

EGYPT STUDY CIRCLE

THE QUARTERLY CIRCULAR

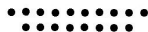
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CONTENTS

Meeting of the Egypt Study Circle	Page 16
Notes from the Keeper of the Record:-	
The British Post Office in Cairo	18
World War I - Civil Censorship	18
Disinfected Mail	19
The French Consular Office in Alexandria	20
Sudan - Historical Notes by Lt.Col. J.R.Danson M.C. T.D.....	21
Waghorn Overland Mail	31
List of Studies undertaken by the Egypt Study Circle	31



THE QUARTERLY CIRCULAR

Published by the Egypt Study Circle

Vol. VI Nos. 2/3

Whole series Nos. 62/63

August 1963 Page 16

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Meeting of the Egypt Study Circle

at 41 Devonshire Place, London

on 25th. May 1963.

The meeting commenced at 2.45 p.m.

Our President produced an album containing photographs from complete proof sheets of the FIRST ISSUE which he was desirous of presenting to the Circle's Reference Collection but wished for a discussion regarding the best method of mounting them for easy reference. It was finally agreed that the Keepers of the Reference Collection should consider mounting the individual photographs on linen in the form of complete sheet, which could then be folded to the size of the standard album sheets. There was also a number of negatives (glass plates) the housing of which would be considered at a later date as they were of considerable bulk and weight.

Other members also had some negatives and prints which they were prepared to hand over when the question of storage had been decided. Our Reference Collection continues to expand thanks to the generosity of such members.

The list of "WAGHORN" covers produced in "The Overland Mail" by John K. Sidebottom O.B.E. (1948) was now considerably out of date and it was agreed that the Circle should attempt to complete the record for possible publication. (A note to this effect appears elsewhere in this number of the Quarterly Circular).

A number of other matters of domestic interest was discussed and individual members then showed some of their recent acquisitions.

After tea our Chairman read his preliminary report on the history, routes, postal rates, cancellations and other markings of the FRENCH POST OFFICES IN EGYPT, well illustrated with covers from his collection. A brief coverage of this report appears elsewhere in this number.

It was reported that Prof. Peter Smith (Ann Arbor, Michigan, U.S.A.) would be in England and available for a meeting on 13th. July 1963 and it was heartily agreed that the strongest efforts would be made to arrange a meeting on that day.

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Expert Committee - Egypt Study Circle

At a business meeting of the Circle held on 23rd. February 1963 it was agreed that members should be reminded (through these pages) of the most important work being carried out by various members of the Circle through the Expert Committee.

Their willingness to help both members and non-members alike is very much appreciated but it was now felt that a charge, at least to cover expenses, should be made. It was agreed that the following scale of charges should be adopted:-

	<u>Members of the Circle</u>	<u>Non-members</u>
Genuine item	10/6	21/-
Forgery	5/-	10/6

These charges to include signed certificate and photograph, and return postage.

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Errata Vol. V Nos. 5/6, page 62. It should be made clear that the Retta cancellation was applied after the writer had posted his letter in his unit mail box.

C.W.Minett (No. 77)

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Notes from the Keeper of the RecordThe British P.O. at Cairo - The Crowned Circle

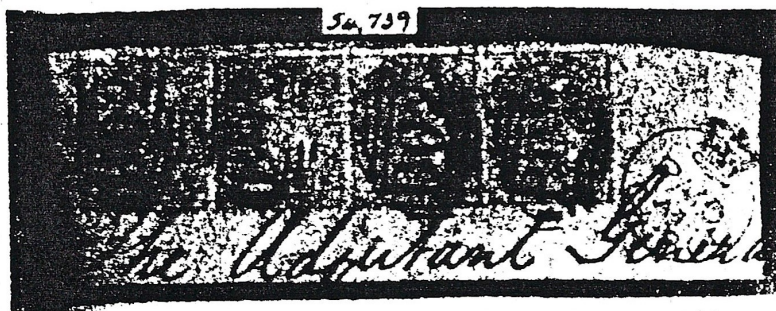
Mr. Angus Parker (No. 117) has shown us an undated piece bearing a strip of four G.B. Q.V. 1/- green (S.G. Z398, 1856) each being cancelled by the B02 obliterator. Alongside is the Crowned Circle "PAID AT CAIRO" (in red).

Part of the address reads "The Adjutant General" and Dr. Byam suggests that the only one at that time would have been in India.

This is the first example of dual usage recorded by the Circle, though Brigadier Rawson points out that in his study on "The Crowned Circle Handstamps of Egypt" (Quarterly Circular Vol. III No. 1 page 9) he stated "There is evidence that at Suez and Cairo they were used concurrently with adhesives".

The Crowned Circle is known to us only in red and Brig. Rawson states that it came into use on March 23rd, 1859, followed by adhesive stamps on August 2nd, 1859. To date the recorded period of use of this handstamp on covers without adhesives is from March 17th, 1860 (Danson - No. 32) to April 9th, 1861 (Cicurel - No. 84).

It is possible that in this instance the Crowned Circle is a frank on official correspondence.



The item bears a "Royal" certificate of genuineness.

World War I - Civil Censorship

Mr. L.W.Perry (No. 94) has the front of a cover franked with two 5mils Sphinx cancelled Cairo (civil c.d.s.) 1.VI.19 addressed to Edinburgh. There is part of a stuck-on "PASSED BY CENSOR" label (black on white); in addition, and partly tying one of the stamps, is a rubber handstamped cachet consisting of five parallel bars (in blue) and, nearby, a pencilled figure "2" the significance (if any) of which we do not know.

We are not sure whether this cachet is in fact a censor mark nor do we know whether it was applied at Cairo. Can you help please?

The following notes on other civil censorship markings may be of interest.

- (a) A handstruck mark consisting of 5 thick wavy bars (recorded only in black) is found on covers from November 1917 to March 1919 at least. From cancellations and transit or arrival marks Alexandria was almost certainly its place of origin.
- (b) A handstruck "L" in circle (recorded only in black) is found on a cover

dated 3rd. February 1918 from Zagazig via Port Said and London to British Guiana. It also appears on a second cover dated 19th. March 1919 from Jerusalem to Port Said. The inference is that this cachet was applied at Port Said.

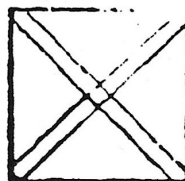
(c) Brigadier Rawson has a single 5mils Sphinx cancelled Port Said/E dated 18th. June 1919 and also what may be described as a skeleton St. Andrew's Cross in a frame, struck in blue. Brig. Rawson has seen several examples of this mark.



(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)

(d) A handstruck five-pointed star (struck in grey, black, red or violet) occurs on covers which appear mostly to be civilian but have also military connections. Recorded dates are from June 1916 to April 1919, the mark having been applied at Alexandria.

It is not certain that this mark was civil as all twelve covers so far recorded had connections with either M.P.O. Alexandria or B.A.P.O./Z (which was at Alexandria).

Surprisingly, this star (in black) has turned up struck twice on a World War II cover. R. Seymour Bloomfield writes to say his cover is from Thomas Cook & Son (Bankers) Ltd., Alexandria to their company in New York. It is a registered air mail cover bearing a 4mils 1937 and three 50mils 1939 adhesives. Unfortunately the cancellation is illegible but the New York arrival mark is dated 9-14-1942. The cover is endorsed "not by Clipper" and has a double circle handstamp No. 77 (in black) of the civil "Censorship Dept.". No military connection is apparent.

(e) In addition to the forgoing there are circular, oval and framed "Passed by Censor" marks bearing either letters or numbers but recordings of these are not sufficiently advanced to give data at present.

World War II - Disinfected Mail

Mr. L.W. Perry (No. 94) has shown us a cover franked by a small 10mils Army Post cancelled M.P.O./E.601 (Cairo) dated 15(10?).FE.40.6-7P (twice) addressed to Plymouth and censored in m/s "Woodside". It bears a transit backstamp B.P.O./E.602 (Alexandria) dated 16.FE.40.9-10A. On the front is a rubber-stamped "DISINFECTED" in violet. Can any member give information about an epidemic in the Cairo area in February 1940?

It is of interest to note that following an article by Dr. Teall in "The Philatelist" dealing with disinfected mail, Dr. Patton wrote a letter ("The Philatelist", February 1947) in which he said "Finally, soldiers' and airmen's letters

DISINFECTED

were disinfected during localised outbreaks of plague at Suez in 1942 and of typhus at Homs in Tripolitania in 1943. It is quite probable that other instances of disinfection of mail during recent times may be forthcoming".

Charles W. Minnett

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French Consular Office in Alexandria

At the Circle meeting on 25th. May 1963 the Chairman read his preliminary report on the French Consular Office in Alexandria and also passed round some 90 covers emanating from this and other French offices in Egypt.

He mentioned that until quite recently the date of the opening of the Alexandria office was unknown, some date between 1830 and 1837 being considered to be the most likely.

Owing to the researches of our member Jean Boulad d'Humieres the date now appears to have been the 6th. May 1837. He ran it to earth in a publication entitled "Les Postes Francaises" by Alexis Belloc, an official in the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs, published by Messrs. Firmon-Didot et Cie., Paris 1886.

Monsieur Boulad incorporated the information he obtained from this publication in a most interesting and instructive article on the early postal history of the French/Egypt offices which was published in French in July 1960 in the Schweizer Briefmarken-Zeitung.

It is not proposed to publish the preliminary report at the present time as there are still too many problems to be solved, including the following:-

It is stated that French stamps were available at the Alexandria office some time in 1857. These were cancelled by a diamond of dots containing the number 3704 in small figures and this obliterator remained in use until certainly July 1862. What is the earliest known date for this postmark and has anyone seen it used later than July 1862?

Between 1862 and at least 1875 a similar mark containing the number 5080 in large figures was in use. Again, what is the latest known date?

The indiscriminate use of "boxed" PP or PD between ?1858 and 1875 requires elucidation and it would be interesting to know why two colours were used, viz. black and red. I have examples of "boxed" PD in black during the period 26.12.58 to 4.12.71 and the same mark in red from 15.1.73 to 21.5.75. "Boxed" PP in black was used between 5.8.57 and 17.9.63 and in red between 18.8.74 and 28.4.75.

It seems probable that "Boxed" PD was used right through from 1858 to 1875, whereas there is a gap of 11 years in the use of "boxed" PP between 1863 and 1874, at any rate in my covers. Can anyone extend the period?

Any additional information on the above points should be sent to Lt.Col. J.R.Danson, "Dry Close", Grasmere, Westmorland.

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Back Numbers of the Quarterly Circular and L'Orient Philatelique. The Secretary would be pleased to receive any spare copies of these to assist him in meeting requests for same.

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Sudan - Historical Notes

by Lt.Col. J.R.Danson M.C. T.D. (E.S.C. No. 32)

During the period 1884-1898 there were two campaigns in the Sudan, together with various subsidiary military undertakings.

OPERATIONS ON THE RED SEA LITTORAL

During 1882 the power of the Mahdi was increasing and though repeated attempts were made by the Governor-General of the Sudan to subdue him these failed, usually with heavy losses, and the Mahdi's following swelled in proportion to his success.

In October 1882 the Governor-General at Khartoum called for large reinforcements, but as the British Government were unwilling to send troops so far south the Egyptian Government had to send the necessary forces. These consisted of about 10,000 native troops who were sent to Suakin by sea and thence across the desert to Berber on the Nile. These troops were little better than an armed mob and they had no success and eventually the Egyptian Government engaged a retired officer of the Indian Army, Col. W.Hicks, to take command of the army.

He, together with a European Staff, duly arrived in the Sudan and took command in July 1883. Two months later he marched into the Kordofan desert at the head of 10,000 men but met a greatly superior enemy force near El Obeid and on the 4th. November he and his army were totally destroyed.

As a result of this the whole of the Sudan south of Khartoum lay at the mercy of the Mahdi and the capital, Khartoum, was in great peril.

As soon as news of this disaster reached England the British Government advised the Khedive of Egypt to abandon all territory south of Wadi Halfa, but the Khedive was unwilling to do this and applied to Turkey for 10,000 Turkish troops to be sent to Suakin. The British Government, however, would not agree to this being done, though it was obvious that troops from some source would have to be sent.

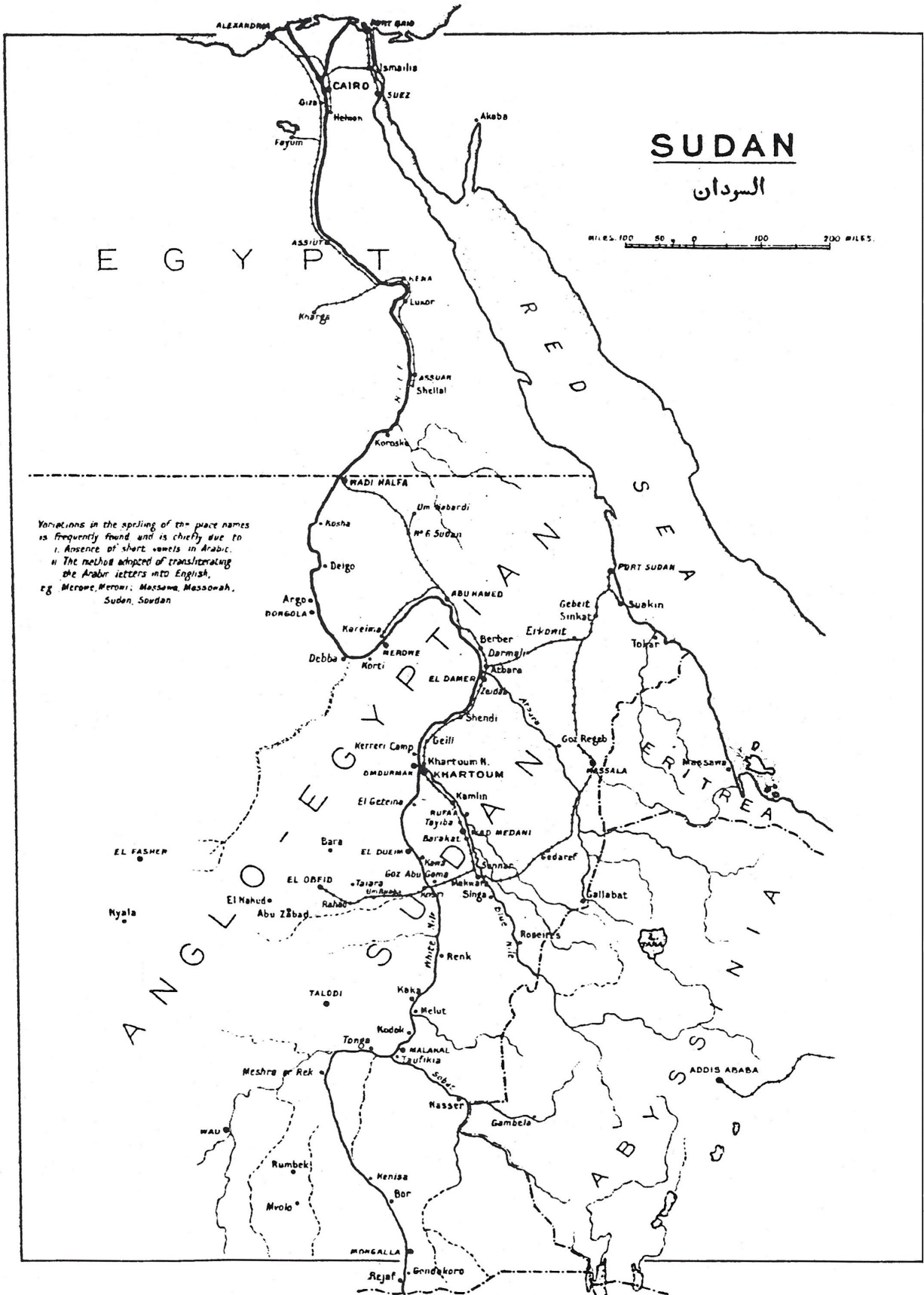
In the meantime, in August 1883 the tribes round Sinkat, an important town lying some 40 miles inland from Suakin, rose against the Government. At their head was a man named Osman Digna.

In October 1883, Osman Digna invested Sinkat and moved towards Suakin and besieged Tokar, and on the 6th. November he wiped out the Egyptian troops who had been sent from Suakin to relieve that place. On 2nd. December he annihilated a small Egyptian force near Tamanieb and all the country inland from Suakin was in his hands.

In order to deal with the situation the Egyptian Government appointed Major General V.Baker, head of the Egyptian Gendarmerie, to raise a force of 4,000 men and take it to Suakin. This force encountered a much smaller army under Osman Digna at El Teb on the 4th. February 1884 and was completely routed.

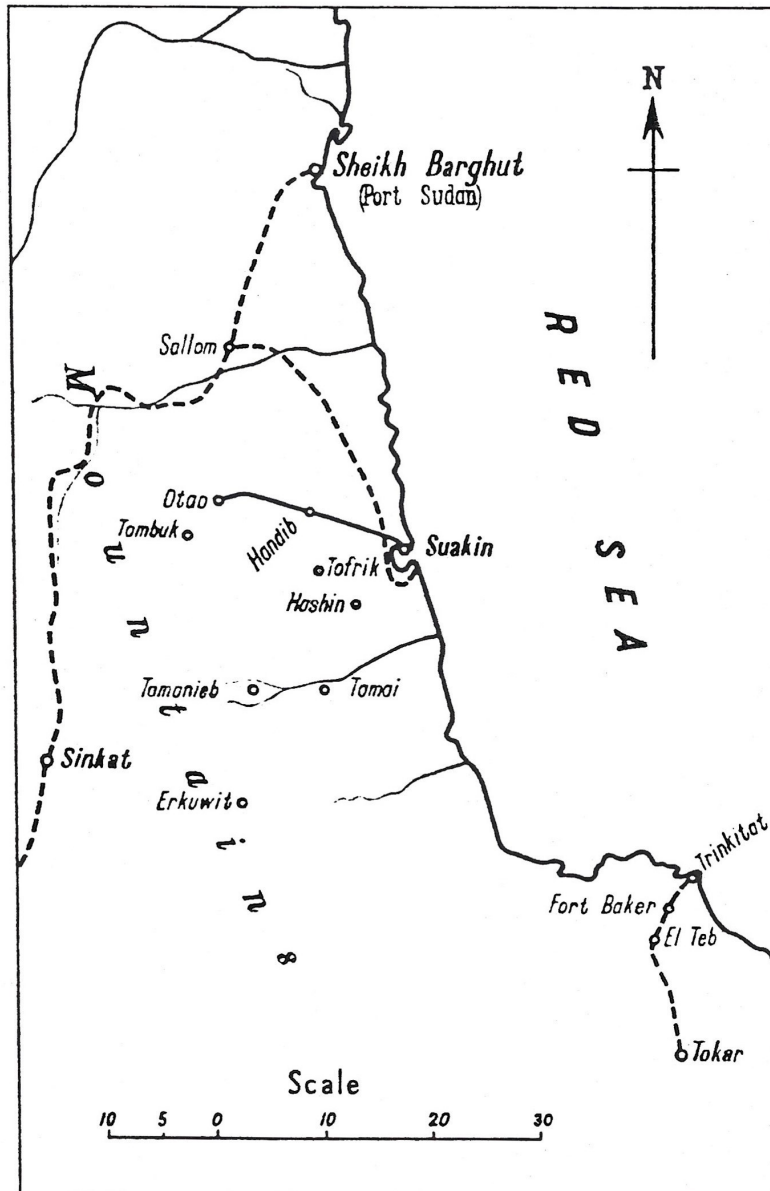
On the 8th. the garrison at Sinkat was wiped out.

The British Government then decided that British troops must be sent and accordingly two brigades of British infantry and other troops, about 4000 in all, under the command of Major-General Sir Gerald Graham V.C. K.C.B. were despatched and reached Suakin on the 22nd. February 1884. On the 25th. most of the troops



Sketch Map of the Suakin District in 1885.

Railways - existing - shown thus —
Modern Railways shown thus - - -



Copied from 'The Royal Engineers in Egypt & the Sudan' by Lt. Col. E.W.C. Sandes, D.S.O., M.C.

were landed at Trinkitat preparatory to a move towards Tokar, which had fallen to Osman Digna.

On the 29th. February the force met and completely defeated the Dervish Army at El Teb and then advanced to Tokar, which was found abandoned by the enemy.

Early in March the force was concentrated at Suakin but on the 13th. they again encountered and completely routed a Dervish force at Tamai.

The road to Berber was now open but the British Government refused to allow the force under General Graham to proceed to that town and in fact gave instructions that the campaign was to be brought to a close. Two British battalions were left at Suakin as a garrison and the remainder was withdrawn.

In February 1885, after the fall of Khartoum and the death of General Gordon, the British Government decided to send a second expedition under Lieut. General Sir Gerald Graham V.C. K.C.B. to Suakin with the intention of crushing Osman Digna and guarding the construction of a railway from Suakin to Berber. By April General Graham's force amounted to some 13,000 fighting men and 11,000 followers.

On the 19th. March he defeated a small Dervish force at Hashin and on the 22nd. a larger one at Tofrik.

On the 2nd. April a strong force was sent out to attack Tamai, which was known to be Osman Digna's headquarters, but on the 3rd. the place was found to be deserted and having destroyed the huts and stores the force withdrew to Suakin.

In the meantime, work on the railway proceeded very slowly and on the 2nd. May Lord Wolseley arrived at Suakin with the news that the British Government had once more decided to abandon the Sudan and to discontinue the construction of the railway to Berber. Consequently a large force was no longer required at Suakin.

The force was accordingly reduced until all that was left was one British battalion, an Indian contingent and several Egyptian units, about 6000 men in all.

During the following few years the garrison remained at Suakin and the defences were put in a proper state. Osman Digna was still at large, however, and still had a large following, and in January 1888 he established himself at Handub and attacked the water forts at Suakin. He was pushed back by a small force under Sir H. Kitchener, the Governor-General of the Red Sea Littoral, but Kitchener was severely wounded in the neck and had to go to Cairo.

Osman Digna then increased his activities round Suakin and blockaded the town until September, when he threatened a serious attack. The town's garrison was accordingly strengthened and the Sirdar of the Egyptian Army, Major-General F.W. Grenfell C.B. took command. On the 20th. December he led his force out of the town and routed the enemy at Gemmaiza, near Handub.

Once more, however, the British Government withdrew the force and a garrison of about 2000 was all that was left at Suakin.

Osman Digna continued to cause trouble and early in 1891 a force from Suakin occupied Handub and Tokar and later Afafit (a short distance beyond Tokar), at which place Osman Digna was decisively defeated.

In 1892 Osman Digna returned and caused some trouble near Suakin and in 1895 he raided Tokar. In 1896 a small force was despatched from Suakin to deal with him and he was driven back into the hills. Early in 1900 he was captured in the Gemilab Hills, 100 miles S. of Suakin.

During the Dongola Expedition of 1896 every available Egyptian soldier was needed on the Nile, so a contingent of Indian troops was sent to hold Suakin to replace the Egyptian garrisons.

During the period under review unoverprinted Egyptian stamps were used at Suakin and at other ports and places in the Red Sea Littoral. In 1885 a section of the Army Postal Corps accompanied the British troops and the current English stamps were used, and from time to time the Indian contingents used the current Indian stamps.

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1884-1885 UP THE NILE - undertaken to relieve General Gordon at Khartoum

On the 19th. April 1884 all communication with General Gordon at Khartoum was cut off and in August, moved by public opinion, Mr. Gladstone, the Prime Minister, moved a vote of credit in the House of Commons to undertake operations for the relief of Gordon.

Lord Wolseley, who had had experience of river transport in Canada, was appointed to command the force and he had to assist him Colonel Sir William Butler, who had had similar experience in Canada.

The original plan was simple. A column of infantry in boats was to work up the river from Wadi Halfa, accompanied by mounted troops and transport on the banks. If the column was delayed a Camel Corps was to leave the Nile at Korti and strike across the Bayuda Desert to Metemma. Having arrived there a small force was to be despatched to Khartoum by steamers sent down by Gordon.

Special boats were built in the British Isles and sent out to Alexandria, whence they were sent by train to Assiut and so up the river to Wadi Halfa.

It had been hoped to use the railway which ran from Wadi Halfa to Saras ($33\frac{1}{2}$ miles) to transport the boats round the Second Cataract, but the railway was found to be of very little use.

The history of this railway is interesting. The original idea came from Said Pasha who, in 1860, proposed to connect the Sudan with Egypt by a railway. Nothing much was done until 1873 when Ismail Pasha instructed an English firm to construct a 3' 6" gauge line from Halfa to Kerma at the head of the Third Cataract.

Modifications and alterations in the scheme followed, but by 1877 the line had reached Saras ($33\frac{1}{2}$ miles) and the formation, exclusive of bridges, was completed for a further 21 miles.

The line did not pay and General Gordon, as Governor-General of the Sudan, objected to the scheme being continued and from 1877 to 1884 the short length of line was used only about once a week and everything fell into decay.

In October 1884 the 8th. Railway Co. R.E. arrived from England and took over the railway and by the 2nd. November two trains a day were running between Halfa and Saras. The line was extended southward until the 21st. February 1885, when a station was opened at Ambigol Road, 17 miles from Saras and $50\frac{1}{2}$ from Wadi Halfa.

In the meantime the Army had proceeded up the Nile in boats and early in November 1884 the headquarters had reached Dongola and by Christmas Day most of the force was concentrated at Korti.

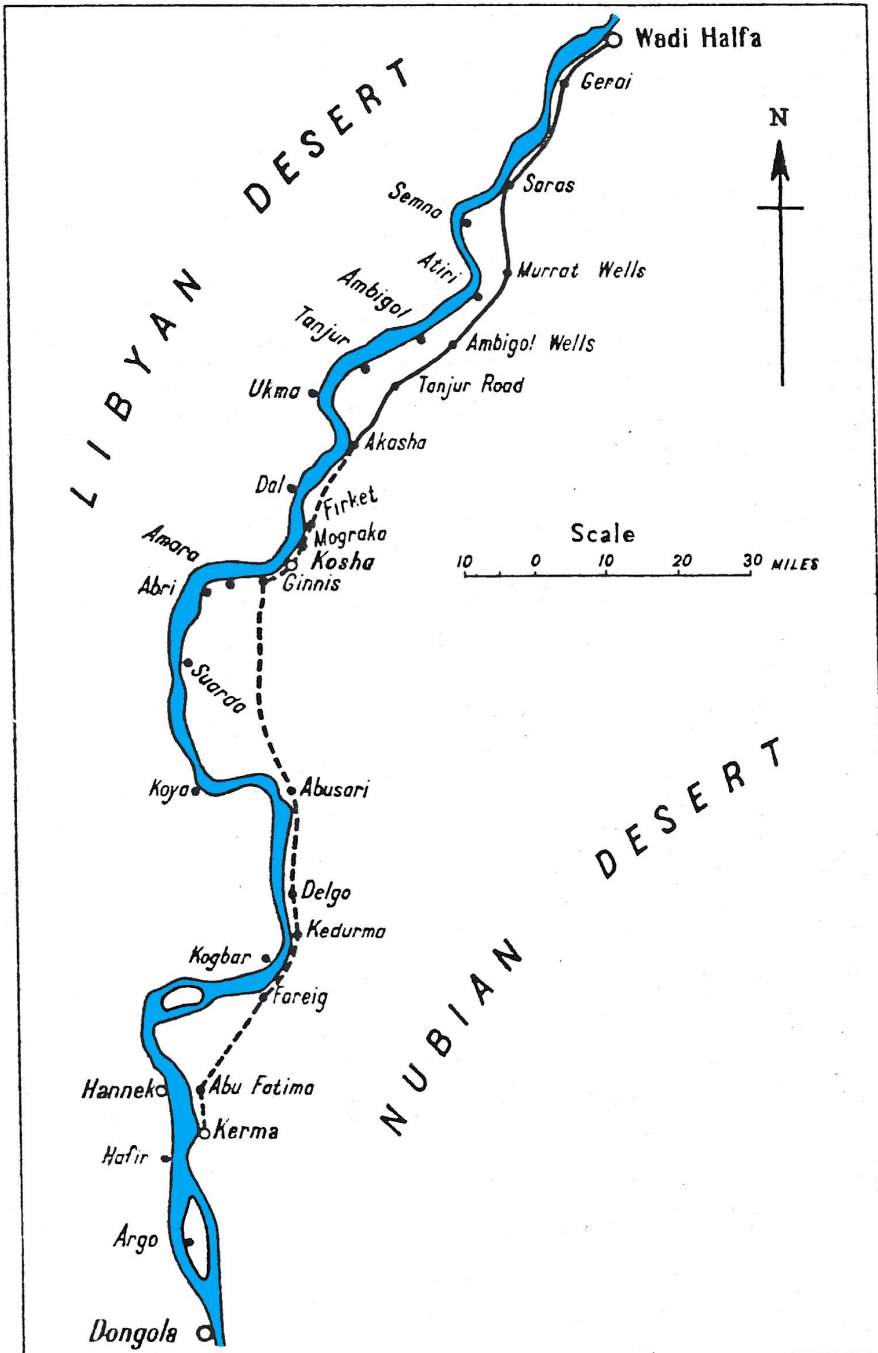
It was then decided to send a Desert Column on camels across the Bayuda Desert to El Metemma, occupying the oasis of Gakdul and Abu Klea on the way, while the river column would fight its way up the Nile, capture Abu Hamed, drive the Dervishes from Berber and join hands with the desert column at Metemma.

The desert column was commanded by Brigadier-General Sir Herbert Stewart and the river column by Major-General Earle.

Sketch Map of The Nile from WADI HALFA to DONGOLA

Showing the Halfa-Akasha Railway of 1885, thus ———
and its extension to KERMA in 1896, thus - - - - -

River Nile shown in blue.



Copied from "The Royal Engineers in Egypt and the Sudan" - by Lt. Col. E.W.C. Sandes, D.S.O., M.C.

On the 30th. December the desert column set out and on the 17th. January 1885, having occupied the wells at Gakdul, the enemy were decisively defeated at Abu Klea. On the following day the advance was continued and on the 19th. the force occupied Gubat on the river. General Stewart had been wounded on the 18th. January and the command of the desert column fell to Sir Charles Wilson.

On the 24th. January, as a result of messages received from Khartoum, a small force was embarked in two steamers which proceeded up the river and on 28th. Khartoum was in sight, but those on board learned that the town had fallen two days previously. The two vessels proceeded as far as the junction of the Blue and White Niles, after which they returned down-stream and on the 4th. February the force arrived back at Gubat with great difficulty, having lost one steamer on the way.

Meanwhile the river column was advancing up the river from Korti in 217 boats, with mounted troops on the banks.

On the 4th. February, while at Birti, the Commander heard of the fall of Khartoum and received orders to halt. On the 8th., however, he was allowed to proceed and on the 10th. the column encountered a large enemy force at El Kirbekan. In the ensuing fight, in which the enemy was defeated, General Earle was unfortunately killed and the command fell to Brigadier-General H. Brackenbury. The advance was continued until the 24th. February when the force was only 26 miles from Abu Hamed, but on this day orders were received to withdraw to Merowe, where the column arrived on the 5th. March, and later in the month it joined hands with the desert column at Korti.

Towards the end of March the force commenced to withdraw to Dongola, leaving rearguards at Korti, and on the 11th. May complete evacuation of the Sudan was ordered and by June the Nile Expedition was at an end.

One brigade was, however, left at Wadi Halfa, with outposts at Kosha, 42 miles south of the railway terminus at Akasha.

On the 30th. December a Dervish force appeared near Kosha and Ginnis but was defeated.

Early in 1886 the force was withdrawn to Wadi Halfa, this place being held by Egyptian troops while the British troops were stationed further north at Aswan and other places.

In June Dervish forces occupied Akasha and destroyed the railway as far as Ambigol Wells.

During the following two years there was considerable activity on the frontier but on the 3rd. August the Dervishes were decisively beaten at Toski after which they withdrew to the south and there was peace on the frontier until 1896.

During the campaign of 1884-1885 no postage stamps appear to have been used by the troops and letters, which are rare, were sent unstamped. Up to March 1897 unoverprinted Egyptian stamps were used in correspondence from Wadi Halfa.

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1896-1898

Ever since the death of Gordon in January 1885 the British public had been anxious to avenge his murder but the Government were unwilling to go to the expense of a further expedition for that purpose and intimated that any expedition should be composed of the Egyptian Army, which, by 1896, consisted of 14 well-trained battalions of infantry commanded by the Sirdar, Colonel H.H. Kitchener.

Early in 1896, however, certain political events took place which altered

the position. In the first place a strong Conservative Government came into power in Great Britain and rumours reached London that the French from Equatorial Africa were advancing towards the upper waters of the Nile. Moreover, the Italians advancing from Massawa to Kassala were hard pressed by the Abyssians and on the 1st. March were crushingly defeated at Adowa. In these circumstances it was feared that the Dervishes might invade Egypt and a suitable pretext was furnished for immediate action, and on the 13th. March a telegram was despatched to Kitchener to commence operations.

The campaign which followed may be divided into two parts; (1) the Dongola Expedition of 1896-7, which followed the route of the old Wadi Halfa - Saras railway and (2) the campaign for the capture of Khartoum, for which a new railway was built from Wadi Halfa across the desert to Abu Hamed and eventually to Khartoum.

(1) THE DONGOLA EXPEDITION

The Nile route was followed by this expedition, which was composed of the Egyptian Army with certain British battalions all under the command of Kitchener. The Dervishes were in strength at Dongola, with outposts at Suarda, Firket and Akasha.

The campaign opened on the 16th. March 1896 when a small force was despatched to seize Akasha, which was reached on the 20th.

The old railway between Saras and Akasha had been destroyed but this was soon in working order again and it was extended as the force moved forward, until in May 1897 it reached Kerma, from which point it was not taken further.

Until the latter part of May 1896 there was no move forward from Akasha, but the force was concentrated at that place and the railway relaid and communications opened up. On the 7th. June a strong force which had left Akasha a few days earlier completely routed a Dervish force at Firket and a large area was cleared of the enemy. The force occupied Kosha, but a serious outbreak of cholera occurred and spread to Saras, Ambigol, Akasha and Firket.

No further advance took place until August, but on the 26th. June railhead reached Akasha and on the 4th. August it reached Kosha.

Meanwhile, further British reinforcements had arrived and in August, when the Nile rose, several steamers were hauled through the Second Cataract at Wadi Halfa and on the 23rd. August four gunboats and three unarmed steamers arrived at Kosha. Another steamer, which had been built in England and sent out in sections, arrived at Kosha and was put together at that place.

In August the advance continued and Abu Sari was occupied on the 23rd., and later the force concentrated at Fareig.

On the 18th. September the force advanced against the enemy at Kerma who withdrew to Hafir on the opposite side of the river.

On the 19th. the enemy were shelled by the gunboats, which then proceeded up-river to Dongola, which they reached the same evening. The enemy evacuated Hafir during the night and the advance was continued and on the 24th. September Dongola was entered.

Subsequently, El Debba, Korti and Merowa were occupied and by the end of the year Dongola province was more or less pacified.

During the expedition unoverprinted Egyptian stamps were used at Wadi Halfa but letters from the troops were generally franked by the signatures of responsible officers as no stamps were available.

(2) THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE RECAPTURE OF OMDURMAN AND KHARTOUM

On the 1st. January 1897 a new railway from Wadi Halfa to Abu Hamed was commenced. The reason for this was that the new campaign was likely to be considerably greater than that which had undertaken the recapture of Dongola province in the previous year and much larger forces would be required.

To have followed the Dongola route would have entailed bridging the Nile between Debba and Merowe and constructing the railway across the Bayuda Desert in the face of hostile action from Metemma.

The distance from Wadi Halfa to Abu Hamed is 230 miles and at first progress was slow, as for the first five months of 1897 the Kerma railway was still under construction. By the middle of July, however, about 100 miles had been laid.

Kitchener then decided that Abu Hamed must be captured before the railway could advance further and accordingly a strong flying column was sent from the Merowe district to capture the town, which lay some 118 miles distant, and on the 7th. August Abu Hamed was duly captured. As a result of this, and of patrolling by gunboats, the enemy evacuated Berber on the 24th. August and the town was occupied by our troops on the 5th. September. Later in the month a camel corps post was established at Dakhila, afterwards known as Atbara.

On the 31st. October the railway reached Abu Hamed and early in November the Suakin-Berber route was re-opened after having been closed for 13 years.

During the closing months of the year it appeared likely that the enemy would make a heavy attack on Berber and on the 1st. January 1898 Kitchener applied for British troops to be sent to reinforce his army and a British brigade under Colonel Gatacre C.B. D.S.O. arrived at Abu Dis, 30 miles south of Abu Hamed, by the end of the month.

The main Dervish army, some 40,000 strong, was at Omdurman, with a further 20,000 at Metemma.

In February the enemy force at Metemma, under the Emir Mahmud, marched against Berber and crossed the Nile on the 25th. February. Meanwhile railhead had reached Shereik, 70 miles short of Berber, on the same day.

Mahmud's army was in the angle formed by the rivers Nile and Atbara and on the 12th. March he began to move down the Nile to attack Atbara, but on the 18th. he struck across-country towards Hudi on the Atbara, only to find that the Anglo-Egyptian army had arrived there before him. Mahmud therefore swung further south and took up a position near the village of Nakheila, where he was attacked and defeated by the Anglo-Egyptian army on the 8th. April in a battle known as the battle of Atbara.

Subsequently the troops went into summer quarters at Atbara, Abadieh, Darmali, Selim and Berber.

On the 5th. May railhead reached Abadieh, 12 miles north of Berber, and on the 3rd. July the railway from Wadi Halfa to Atbara was completed.

During the summer, further reinforcements arrived and by August the army consisted of 8,200 British and 17,600 Egyptian and Sudanese troops, with 44 guns and 20 Maxims on land and 36 guns and 24 Maxims on the river. This force was considered to be sufficient for the work of destroying the Dervish army and reoccupying Khartoum and the advance commenced.

On the 25th. August Metemma was occupied and on the 2nd. September the Dervish army was completely routed at the battle of Omdurman, where the enemy lost over 11,000 killed and 16,000 wounded, the Anglo-Egyptian losses being 48 killed

and 382 wounded only.

This was the decisive battle of the campaign and the ruins of Khartoum were occupied, a memorial service to Gordon being held there on the 4th. September. This ended the campaign and the bulk of the British troops returned to Egypt.

The postal services during the campaign were as follows:-

On the 1st March 1897 the first (provisional) issue of Sudan postage stamps appeared, eight values of contemporary Egyptian stamps being overprinted for the use of the troops. In some instances, however, unoverprinted Egyptian stamps continued to be used and occasionally no stamps were available and letters were endorsed accordingly.

The postal rate for letters from the Expeditionary Force to Egypt was fixed at 3 mils for prepaid and 6 mils for unpaid letters, but arrangements were made only to charge 3 mils on unpaid letters from the forces, delivered in Egypt, in such cases as were certified by the sender's commanding officer that no stamps were available.

This postage was collected by affixing a 2mil Egyptian postage-due stamp together with half of a similar stamp, but later a 3mil postage-due stamp was made by surcharging an Egyptian 2P. postage-due stamp.

On the 1st. March 1898 the second (permanent) issue of Sudan postage stamps appeared. This was designed by Captain (later Colonel) E. A. Stanton (Pasha) C.M.G., later Governor of Khartoum.

During the campaign of 1897-8 certain other events of importance took place outside the area of operations. On the 25th. December 1897 Kassala, which had been taken from the Dervishes by the Italians in 1894 was handed back to Egypt, the troops marching in from Suakin.

On the 22nd. September 1898 Gedaref was recaptured by a force from Kassala under the command of Colonel Parsons.

Early in September 1898 Fashoda on the White Nile was evacuated by the small French force under Major Marchand which had held it since 10th. July 1898. The town was subsequently renamed Kodok out of consideration for French susceptibilities.

The railway reached Khartoum in 1899 and later was continued up the Blue Nile to Makwara.

A branch line opened in January 1906 connects Atbara with Suakin and Port Sudan and from this line a further branch extends through Kassala and Gedaref to join the main line on the Blue Nile at Makwara.

A further branch extends from Sennar on the Blue Nile across the White Nile to El Obeid and in 1906 a branch was constructed from Abu Hamed to Kareima.

As for the Wadi Halfa - Kerma railway, when the advance on Khartoum took place in 1897 large sections of the track were taken up for use on the desert railway and the residue gradually fell into disuse and the line was officially closed on the 31st. December 1904.

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The Waghorn Overland Mail

In 1948 the late John K. Sidebottom published his splendid book on "The Overland Mail" under the auspices of the Postal History Society. In this monumental work "J.K." made a summary of all the known Waghorn covers with the various cachets used and these are listed under ten different types (ref. "The Overland Mail" pages 146-151).

Since the publication of this book various other examples of Waghorn covers have come to light and we feel that details of these should be published.

The ten different types (and varieties) are clearly shown in detail with illustrations in Sidebottom's book; if any of our members have covers not so far recorded will they please send details as follows to the Keeper of the Record, viz:-

- (a) The Type number.
- (b) Town of departure and arrival.
- (c) Date of despatch.
- (d) Number of days in transit.

Some of our members have Waghorn covers but have not had access to a copy of Sidebottom's book. In such cases it would be helpful if they would send full particulars as above together with a tracing of the cachet and the Keeper of the Record will record it if it has not already appeared in the book.

Your co-operation in this matter will be appreciated.

J.H.E. Gilbert (No. 50)

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(Should any member have any difficulty regarding Sidebottom's book he may gladly borrow my copy. Editor)

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Studies undertaken by the Circle

The following is a list of the studies so far undertaken by the Circle:-

- I. The history of the Egyptian Post Offices in Turkey, the Red Sea area and the Sudan - their duration, the stamps used in them and the postal rates and routes.
- II. The history of the Foreign Post Offices in Egypt on the lines of Study I. Divided into

(a)	French Post Offices.	
(b)	Italian "	"
(c)	British "	"
(d)	Austrian "	"
(e)	Greek "	"
(f)	Russian "	"
- III. The Postal History of the Canal Zone including the Egyptian Post Offices and the Canal Co.'s. stamps, their use and the forgeries of same.
- IV. Pre-stamp Egyptian Postal History in the 19th. century, and the Posta Europa.

- V. The history of the carriage of Egyptian official postal matter and the use of interpostal labels.
- VI. The postal markings of Egypt in the 19th. century.
- VII. The postal markings of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan from 1896, on the lines of Study I.
- VIII. The compilation of an extensive check-list of Egypt, which shall include all postal matter.
- IX. The classification of the essays, proofs and colour trials for the stamps of Egypt.
- X. The forgeries of the stamps of Egypt.
- XI. The perforating machines used in connection with the preparation of the stamps of Egypt.
- XII. Military Seals and Army Posts.
- XIII. The second Fouad Portrait issue 1927-37.
- XIV. The Third Issue 1872-4/5.
- XV. The air-mail services and stamps.
- XVI. The British Military Postal Concession and its franks and seals.
- XVII. The de la Rue issues of Egypt 1879-1902.
- XVIII. The postal stationery of Egypt.
- XIX.
- XX.
- XXI.
- XXII.
- XXIII.
- XXIV. Consular and diplomatic franks used in Egypt.

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Amendments to Membership

Resignation:- J.R. Raeburn (No. 26).

New Members:- No. 118 J.S. Horesh, 55 Latymer Court, London W.6.

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