamp embossed 1d red.

Three types of postmarks appear to have been used.

(a) An upright oval of 13 bars with the letters BA in the centre. This is
E

very rare and only a few examples are on record.

(b) A single lined circle 23 mm. in diameter, containing the words BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE around the inner circumference, with EGYPT at the bottom; in the centre the date in 2 lines e.g. SP2

Above the date ins some, but not all, examples., there is a letter A, B, or C. The significance of these letters is unknown.

- (c) A single lined circle with the inscription Field Force P.O. Egypt round the inner circumference of the top half of the circle, and in the centre No. 2 The bottom of the inner circumference is blank
Sep. 23

This mark is very rare and it has been suggested that it is a mark used by the Indian Contingent Postal Authorities.

The following is a list of our earliest and latest dates which have been reported to me of Postmark, Type (b)

	A.	B.	C.	No letters.
Earliest	8 Sept.	28th Aug.	14 Sept.	10 Sept.
Latest	4 Oct.	4th Oct	25 Sept.	4 Oct.

It is believed that prior to the arrival of Major Sturgeon's detachment, letters from the Army in Egypt were sent in official bags unobliterated, and if stamped, the adhesives were cancelled on arrival in England with obsolete obliterators.

The Egyptian Post Office continued to function during the rebellion but owing to the presence of the rebels communication between various towns and villages was very difficult and at times probably impossible.

A stampless cover is known addressed to England from an Army Officer which is postmarked at the Egyptian Post Office at Ismailia on the 27th August 1882. This was taxed 2½d on arrival in England, i.e. the single rate for Officer's letters despatched through the Army Post Office.

Note. The dates shown above are taken from the Official History of the Campaign in Egypt in 1882 and from information supplied by the Public Relations Department of the G.P.O., in London.

Where they differ from the dates given in Brigadier Rawson's article which appeared on page 6, Vol. III of the Q.C. the latter should be amended.

Copy of the Printed post office notice referred to on page 129.

No. 24

(The Royal Arms)

E G Y P T.

P O S T A L A R R A N G E M E N T S F O R B R I T I S H
F O R C E S.

FOR the convenience of her Majesty's Forces serving in Egypt, the Postmaster-General has established an Army Post Office, which will undertake all duties connected with the receipt and dispatch of Mails, the sale of Postage Stamps, and the issue and payment of Money Orders and Postal Orders.

Mails for the Forces in Egypt will be made up in London three times a week, viz.:-

On Monday Evenings.

On Wednesday Mornings.

On Friday Evenings.

The rates of Postage (if prepaid) will be as follows :-

Letters	-	-	-	-	-	2½d per ½ oz.
Post Cards	-	-	-	-	-	1d each.
Newspapers	-	-	-	-	-	(½d each not exceeding (in weight, and ½d for (every additional 2 oz.
Printed Papers and Books	-	-	-	-	-	½d per 2 oz.

Unpaid letters will be charged double postage on delivery.

But, in exception to the above rate on letters, those addressed to or for only Non-Commissioned Officers, Soldiers, and Seaman in her Majesty's Service, will be privileged to pass for a postage of one penny each, provided the postage is prepaid and the letters do not exceed half an ounce in weight. To enjoy this privilege the senders must, in all cases, comply with the regulations specially applicable to such letters, - as detailed in the Post Office Guide.

Money orders and Postal Orders will be issued at the same rates of commission as Inland Money Orders and Postal Orders.

By Command of the Postmaster General.

GENERAL POST OFFICE

11th August, 1882.

Extract from Post Office guide, 1882.

LETTERS FOR NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS, SOLDIERS, AND SEAMAN IN
HER MAJESTY'S SERVICE.

1) Non-commissioned officers, bandmasters, army schoolmasters, schoolmistresses, private soldiers, writers or schoolmasters in Rates Her Majesty's Navy, or seamen belonging to her Majesty's Ships, of whether serving on sea or land, and whether in a British Possession postage. or Foreign Country, the Cape Mounted Rifles, the Cape Field Artillery, and the Cape Infantry Regiment, and also enrolled pensioners in Canada can send and receive letters for a postage of 1d.; but if any such letters have to pass through a foreign country they are subject, in addition, to the foreign postage whatever that may be. Thus the postage to the under-mentioned countries (including the British charge of one penny) is as follows :-

To or from	s	d	To or from	s	d
Australia, Ceylon, Hong Kong)			Chili, Peru, or any other)		
India, etc., via Brindisi.)	0	2.	place in the South Pacific,) 0	2	
			via Southampton and New York)		
Mauritius by French packet	0	3.	Bermuda via New York	0	2

2) The person claiming the privilege must at the time be actually Must employed in the service of her Majesty, and must be either a be on commissioned officer, or warrant officer, viz :- conductor in the Service. army of assistant engineer, gunner, boatswain, or carpenter in the navy, the privilege not extending to these officers.

3) If a letter be posted within the United Kingdom, a penny must Pre- payment be prepaid, as must any foreign postage that may be chargeable. compulsory. If posted abroad, prepayment is not compulsory, but if a letter be sent unpaid, it is on delivery charged two pence, together with any foreign postage that may be due.

4) The letter must not weigh more than half an ounce.

5) It must relate entirely to the private concerns of the soldier or seaman.

6) The name of the soldier or seaman, with his class or description , How to be must appear in the direction; and the officer having the command address must align his name, and specify the ship, or regiment, corps or -ed ship or regiment to which the soldier or seaman belongs, the name of the ship or regiment being entered in full. The foregoing particulars must be given in one of the following forms :-

SEAMEN

From A.B., Seaman, H.M.S. _____
(here the direction of the letter to be inserted)
C.D., Captain (or other Commanding Officer)
H.M.S. _____

To A.B.,
Seaman, H.M.S. _____
(here the direction of the letter to be finished)

SOLDIERS

From A.B., Sergeant etc., _____ Regt. _____
(Here the direction of the letter to be inserted)
C.D., Colonel (or other Commanding Officer)
Regt. _____

To A.B.,
Private (or Sergeant, Corporal, etc.)... _____ Regt. _____
(Here the direction to be finished)

Treatment
of
insuffic-
iently
paid and
incorrect-
address
letters.

7) If a letter be posted in the United Kingdom for a place abroad, unpaid or insufficiently paid, or if a case of description of the soldier or seaman be not written in the address, it will be detained and returned to the writer for payment of the postage.

S U D A N 1885.

As for the Campaign in Egypt in 1882, a detachment of the Army Postal Corps, consisting of 20 N.C.O's and men under Major Sturgeon, left England on the 3rd, March 1885 and returned to England on the 28th July 1885.

The same postmark as used in Egypt in 1882, viz :- Type (b), single lined circle containing the words BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE EGYPT and date, was used in 1885, though no postmark embodying the letter B over the date has been recorded and it is doubtful whether the marking without a letter exists.

The following stamps of great Britain have been seen used in this Campaign.

1d Lilac
2½d of 1883
5d Green

The earliest recorded date is March 29th and the latest 27th May.

Assuming the letters in the postmark indicate something of philatelic importance, the following are the earliest and latest dates of each :-

	A.	C.
Earliest	Ap. 20.	March 29
Latest	My. 27	Ap. 15

Military telegraph stamps of Great Britain made by overprinting stamps of the "Appropriate Dies" with the words Military Telegraph in black were also used during this period and 8 values, viz :- 1d, 3d, 6d, 1/-, 2/-, 5/-, 10/-, and £1 were available for use in Suakin.

These stamps are very rare either used or mint and the majority of examples which are met with are overprinted "Specimen".

The following used examples are in my collection :-

		Postmark.
Pair of 1/- value.	Field Telegraph No. 10 within a double lined circle.	
	In centre	S.K. 30 Mar. 1885. Struck in purple.
£1	Similar postmark, but number of Office not shown.	
	In centre	Q.1. 24 Mar. 1885. Struck in purple.
2/-	Similar postmark, but number 16.	
	In centre	S.K. 7 May. 1885. Struck in purple.

There is no absolute proof that these examples were used in the Sudan as similar stamps were in use in Bechuanaland at this period, but it is not unreasonable to suppose that S.K. on two of the postmarks indicate Suakin.

It is believed that the detachment of the Army Postal Corps remained at Suakin throughout their short Service in the Sudan and that letters emanating from Tokar were dealt with by the detachment of the Indian Post Office.

THE HISTORY OF THE FOREIGN POST OFFICES IN EGYPT.

THE POSTS OF GREAT BRITAIN IN EGYPT

By Brigadier C. D. Rawson, C.B.E.; D.S.O..

(continued from page 125.)

The following provisions were made :-

- (1) The British Post Office to have the right to maintain Agencies at Alexandria and Suez, and to send its own messengers with mails.
- (2) The powers of these Agents to be limited to the superintendence of the transit of British Mails

The Convention came into operation on April 1st 1878 on which date the British post Office was abolished, and tis terms hold until the present dat.

(c) CAIRO.

A Postal Agency was established at Cairo at the British Consulate on _____?. Paid letters and newspapers directed to Cairo, and received at the Alexandria Post Office, were regularly forwarded in charge of a messenger in sealed bags addressed to H.R.H. Consul in Cairo, with the mails for India.

Similarly letters were forwarded from Suez to Cairo. All letters on arrival at Cairo were sorted, and kept at the Consulate until delivered to their owners, their servants, or their hotel keepers. The Consular officials had nothing to do with postages.

In 1856 the Postal Official at the Consulate was granted an annual gratuity of £20, but he was not responsible for the G.P.O. and letters could not be prepaid at Cairo, nor received form the other British Post Offices unprepaid.

In 1858 Anthony Trollope in his survey of the British Postal arrangements in Egypt considered that there was a grave lack of accommodation for correspondence in Cairo "Being a place of great resort for English pulmonary invalids and the amount of correspondence considerable". He was of opinion that "the establishment of a British Post Office in Cairo would be of great service not only to the English residents, but to Europeans generally. No other Government but the British has the power of opening a Post Office established in the centre of Egypt without making special arrangements for the conveyance of mails to and from that town. Such conveyance is, however, already established and paid for us for the Indian Mail Service. At present letters are delivered daily except Sunday but they are not delivered the whole day from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. There is a box for posting letters but they cannot be prepaid About 100 letters are now sent to Cairo by each mail from Alexandria, and about 25 from Suez, but the number would probably increase once there was the establishment of a Post Office.

The Office should be under Alexandria, and not only paid letters, but also unpaid should be delivered from such office, postage being paid on delivery in the latter case; and that postage should be collected on paid letters from Cairo to the United Kingdom, and that the postage revenues should be submitted to Alexandria."

After a good deal of argument the Post Office was established at the Consulate on February 23rd, 1859.

The British Post Office at Cairo was closed in 1873, the National Post Office being by then firmly established in that city by the Egyptian Government.

II. MAIL SERVICES BETWEEN EGYPT AND ENGLAND.

The Early Packet Services.

The earliest records of a British Postal or "Ship Pacquets" Service under the Postmaster for Foreign Affairs in Britain, are of boats being rowed or sailed across the English Channel in 1633.

In 1688 Falmouth was first used as a mail-packet port and later to the West Indies and North America. By 1800 two packets a week were sailing for Spain and Portugal, and the town of Falmouth, a tiny village in 1688, had become a busy and prosperous centre.

Up to the end of the Napoleonic wars these packet ships were hired by the Post Office, from their owners or private syndicates, but the whole system became rotten with corruption and jobbery.

The Admiralty Packet Service.

In 1827 all Packets sailing out of Falmouth were transferred to the Admiralty against the most vigorous opposition of the Post Office; the former stating that they needed the ships for the training of seamen and half pay officers; the latter protesting that the regularity and certainty of the carriage of mails would be unlikely to be achieved by ships manned by training ship seamen, and elderly officers who had to be found jobs!

The Admiralty Packet Service to the Mediterranean and the East was run in stages. The sailing brigs from Falmouth ran once a week, wind and weather permitting and took three weeks to reach Lisbon. Mails for Egypt went to Malta, and were transhipped there for forwarding to Egypt once a month.

Up to 1830 mails for Malta and Egypt went by sail packets, but in that year the Admiralty sent out their first steam packet the "Meteor", and followed with 8 others for the Mediterranean.

In 1837 an Act of Parliament confirmed that the charge of all packets and powers then existing in the Postmaster General, under any contract for the conveyance of mails, should be transferred to the Admiralty. The Post Office

still regulated the times of departure of the packets and received the reports of any delays in their arrival.

By a later act in that year the Postmaster General was authorised to contract for the conveyance of all letters by private ships, provided that the ships were British, the rates being the same as the packet rate.

The Peninsular and Orient Steam Navigation Company.

The Service, however, remained uncertain and irregular until, in 1836, the founders of the Peninsular Steam Navigation Company (Messrs Willcox and Anderson) who had built up an efficient steamship service to Spain and Portugal presented a plan and proposals to the Admiralty guaranteeing a quicker and cheaper service to the Peninsula, which was summarily rejected. The pressure of public opinion and business circles prevailed, however. At the request of the Government who had in 1839 made arrangements for the transport of mails to the East across France which proved unsatisfactory, the Peninsular Steam Navigation Company extended their service to Alexandria in 1840. The first sailing was on September 1st 1840, the charter was granted in December 1840, the company being afterwards known as The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company.

Her Majesty's mails in sailing ship days were placed in charge of an admiralty Agent, usually a very elderly Lieutenant of the Royal Navy, and the practice continued with the P & O whose ships had to be fitted with six or nine twelve pounder guns, and a quota of small arms.

When the mail was brought abroad, the Lieutenant dressed in full ceremonial uniform of long tailed gold braided, brass buttoned coat, high stiff white collar, glazed cocked hat and sword, stood to attention at the gangway. The ship with Admiralty Agent on board were entitled to fly the long pennant of a man-of-war. The Postal flag of the old sail packets was the Red Ensign with a large white square in the centre bearing the designs of a red jacketed post boy riding a white horse, and blowing a horn. The steamers had a special "Postal Flag" of the Red Ensign with a large yellow anchor and crown over it on the red of the fly. Admiralty Agents were carried until 1874, when the Master was allowed to take charge of the mails.

There were two routes for the mails :-

(a) The Long sea route.

(b) The Overland route.

(a) The long sea route.

In 1840 the mails left London every Friday for Falmouth whence the P & O steamers sailed on Mondays. They visited Vigo, Oporto, Lisbon and Cadiz and reached Gibraltar in 7 days, thence 5 days to Malta by Admiralty packet and four days to Alexandria, a total of 16 days. The process was reversed for homeward bound mails.

Falmouth was abandoned in 1843 and the vessels left Southampton on the 1st. of the month, reached Gibraltar on the 6th., Malta on the 19th., and Alexandria in 12 or 13 days, returning on the 15th.

The mails were taken over by Messrs Briggs & Co., the P & O agents at

Alexandria, and conveyed across Egypt under arrangements made by the Egyptian Transit Company who had superceded the Waghorn, Hill and Coy. Organisation in June 1842.

The heavier portion of the mails went but the long sea route, the lighter portion went by the overland route.

(b) The Overland Route. (1) England to Egypt.

In 1843 the indefatigable Mr. Waghorn was developing travelling facilities from England, through France to Marseilles.

The "overland closed mail" went from Calais or Boulogne via Paris, Chalon, Lyons to Marseilles in special coaches which were driven at high speed with only the briefest halts to change horses.

A special Indian Mail Service in charge of a British Official was inaugurated. The mail was packed in iron boxes fastened by means of internal springs so that they could only be forced by cutting through the lids with a pair of shears. The mails reached Marseilles on the 5th day after leaving London. From Marseilles they were conveyed by Admiralty packet to Malta, which plied to and from Malta once a month. At Malta, it met the vessel which had come direct by sea from England, and the mails were transferred and carried to Alexandria.

On arrival in Alexandria the mail for Egypt itself went to the British Packet Office there, which was the only one in Egypt at that time. The post left Alexandria for Cairo every Monday, Wednesday Friday and Saturday at 7 p.m. and returned on those days at the same time. The post arrived on the 4th day, went less frequently and took longer than the "Pasha's Post" which went every day except Friday and took only 36 hours.

(b) Egypt to England.

Mail were made up at Alexandria Packet Office for Malta, Gibraltar, Syra and Marseilles. All letters, except those for Marseilles, had to be prepaid at Alexandria.

Letters from Egypt for England via France left Alexandria for Malta about the 23rd of the month and reached London about the 4th of the following month; their departure from Alexandria was dependent on the arrival there of the Indian mail from Suez. These mails, on arrival at Malta, were separated. Those marked "via Marseilles" being taken out, and sent on by a packet steamer which met P. & O. vessels at Malta and carried them on to Marseilles; Those "via Gibraltar" remaining on board. Letters "via Marseilles" arrived in London 4 days earlier than those sent "long sea" but the rate of postage was greater.

It is to be noted that the French Service took three days more than the P. & O. mail steamer, and the rate of postage was higher.

The quicker route overland via Marseilles might well have cut out the long sea route, but the British Government were not satisfied with this method of sending mails across France, a major factor being the possibility of Official Despatches being tampered with "en Route". There was also the liability of delay by Admiralty steamers in meeting the mail at Marseilles.

(to be continued)