

EGYPT STUDY CIRCLE .

THE QUARTERLY CIRCULAR .

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S U B S C R I P T I O N S .

Members are reminded that their subscriptions to the Circle became due on January 1st last and the Hon. Treasurer - F.S.Mumford, 174, Buxton Road, Stockport, Cheshire, England - would be glad to receive them as soon as possible.

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Arrears.

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Towcester Northants.

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The Chairman.

Many members will have heard, and others will be interested to hear, that Colonel W. Byam, O.B.E. has left this country to take up his new appointment as Medical Superintendent of the Princess Tsahai Memorial Hospital, Addis Abbaba, Ethiopia.

He carries with him the good wishes of the Circle for a happy period of residence in the Middle East and we look forward to hearing from him from time to time.

Changes of Address.

- 8. D. B. Armstrong, 6, Clifton Crescent, Folkestone.
- 26. J. R. Raeburn, Tonn Newydd, Merthyr Tydfil, Glam.
- 51. Robert Leslie, Wood Nook, 22, Park Drive, Whitehaven, Cumberland.

Resignations.

- 27. Surg.-Captain F. F. Mahon, R.N., 31 Westbourne Grove, Scarborough,
Yorks
- 52. J. K. Sidebottom, O.B.E., 26, Lee Lane, Horsforth, Yorks.
- 57. F. J. Coomer, 7, Larnach Road, London. W. 6.

New Members.

- 76. H. U. Rush, 34, Holland Villas Road, Kensington, London. W. 14.
- 77. Charles W. Minett, "Fairmead", Bridgefield Road, Tankerton, Kent.
- 78. A. J. Revell, 113, Tankerton Road, Whitstable, Kent.

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 138.)

In 1858 the P. & O. S. N. Coy. established an Agency at the port of Marseilles which has been held continuously to this day by Messrs Robert Gower & Co, the name of the firm was changed to Estrine & Co on Robert Gower's death.

In 1859 mails for Egypt and the East sailed from England as follows :-

Overland. Via Marseilles in the evening on the 3rd., 10th., 18th., and 26th. of the month.

Long sea. via Southampton in the morning on the 4th., 12th., 20th., and 27th. of the month.

(3) The Trieste Route. England to Egypt.

In 1843 Mr. Waghorn was also developing another route through Belgium and Germany to Trieste. The route ran from Ostend to Liège by rail - Liège to Aix la Chapelle by coach - Aix to Cologne by rail. Cologne to Mayence by coach and Rhine boat - Mayence to Basle by steamer. From Basle by coach via Zurich to Wohlenstadt, and thence over the Alps to Brescia and Venice, thence by steamer to Trieste.

Although primarily a passenger service, it is possible that letters went also by this service to Egypt connecting with the bi-monthly service from Trieste to Alexandria which took 10 days in 1837, the mails being transhipped at Syra and touching at Crete.

In 1845 as an advertisement Waghorn carried the mail of the "Times" newspaper by this route, and proved it to be shorter than that by Marseilles by 14 hours. No covers of letters by this route have been seen. The Austrian Lloyd Service between Trieste and Alexandria became a direct one on May 10th 1848 taking 5 days and touching at Corfu. This was a monthly service which became bi-monthly in 1851, and a weekly service in 1873.

(4) The passage through Egypt.

To illustrate the discomforts suffered in traversing Egypt prior to 1830 one reads that travellers from India journeyed in native craft landed in Egypt either at Kossier on the Egyptian shore about 250 miles down the Red Sea, south of Suez or continued the sea passage to Suez. From Kossier they crossed the desert to the Nile about Luxor, and thence sailed down to Cairo. This route was often quicker than the Suez route if winds were adverse.

In 1836 - 37 Waghorn's Agency tried to develop the overland route through Egypt, and the choice of these two routes was offered.

From Cairo down the Nile travellers proceeded by native sailing craft but later a tiny vermin infested steamer of 6 h.p. carrying about 10 people was used. The journey to Atfe on the left bank of the Nile took a day and a night and then passengers transferred to the Mahmoudieh Canal for Alexandria. The canal was traversed in a native track boat towed by horses. A hornblower posted in the bows gave warning to other craft to clear the way. On meeting one of these the horses had to be halted and the rope lifted over its mast. The 48 miles of canal took anything from 12 hours or more to traverse. It was only the passengers, however, who travelled by this route. the mails went the whole way from Alexandria to Suez via Cairo by donkey and canal, and with relays of these the journey took, on the average, 64 hours.

The P. & O. Coy. were very dissatisfied with the conditions of transit of passengers across Egypt and took them over wholly in June 1842 with quicker and more comfortable vessels.

On 30 March 1852 an agreement was signed in Cairo between the Hon. East India Company and the Egyptian Government for the transmission of mails through Egypt.

In 1860 control of the mail packet service was transferred from the Admiralty to the Post Office, and in 1863 the mailboat connections between Egypt and England were these :-

(1) The Long Sea Route.

- (a) P. & O. S. N. Coy. - from Alexandria to Southampton touching at Malta and Gibraltar leaving Alexandria on the 11th and 27th of the month.
- (b) The Pappyanni Screw Steamships of Liverpool which plied between Alexandria and Liverpool touching at Malta.

(2) The Overland Route.

- (c) P. & O. S. N. Coy. from Alexandria to Marseilles touching at Malta, which left Alexandria on the 5th, 12th, 19th, and 28th of the month.

In 1863 Ancona and Naples were connected by the Italian railroad which by 1866 had been extended to Brindisi. In the autumn of 1870 in consequence of the interruption of communications by the Franco Prussian war, it became necessary to divert the British mail from Marseilles to Brindisi via Belgium and Germany.

The first P. & O. steamer from Brindisi to Alexandria sailed on 20 December 1870, the mail having left London on 16 December.

This route was followed until 5th January 1872 when the opening of the Mont Cenis tunnel afforded a shorter and quicker journey to the south of Italy.

In 1870 mails were dispatched to and received from England and America by the P. & O. steamers. From England they went overland to Brindisi or to Marseilles. The Brindisi mail arrived at Alexandria on Wednesdays taking 7 days, and the mail from Marseilles took 8 days arriving on Thursdays.

Mails left Alexandria daily for Cairo, Suez, Ismailia and Port Said. Letters for Upper Egypt went by special messengers to Luxor, etc. under arrangements made by the British Consul in Cairo: 7 days from Cairo to Luxor, and 11 days Cairo to Assuan.

In 1879 the low tariff mails to the East were carried weekly by P. & O. steamers to Port Said and through the canal to Suez. The high tariff mails were transported by express trains from Calais through France and Italy via the Mont Ceris tunnel to Brindisi, thence by steamer to Alexandria and by railway to Suez. Rail transport was then much quicker than by canal.

In 1882 during the Arabi Pasha rebellion in Egypt, all Army mail was handled by the Army Post Office, run by a special postal unit which accompanied the Force. When the campaign ended, from October 6th 1882 the Army mail was handled by the Egyptian Post Office. Owing to disturbances due to the rebellion, the railway service for the Anglo-Indian mail was suspended from July 9th to November 30th and the mails from Brindisi were received at Port Said instead of at Alexandria. During this period a special service of the Khedivial mail line carried mails from Alexandria to Port Said connecting with the steamers from Brindisi. During an interruption of the land service between Suez and Ismailia the Government conducted a special daily service by boat up the canal using steamers of the Suez Canal Company.

In 1888 the transportation of the Indian mails by railway was abandoned and they were sent by the canal owing to the greater speed now achieved by this route.

The weekly P. & O. Mail services from Alexandria to Brindisi and Marseilles have continued since 1880, and the fortnightly sailings to Southampton by the long sea route. They have only been interrupted during wars on the continent of Europe.

III. COOPERATION WITH OTHER POSTAL ORGANIZATIONS BEFORE THE FORMATION OF THE U. P. U.

- (a) The Egyptian Transit Company, and subsequently the Egyptian Transit Administration.

The services to be performed were the conveyance of the Indian mails from Alexandria to Suez, and vice versa. These mails were carried in sealed cases, and therefore no covers with cachets of these organisations are known.

- (b) Postal Services of France, Italy and Austria.

(1) France

There is evidence in the Rawson collection that British mail was carried by France from Egypt to Malta on 27 May 1838, and to England on 9 August 1849.

(2) Italy.

Cooperation with Italy consisted of carrying mail in British vessels from the time the service was established between Alexandria and Marseilles. Letters were posted at either the British or French P.O.s. Those transhipped at Malta were purified there. At Marseilles the circular PAQ. ANG. postmark was struck in red. From there the mail travelled overland by the Riviera route to its Italian destination.

From 1863 when the Italian P.O. was established at Alexandria, letters franked with stamps of Sardinia for transmission to Marseilles received the Italian marking "PIROSCAFI POSTALI INGLESII" enclosed in a rectangular frame, struck in blue or black. These letters were sent forward via Susa and Turin. We have knowledge of three covers of this nature. It is possible that mail transhipped at Malta was sometimes sent direct to Sicily or Italy, though we have no record of covers travelling by this route.

As a result of disturbances caused by the Franco Prussian war, the Brindisi route was taken into use and in the autumn of 1870 British mail was carried between Brindisi and Alexandria in ships of the Adriatico Orientale Company. Those letters bear no Italian postal markings.

(3) Austria.

There is evidence of the carriage of mail through Egypt for Austria. British stamps were affixed at Alexandria on mail passing through Egypt from Austria for purposes of accountancy, - (see Chapter VI, Sec. III.2.)

The rate was always 1/- and the stamps were obliterated BOI, but carry no Alexandria date stamp.

There is evidence of direct service in 1869 in the Byam collection of mail carried from Egypt to England franked entirely by stamps of Austrian Italy.

(c) The Posta Europea.

Although British mail must have undoubtedly been collected and delivered within Lower Egypt by the Posta Europea, as yet no specimens have been seen by members of the Circle.

(d) Modern Egyptian Post.

(1) Government Frank with Great Britain adhesives.

No examples of this cooperation have been seen.

(2) Letters for Britain or her possessions emanating from towns in Egypt, where no British Post Office existed, were carried by the Egyptian Postal Service, and franked by Egyptian adhesive stamps. The letter was received by the Egyptian P.O. at Alexandria or Suez, the stamps postmarked, and the letter sent to the British P.O. where presumably British adhesives were affixed and obliterated, the cost being collected from the addressee on arrival in England.

(3) An Anglo-Egyptian Convention was signed on 18th May 1873 and came into effect on 1st July of that year. By this convention mail was to be conveyed through Egypt in both directions in sealed containers for

£8000 per annum payable in equal quarterly amounts, with the proviso that the sum was to be reduced to £6000 p.a. when mail was carried through the Suez Canal instead of overland.

Under this convention, mail between Great Britain and Ireland, and from the East carried to Egypt by the British service was to be franked completely by British stamps alone, and letters starting from Egypt, from places other than Alexandria and Suez would be franked completely by Egyptian stamps, to the East Indies, Ceylon, Straits Settlements, China, Japan, Australia or New Zealand as well as to the United Kingdom, Malta, Gibraltar and the U.S.A. It was thus that combined franking no longer became necessary. Prepayment was obligatory except on letters to Upper Egypt beyond Assiut. They had to be prepaid to Assiut.

All registered letters had to be prepaid. A date stamp showing place of origin had to be applied to all correspondence, ordinary and registered, and the letters PD struck on all mail fully prepaid.

Registered letters to be struck with either the word "REGISTERED" or "RACCOMANDATA".

Letters insufficiently prepaid to be stamped "INSUFFICIENTLY PREPAID" or "INSUFFICIENTEMENTE FRANCIATA".

For the purposes of the Convention the exchange rate was fixed at $97\frac{1}{3}$ Egyptian piastres to the £1 sterling.

The British mail between Alexandria and Constantinople was to be conveyed in closed containers by means of the steam vessels belonging to or subsidised by the Egyptian Government.

IV. BRITISH POST FROM EGYPT.

1. Franking of Mail.

(a) Handstamps.

The handstamps used before the introduction of adhesive stamps were, as shown under Type I.1 and II.1. Alexandria, Suez and Cairo respectively.




(b) Adhesives.

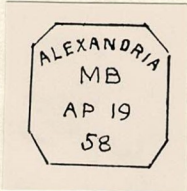

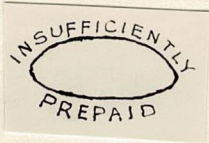
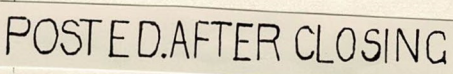
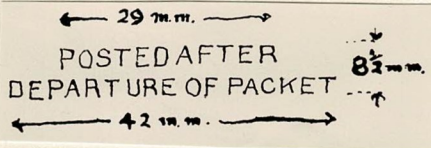
On 2 August 1859 the G.P.O. supplied their Post Offices at Alexandria, Suez and Cairo with British adhesive postage stamps, Simultaneously obliterations were issued to Alexandria (BO1) - Suez (BO2), but no obliteration was issued to Cairo.

Those adhesive stamps believed to have been sent to Egypt are enumerated in lists under Alexandria and Suez showing the obliterations known on many of them.

V. POSTAL MARKINGS.

Classification. (a) ALEXANDRIA.

Type.	Illustrations.	Period of use from examples seen.	Ink.	Function & Remarks.
I.	CROWNED CIRCLE FRANK STAMPS.			
I.1.		22 $\frac{10}{45}$ 23 $\frac{12}{57}$	Red. Black.	As Frank stamps to defray postage.
II.	DATED MARKINGS.			
II.1.		24 $\frac{12}{40}$ 4 $\frac{11}{51}$	Black.	Information and arrival stamp.
		22 $\frac{3}{45}$ 21 $\frac{2}{47}$	Red.	
		21 $\frac{10}{51}$ 9 $\frac{4}{56}$	Blue.	
II.2.		12 $\frac{11}{59}$ 5 $\frac{3}{68}$	Black.	
		12 $\frac{1}{61}$	Red.	
II.3.	-----	12 $\frac{10}{67}$	Black.	
II.4.	-----			

Type.	Illustrations.	Period of use.	Ink.	Function & Remarks.
II.5.		--	Black.	Information and arrival stamp to date letters received from Mobile boxes carried on packet steamers
III.1.		1871.	Black.	Postage Due. Applied at office of dispatch.
III.2.		1871.	Black.	
III.3.		1873.	Black.	Applied at office of dispatch.
III.4.		1870.	Black.	For information.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION. ALEXANDRIA.

Type I. Crowned Circle Frank Stamp. *

I.1. Two concentric circles both of which are intersected at the top by a crown. The circles are slightly flattened at the top, the horizontal diameters being 29 mm. and 26.5 mm. and the vertical diameters 27 mm. and 25 mm. The crown is 13 mm. high and 8.5 wide. Within the circles is "PAID AT ALEXANDRIA" in 3 lines, the letters are from 3 to 3.5mm. high. The stamp was struck both in black and red inks.

The stamp was registered at the G.P.O. on November 13th 1841 but was not put into use at Alexandria until May 1843.

	<u>Earliest date.</u>	<u>Latest date.</u>
In black.	?	?
In red	22 Oct. 45 (Besly)	23 Dec. 57.

- (a) The cover from the Besly collection is from Alexandria to London, has the Malta purification mark and cuts, is marked "via Marseilles", and arrived 3 Nov. 1845. Rate charged 1/8. The date stamp (Type II.1.) is in blue.
- (b) The second cover is similar to the above but, not receiving purification at Malta, reached London via Marseilles in 8 days on 31 Dec. 1857. 9d rate being charged.

* See article on these Frank Stamps in "Q.C." Vol. III. No. 1. page 3.

Type II. Dated Circular Markings.

II.1. ALEXANDRIA in serif caps. occupying the upper half of a double circle, outer diameter 30 mm., inner diameter 23 mm. Letters 3.5 to 4 mm. high. Date in two lines, figures 3 mm. high. Issued at Alexandria on the opening of the packet agency 19 Aug. 1839. It was superseded by Type II.2. The stamp was struck in black, red and blue inks.

	<u>Earliest date</u>	<u>Latest date.</u>
In black.	24.12.40.	4.11.51.
In red.	22.3.45. (J.Boulad)	21.2.47.
In blue.	21.10.51. (Mackenzie-Low)	9.4.56.

- II.2. ALEXANDRIA in Roman caps. 2.5 mm. high. within the upper part of a circle of diameter 19.5 mm.. In the centre is the date in two lines. First used on 2 Aug. 1859 simultaneously with the issue of adhesive stamps.

There are two types - (a) has the code letter "A" between the word Alexandria and the date. (b) the code letter "B".

	<u>Earliest date.</u>	<u>Latest date.</u>
In black, "A"	12 Nov. 1859. (J.Boulad)	5 Mar. 1868.
In red.	12 Jan. 1861.	

Note. There is a Scottish town, Alexandria, in Dumbartonshire which was allotted a circular date stamp similar to Type II.2, but the diameter of this marking is only 18 mm, and it therefore can be distinguished from that of its Egyptian sister.

- II.3. ALEXANDRIA in Roman caps. 3 mm. high within the upper part of a circle of diameter 20 mm.. In the centre is the date in two lines. This marking has three types with code letters "A" and "B" and without a code letter. This marking is known in black only.

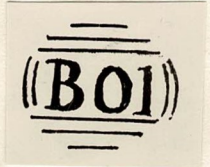


	<u>Earliest date.</u>	<u>Latest date.</u>
In black "A"	12 Oct. 1867 (J.Boulad)	..


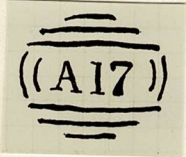
- II.4. From two covers and a piece in the Byam collection there appears to have been another date stamp which was issued for use with Obliterator type III.2. (5 bars). This differs from Types II.2 and III.3 as the diameter is 20 mm.. height of letters 2.5 mm. to 2.75 mm. and code letters "A", "B", "E" and without code letter.

Note. The main difference in Types II.2 and II.3 is the more firm and solid appearance of the lettering in the latter; of which the diameter of the circle and lettering is slightly larger with a thicker circumferential line. In Type II.3 the "E" has longer horizontal strokes, the crossbar of the middle "A" is higher, and the "D" and "R" are more widely spaced.

Type II.4 in these respects resembles Type II.2.

IV. OBLITERATORS.

Type.	Illustrations.	Period of use from examples recorded.	Ink.	Remarks.
IV.1.	Horizontal oval. BOI with 3 thin bars. 	12 $\frac{11}{60}$ 23 $\frac{2}{72}$	Black. Blue.	Function. Cancellation of Adhesives. Obliterator 16X22 mm.--BOI 6.5 X 15 mm. In use from 2.8.59 to 1873. Used with Types II.2 and II.3 but never in Duplex. Adhesives of other countries are sometimes found with this obliterator, which was presumably applied at the British P.O. at Alexandria on stamps which reached it uncanceled from the Egyptian P.O.
IV.2.	Vertical oval BOI with five bars. 	3 $\frac{1}{67}$ 9 $\frac{4}{69}$	Black.	Obliterator 28 X 26 mm. BOI 6 X 18.5 mm. in use from early 1871. Used with Type II.4. On covers seen, this obliterator and date stamp are in duplex, but they were evidently detachable and clamped together as their distance apart varies from 3 to 4 mm. and on one cover they are tête-bêche.
IV.3.	Vertical oval. BOI with 4 bars. 	6 $\frac{1}{71}$ 14 $\frac{10}{77}$	Black.	Obliterator 28 X 19 mm. BOI 7 X 14 mm. In use from early 1871. Used with Types II.2 and II.3. but never in duplex.

Type.	Illustrations.	Period of use from examples recorded.		Ink.	Remarks.
IV.4.	Vertical oval. BOI with 3 bars. 	4 $\frac{10}{74}$	18 $\frac{2}{78}$	Black.	Function. Cancellation of Adhesives. Obliterator 26 X 5 mm. BOI 8 X 14 mm.. Used with Types II.2 and II.3. but never in duplex.
IV.5.	Horizontal Oval. A 17 with 3 bars. 				Presumably used with Type II.5 to obliterate adhesives on letters received from mobile boxes from packet steamers.

Mobile letter boxes.

In the Proof Book at the G.P.O. London evidence has been received that in 1857, locked mobile letter boxes were supplied to British Packet Steamers plying between England and Alexandria. Letters posted in these boxes by passengers were taken ashore at Alexandria, the boxes opened, and all letters stamped with a "tombstone" shaped date stamp (Type II.5.) and the stamps thereon cancelled by an obliterator A 17 (Type I). Although in the Proof Book it is evident that both date stamp and obliterator were sent to Alexandria on the same day - October 15th 1857 - no cover has been recorded with either mark.