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S T U D Y I.

THE HISTORY OF THE EGYPTIAN POST OFFICES IN TURKEY, THE RED SEA AREA  
AND THE SUDAN, ( before 1896 ), THEIR DURATION, THE STAMPS USED IN  
THEM AND THE POSTAL RATES AND ROUTES.

by Charles Fox.

At the time when this Study was undertaken only two official sources of information on the subject were known to the Study Circle and these sources were both conflicting and incomplete in the light of existing postmark evidence. Therefore, in the Interim Report (1) tentative dates of opening and closing of the offices were proposed, based on a study of these sources, postmark dates recorded by numerous collectors and information found in various works of reference.

During the years since the publication of the Interim Report some extremely valuable official records have been discovered, and much new information has been recorded in the pages of The Quarterly Circular and L'Orient Philatelique. The task of the writer in preparing this present Report has therefore been mainly editorial, with the purpose of summarizing, in a convenient form for reference, the new data which have been discovered. Our knowledge of the subject is still incomplete, however, and it is hoped that the comments given here on certain still unanswered questions will stimulate the recording of further data and additional research work. Those interested are urged to consult the many excellent articles in L'Orient Philatelique on various phases of the subject, since the information given in this Report is considerably condensed in order to save space.

The plan of this Report is, with one exception, the same as that of the Interim Report, i.e., (A), the post offices in the Levant, but here also including Jeddah; (B), the post offices in the Red Sea area; (C), the post offices in the Sudan. Place names given in the text are in the commonly accepted versions, the actual spellings used on the postmarks are given in Table II. Numbers shown thus : (1), identify sources consulted, which are listed at the end of the Report.



A. POST OFFICES IN THE LEVANT.

Opening and closing dates.

The first regular Egyptian post offices established in Turkish territory were opened in 1865, at Jeddah on June 8; at Constantinople on June 13, and at Smyrna on November 14. This information is given in a letter dated 1866 written by G. Muzzi, Postmaster-General, to the Ministry of Finance, in reply to an enquiry concerning the status of these offices. (2)

Opening and closing dates for all post offices are found in two documents in the Egyptian Postal Museum: (a), files of the official Postal Circulars, public announcements of changes in, or additions to, the postal service; and (b), the Inventory of Postal Documents, a file of monthly reports from all offices giving the current financial and personnel status of each office (3). Table I, compiled from the data in these two sources, is arranged in chronological order of opening dates according to the Postal Circulars.

It is apparent that these two sources agree quite closely, except for the opening dates for Chios, Dardanelles, Galipoli and Mitylene, and for the closing date for Tenedos. In the case of Tenedos the few postmarks so far recorded all bear dates of 1871 and 1872 and while there is reason to believe that some of these are forgeries, the date of 1872 seems to be acceptable, at least for the present. In the case of the other four towns, the writer believes that post offices of some sort did exist there prior to the Postal Circular opening dates, but the writer's hypothesis concerning these post offices is, for want of evidence, too conjectural to be discussed here.

The Inventory opening date of May 1865 for Constantinople is explained by reference (2) which states that a Postmaster and an assistant arrived in Constantinople on May 9, but that postal service did not begin until June 13. Thus a report on finances and personnel, submitted for the Inventory, would normally have been required for the month of May. The early Inventory dates for Salonica and Tenedos may be due to the same reason, while the August 1870 reports for other offices may have included the last two weeks of July.

Confirmation of the opening dates given in the Postal Circulars for Jeddah, Constantinople and Smyrna is found in reference (2) and confirmation of the June 1881 closing dates is found in the Postal Report for 1881 which states that "the eight post offices in Turkey were closed on July 1". Partial confirmation of opening dates for other offices is found in reference (4) but the list given there includes only ten offices and several of the dates do not agree with those in Table I. Although "Les Postes en Egypte" was an official publication it was not, in the opinion of the writer, intended to be an accurate reference work and since it has been found to contain several errors it is referred to in this Report only with caution.

The Postal Circular (5) announcing the opening of the 1870 group of post offices includes an office at Syra which, for the record, is included in Table I but which is omitted from further consideration since, in the opinion of the writer, this office, if it ever existed, must have been of extremely short duration. No Egyptian postmarks from such an office have ever been recorded and in view of the fact that Syra at the time was an important shipping centre this lack of postmarks strongly indicates that no Egyptian post office ever operated there.

TABLE I.

Post Office.	Postal Circulars.		Postal Inventory.	
	Open.	Close.	Open.	Close.
Jedda.	June 8, 1865.	June 30, 1881.	July 1865.	June 30, 1881.
Constantinople.	June 13, 1865.	-	May 1865.	-
Smyrna.	Nov. 14, 1865.	-	Nov. 1865.	-
Dardanelles.	June 10, 1868.	-	Sept. 1867.	-
Gallipoli.	-	-	Nov. 1867.	-
Alexandretta.	July 14, 1870.	Feb. 15, 1872.	Aug. 1870.	Feb. 1872.
Beirut.	-	-	July, 1870.	-
Cavalla.	-	-	Aug. 1870.	-
Chios.	-	June 30, 1881.	Nov. 1869.	June 30, 1881.
Jaffa.	-	Feb. 15, 1872.	July. 1870.	Feb. 1872.
Lagos.	-	-	Aug. 1870.	-
Latakia.	-	-	-	*
Mersina.	-	-	-	-
Mitylene.	-	June 30, 1881.	Jan. 1870.	June 30, 1881.
Salonica.	-	Feb. 15, 1872.	June, 1870.	Feb. 1872.
Tenedos.	-	-	-	March, 1871.
Tripoli.	-	-	Aug. 1870.	Feb. 1872.
Volos.	-	-	-	-
Syra.	-	-	-	-
Rhodes.	Aug. 13, 1872.	June 30, 1881.	Aug. 1872.	June 30, 1881.
Leros.	*	-	-	-

The records indicate that the post office at Leros was open, for the most part, during the summer months only, while the Khedive was in residence there, and only during 1873 and 1874. The Inventory dates are July to December 1873 and May to September 1874, while the available Postal Circulars state that the office was closed in January 1874 but open from May to October 1874. Postal Circulars of May and September 1876 state that mails for Leros were required to bear postage according to the U.P.U. rate, i.e., 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  P.T., which suggests that there was at that time no Egyptian post office there, although the rate for other Levant post offices is believed to have been the same at that date.

Note. In the above Table - = ditto.

Since postmarks are known from all of the offices listed in Table I ( with the exception of Syra ) this list, excluding Syra, may be, with considerable certainty, accepted as definitive.

Since the Postal Circulars were public announcements of the dates on which postal service either began or ended, it seems logical to consider these dates the dates of opening or closing of the post offices. In checking these dates against postmark dates given in the Interim Report the writer found several discrepancies. In the list of 19 offices ( excluding Leros, since at that time no postmarks had yet been recorded ) early postmark dates for three offices antedate the Postal Circular opening dates and nine late postmark dates postdate the Postal Circular closing dates. In only three instances among the twelve discrepancies do the postmarks have apparently impossible year dates ( Beirut 1878,



Salonica 1877 and Tripoli 1879 ), year dates of all the others are possible and only the month is questionable. Since so little was known about the Levant post offices at the time the dates in the Interim Report were recorded, it was impossible to say definitely that any particular date was inconsistent and all dates were therefore recorded as submitted, without expertization or verification of the postmarks. In view of this fact and its inherent possibilities ( wrong dates on postmarks, misinterpretation of blurred postmarks, forgeries, etc. ) the writer is inclined to attach little importance to these discrepancies. Therefore it seems that the Postal Circular dates should be accepted as final, at least until such time as incontrovertible evidence may be found to prove otherwise. In Table II the questionable dates have been replaced by dates recorded since the publication of the Interim Report, all of which lie within the here accepted period of existence of the office in question.

#### Postmarks.

Postmarks used by the Levant post offices were, with a few exceptions, Types I and III. Constantinople, Smyrna and Jedda first used Type I-1, and there exists a fragment of a stampless letter postmarked Constantinople, Sept. 14, 1865, which suggests that this postmark was also used at Jedda and possibly at Smyrna, during 1865, before the introduction of adhesive stamps. (6) Few late dates of use of Type I-1 have been recorded; those seen are listed in Table II. The late use of this Type at Smyrna on a bisected 1 P.T. stamps of the 1874 issue, recorded in the Interim Report, is now believed by the writer to be of questionable authenticity. Byam has Type I-1 on 10 pa. of 1872 and 2 P.T. of 1874, bisected.

Postmark Type III was apparently put into general use in Egypt in December 1869 and in the Levant offices ( with the exception of Jedda ) probably in July, 1870, although the earliest recorded dates are late 1870. Type III-2 was used in the larger offices at Constantinople and Smyrna and Type III-1 in all other offices ( except Jedda and Dardanelles ), including those opened in July, and also at Rhodes, opened in 1872. These two Types were eventually superseded at Gallipoli, Mitylene, Rhodes and Chios by Type III-3, and at Constantinople and Smyrna by Type III-4. Two examples of Type III-5 used at Smyrna have been recorded but since their dates fall within the period of use of Type III-4, it is presumed that they are impressions from a second, damaged, die of Type III-4 which was normally not put into use.

At Jedda Type I-1 was used in its original form, i.e., with the month in letters, until the end of 1871. Letters were sometimes replaced by a numeral from early 1871 onwards. Various " freak " examples of this postmark are found, from the period 1871 to 1873, in which the dates are inverted, transposed, or both, and in which an apparently " home-made " numeral " 1 " was used. Type I-1 was superseded by Type IV-1 early in 1873 and this in turn was superseded, about 1880, by Type VIII-1. One example of a postmark similar to Type IV-1, inscribed " Gedda ", has been recorded on a 1 P.T. 1874 stamp. (21) and four examples of a star and crescent postmark similar to Type GS-1 but inscribed " Gedda " are known on stamps of the 1866 ( one ) and 1867 ( Three ) issues. (22) ( Danson ).

The post office at Dardanelles used Type II-4 during its entire existence. The occasional use of green ink at Dardanelles, as well as red and blue at Constantinople and blue at Jedda, appears to have no special significance.

Seal postmarks are known to have been used as obliterators at Chesmé ( Chios ), Chanak Kilia ( Dardanelles ), Gallipoli and Mitylene.

TABLE II (A)

Office.	Open.		POSTMARK DATES AND TYPES.				VIII-1.	SMAN.											
	Close.	I-1.	II-4.	III-1.	III-2.	III-3.			III-4.	III-5.	IV-1.								
Alessandretta.	14-7-70 15-2-72			11-5-71 15-2-72 20-12-70 2-2-72															
Bairout.	14-7-70 15-2-72			7-12-70 4-2-72															
Cavala.	15-2-72																		
Constantinopoli.	13-6-65 30-6-81	14-9-65 28-12-69		5-10-70 2-4-73															
Dardanelli.	30-6-81																		
Gallipoli.	30-6-65 30-6-81			10-3-70 -7-79															
Gedda. *	8-6-65 30-10-81	17-10-66 1-1-73																	
Jaffa.	14-7-70 15-2-72			24-11-71 17-2-72															
Lagos.	14-7-70 15-2-72			29-4-71 17-2-72															
Latakia.	14-7-70 15-2-72			16-12-70 2-11-71															
Leros.	See Table I.																		
Mersina.	14-7-70 15-2-72			20-12-73 27-6-71															
Metelino.	14-7-70 30-6-81			14-2-72 13-12-70 5-12-73															
Rodi.	13-8-72 30-6-81			3-7-73 3-7-73															
Salonicchi.	14-7-70 15-2-72			3-4-71 28-12-70															
Scio.	14-7-70 30-6-81			11-12-70 3-4-73															
Smirne. *	14-11-65 30-6-81	5-5-66 3-5-70		28-7-70 13-12-73															
Tonedos.	14-7-70 15-2-72			3-7-71															
Tripoli.	14-7-70 15-2-72			3-7-71 17-2-72 21-1-71 25-1-72															

\* Miscellaneous postmarks : Gedda, Type GS-1, 1866, 1867 issues.  
 Gedda, Type IV-1.1, 1874, 1875 -  
 Smirne, Type IV-1.1, 1874 issue.

X Byam has a 2 P.F., 1874 issue, bisect. cancelled with Type I-1.  
 also 10 para of 1872.





### ADHESIVES USED.

The postmark data collected for the Interim Report included stamp values used at the various post offices and these were included in the Report in the hope that they would help to determine postal rates. However, they proved to be of no value for this purpose and, the rates now being almost certainly known, stamp values have been omitted from this Report. As a matter of general interest it may be mentioned that current adhesives were used at all post offices, the 20 pa. and 1 P.T. values being most common, 2 P.T. values scarce, and the 5 and 10 pa. and 5 P.T. values very scarce; the  $2\frac{1}{2}$  P.T. and 10 P.T. have been recorded. The higher values seem to have been used almost exclusively at the three larger offices.

### USE OF BISECTED ADHESIVES.

The following are known :-

1872 issue. 1 P.T. at Scio 25 DIC 75, Type III-3 on piece, making  $1\frac{1}{2}$  P.T. rate.

2 P.T. at Galipoli.

1874 issue. 2 P.T. at Smirne and Gadda, the latter being cancelled with Type IV-1. - in blue only - in April 1875 ( as proved by the contents of the letters ) the year date being omitted.

### POSTAL RATES.

According to a public announcement (7) dated May 31, 1865, the sea-post rate from Alexandria to Constantinople, and from Suez to Jedda, was 1 P.T. for ordinary letters and 5 pa. for newspapers and printed matter. Mails posted at towns in Egypt ( other than Alexandria and Suez ) required additional postage according to the inland rate which was 1 P.T. for letters of 7.5 gm. weight and 5 pa. for newspapers of 40 gm. weight. ( Postal Report 1878 ). Registration was a fixed surtax of 2 P.T.. Prepayment of letters was required. Apparently, from the evidence of recorded entires, the 1 P.T. sea-post rate applied to mails sent from one Levant post office to another, as well as to mails carried between these offices and Egypt.

On July 1, 1875, in accordance with U.P.U. regulations, the postal rate for foreign countries was fixed at  $1\frac{1}{2}$  P.T. for letters of 15 gm. weight, and this rate was also made applicable to letters to, from and between the Egyptian post offices in the Levant. The 1 P.T. sea-post rate to Jedda remaining unchanged.

On April 1, 1878 inland rates were, in effect, revised by increasing the allowable weight for letters ( to 15 gm. ) and newspapers, and reducing the registration surtax to 1 P.T., and on the same date the  $1\frac{1}{2}$  P.T. Levant rate was reduced to 1 P.T.

### POSTAL TRANSPORT.

Between 1865 and 1870 mails were carried by ships of the Egyptian " Azizieh Misri Company " which made weekly trips between Alexandria, Smyrna, Dardanelles, Gallipoli and Constantinople, also between Suez and Jedda. Reference (12) states that Salonica and Massawah were added to the itineraries of the Company in 1868.

Early in 1870 the Government took over the Company and continued to operate



it as a State service under the name "Administration des Paquebots-Postes Khedivie". When the 1870 ( and later ) group of Levant post offices was opened the Khedivial steamers maintained postal service to these offices, for the most part on a weekly basis. The steamers also called at Syra, probably from 1870 if not earlier, although the earliest available official schedule including this port is dated 1872. ( In 1880-1881 the schedules also included the Piraeus and several of the small Greek islands in the Aegean Sea.) During the Russo-Turkish war the service was suspended from May 2, 1877 to June 25, 1878, and mails between Egypt and the Levant were carried by the Austrian Lloyd and the Messageries Maritimes steamship lines. (3,8)

Mention should be made here of the sea-postmark Type P-1, inscribed "Uffizio Natante" and either "Ales." or "Cosp". The two varieties of handstamp are believed to have been carried on board ships of the Khedivial line, but nothing is known about their exact usage. The few examples recorded bear dates of 1876 to 1878 and one example of each variety is recorded on cover, the address in each instance showing that the town name on the postmark indicated the port of departure.

#### B. POST OFFICES IN THE RED SEA AREA.

In 1866 the Khedive Ismail obtained possession, by Firman of the Sultan of Turkey, of a strip of territory extending from Suakin along the coast of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden to Cape Guardafui. This entire territory was made a Governorate and a resident Governor was sent to Massawah in November 1867. For some five years Egyptian control was effective only in the vicinity of Suakin and Massawah; petty Sultans controlled much of the remaining coast. The French had purchased the port of Obok from local chieftans as far back as 1862, and the right of the Sultan of Turkey to dispose of Zeila and the territory east of that town was disputed by Great Britain. However, between 1872 and 1877 the town of Berbera was built up and improvements were made in the port. In 1874 the town of Harar was formally annexed by the Khedive. The small towns of Tajura and Bulhar were also formally annexed about this time and, because of the dispute mentioned above it was necessary for Egypt to purchase the port town of Zeila from the Sultan of Turkey, in 1875. (9, 10, 13)

Upon the outbreak of the rebellion of the Mahdi, Egyptian control of the southern part of the area collapsed; the port of Tajura was sold to the French by local chieftans in 1883, Great Britain occupied the towns of Zeila, Bulhar and Berbera in 1884 and Harar in early 1885. The final loss to Egypt was Massawah, which was occupied by Italy in December 1885. ( A detailed account of the early history of Suakin and Massawah is given in reference 21.)

#### Post Offices.

The opening dates of the post offices at Suakin and Massawah are apparently quite definitely established by documentary evidence. These offices are included in the Postal Circulars and the Postal Inventory (3) but the dates of opening given in these sources have so far been published only in reference (25). "Les Postes en Egypte" (4) states that a post office was opened in Suakin in 1867 and one in Massawah in 1869. However, the "General Guide to Egypt" (11) published probably during early 1868, gives the names of postmasters at various post offices, among which are included Suakin and Massawah, and since the earliest recorded postmark date for Massawah is May 1868, the 1869 date of (4) is in error. Reference (25) gives November 1867 for the opening date for both offices, and since the Governor of the territory took up his residence in Massawah in November 1867 this date seems to be valid.

The existence of post offices at Berbera, Zeila and Harar is definitely established by official records but there is no agreement between sources, official



or otherwise, as to the opening dates of these offices. This problem is further complicated by the fact that so far only one dated postmark has been recorded from these offices. The following tabulation and explanation includes all the data so far discovered concerning opening dates or early dates of existence of these offices.

	(a) P.C. P.I.	(b) P.R. 1881	(c) P.E.	(d) I.P.	(e) (13)	(f) (14)	(g) (24)
Berbera.	1883.	1881.	1881.	1878.	1877.	1877 ?	----
Harar.	1883.	----	1881.	----	----	1877 ?	1876.
Zeila.	1876.	1881.	1881.	1872.	----	1877 ?	----

- (a) Postal Circulars, Postal Inventory (3, but published on reference (25))  
It is apparent that the opening dates given on reference (25) are the early dates of the Inventory which, as shown previously in Sec. A, do not always agree with the Postal Circular dates.
- (b) Postal Report 1881 (reprinted in ref. 3) Earliest mention of these offices in the available files of the Postal Reports.
- (c) Les Postes en Egypte (4). Date identified as official opening date.
- (d) Interpostals, Earliest recorded dates of issue: Berbera 1878, Zeila 1872; none recorded for Harar.
- (e) Reference (13). Document quoted: Memoire, General Staff, Egyptian Army, dated June 1877, in Archives, Abdin Palace, to the effect that a post office existed at Berbera in 1877.
- (f) Reference (14). The author of this work describes in detail conditions in Egypt in 1877 and acknowledges the help of the then Postmaster-General Caillard in preparing his notes on the postal system. He states that there was then a total of 67 Egyptian post offices, 34 in Lower and Middle Egypt, 6 in Upper Egypt, 15 in the Sudan, 5 on the coasts of the Red Sea and 7 post-offices outside Egyptian territory in the Levant. His grand total of 67 offices is quite close to the total of 70 offices given in the earliest available postal Report (1880) and his sub-totals for Upper Egypt and the Sudan agree very closely with the totals found in other sources. His total of 7 Levant offices is correct and therefore his total of 5 for the Red Sea area would certainly include Jadda, Suakin, Massawah and two of the three offices presently in question.
- (g) Reference (24). While the experience of the co-author of this article in the Ethiopian postal service dates only from 1901, his statement that the Egyptian post office in Harar was opened in 1876 should carry some authority.

In the face of such conflicting data it is difficult even to hazard a guess as to when these offices were actually opened. However, it is the opinion of the writer that all three offices were opened between 1876 and 1878. This opinion is based partly on the above data and partly on the fact that General Gordon was appointed Governor of the combined Sudan and Red Sea area in February 1877. His active interest in communications in the Sudan is shown in reference (20) and it seems quite reasonable to believe that such interest would extend to all the



territory under his jurisdiction, and that he would establish postal services, at the earliest opportunity, wherever he deemed it necessary. In view of the continued deterioration of conditions in the area after, say 1880, it seems most unlikely that any expansion of the postal system would have been made after that date, when Egyptian control was already waning.

According to the Postal Report 1884 the post offices Berbera, Zeila and Harar were closed on November 1, 1884.

Massawah was occupied by Italy on February 5, 1885, and a condominium was established with the Egyptian authorities, which lasted until December 2, 1885, when the Egyptian garrison returned to Egypt. The Egyptian Post Office there continued to operate for several weeks after that date, the latest recorded postmark date being Dec. 19.

The post office at Suakin was absorbed into the postal system of Egypt proper in 1885 and continued to operate during the period included in this Report.

#### Dated Postal Markings.

The first of these markings used in the Red Sea area were Type II-1 at Messawah and Type II-2 at Suakin. Few examples of these have been recorded but they were apparently used until nearly the end of 1872 when they were superseded by Type IV-1. This Type was in turn superseded, about 1880, by Type VIII-1.

The only dated postmark known from any of the other offices in the area is a Type V-2 from Zeila, on a stampless entire, also bearing the Interpostal (1872 issue) of Zeila.

Two apparently irregular varieties of postmarks were used at Suakin, Type IV-1.1, and a Type II-2 in which the day and month are set vertically, with a solid horizontal bar above, presumably replacing the year date.

"Negative" handstamps, Type GS-3 for Massawah and the almost identical variety inscribed "Suakin" are known on stamps of the 1867 and 1872 issues. The exact usage of these handstamps is unknown but they are believed to have been intended for administrative use only, and to have been used, irregularly, to obliterate postage stamps. The use of Type GS-3 on Massawah Interpostals suggests official usage but this is by no means conclusive. The use of the word "Regie" on these markings, and on Types II-1 and II-2 until at least 1872 indicates that the furor caused in Egypt by the use of this word was not repeated in the Red Sea area. (16)

Seal franks are known used at Suakin as obliterations (two examples recorded on 1 P.T. stamps of the 1872 issue). Two examples are recorded on Gordon letters dispatched from Massawa. These two covers are otherwise unfranked.

A rather curious statement is found in reference (24) concerning a postal marking used at Harar. The authors say that the Egyptian Post Office there used a "mute" postmark consisting of a "striated" Maltese cross and that the postmark die was turned over, by the Catholic Mission there, to the Ethiopian Government in 1894 for provisional use on the first Ethiopian adhesive stamps. These stamps are to be found with such a postmark, the arms of the cross consisting of series of bars parallel to the outer edge of each arm, with a round dot in the corners of the marking. While the use of a cross by the Ethiopian Government seems logical,\*

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\* Footnote: In 1951 the Father in charge of the Catholic Mission at Harar stated that the early Egyptian Postal Service there had been administered by the staff of the Mission.



its use by the staff of the Mission for the Egyptian Government seems equally understandable though no example of such a marking on early Egyptian stamps has been recorded.

#### Postal rates.

No specific mention of the early postal rates to Suakin and Massawah has been discovered but the schedule of revised rates established on April 1, 1878, gives both the old and new rates for Lower Egypt, Upper Egypt and the Red Sea area, the two latter having the same rates. The old rate for these two areas was 2 P.T. for letters of 10 gm. weight and the new rate was 1 P.T. for letters of 15 gm. weight, with a corresponding change in the printed matter rate. Therefore it would appear that the 2 P.T. rate prior to 1878 was the same as the rate to Jedda at that time i.e., 1 P.T. for the interior of Egypt, and 1 P.T. for the sea-post rate from Suez.

The 1878 reduction of the registration surtax to 1 P.T. also applied to the offices in the Red Sea area.

#### Postal transport.

Reference (7) states that weekly steamer service was to be maintained from Suez to Jedda, and other references indicate that when regular service was established to Suakin and Massawah it was on a bi-weekly basis. However, a British Foreign Office source quoted in (13) states that in 1875 there was only monthly service to Massawah. The same source states that in 1875 there was a project for extending the service to Berbera and although this was probably done, no further record of service beyond Massawah has been discovered.

### C. POST OFFICES IN THE SUDAN.

Since this Report is concerned only with the history of the post offices established by the Egyptian Postal Administration which came into being in 1865, all reference to the postal service in the Sudan prior to that date has been omitted. Very little is known concerning this early postal history but those interested will find references (17) and (21) very informative, and some data of interest in reference (12).

#### Post Offices.

The first regular post offices in what is now the Sudan were opened at Wadi Halfa, Dongola, Berber and Khartoum on October 1, 1873. This information is given in a postal notice dated September 7, 1873, which announced the opening of various offices in Upper Egypt, including those mentioned above. These offices were authorised to receive and dispatch ordinary and registered letters, "samples", printed matter and small registered parcels. Fixed rates were established for mails sent as far as Khartoum but special rates applied to mails sent beyond Khartoum "as far as Fazogl".

According to Document No. 1 of reference (19) a post office was opened at Kassala on May 15, 1875. The year date of 1875 is confirmed by reference (4) and an Interpostal of the 1874-1876 issue is known.

Document No. 2 of the same reference lists a number of post offices "newly installed" in the Sudan as of August 14, 1878. Reference (17) describes the circumstances surrounding the opening of these offices but a more detailed and documented account is given in reference (20).

The list in Document No. 2 includes offices of two categories: "Ordinary"



and "simple distribution"; the latter being branch offices and presumably limited to the distribution of mails arriving from other post offices.

The "ordinary" post offices listed are eight in number, at Facher, Fashoda, Fazoglu, El Gadaref, Karkoj, Mesallamia, El Obeid and Sennar. These offices are mentioned in reference (4) as having been opened in 1877 but reference (20) proves that they could not have been opened until sometime after January, 1878. Interpostals of the type of the 1877 issue, but presumably printed, at the earliest, during 1878, are known for all of these offices, except Karkoj, if one makes the reasonable assumption that the one inscribed "El Adaref" was for the office at El Gadaref.

The 15 "offices of simple distribution" are listed in Table II, after the name of the regular post office from which each depended.

There were, therefore, according to the sources cited above, 13 regular and 15 branch post offices in the Sudan in August 1878. Lists in the files of the annual U.P.U. publication "Statistique Generale" show that Egypt had a total of 61 post offices in 1877, 91 in 1878 and 93 in 1879, the latter total bearing the notation that it included the offices in the Sudan, a fact which almost certainly also applied to the total of 91 for 1878. Totals of the number of post offices in Egypt in various years are given in the Postal Reports, in reference (14) and in a chart in reference (4) and while none of these totals agrees with the U.P.U. totals, it seems clear that the U.P.U. total for 1878 includes all of the post offices in the Sudan, whether the number of offices there was 28, or more or less than that number. The writer has been unable to determine what types of post offices were included in the U.P.U. lists but apparently the Sudan branch offices were at least of some minimum status which made them eligible for admission to the U.P.U.

In spite of the fact that the 15 branch offices are quite definitely described in the documents mentioned, the writer believes there is a possibility that their exact status is open to question. This belief is based on the fact that Interpostals of the 1877 type issue are known for only four of these offices: Ohaka, Dara, Kalkal and El Kalabat; the question being why none is known for any of the other eleven offices of the group. If all offices were of the same status all should presumably have had Interpostals issued for them, and while there does exist the possibility of an occasional single Interpostal not having survived, such as may have occurred in the cases of Karkoj and Harar, the likelihood of eleven Interpostals of one issue having been completely lost seems rather remote. While this question of missing Interpostals presents an interesting problem, it probably does not alter the assumption that all of these 15 offices were basically distribution offices and authorized to accept mail.

As previously mentioned in Section B, the author of reference (14) states that there were 15 post offices in the Sudan. The author does not state specifically what period he is describing but he apparently left Egypt in 1878 and therefore, although his personal observations might have been limited to 1877, his statistical data could well have been for, at least, early 1878. It seems clear that his total of 15 offices refers to the 13 "regular" offices given above, and it is possible that he also includes Suakin and Massawah which were transferred to the Sudan postal administration when General Gordon took over in 1877. However, if this were the case, his total of 5 offices for the Red Sea area should be reduced to three, unless there were two other offices there concerning which there is no known record. In view of the many discrepancies found in records and dates speculation on the subject seems futile.

Closing dates of the Sudan post offices given in Table II are, for the most part, the dates on which the towns were evacuated or captured by the forces of the



Mahdi. The following information is given in the Postal Reports for 1884 and 1885. The last regular service Khartoum took place on March 16, 1884 and with Berber on May 2, 1884. Postal employees following Lord Wolseley's expedition from Dongola established a post office at Korti, which was closed when the expedition returned to Dongola, and all postal employees left Dongola with the retiring army at the end of June 1885. Korti was occupied from December 13, 1884, to March, 1885, which fixes the maximum duration of that office.

After the abandonment of the Sudan the post offices at Wadi Halfa, Suakin and Massawah were transferred to the postal administration of Egypt proper.

According to the Postal Reports a travelling post office was opened in 1888 on the Shallal-Wadi Halfa steamer route, and in 1889 an office was opened at Dabroussa, a suburb of Wadi Halfa. Sometime before 1892 offices were opened at Wadi Halfa Camp and at Tokar ( these offices are listed in the Postal Guide for 1892.)

Philatelic writers and collectors have at times been confused by the similarity of town names in the Sudan and in Egypt proper. The most common example of this confusion, Abu Hamad, has been cleared up in the pages of L'Orient Philatelique, where it was shown that Abu Hamad in the Sudan has only one "M" while the Abu Hammad of Egypt proper has two. Another name which may be confusing is Tewfikieh, which is the name of two towns in Lower Egypt, a suburb of Wadi Halfa ( postal marking spelt Taoufikia ) and a place south of Fashoda where Sir Samuel Baker built a camp prior to 1873. The latter place undoubtedly never had a post office during this period, so it seems quite certain that postmarks bearing this name emanated from Wadi Halfa or Egypt.

#### Dated Postal Markings.

A common characteristic of all first recorded postmarks from the Sudan is the use of Arabic with Italian, before this became the general practice in Egypt, probably because many of the postal employees in the Sudan spoke only Arabic.

The earliest recorded postmarks are Wadi Halfa Type I-5 dated February 23, 1874; Khartoum Type IV-4 dated November 1, 1874, and the undated Type GS-7 from Dongola on a stamp of the 1872 issue. No postmarks of these Types from Merber have been found.

The use of Type I-5, inscribed "Poste Vice Reali Egiziane", suggests that the post office at Wadi Halfa might have been opened before 1873, at a time when this inscription was in general use, but the use of Types I-3 and I-4 in Lower Egypt until 1875 indicates that the introduction of Type I-5 even in 1873 was not necessarily irregular.

Type V-5 was put into use in Upper Egypt about 1874 and probably in the Sudan at the same time. The earliest recorded date for this Type is Berber, October 2, 1875. A date of September 1874 is recorded for Kassala, but this is apparently an error in the year date, a rather common occurrence at the time.

Type VIII is recorded only from Khartoum and Wadi Halfa and although dies of this Type may have been sent to other offices, the late use of Type V-5 at these offices suggests that Type VIII was never put into use.

Type X-1 is recorded used at Dongola on June 10, 1884, and at Korti on a stamp of the 1884 issue, date unknown to the writer.

Two specimens of a seal postmark bearing the name Gedaref and the date 77 have been recorded; one struck on the 1 P.T. of 1875.



Postal rates.

In 1873 postal rates were : from Lower, Middle and Upper Egypt to Asyut (and vice versa), and from Asyut to Khartoum ( and vice versa), 1 P.T. for letters of 10 gm. weight, and 1 P.T. for each additional 10 gms. Thus the total rate from Cairo to Khartoum was 2 P.T. Rates for mail addressed to offices beyond Khartoum were available upon application at the dispatching post office, (15)

While the schedule of revised rates established in 1878 does not mention the Sudan as such, the old rate of 2 P.T. listed therein for "Upper Egypt" corresponds to the total rate of 2 P.T. to Khartoum, cited above, and it is therefore assumed that the new rate to the Sudan was 1 P.T. The accompanying reduction of the registration surtax to 1 P.T. also applied to letters to "Upper Egypt" and, presumably, the Sudan.

Postal transport.

The actual carriage of mail within in the Sudan was in the hands of a private contractor, a local sheikh, who provided relays of men and camels along the postal routes so that the mail could be kept in continual motion. Strict delivery schedules were maintained, under penalty of fine for any inexcusable delay in delivery. (23)

Slatin Pasha, reference (23), states that, to the best of his knowledge, mail for the Sudan was sent to Khartoum for distribution, with the exception of that for Dongola, which was dispatched direct from Wadi Halfa, and that for Kassala, which was dispatched via Suakin.

According to official instructions issued on April 26, 1877, (quoted in reference 20), mail for the Sudan, upon arrival at the railhead at Asyut, was sorted, placed in envelopes according to office of destination, and forwarded to Khartoum where it was distributed to the local carriers for delivery. According to these instructions mail for Kassala was sent via Khartoum. The routing of mail for Wadi Halfa and Dongola is not specifically mentioned, but it seems possible that such mail would have been delivered en route from Asyut to Khartoum.

Transit time for mail between Cairo and Khartoum, which in 1867 was about 50 days, was gradually reduced as the railroad was extended into Upper Egypt and in 1874, when it had reached Asyut, the transit time was only 28 days. Dromedaries and runners were still used on various portions of the route but some of these were replaced, in 1880, by river steamers between Asyut and Aswan, and by the end of that year the Cairo-Khartoum route of over 1200 miles was traversed in 21 days, with bi-weekly service. Various minor improvements were made in the service from time to time and in 1892 the railroad was extended from Asyut to Girgeh, but no record has been discovered concerning the improvement in transit time as a result of these measures.

Forged postmarks.

Since many forgeries of the postmarks of the Egyptian post offices in Turkey and the Sudan exist, the writer believes that this Report should include some data on the subject. Unfortunately the scarcity of material and its widely scattered ownership make study very difficult and as yet no exhaustive research has been done on the subject. Therefore the remarks included here are solely the result of the writer's observations and are given only in the hope that they may be of some value until such time as a thorough study is made.

There appear to be two general types of forgeries of the Levant office postmarks: very crude types and very dangerous types. The first type is generally



detectable at a glance; it is an imitation of Type III-3, the inscriptions are badly formed and apparently cut in wood, the dates are either similar in character to the inscriptions or made from printers' type, and in some types the town names are not in Italian, viz. : Dardanelles, Rhodes, Salonica, Other similar varieties seem to be struck from rubber stamps or metal dies, but so crudely done that detection is not at all difficult.

The second, more dangerous, type is generally so well done that, in the opinion of the writer, expertisation can be done only by very careful comparison with a genuine postmark. An example of this type of forgery seen by the writer was a Salonichhi postmark which was, in all details, very like postmarks of Constantinople and Smyrna which were undoubtedly genuine. This postmarks would probably also have been considered genuine if there had not been available for comparison four other Salonichhi postmarks, two of which were on cover, with reasonable proof of their authenticity. It was discovered that these four examples, dated late 1870 and late 1871, had a broken "H" in the town name, while the suspect example, dated September 1871, did not have the break. Further examination of an enlarged photograph of the suspect example showed, minor, but definite, differences and irregularities in the letters of the inscription which might not have been questioned if other examples had not been available.

This method of expertisation is unfortunately of no value to those who have no guaranteed genuine examples for comparison, but the writer's study of over 50 Levant office postmarks, exclusive of Constantinople and Smyrna, shows a variety of condition, due to careless handling of the dies, over-inking, under-inking, etc., that any expertisation which relies on "appearance", "looks", or other intangible qualities, would seem to be most unsatisfactory.

A suggestion which may prove useful is the study of a photograph of the postmark in question, made with a colour filter, of the same colour as the stamp design, which partially or completely blots out the design of the stamp, making the postmark readily visible. Any evidence of crude workmanship which might thus be made visible would be reason to suspect the postmark, although it is necessary to distinguish between crude workmanship and irregularly shaped letters and numerals, there being, for example, a surprising similarity between the irregularly shaped year dates of some of the Levant office postmarks and the dates on certain postmarks used in even the large towns in Egypt at the time. Special attention should be given to the shape of the V, which in some of the forgeries is wider than on genuine postmarks, and also to the relative spacing of the lines of the date inscriptions, which in some of the forgeries are not parallel, as they are in genuine examples, where the date inscriptions were set into slots in the die.

A few genuine postmarks have characteristics which appear to be constant for certain periods of time; various examples of the following postmarks have either been seen by the writer or have been reproduced or described in *L'Orion Philatelique*.

Gedda, Type IV-1 (after March, 1873):- dent in circle opposite P of Poste, break in circle from end of E to middle of second D in Gedda. This break gradually increased in length and by the time the die was taken out of use, about 1880, it had extended beyond the end of the word Gedda. Examples of this postmark with an unbroken circle, dated between June 2, and November, 1873, have been recorded, and it has been suggested that these postmarks are impressions from a new die. This is, of course, the most logical explanation, (if the specimens are genuine) but there still remains the question as to why the old, damaged die was again put into use, and continued in use for so many years.

Salonichhi, Type III-3 (Dec. 1870 to Dec. 1871):- right hand bottom leg of H missing.



Rodi, Type III-3:- break in circle over letters I A, in 1873, increasing to include IZIA by 1879; wide break from end of Egiziane to ornament, and break under D, seen from 1873 to 1879. The circle is flattened under R of Rodi.

A very dangerous forgery of the Dardanelles postmark is completely described in reference (18). The one easily checked characteristic of this forgery is the space between the words Poste and Egiziane, which measures 1 m.m. in the forgery and 2 m.m. in the genuine postmark. Unfortunately all the other distinguishing characteristics are concerned with the diameters of the circles or the relative position of certain letters and these can be checked only in an almost complete example which, because of its size, is seldom found off cover.

Few forgeries of postmarks of the Red Sea offices have been recorded; one example known to the writer is a Messawah postmark dated December 25, 1885, which differs in detail from the latest postmark recorded, December 19, 1885, and is therefore presumed to be a forgery.

Many forgeries of Sudan postmarks exist, ranging from crude through good copies of Type VIII or the "Swiss type" used later on in Egypt, to genuine postmarks of the 1890's with altered dates. Some of these exist on stamps which could never have reached the Sudan, for example, the forged Khartoum postmark on stamps of the December 15, 1884, issue.

One of the most common Khartoum forgeries is of Type VIII-1, in which the tail of the R in Khartoum is too close to the vertical stroke and the first alif of the name in Arabic is too long and projects below the level of the next character.

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#### CHANGES OF ADDRESS.

42. I. Chaftar, Directeur Sucrerie, Abou Kourgas, Upper Egypt.
66. Gabriel Boulad, 21 Rue Talaat Harb, Alexandria, Egypt.
78. A. J. Revell, Preston Lodge, 135 Cromwell Road, Whitstable, Kent.
84. Albert L. Ciourel, 15 Sherif Pasha Street, Alexandria, Egypt.

#### NEW MEMBERS.

90. J. L. Heap, 37 Overton Road, Southgate, London, N. 14.
91. Major Clive Aspinall, The British Military Mission to Libya,  
c/o H.Q. Tripolitania District, Tripoli, British Forces P.O. No. 57.

#### RESIGNATIONS.

60. Fisel Klein, 9 Rue Adly Pacha, (Imm. Mazloun), Cairo, Egypt.
  65. M. A. Cabourne Smith, 20 Berkeley Road, Barnes, London, S.W. 13.
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