

EGYPT STUDY CIRCLE

THE QUARTERLY CIRCULAR

Volume VIII No. 1

Whole Series No. 85

MARCH 1973

FUTURE MEETINGS

2nd June 1973	Bar Overprints Presented by W. C. Andrews.
4th August 1973	Hotel Postmarks Presented by F.W. Benians.
13th October 1973	Third Issue. 20 paras and 1 piastre Litho. and Typo. Presented by E.L.G. MacArthur.
1st December 1973	1866 Issue. Presented by P. Andrews.

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REPORT of the 145th Meeting of the Egypt Study Circle held at
'The George' 2 George Court Adelphi Strand London, WC2.
on the 3rd February 1973.

J.H.E. Gilbert presided and the following members were present. P. Andrews, K.C. Brown, D.H. Clarke, B.E. Conway, C. Gilders, G.F. Green, J.S. Horesh, C.W. Minett, R. Wheatley, and P.E. Whetter. Apologies were received from F.W. Benians, J. Firebrace, J. Hobbs, E.L.G. Macarthur, R.A.G. Potter and F.E. Woodland.

This was the first meeting held at this venue, and it was generally agreed that it was a great improvement from our earlier meeting place.

The main business of the meeting was the introduction of the Civil Censor markings from 1948, and was led by Peter Andrews. Peter produced Zerox sheets containing illustrations of forty of these markings which he had in his collection at that time, and these sheets enabled members present to mark up the earliest and latest dates recorded.

It is intended that an article be published in the Quarterly Circular giving full details.

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MEMBERSHIP

We give a sincere welcome to the following new members:-

E.S.C. No. 171	Major Clifford Cole	'Crythan' Sydenham Road CHELTENHAM GL52 6IA
172	C.E.H. Defriez	13 Myerscough Avenue ST. ANNES ON SEA Lancashire.
173	A. C. Crew	150 The Fairway LEIGH-ON-SEA Essex SS9 4QR
174	D. R. Beak	'Christies' 19 Salts Avenue Loose, MAIDSTONE Kent ME15 0AZ

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NOTES FROM THE KEEPER OF THE PHILATELIC RECORD

Charles W. Minett, (E.S.C. No. 77)

Egyptian Government Labels

Following the report on page 212 of the last Quarterly Circular (Volume VII No. 12), I have discovered in my own collection another label of the nature of those described. It is printed in black on white paper measuring approximately 38mm. x 24mm. from sheets perforated 10. Clearly it is a later printing in which the Arabic is above the English and the label's printing number is M. of C., 52, Q., whereas that on the earlier ones is 132 D.

Its usage is interesting as it 'sealed' a civilian Airgraph from Great Britain which had been processed in Cairo and folded in such a way that the message was obscured whilst the address panel remained visible, doubtless it was delivered without a covering envelope but whether this was the general practice in Egypt I do not know, in this country the final form was enclosed in an open-window envelope marked 'Airgraph'.

On the back of the airgraph is a handstruck rubber civil censorship mark 'M/74' of Cairo in black and the cds of 'CAIRO/AIRGRAPH' dated 6 AU. 45. 9-10.. also in black.



This particular type of censorship mark was not confined to this use as I have it with the same number on a surface mail cover from Alexandria via Cairo (B/s 23 MA. 45) to England. Other numbers in this type during mid-1945 I have on Air Letters, letters by Air Mail and on incoming foreign mail (in one case from Italy).

A further point, of very personal interest, lies in the fact that this airgraph was sent by John Gilbert to catch the last acceptance from Great Britain of this service which had become redundant due to the popularity of the new lightweight Air Letters. It is datestamped London 31 JY/45 and is addressed to the late F.S. Sillitoe (E.S.C. No. 24) C/o our old friend Jean Boulad of the Suez Canal Company at Ismailia.

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Balloon Flights

- 1) Military postal historians will recall that the British Army had flown its first balloon at Suakim in the Soudan on 25th March 1885. The Engineer's Balloon Corps under Major Templar and Lieutenant Mackenzie used it for reconnaissance work, the latter being the balloonist, and messages were passed between them written on small pieces of paper attached by a loop to a rope. (Reference: Cassell's 'History of the War in the Soudan' by James Grant, Volume IV, Chapter 10). It seems highly unlikely that any of these messages could have survived unless perhaps in the museum of the Royal Engineers or other military archives.
- 2) From Gordon Garrett (E.S.C. No. 144) has come a photocopy of an item stamped with a double circle cachet bearing the words 'Eugene GODARD Fils/ AERONAUTE' with, in the centre, a balloon.

The cover is in fact a 2 milliemes postal stationery wrapper (of 1889) cancelled 'ALEXANDRIE/D, ? X 94. T.6' and is addressed to Madam Godard in Paris - mentioning that Eugene Godard was one of a famous French ballooning family Gordon writes that he was unaware that he flew in Egypt and wonders whether he had a balloon on exhibition out there and if so whether souvenir cards were dropped. (There is nothing about this in our Record).

- 3) Nearly ten years later, on the 21st February 1904, there was an ascent from Cairo by the Swiss Capt. Spelterini in the balloon 'Stella' which flew over the pyramids and from which souvenir cards are reported to have been tossed down, one is said to be in a Swiss museum. Some details of this flight were recorded by Peter Smith and Gordon Garrett in 'Egyptian Topics' for November/December 1970 (Volume 3 No. 1 page 5).

WORLD WAR I, History

Recently John Heap (E.S.C. No. 90) came across Part 97 of 'The Great War' (edited by H. W. Wilson) and, most kindly, he has presented this to the Record. Embellished with photographs, artists' impressions, and a map the account covers the defence of Egypt in the Western Desert and along the Suez Canal up to January 1916 and includes the capture by the Senussi of the Captain and crew of the armed merchantman 'Tara' and the capture by the Dorset Yeomanry of the Turkish leader Gafar Pasha.

Should any member find a copy of Part 98 which presumably completes this chapter of the period we would be pleased to hear of it.

Hotel Postmarks

At the August meeting on this subject Jim Benians, who will lead the discussion, intends including not only the datestamps but also the Registration Marks, touching as well on the Hotel envelopes. Included under this heading are both Cook's Tourist Office and Simon Art~~is~~ Store.

As few examples of the Registration Marks have been recorded so far will members possessing them please send details to Jim or me, and at the same time include any new types and early or late dates.

EGYPTIAN PERFINS

by

Dr. A. Winter (E.S.C. No. 149)

'Perfins' are stamps punctured with the name of a firm. These stamps were not thought worth collecting until the last 10-15 years and generally thrown away by philatelists. That is why many of these stamps have become uncommon, and some of them even very scarce.

Perfins are not to be confused with Government punctured stamps and all our readers know of the definitive Zeheri No. 41 overprinted 'Sudan' in Arabic and French and punctured 'S G' (Sudan Government) in 1900. This official stamp is sometimes mistaken for a perfin (Societe Generale, a French bank).

The reason for making private punctures is rather prosaic. They were intended to avoid theft of stamps by employees who could no longer resell the stamps as the puncture showed the origin.

The inventor and patentee of the original machine to perforate stamps and documents with names and initials was an Englishman, Joseph Sloper, who was first licenced to do the job in England in 1868. These machines then appeared in most countries and were used to puncture stamps in France in 1876, in Egypt in January 1895, as we learn in 'L'Orient Philatelique' of July 1937.

The punctures were generally made on several sheets at a time, on recto or verso of stamps or on both sides when the sheet was folded, sometimes without much care, as we find some of them a cheval. It could also happen that a few pins got broken and this led to altered letters, or even changed a letter into another one (e.g. 'R' to 'P'). The punctures must not alter the figure expressing the value of the stamp, the holes size was limited by the size of the holes dividing one stamp from another. We read in the Egyptian Postal Guide of 1929 that a specimen of each 'perforation' had to be submitted to the General Post Office.

Perfins have, of course, a historical interest in themselves as they are no longer used, having been rendered obsolete by modern franking machines but on the other hand, they may be considered as an equivalent to an authenticity certificate. This is true for Alexandria and Fort Said high values of the second issue (French Post Offices) where forgeries are well known and where the puncture of the Credit Lyonnais (bank) should not devalue the stamp, but the contrary.

The description of each Perfin should follow a standardized format, giving the opportunity to describe new types and varieties and should include:

- 1) Height of perforated letters in millimetres.
- 2) Number of holes constituting each letter.
- 3) Existence of separating holes.
- 4) Possible extra indications (bars of letters, size of holes).

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- 5) Catalogue numbers of punctured stamps.
(Zeheri and Yvert in this article)
- 6) The cancellation which allows to situate the puncture.
- 7) Name of the issuing firm.
(Let us notice here the importance of keeping perfins on covers with commercial heading).

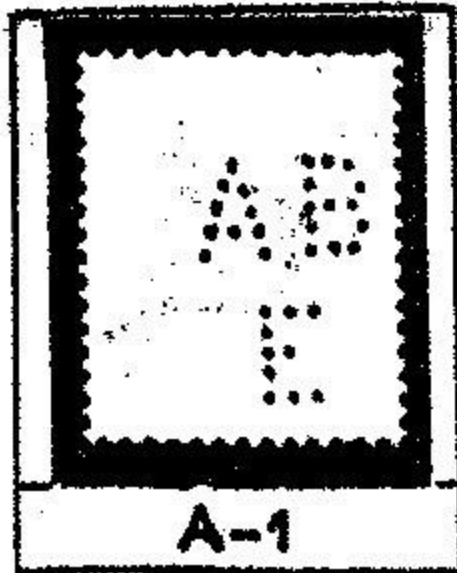
In the present study the first firm to use perfins was Thomas Cook and Sons Limited (on Zeheri No. 34 cancelled 6-XI-96) and latest the Vacuum Oil Company (stamps of 1958), while the record of long life is held by the 'Societie Anonyme du Behera' (extreme cancellations 1909-1956).

As can be seen on the illustrations, each pattern has been given a serial number which facilitates quotation and avoids errors.

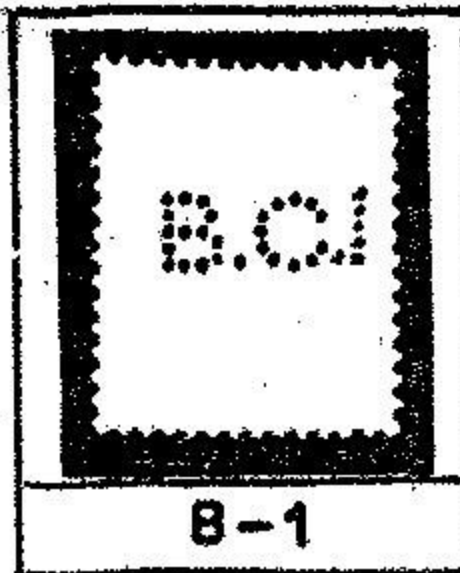
Here follows the list of perfins recorded to date, after 3 years of collecting material.

Only main characteristics are indicated. A question mark after a firm's name means confirmation of a cover is needed.

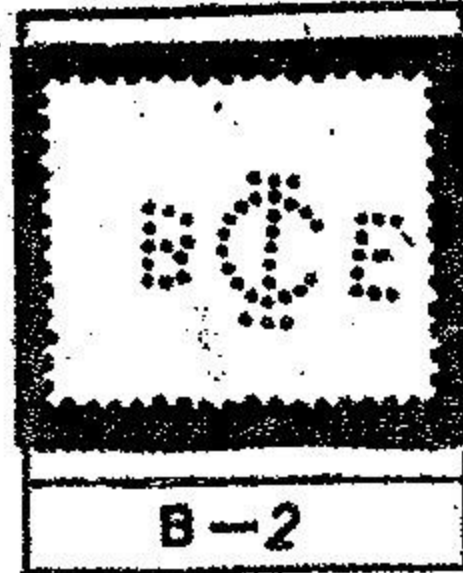
- A-1 Height 6mm. 'A' 10 holes; 'B' 13 holes; 'E' 10 holes.
On Zeheri 34/85. Firm: Anglo Belgian Co. of Egypt Ltd. ?
- B-1 Height 4.5mm. 'B' 14 holes; 'C' 11 holes; 'I' 5 holes.
Period after 'B' and 'C'.
Banca Commerciale Italiana.
- B-2 Height (B and E) 5.5mm., (C) 7.5mm., (I) 9.5mm.
'B' 12 holes; 'C' 16 holes; 'I' 13 holes; 'E' 10 holes.
'C' and 'I' ligatured.
On Z.85/113. Banca Commerciale Italiana per l'Egitto.
- B-3 Height 8mm. 'B' 16 holes; 'I' 10 holes; 'E' 14 holes.
Period after each letter.
On Z. 100/158. Banca Italo-Egiziana.
- B-4 Height 8mm. 'B' 14 holes; 'M' 21 holes.
Period after each letter.
On Z.36c and Alexandrie 25/30. Banque Mosseri ?
- C-1 Height 4.5mm. 'C' 9 holes; 'L' 7 holes; 'A' 10 holes.
On Z. 38/135 and Alexandrie 29/78. Credit Lyonnais Alexandrie.
- C-2 Height 4.5mm. 'C' 9 holes; 'L' 7 holes; 'C' 9 holes.
On Z. 34c/134. Credit Lyonnais le Caire.
- C-3 Height 6.5mm. 'C' 8 holes; 'N' 13 holes.
On 40. Comptoir National d'Escompte.
- C-4 Height 8.5mm. 'C' 13 holes; 'N' 19 holes.
Period after each letter. " " " "
- C-5 Height 8.5mm. 'C' 13 holes; 'N' 20 holes.
On 110-197 and Curve of 'C' different to C-4.
Port Said 70. " " " "
- C-6 Height 5.5mm. 'C' 8 holes; '&' 14 holes; 'C' 8 holes; 'O' 4 holes.
On 42. 2 final dots under 'O'.
Carver Brothers and Co. Ltd. ?
- QC VIII



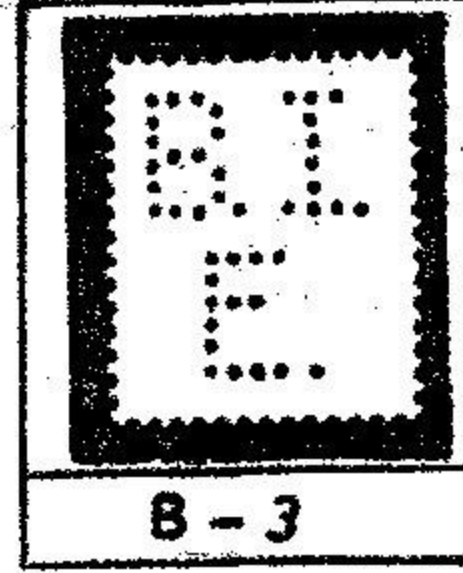
A-1



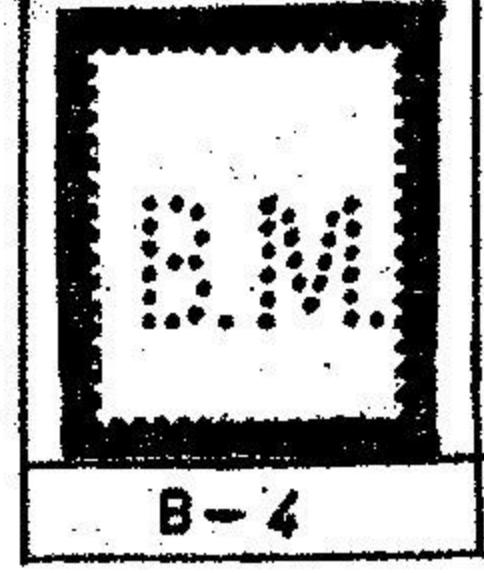
B-1



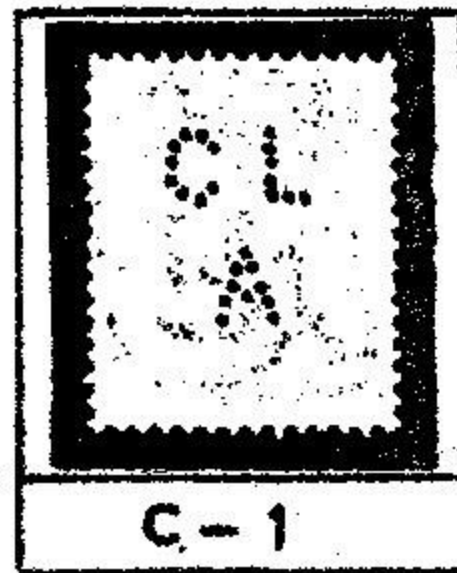
B-2



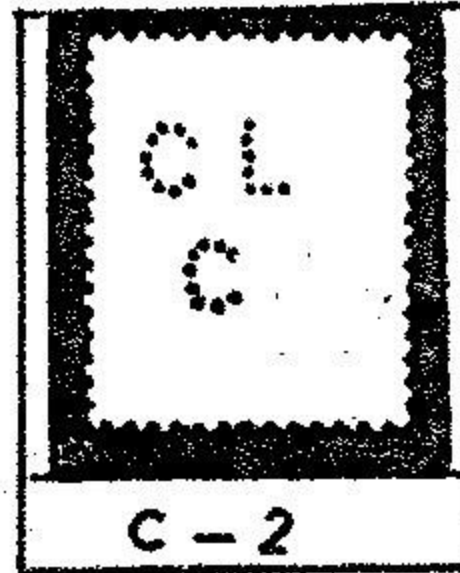
B-3



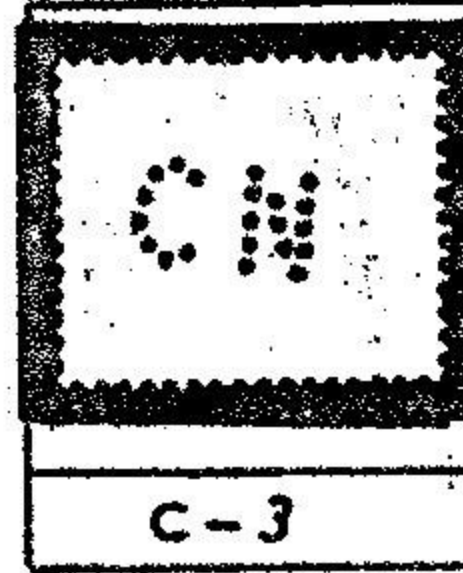
B-4



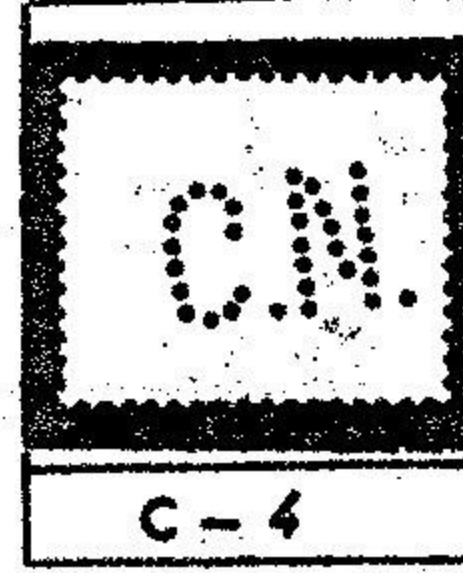
C-1



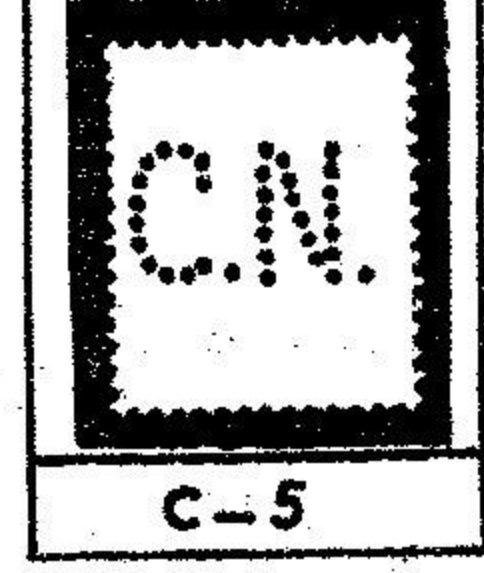
C-2



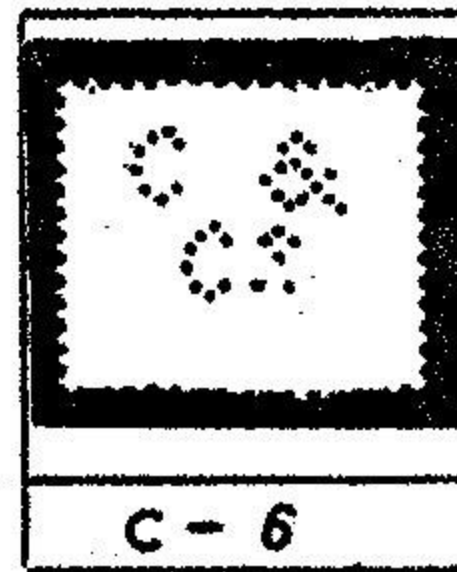
C-3



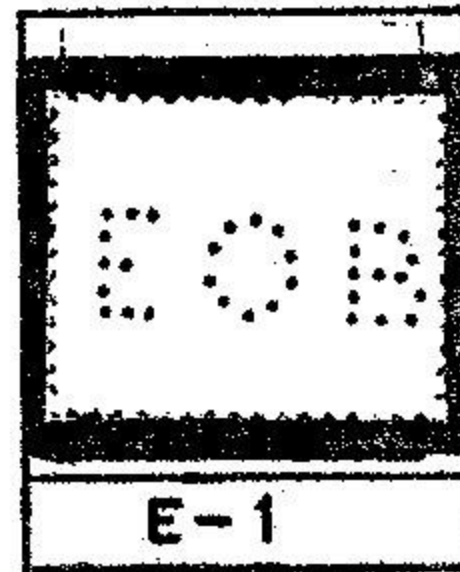
C-4



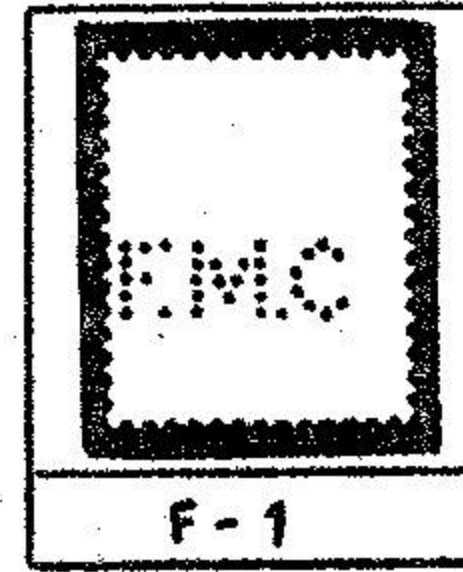
C-5



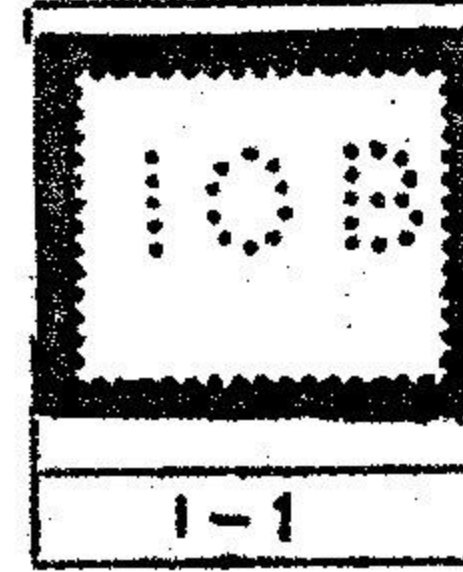
C-6



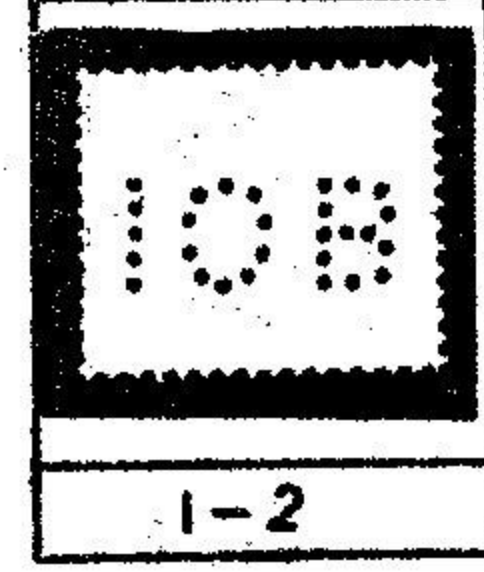
E-1



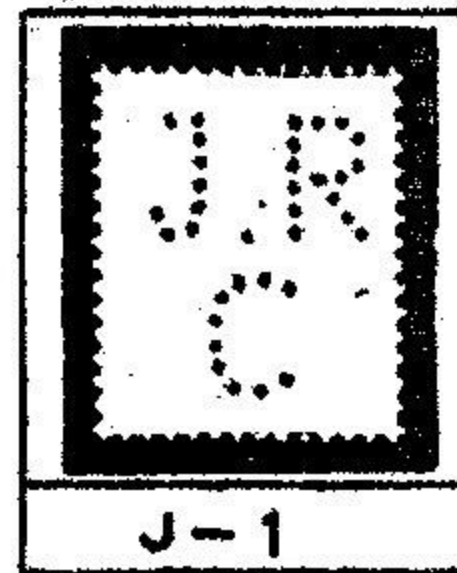
F-1



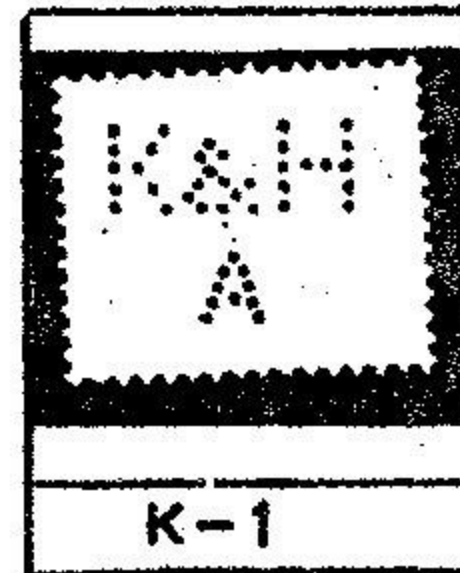
I-1



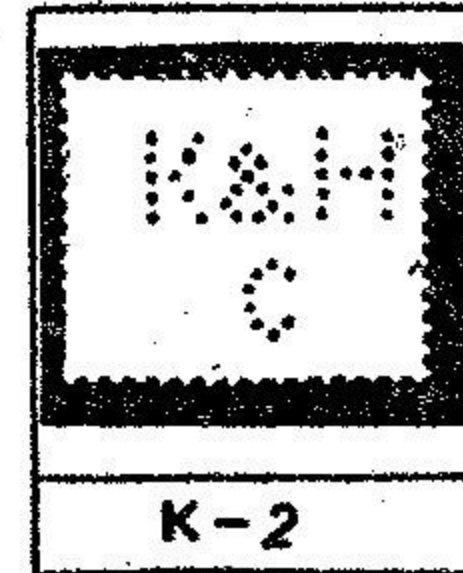
I-2



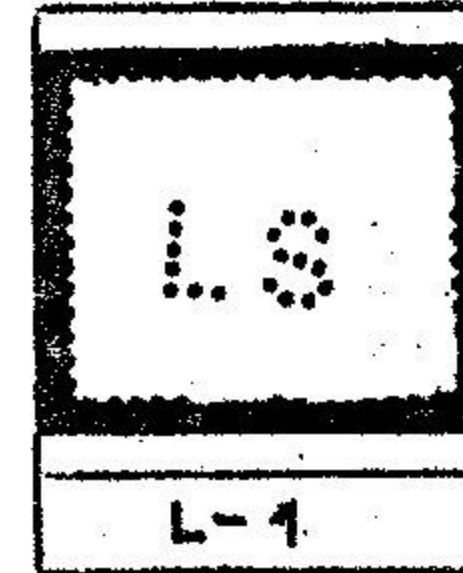
J-1



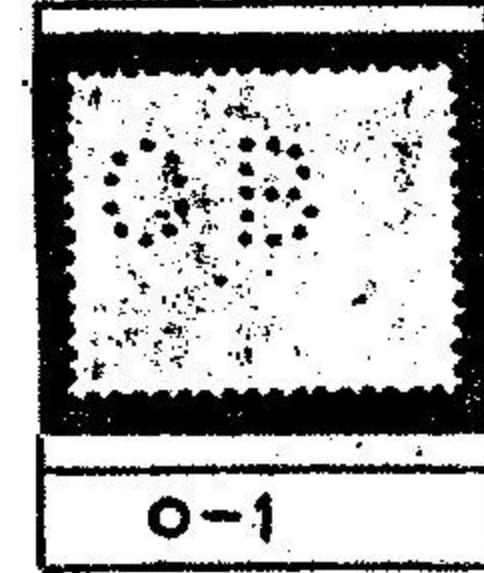
K-1



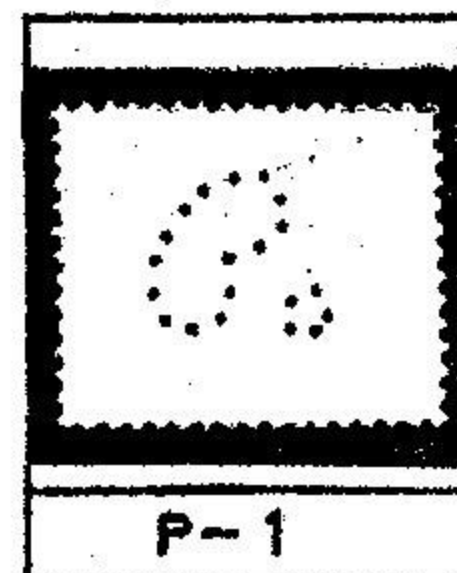
K-2



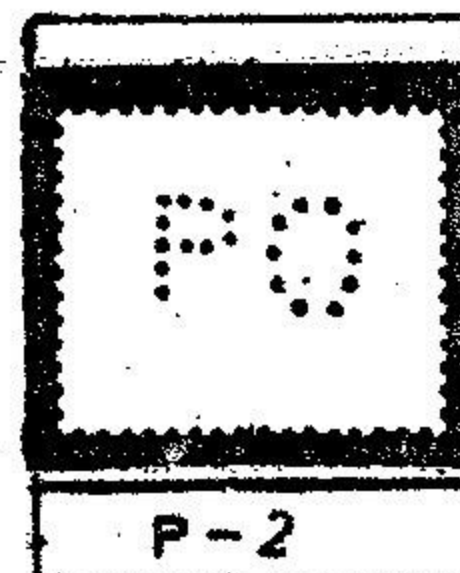
L-1



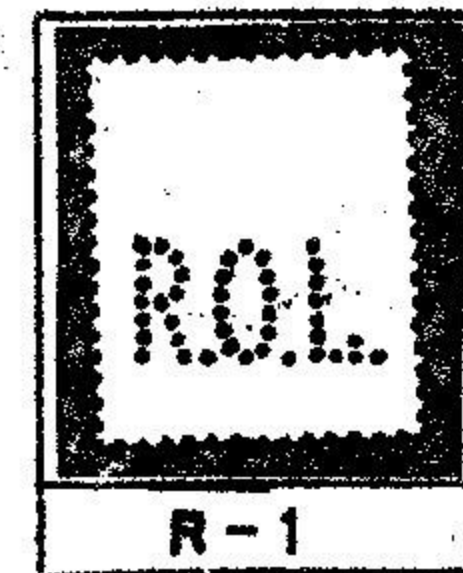
O-1



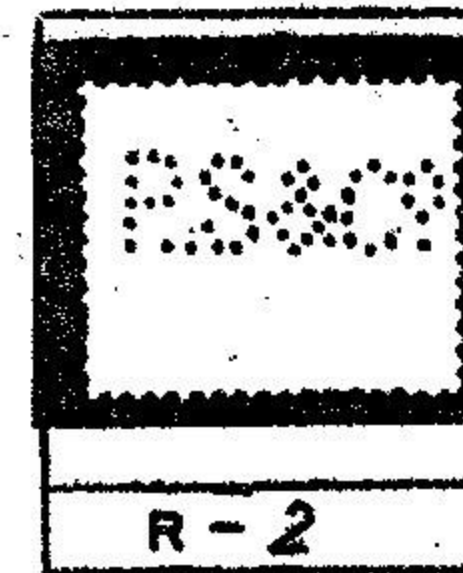
P-1



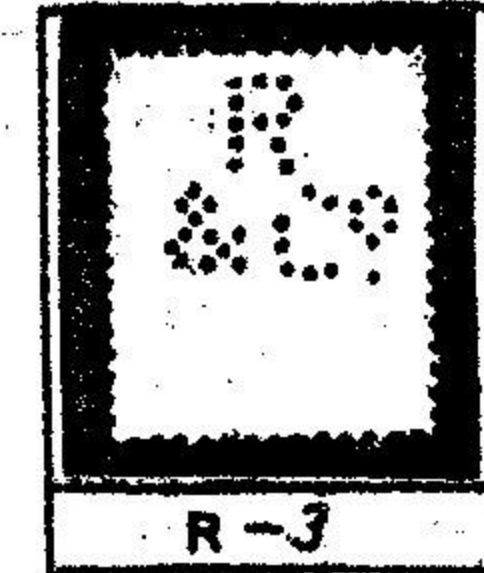
P-2



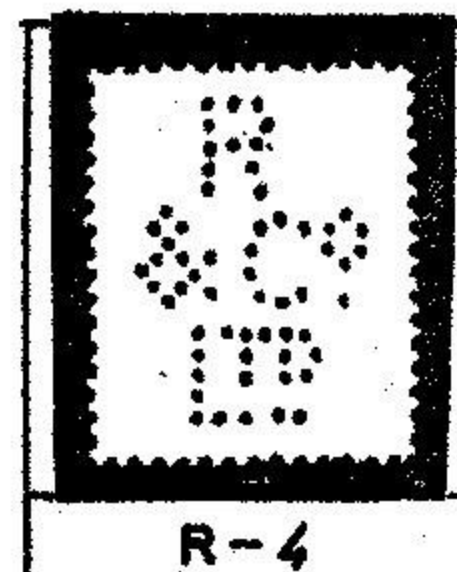
R-1



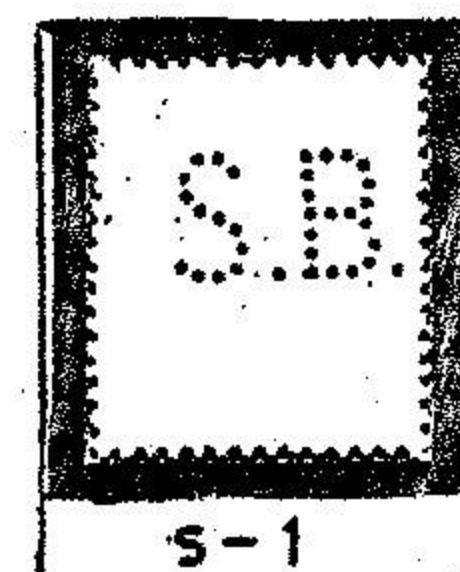
R-2



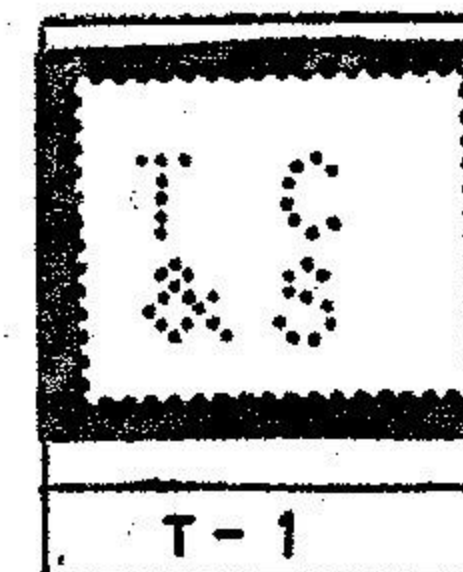
R-3



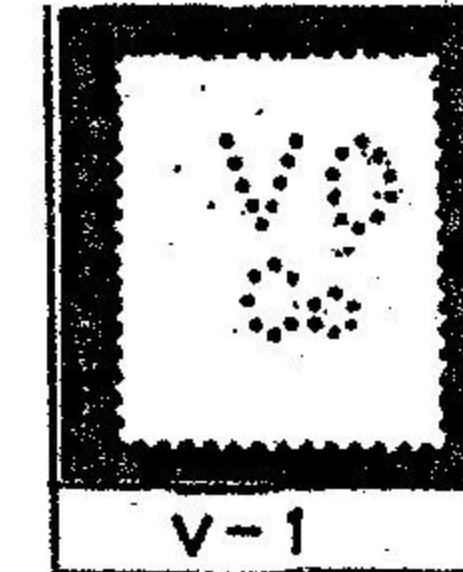
R-4



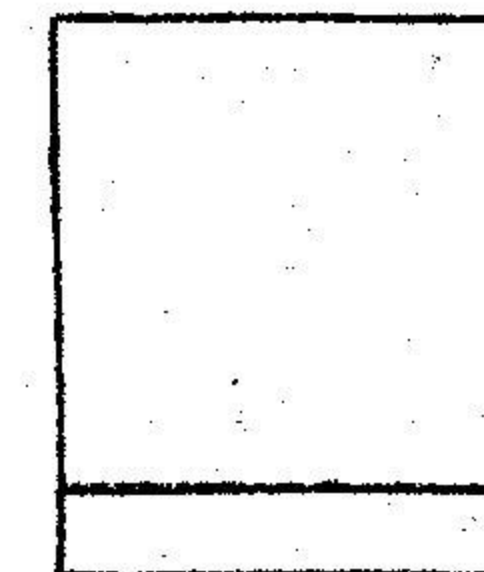
S-1



T-1



V-1



- E-1 Height 6.5mm. 'E' 10 holes; 'O' 10 holes; 'B' 13 holes.
On Alexandrie 27. Etablissements Orosdi-Back ?
- F-1 Height 4.5mm. 'F' 8 holes; 'M' 15 holes; 'C' 8 holes.
Period after 'F' and 'M'.
- I-1 Height 7mm.) 'I' 5 holes; 'O' 10 holes; 'B' 13 holes.
I-2 7.5mm.) On 46/89 Imperial Ottoman Bank.
- J-1 Height 7.5mm. 'J' 9 holes; 'K' 15 holes; 'C' 10 holes.
Period after 'J'.
- K-1 Height 'K' 'H' 5.5mm. '&' 'A' 5mm. 'K' 10 holes; '&' 12 holes;
'H' 12 holes; 'A' 10 holes.
On 35/42
- K-2 as K-1 but 'C' 8 holes.
- L-1 Height 6mm. 'L' 7 holes; 'S' 11 holes.
L. Savon and Co. Ltd. ?
- O-1 Height 7mm. 'O' 10 holes; 'B' 13 holes.
On 63/233 Ottoman Bank.
- P-1 Appears to be a fancy 'P' 15 holes; with a period
as a small 'O' 5 holes.
- P-2 Height 6mm. 'P' 11 holes; 'O' 10 holes.
On 127/140 Philips Orient S.A.
- R-1 Height 7.5mm. 'R' 15 holes; 'O' 14 holes; 'L' 10 holes.
On 40 Period after each letter.
Revue l'Orient Litteraire ?
- R-2 Height 6mm. 'R' 11 holes (1 pin missing); 'S' 11 holes;
'&' 13 holes; 'C' 8 holes; 'O' 6 holes.
Period after 'R' and under 'O'.
On 41a (cancelled Alexandria 1896).
- R-3 Height 'R' '&' 6mm. 'C' 6.5mm. 'O' 3.5mm.
On 45/129 Reinhardt and Co..
- R-4 Height 5.5mm. 'R' 12 holes; '&' 9 holes; 'C' 8 holes; 'O' 6 holes
'L' 7 holes; 'T' 5 holes; 'D' 6 holes.
Period under 'O', 2 under 'TD'.
Reinhardt and Co. Ltd. ?
- S-1 Height 8mm. 'S' 13 holes; 'B' 19 holes.
On 39/236 Period after each letter.
Societe anonyme du Behera.
- T-1 Height 6.5mm. 'T' 7 holes; 'C' 8 holes; '&' 14 holes; 'S' 10 holes
On 34/108 Thomas Cook and Son.
- V-1 Height 6mm. 'V' 9 holes; 'O' 10 holes; 'C' 7 holes; 'O' 6 holes.
On 48, commemorative 193. Vacuum Oil Co..

May I finally thank all the collectors, both members of the Circle and others, who have helped me in this study.

QC VIII

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Royal Engineers in Egypt
and Bechuanaland

9

by

John Firebrace
(E.S.C. No. 71)

Peter Smith's cover bearing the c.d.s. of Dongola illustrated in the Quarterly Circular Volume VII No. 12, December 1972, page 212, is of very great interest.

It would enhance the interest if we could find who wrote the letter to R.W. Anstruther, for a slightly earlier letter exists in my collection addressed to him. It is not of very great interest of itself, from an Egyptian point of view. It was written from Cairo on 2nd December 1884 addressed to him as 'Lieutenant, Royal Engineers, Bechuanaland Expedition, Cape Town, South Africa', and is franked by a pair of one piastre adhesives. It bears transit markings of Cape Colony and Orange River Station, as well as the Kimberley c.d.s. of JA 7 85, all on reverse. On the front it also bears the oval numeral No. 1 of Kimberley (see Hobson Lowe Encyclopaedia Volume II, Africa - 'Griqualand West', page 51, for illustration) and in manuscript 'Barkly West'. The handwriting is different from both the original and the forwarding address on Peter Smith's cover.

Anstruther was probably a Telegraph specialist. He took part in the Egyptian Campaign of 1882, serving in C Troop, 26 Field Company. He opened up the permanent telegraph line from Ismailia to Suez. He was present at the battle of Tel el Kebir and was awarded the Egypt Medal with clasp and the Khedive's bronze star.

Troops for the Bechuanaland Expedition of 1885 began arriving in Cape Town in December 1884. Anstruther served with the Mounted Section of the Telegraph Battalion.

I am grateful to Lieutenant Colonel J. F. Inglefield-Watson, R.E., who in 1965 sent me an extract concerning the Bechuanaland Expedition from the 'History of the Corps of Royal Engineers' Volume II page 41.

It seems probable that the writer of Peter Smith's cover was a fellow officer of Anstruther's serving in the Nile Expedition of 1884-85. There were 48 R.E. Officers serving during the winter. See 'The Royal Engineers in Egypt and the Sudan' by Lt. Col. E.W.C. Sandes, D.S.O., M.C., R.E.. Chapter IV.

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Colour Trials of the
'King of Egypt and Sudan' Overprint

by

P.A.S. Smith (E.S.C. No. 74)

In the Quarterly Circular for June 1972 (Volume VII No. 10) 'Pip' Whetter listed some colour trials extending the list that appeared in L'Orient Philatelique (No. 124). I think there is a misunderstanding over the names of colours, and I believe I can clear it up, because I now have in my possession the collection from which I believe Pip made his observations. This collection appeared at a Harmer auction last summer, and Pip kindly bid on it (successfully) on my behalf.

To put in bluntly, I do not think there is any such thing as a 'violet' overprint, issued or trial. 'Violet' is the colour that Gibbons uses to describe the 10 milliemes 'Boy King', the 10 milliemes King Farouk Air Mail, etc.. It is the colour of the flower, and is a very bluish shade. The collection at hand was neatly written up by the unknown former owner, who has identified on the album pages various colour trials as 'red-violet', 'violet', or 'crimson'. In every case these correspond to the color that I listed as 'red' in L'Orient Philatelique, and they correspond exactly to the color of the overprint on the issued stamps where Gibbons lists the overprint as 'red'. How can this be?

There are two reasons that may account for this discrepancy. The most important is that these overprints are on coloured stamps, with little or no white paper for background. The colours are thus distorted showing through the transparent overprinting ink, and by the psychological effect of seeing the overprint with a massive surround of a different colour. The lesser reason is that proper observation of colour is often difficult in indoor lighting - especially when it is as poor as often found in auctioneer's premises!

I have carefully examined all specimens with a good glass, concentrating on such areas as have a bit of white background or, at least, faintly coloured background, using a Gibbons colour guide for comparison. The 'red-violets', 'violets', and 'carmines' all come out to be shades of carmine or carmine-red. The colours are a very good match for the overprint on the 1957 Al-Azhar commemorative, which falls on a white background. I suggest, therefore, that there are actually only three additions that should be made to the list in 'L'Orient Philatelique': 4 milliemes and 17 milliemes 'ordinary' with green overprint, and 50 millieme 'official' with black overprint.

I do not have a specimen of the 50 milliemes 'official' with blue overprint, and made the listing in 'L'Orient Philatelique' from a once-only inspection of a collection I was shown at an exhibition. Dark Blue is easily mistaken for black, and I may have made a mistake. Until a confirmed example of blue is reported, the listing should therefore be regarded as questionable.

QC VIII

There was apparently some experimentation with shades of 'red', for I have two copies of the 1 millieme 'ordinary' that most probably came from different sheets, judging by small differences in the centering of the stamp and overprint. One overprint is best described as 'carmine' the other as 'carmine-red'. I also have two of the 3 milliemes in which the positioning of the overprint is quite different one from the other. One overprint is carmine, the other almost scarlet. The 50 milliemes 'official' also comes in carmine and carmine-red.

The ease of confusion of color names for the overprint is illustrated nicely by the fact that the issued overprints that Gibbons and Zeheri describe as 'red' are described in the Scott catalogue as 'red-violet', and are sometimes listed in auction catalogues as 'magenta'. The issued stamps, of course, are subject to a considerable amount of variation, owing to the quantities that were printed. To my knowledge, however, none exist that could truly be called 'magenta' when properly examined.

The variation in shade of the green overprints is recognised in Zeheri for both the 10 milliemes and 30 milliemes Air Mail stamps ('green' or 'olive'), and in the Scott catalogue for the 30 milliemes only ('green' or 'dark green').

In closing it is perhaps of interest to note that there does exist a 'violet' overprint in Egyptian philately, it appears on the 100 milliemes Graf Zeppelin stamps.

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