

EGYPT STUDY CIRCLE.

THE QUARTERLY CIRCULAR.

Vol. V. No. 3. (Whole Series No. 51.) May, 1958.

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THE QUARTERLY CIRCULAR.

Published by The Egypt Study Circle.

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NEW MEMBERS.

96. F. W. Pollack, 39, Rothschild Blvd., P.O.B. 14002, Tel Aviv, Israel.
97. H. E. Wissa, 116, St. George's Mews, London, S.W. 1.
98. Leslie Bowyer, 32, Sandacre Road, Northenden, Manchester, 23.
99. E. A. Piprell, 19, Dean Drive, Stanmore, Middlesex.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS.

16. Jean Boulad, Villa Orient, 10-12 Avenue d'ouchy, Lausanne, Switzerland.
33. A. L. Pemberton, Willis Farm House, Hammerpond Road, Lower Beeding,
Nr. Horsham, Sussex.
54. Brigadier C. D. Rawson, C.B.E., D.S.O., The Cottage, Orchard Close,
Caroll Avenue, Ferndown, Dorset.
72. H.H. Hammond, Brooklands, 51, Victoria Park, Colwyn Bay, N. Wales.
78. A. J. Revell, 135, Cromwell Road, Whitstable, Kent.
84. Albert L. Cicurel, 1, Rue Lord Byron, Paris, 8^{eme}. France.

RESIGNATION.

14. W. C. Hinde, 20 Southdown Crescent, Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire.

DEATH.

24. F. S. Sillitoe, M.B.E., 31, Priory Road, Kew, Surrey.
-

F. S. SILLITOE, M.B.E.

Sillitoe joined the Circle as No. 24 and no one of us has better lived up to the traditions of our brotherhood, both as philatelist and friend. His modesty prevented a better appreciation of his talents but few of us can have any doubts about his value as a friend.- I speak with feeling on this point as he gave me valuable advice when I was planning my first garden in Guernsey; he took endless trouble to select and send to me in Ethiopia roses and other shrubs he thought likely to succeed at an altitude of over 8000 feet at which I was to live and more than once he presented me with items from his own stamp collection which I knew full well were not duplicates but which he believed would help me in my studies, never asking anything in return. We of the Egypt Study Circle are proud to have had Sillitoe with us and will cherish his memory with affection and gratitude.

W. Byam.

F. S. Sillitoe was born at Redhill on October 27th, 1877 and, after an extensive horticultural training, joined the staff at Kew where he was engaged in the orchid and tropical plant houses. In March, 1903 he was appointed Superintendent of Gardens and Open Spaces in Khartoum, Sudan.- Gardening in a desolate waste, under a tropical sun where every drop of water had to be supplied by irrigation owing to the rainfall being only about 5 inches a year and with no one to turn to for advice, would have seemed an insurmountable task to many but all this did not daunt F.S.S.. By trial and error he gradually worked out what could be done and those who today wander over beautiful lawns, among beds of colourful flowering plants and amidst shady trees and palms, realise what a debt is owed to our old friend.

At the time of his retirement, in addition to the Palace grounds, he had charge of the gardens of 82 Official residences in Khartoum, the grounds around 19 Public buildings in the same city, 114 grass tennis courts, each of which had to be flooded every few days, and many other public spaces.

In recognition of his services he was awarded the 5th Order of the Nile by the Sultan of Egypt in 1917 while ten years later he received the M.B.E. from H. M. King George V.

On his return to England he was elected an Associate of Honour of the Royal Horticultural Society, being among the first thirty to be thus honoured. He acted as Horticultural Adviser to the Government of Malta and, in May 1930, was elected President of the Kew Guild.

Sillitoe joined the Circle in 1932, being one of the founder-members and has been in charge of Study XXIV, " The Consular and Diplomatic Franks used in Egypt ". We shall long remember his genial personality which so endeared him to us and all members of the Circle will feel his loss very keenly.

I am indebted to the Journal of the Kew Guild of 1931 for much of the foregoing information.

F. S. Mumford.

S U E Z.

An attempt to illustrate SUEZ as a factor in World Communications.

A talk by Dr. W. Byam, O.B.E. before the Society of Postal Historians on 1st April, 1957.

Suez has been an important spot throughout history. The earliest attempt to cut a canal is said to have been by Sesostris, a famous Pharaoh of the XIIth Dynasty. The object of this project was to bring the riches of the Persian Gulf area, and the eastern portion of Africa, to the markets of the

wealthy cities of Egypt along the valley of the Nile. The Canal ran to the Red Sea from the Pelusiac branch of the Nile, which has now ceased to exist. Commencing just north of the famous city of Bubastis it traversed the land of Goshen, entered the Bitter Lakes and terminated at Clysma near the present port of Suez. This Canal functioned intermittently for approximately 1000 years and was known as the Canal of the Pharaohs.

The next Canal was attempted by the Pharaoh Necho, about 612 B.C. He was the famous Pharaoh who defeated Josiah King of Judah at the battle of Megiddo. He employed approximately 120,000 men, who were probably slaves captured in many wars that Egypt conducted in those days, and it is extremely interesting to note that 120,000 is the number of people that President Nasser said lost their lives in the digging of the present Canal. That is a complete misstatement. The numbers who died during the construction of the present Canal were approximately 15,000 Europeans and 13,000 Egyptians; the death rate among Egyptians was no higher, and probably less, than the average death rate in Egypt at that time. Necho was warned by an oracle not to complete the canal because it was suggested a canal would make it easier for the Barbarians to enter Egypt and conquer the country. It was approximately 100 years later when the Persians actually invaded Egypt and Darius cut the canal. He left a monumental record of the event. It is probable that he opened the canal constructed by the Pharaohs before him. He subsequently blocked part of it and his successor Xerxes I re-opened it, but what actually was done with the canal I do not know.

The rulers who followed were the Greeks. Alexander the Great of Macedon passed through Gaza and captured Egypt but did not remain there after he had laid the foundations of the city to which his name was given. Alexandria rapidly became one of the great centres of the world, both in learning and commerce. Alexander left his General Ptolemy to govern the country and thus was founded a dynasty which was essentially Greek. Most of us probably associate the Ptolemaic dynasty with the name of Cleopatra. She came at the end of a line of evil men; they were some of the worst characters you can read about.

It was one of the Ptolemys, Philadelphus, who first conceived the idea of cutting a canal through the Isthmus itself. Before his reign there was little to be gained by connecting the Red Sea with the Mediterranean as there was no great trade in the Mediterranean. The canals of the early days were essentially waterways bringing the wealth of the East to the famous cities of Egypt, to Bubastis, Heliopolis, Memphis, Thebes and others. At the time Alexandria came into being the markets of the West were developing. In the time of Philadelphus the waters of the Red Sea were thought to be higher than those of the Mediterranean and for that reason it was feared that a direct connection would flood the whole of the Nile delta. This conception of the level of these two seas persisted until the beginning of the 19th century, and had a great effect on the planning and work of the engineers up to that time.

The Greeks were supplanted by the Romans, who re-opened the canal, which became known as the river of Trajan, but instead of commencing in the region of Bubastis, it started from the Nile at Babylon which lay just south of the present Cairo, and was the city to which the Holy Family came and received shelter in Egypt. It was there the Romans established themselves and continued to operate their canal until they were supplanted by the followers of Mohammed, who in their turn reconstructed the canal in the winter of 642 A.D. This canal was eventually closed in 776 A.D. because the holy cities of Mecca and Medina in Arabia revolted. In those days there was no such place as Cairo, as that city was not founded until 969 A.D., when a group of

Arabs came in from Tunisia and established the line of Fatimid caliphs. Cairo therefore is a comparatively modern city when compared with Alexandria and the ancient cities of Egypt.

Suez and the Isthmus of Suez have played a big part, in World Communications throughout the ages, but as Turkish control from Istanbul increased, it became impossible for merchants to use the route between Europe and Asia plotted by Marco Polo in his travels to the East, and attempts were therefore made to find another way to the wealth of the Indies. Christopher Columbus set forth on this quest for such a route but instead discovered America in 1492 A.D. About the same time Vasco da Gama set sail from Lisbon and discovered the route round the Cape of Good Hope in 1498 A.D., reaching India on 20th May.

In those days much trade was in the hands of the Venetians and the Genoese and it was a tremendous blow to all the traders of the Mediterranean that the way round the Cape to India had been discovered. The Portuguese were the first to use this route but Britain also gained greatly and so did the Dutch.

The next phase I would like to emphasise is demonstrated by the contents of the first wall frame which contains mail brought back from the East via the Persian Gulf, a service organised by the British Consul in Aleppo. On the back of one letter are the signatures of the various British Consuls who were responsible for passing on the letter, up the Persian Gulf to Aleppo and thence to Vienna and England; the date of that letter is 1785. By that time there was great rivalry between Britain and France. France was essentially a Mediterranean power. It was to her disadvantage that we were gaining trade by travelling round the Cape. This was a factor in determining her actions. Her representatives in Cairo towards the end of the 18th century wrote such reports on the subject that in April 1798 the Directory gave instructions to Napoleon Bonaparte to go to Egypt and cut a canal through the Isthmus of Suez, thereby converting the Red Sea into a Sea of France with a monopoly of its use for France, as the best means of defeating England " whose greatness depended on her possession of India " .

Napoleon landed to the west of Alexandria on 1st July 1798 and subsequently obtained control of Egypt by winning the battle of the Pyramids on the western bank of the Nile, Cairo being on the opposite bank.

Napoleon then made every endeavour to establish himself as a friend of the people of Egypt; Egypt in those days being merely a province of Turkey, paying tribute to the Sultan. In the first frame are some pieces of mail that passed between Napoleon's Generals. Kleber who took command when Napoleon left Egypt, is represented by two pieces, and there is a particularly interesting and somewhat discoloured looking object which is one of the very few letters that got through the British blockade and reached the Minister of War in Paris. The postal markings on the letters displayed comprise the complete series of French hand-stamps, with the exception of Beni Suef, Damietta and the lower case Alexandria. The French forces were eventually defeated and turned out of Egypt in 1801. The attempt to cut a canal was therefore never made by Napoleon, but the plans and drawings of the famous engineer, J. M. Lepère, who came to Egypt with him remained, and when de Lessops, who was not an engineer but a French diplomat, was waiting in quarantine to enter Egypt he received a parcel of books, amongst them being an account of Lepère's investigations which fired his imagination. De Lessops was unable in those days to further the project of a canal, but he made friends with the youngest son of Mohammed Ali. I show a reproduction of Mohammed Ali's portrait. He came over to Egypt with the original Turkish Albanian troops in the attempt to turn out Napoleon. In those

days it was unusual for the soldiery of Turkey regularly to receive pay, but Mohammed Ali succeeded in obtaining money and he paid them, with the result that they supported him with confidence. It was thus that he became the Turkish Vice-roy in Egypt. He was a somewhat brutal man, but very able - a man of great imagination. He had been influenced by a Frenchman when in Albania and his sympathies were very much with France. He subsequently sent his officers to be trained in France and French became the language of the country, its own language at that time being Arabic supplemented by Turkish, so you find much of what is written in connection with the posts a mixture of Arabic and Turkish, often influenced by French. He saw there was much to be gained by developing communications between East and West, and it is interesting to note that when his son, his chief general, Ibrahim, was advancing through Syria and looked like invading Constantinople, Britain played an active part in halting this advance, and later destroyed the Turkish fleet, which was largely Egyptian, at the Battle of Navarino. This victory led to the liberation of Greece, at that time a province of Turkey. Yet, in spite of these hostilities, Mohammed Ali maintained the right of merchants to carry on their business through his country, and I have here a copy of the medal which was presented to him by the Merchants of London dated 1840. It is a most remarkable thing, that on one occasion he went so far as to lend his own yacht to carry important correspondence coming from India, which had missed the ordinary communication, in order that it should go on to Malta.

You see in his portrait there is a large scroll on the floor which shows a plan of the railroad he hoped to make between Cairo and Suez. It was the railway that we, the British, specially helped to develop and which gave rise to so much dispute between us and the French. The French from the time of Napoleon Bonaparte had always desired a canal, their various engineers had made schemes and sundry drawings showing how it was a possibility, however, Britain obstructed them. We thought it would interfere with our route round the Cape and Lord Palmerston stated "It was one thing to be ruler of the Seas, but a canal is not a sea". This is true at the moment. He foresaw that the canal would be cut through territory belonging to a State outside our Empire, hence every attempt was made to influence the Viceroy of Egypt, and also the Sultan in Constantinople, to prevent the construction of a canal.

While all this was going on Lt. Waghorn R.N., saw the importance of rapid communication with the East. You see in the frames a reproduction of his portrait which hangs in our National Portrait Gallery, and also a sketch of what the people in England imagined was the way in which he transported his mail - a gentleman riding a camel and smoking a pipe. I have ridden thousands of miles on a camel and have never succeeded in smoking a pipe, nor have I seen anyone else do so except in this picture. Below you see some sketches of the various halting places Waghorn, with the backing of Mohammed Ali, established between Cairo and Suez.

At that time the desert was infested with brigands and it was impossible to pass through with safety except with the support and protection of the Viceroy. I exhibit a certain amount of mail carried by Waghorn. My first item is what our old friend J. K. Sidebottom regarded as his chief find, an entire marked "CARE OF MR. WAGHORN COSSIER" despatched from Calcutta on 23rd November 1836. Cosair is on the Red Sea a long way south of Suez. Waghorn's idea was to bring mail across from Cosair to the Nile, along a line of wells, then down the river as the most rapid route. This is the only known piece of mail carried via Cosair, though there is another letter which may have been brought that way, marked "CARE OF Mr. WAGHORN ALEXANDRIA", despatched from India 16th November 1836. Waghorn eventually established his service through Suez to Cairo and down the Nile to Alexandria. I display a sketch made by a member of my family going out to visit her brother in Hyderabad about the year

1850, and you see the sort of conveyance in which they then travelled; it was not at all a comfortable journey.

Mohammed Ali died in 1849. He was succeeded by his son Abbas who reigned for a very short time, being assassinated in 1853. He in turn was succeeded by Prince Said - it is sad to hear the B.B.C. alluding to "Port Said", the port being named after Said. de Lesseps on the invitation of the new ruler, his old friend, at once returned to Egypt and travelled with him to Cairo.

A Concession to cut the canal was granted to de Lesseps in 1854 and confirmed in 1856. Unfortunately Said died in 1859. He was succeeded by Ismail, who supported the work and confirmed the Concession. The canal was opened on the 17th November 1869, the Concession being for a period of 99 years from that date, after which, as an Egyptian Company, the canal was to pass into the possession of Egypt.

Britain and particularly the Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston, did her best to prevent the cutting of the canal and it was only the backing of the Emperor Napoleon that enabled de Lesseps to obtain the necessary funds. As a result the major proportion of the shares (52%) was held by France. Only 4% were taken by other countries, and 44% were held by the Khedive Ismail. Ismail was a man who can only be described as a megalomaniac. He was full of wonderful ideas and was determined to make Egypt one of the leading countries of the world; unfortunately he had neither ability nor money. He borrowed extensively and at exorbitant rates; in consequence he was compelled in 1875 to part with his shares in the Canal Company in order to carry on. Disraeli purchased them for Great Britain with 4 million pounds sterling advanced by the Rothschilds. General Stanton, the father of the Stanton who designed the Sudan camel stamp, signed the deed on behalf of Britain. From then Britain's attitude to the Suez Canal changed completely. Meanwhile Ismail got further into debt and had to submit to the formation of what was known as the "Caisse de la Dette". Britain refused to appoint a member to this body, the argument of the British Government being "If the people of Britain care to put their money into a venture of this kind, it is their lookout".

The British Representative, who was eventually appointed by the Khedive, was Major Baring, who subsequently became Lord Cromer. He with the representatives of France, Italy and Austria, acted on behalf of the creditors. The debts continued to increase and in consequence the German Chancellor Bismarck brought pressure to bear on the Sultan of Turkey to depose Ismail in 1879, and in August of that year his son Tewfik took his place. It was then that the "dual control" was established, the representative of France being responsible for all expenditures and Lord Cromer, representing Great Britain, for collecting the revenue. It is often suggested that Lord Cromer was an oppressor, collecting money for the bond holders. That was certainly not the case. He had great sympathy for the Egyptians and it was he who obtained the abolition of forced labour in Egypt, probably nobody had ever done so much for the Egyptians.

Many think that mails passed through the canal as soon as it was opened to traffic in 1869; this was not so as ships at that time were not allowed to pass through the canal at night. This restriction was not removed till 1888, when headlights were fitted to ships which then travelled by night with the mail.

While Tewfik was Khedive, great dissatisfaction arose in Egypt because the French were insistent on the collection of the necessary taxes to produce the money owed to the Bond holders, and it was felt by the Egyptians that the

whole country had got into the hands of foreigners. Colonel Arabi, known as Arabi Pasha, and a number of Egyptian officers attempted to seize control of the country, with the idea of evicting all foreigners. A massacre of Europeans and Christians resulted at Alexandria on 11th June, 1882. About 50 Europeans were killed and many wounded. A month later, on July 11th, the British Fleet bombarded Alexandria. It had been intended that this bombardment should be carried out in conjunction with France, but the French Fleet departed during the night before the bombardment began. Troops were landed on 17th July 1882, and advanced as rapidly as possible to take possession of the Suez Canal. They were under the command of Lord Wolseley who had made a great reputation during the Red River Expedition in Canada. The main fight was in August at Tel el Kebir where Arabi had made extensive preparations to resist the advance of Lord Wolseley's force. He was badly defeated and the British then rapidly advanced on Cairo. Unfortunately it became necessary for the troops to remain in Egypt to support the Government of the Khedive, but to the inhabitants of the country they appeared to do so merely to collect money for the foreign creditors. We remained in Egypt continuously from then until 13th June 1956.

You may think of the Canal as being the main route by which oil was brought to the West from the Persian Gulf area, but no oil ship was allowed through the canal until 1902.

In 1936 Great Britain agreed to withdraw her troops from the main centres of population. I would here point out that the "Army of Occupation in Egypt" furnished one battalion as a garrison in Khartoum and also a detachment in Cyprus. There are two specimens in the frames of letters sent from Egypt to the Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General in Cyprus, the first in 1891 and the second in 1892; the latter bears the earliest known Hotel postmark. About this time it was realised the tourist industry was going to be of great value to Egypt and post offices were established in the main hotels early in 1892. Dr. Gordon Ward has written an excellent article on these hotel P.Os, in the "Holy Land Philatelist".

If the donor will allow me, I will hand round a book of sketches for you to look at. It is a generous gift I have just received from our old friend Robbie Lowe. The artist was the newspaper correspondent William Simpson, who made the drawings shortly before the Canal was opened. I have opened the book to show a wonderful view from the top of the Great Pyramid; in it you see the long line of the twelve mile road built by Ismail, to enable the Empress Eugenie to visit the Pyramids of Ghizeh. Ismail also built the Opera House in Cairo and brought over the Opera Company from Paris to give a performance for the entertainment of the Empress during the celebrations connected with the opening of the Canal. It is not difficult to see why he ran Egypt into debt.

Among other things in the frames worth commenting on, is a letter from India to Cairo, franked by $\frac{1}{2}$ anna and 1 anna stamps to the value of 1 rupee, bearing date stamps of the British Offices both at Suez and Cairo - but no Egyptian postal markings. It must have been carried over the railroad which operated between these two places in Egypt between 1859 and 1868. This line was abandoned when a more direct route from Alexandria to Suez, via Zagazig and Ismailia, was established. It was not until 1904 that the railway was continued in the opposite direction and taken from Ismailia to Port Said. The British Post Office was opened in Cairo to facilitate the handling of mail for India and the East. I show a number of examples of Egyptian stamps carrying mail to India before the U.P.U. came into force on the 1st July 1875, by virtue of a Convention signed in 1873 which enabled the use of either British-Indian or Egyptian stamps according to which way the post was going.

Another interesting cover is one for which the Austrian postal authorities received full payment for the carriage of the letter to China, but as they

had no means of taking it beyond Alexandria, they handed it over to the British Post and 1/- for the carriage forward. The G.B. 1/- green was applied to the cover and cancelled B O 1. for accountancy purposes. There are sundry pieces showing the development of cable communications. First a cover which contained a cable message sent on by post from Alexandria to India. Then you have a message travelling by cable as far as Suez and on from there to India by sea post; the 1/- green is cancelled B O 2. The next cable cover was taken by registered post across the Red Sea from Suez to Jeddah. The envelope below is one supposedly from Jubal. A cable had been laid between Suez and Jubal Island in an attempt to make communication with India; it was thought however to be useless owing to damage by coral on the sea bed and the message was actually posted from Suez where the 1/- green is cancelled B O 2, the mark of the British Office in Suez. Ten years later this cable was raised and found to be in perfect condition.

There was a time before the present canal was cut when mails were coming in quantity from various parts of the East to Europe via Suez. There are letters in the frames from Australia, Japan, Hong Kong, Indo-China, the French ports and stations in India, the Malay States and Mauritius.

You see the British adhesives being used at the French settlement in Pondicherry. These covers all bear the French circular date stamps, struck in red on entry at Marseilles, which include the words "via Suez". Next come a portrait of de Lesseps and a letter bearing his autograph. The adhesives produced for use by the Suez Canal Company, printed in Paris by lithography come next. there are 4 values. Although we are met as Postal Historians, I personally regard adhesives as a chapter in the tale of postal history. The 1 centime stamp was intended for use on newspapers, and when genuinely used is extremely rare; the 5 and 20 centimes were required for internal postage;

the 40c. was to make payment for letters to be delivered to the addressee and not merely collected by him - 20c. was for postage and 20c. for delivery. = 40c. for a single letter delivered. These stamps were probably in use for about about three weeks, in spite of what you read in the catalogues.

There are two rather interesting retouches on the 40c. and there is a wonderful supply of forgeries of these interesting little ships. Every tourist passing through the Canal seemed to think he or she must secure a set of the Canal Company stamps for relatives at home; the forgers supplied them. Here is a most useful illustration made by old friend Worthington-Wilmer, showing how the forger, except in the first instance, never got the piece of "ironwork decoration" around the oval correct. The dangerous forgeries are those which show the design absolutely correct, because they were prepared from the 40c. stone which was stolen. Corrected numerals were substituted for the other three values, but are incorrectly placed. The paper used, the colours and the gum are incorrect. The most difficult forgery to recognise is the 1c. black. It may be known by the fact that the numeral and the letter c. at the south west corner are too close together. In addition there are two constant white flaws near the top on the left which never occur on the genuine stamps.

You see in the frames various circular interpostal labels which were used in the Canal Zone. These were not stamps with franking powers but merely labels applied to containers of mail in bulk. They are found bearing the date stamp of the office from which the mail originated, struck to indicate when the mail left the office of origin. These postmarks are not evidence that the labels had franking power. This statement has been confirmed by documents recently found by Mehanny Eid and published in Egypt.

My next specimen provides evidence of the efficiency of the post in 1869 because the letter travelled the whole length of the Canal in 24 hours. For the ceremonial opening of Port Fuad opposite Port Said, a set of 4 stamps was overprinted. Beneath those displayed is a photograph of the Post Office where

the Egyptians are attempting to obtain sets of the stamps; a demonstration of how hard they work at times !

There is an interesting postcard which I would ask you to look at, bearing a printed statement prepared by the members of the Arab League to be sent to the delegates to the London Conference last August. It is one of the few post-cards sent to the delegates that was not immediately destroyed in anger. It was recovered from the waste paper basket undamaged, and obtained for me by Robbie Lowe.

Finally you see Nasser's picture of the supposed victory by Egypt at Port Said. The Egyptian soldier, armed to the teeth is followed by a civilian also heavily armed, and supported by "a lady" bearing what looks like a Molotov Cocktail; parachutists are coming down by the dozen, being killed as they land, and a British ship is seen exploding in the distance.

Subsequently this stamp was overprinted, in red, with the date -
" 22nd December 1956 " when we evacuated Port Said.

You know the recent happenings as well as I do ; it therefore was mainly the early history at Suez that I felt justified in talking to you about tonight.

THE AL-AZHAR UNIVERSITY MILLENNARY ISSUE.

Some Notes by Jean Boulad.

The work of building the Mosque, which later became the Al-Azhar University, started on the 24th of Gamad Oula 359 (4th April 970) during the time of the Fatimides in the reign of Caliph el Moezz.

The work was completed two years later and the first Friday prayer was said there on the 7th of Ramadan 361 (23rd June 972).

The Millenary has been calculated according to the Hegira Calendar; it should therefore have been celebrated on the 7th Ramadan 1361 (18th September 1942).

Important ceremonies should have taken place in Cairo on that date. Owing, however, to various Military and Political circumstances provoking frequent differences between the Palace and the Government these ceremonies were postponed several times up to 1946 and finally they were cancelled altogether.

A commemorative set of four values - 6, 10, 15 and 20 mills. had been prepared for this occasion, printing 300,000 sets.

In accordance with the usual practice, 100 sets - or two sheets - had been handed over to the King for his personal collection. These sheets were sold at the Koubbah Palace auction on the 14th February, 1954 - lot No. 646A. It was believed at that time that the 300,000 unissued sets had been destroyed soon after 1946.

Then in 1957 the commemoration of this Millenary was brought up again, in fact a number of speeches were made at this time. Regarding the philatelic arrangements there was a rumour circulating in Egypt that the 300,000 sets prepared in 1942 had not been destroyed and that they would be used after

having been overprinted with the date of the current year of the Hegira: 1376. However the 6 mills, which value no longer corresponds with a current postal rate, was not issued with the new red overprint. What has happened to it ?

The following have been overprinted and issued on 27th April 1957:

500,000	copies	of	the	10	mills.
500,000	-	-	-	15	-
300,000	-	-	-	20	-

which correspond with the 300,000 sets of 1942.

It seems unlikely that a reprinting was carried out in 1957 for this purpose; in this case the original control number would have been crossed out and altered accordingly on the cylinder itself, it would then have been printed in the same colour as each of the three values and the printing of a control number in red at the same time as the overprint "1376" would not have been necessary.

With regard to the difference of shades pointed out by Dr. Byam between the issue of 1942 coming from the Koubbeh sale and the one of 1957, I do not think that it can be considered as sufficient to justify the explanation of a reprinting; would not this rather be a question of inking ?

As for the 15 years' delay taken to celebrate the millenary, it has been said to me that a difference of 15 years is insignificant in a millenary.

EGYPT POSTAGE PREPAID.

Mr. R. Seymour Blomfield reports the following dates which are earlier than those given in the Q.C. for May, 1957.

No. 13. 23 JU 41. No. 14. 14 JU 41. No. 17. 23 MA 41.

GEDDA POSTMARK.



Professor Peter A. S. Smith reports the discovery of a Gedda postmark in Type IV. - illustrated above - with the place for the year occupied by a solid segment, analogous to the type IV variant of Suakim. Mazloum does not mention it, nor has Peter Smith heard of it elsewhere. It is on a pair of the 10 para 1875, and only the first two letters of the month are visible. Smith presumes it may be 1875.

MEMORANDUM by Albert L. Cicurel (E.S.C. No. 84) regarding the dates of the c.d.s. cancelling the 10 para of 1867 bisected and used on the newspaper " LA TROMBETTA ".

Most of the 10 para of '67 bisected and recorded to date are on pieces of the newspaper " La Trombetta " which was published in Alexandria.

The bisected stamp was always stuck on the upper right corner of La Trombetta and when collectors detached this portion of the paper, the whole corner was kept including the serial number of the newspaper itself.

In order to ascertain the status of a bisected stamp, the serial number, if it appears, should correspond with the date of the handstamp which obliterates the bisected stamp.

I have been able to establish the date of publication with the corresponding serial number of La Trombetta except for one week, i.e. the one from the 2nd. to the 6th of January during which the newspaper appeared only three times. Did the New Year festivities go on for three days or were there another two days holiday during that week which prevented the paper from coming out ? I cannot tell. Some member could probably throw light on the subject by stating the days when Nos. 666, 667 and 668 appeared during that particular week.

<u>Date.</u>	Serial number of <u>La Trombetta.</u>	<u>Date.</u>	Serial Number of <u>La Trombetta.</u>
Monday 11-XII-1871.	649.	Monday 1-I-1872.	New Year.
Tuesday 12-XII-1871.	650.	Tuesday 2-I-1872.	
Wednesday 13-XII-1871.	651.	Wednesday 3-I-1872.	666.
Thursday 14-XII-1871.	652.	Thursday 4-I-1872.	667.
Friday 15-XII-1871.	653.X	Friday 5-I-1872.	668.
Saturday 16-XII-1871.	654.	Saturday 6-I-1872.	
Monday 18-XII-1871.	655.X	Monday 8-I-1872.	669.X
Tuesday 19-XII-1871.	656.	Tuesday 9-I-1872.	670.X
Wednesday 20-XII-1871.	657.	Wednesday 10-I-1872.	671.
Thursday 21-XII-1871.	658.	Thursday 11-I-1872.	672.
Friday 22-XII-1871.	659.X	Friday 12-I-1872.	673.X
Saturday 23-XII-1871.	660.	Saturday 13-I-1872.	674.
Monday 25-XII-1871.	Xmas.	Monday 15-I-1872.	675.
Tuesday 26-XII-1871.	661.X	Tuesday 16-I-1872.	676.
Wednesday 27-XII-1871.	662.	Wednesday 17-I-1872.	677.
Thursday 28-XII-1871.	663.	Thursday 18-I-1872.	678.
Friday 29-XII-1871.	664.	Friday 19-I-1872.	679.
Saturday 30-XII-1871.	665.X	Saturday 20-I-1872.	680.X

All the numbers marked thus " X " have actually been seen on pieces of La Trombetta bearing 10 para bisects.

CORRESPONDENCE FROM G. T. HOUSTON (E.S.C. No. 83.)

AL AZHAR ISSUE.

At the time I was resident in Egypt, and if my memory serves me right, these stamps were not issued in 1942 by the Egyptian P.O. because the celebrations planned for the 1000th anniversary of El Azhar University were cancelled owing to the war drawing very close to the Nile Delta. In that year occurred the battle of Alamein and only a short while prior to this, Rommel's vanguard had advanced to within 15 miles of Alexandria Naval Base.- I am not sure who cancelled the celebrations but this was most probably decreed by the British High Command in view of the fact that such celebrations might touch off nationalistic rioting.- The writer's query concerning the years 970 to 1942 A.D. NOT REPRESENTING 1000 years is easily answered. The Arabic calendar follows the lunar cycle of months, commencing with the year of the HEGIREH, i.e. when Mohammed arrived in Meccah. The Arabic mention "361 - 1361" means 1000 lunar years or A.H. (ANNO HEGIRAE, if you like) and these may be converted into years A.D. by using the following formula :

Conversion of years A.H. (Hegireh) into years A.D. " The Cairo Scientific Journal", Vol. VI., No. 64 quotes the following useful formula for converting years of the Hegireh into years of the Gregorian reckoning - fractions being omitted:

$$\text{YEAR A.H.} \quad \text{minus} \quad \frac{3 \times \text{YEAR A.H.}}{100} \quad \text{plus} \quad 621,6 \quad = \quad \text{YEAR A.D.}$$

I think this will solve the writer's problem quite satisfactorily.

FORGED COVERS OF THE SUDAN CAMPAIGN.

Mr. Houston then described six of these covers which are in his possession and, after confirming some of the characteristics noted by Prof. Smith, suggests that all the envelopes seem to have been postmarked in the Sudan without bearing any handwriting at all. He arrives at this conclusion because " wherever the Sudan postmarks get into contact with handwriting, the handwriting covers that part of the postmark in an absolutely unmistakable manner". Mr Houston is of the opinion that all these covers were postmarked to order in the Sudan, then brought to Egypt, stamped in accordance with regulations, postmarked to order again, and finally the sender's name, the addressee's name & address and the "endorsement" by the imaginary C.O. were added.

CORRESPONDENCE FROM MR. POLLACK. (E.S.C. No. 96).

In a letter, dated February, 13th, 1958, to the Chairman Mr. Pollack writes :-

" I have just received Q.C. Vol. V. No.1. On page 4 I noted a report on a red Alexandria Registration mark. When going through my collection I found one cover (or rather a front) with the identical oval, red "Registered Alexandria" postmark of the 30th April, 1876. The letter is addressed to London, franked with a strip of 4 G.B. 2nd lilac, obliterated BOI Type IV-4.

The cover shows on the front an identical red oval "London Registered" postmark of 1876. The date is indistinct.
