

EGYPT STUDY CIRCLE

THE QUARTERLY CIRCULAR

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FUTURE MEETINGS

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|-------------------|-----|--|
| 3rd August 1974   | ... | Hotel Postmarks - Part 2<br>Hotels of the Upper Nile and<br>other proprietary markings.<br>F. W. Benians.  |
| 5th October 1974  | ... | President's Day cancelled.<br>Alternative agenda to be considered, but<br>the proposed publication of chapters<br>of 'The Book' will be discussed. |
| 7th December 1974 | ... | Interpostal Seals - Part 2<br>D. Clarke and B. Conway.   |

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The Chairman's Page

Everyone of you will have, by now, received my personal appeal for co-operation in producing, in chapter form, the 'Book'. I am very happy to report that over fifty per-cent have replied to date. If you have not replied by the time you read this, I would once again ask you to answer - even a negative return is better than silence. The answers so far are extremely interesting, and my apologies for leaving out the Interpostal Seals and the Censor Marks. Two other suggestions made were a) The Gaza Strip and b) Mail from the Suez Imprisoned Ships. Are there any other fields being studied? Let me know so that we can fit them in.

Bert Conway has taken away my L'Orient Philatelique numbers and will very soon produce a subject index; this with the Quarterly Circular index produced by Charles Minett will be among the most necessary initial requirements of researchers.

To further this project, and to publish a high class product, we will now need skills other than philatelic. We need advice on finance, production and publishing. A sub-committee, headed by Ron Potter, is being set up and if you have the qualification, or even if you have the right connections, please write to Ron as he will need all the help possible in this most difficult task.

I regret very much to announce that President's Day, scheduled for the 5th October, has had to be cancelled. Col. Danson is apparently very ill, and his solicitor, replying to my letter to Col. Danson, states that in the circumstances he cannot allow the material needed for the occasion to be taken away. The 5th October will now revert to its original position in our programme and on the day we will discuss 'The Book'. Your advice and opinion are earnestly sought so do please try and attend.

I had a most enjoyable day in Basle at Internaba on the 11th July, at which exhibition our members Emile Antonini, Jean Boulad D'Humieres, and Abdullah Mishrick, among others, were present. There were only four collections of Egypt shown, but each of them won an award. The Large Gold went to Antonini for his near perfect display, he has added some notable pieces to his collection since Philympia, and the collection was a real joy to behold. Rudi Jeidel won the small Gold, his display of pre-stamp material was wonderful including Napoleonic, Overland and Waghorns in profusion. Abdullah Mishrick, displaying for the first time, put up a really remarkable and unique showing of Essays and Proofs up to 1906. He was only given four frames whereas he had enough material for at least eight, or twelve... This, coupled with the fact that such material had not been displayed before, may have made the judges hesitant and he was awarded the Vermeil. However, official recognition was given by means of a special mention and a Gold Medal from the Union of South

Continued on page 70.

REPORT of the 151st Meeting of the Egypt Study Circle, held at 'The George', 2 George Court, Strand, London WC2, on the 6th April 1974.

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Major E.L.G. MacArthur, M.C., C. de G., presided, and the following members were present:-

C.W. Minett, D. Turton, P. Andrews, G.P. Green, P.E. Whetter, K.C. Brown, P. Woodland, B. Conway, D. Clarke, C. Defriez, D. Grover and S. Raouf. Apologies for absence were received from R.A.G. Potter and J.S. Horesh.

The Chairman welcomed new members Mr. Defriez (St. Annes on Sea), Mr. Grover (Loughborough), and Mr. Raouf (Egypt).

The Chairman gave a closing report on the subject of the previous meeting - The Third Issue - and stated that photographs of the stereos of the 20 paras typograph plated sheet were available from the Keeper of the Record.

A photograph of exhibits by C.Th.J. Hooghuis (ESC No. 126), which were awarded 2nd place at Barcelona and 3rd in the Netherlands in 1973, was passed round.

The Chairman led a discussion concerning finances and ever rising production costs of the Quarterly Circular, as a result of which it was agreed that the subscription would be £3 per annum from January 1975. Mr. Whetter advised that owing to increased costs of L'Orient Philatelique subscriptions to the Societe Philatelique d'Egypte had been increased to £1.

Propositions from the Chair regarding an annual 'Presidents Day', and the publication of a list of members together with their interests, were referred to in the last number of the Quarterly Circular (No. 89, March 1974, page 48).

The main subject of the meeting was the 1922 Crown Overprints which was conducted by Peter Andrews. Much fine material (loaned by Col. Danson) was inspected and a lucid account of the four types with their numerous sub-divisions was given by Peter. He provided members with a typed precis of the subject for which much appreciation was expressed.

The Chairman read a letter from Donald Gilbert, the son of the late John Gilbert, and members learned that John had donated his reference books and New Issues collection to the Circle. Much appreciation was expressed. The Chairman proposed that the bound volumes of L'Orient Philatelique and the Quarterly Circular be designated the 'Chairman's Set' and they would be added to. Mr. Clarke volunteered to mount and write up the New Issue collection.

Paul Green.

Our Chairman presided, and the following members were present:-  
J. Firebrace, C. Minett, P. Andrews, K. Brown, P. Woodland, B. Conway,  
D. Clarke, C. Defriez, D. Grover, and J. Sears.

Apologies for absence were received from R. Potter, G. Turton and  
F. Benians.

The Secretary asked members if they had now received the 'Data  
Sheets' (details of postal markings, the study under the leadership of  
R. S. Blomfield - ESC No. 15) as all had been circulated. Should any  
member require these please contact the Secretary.

Mention was made of the catalogue of Postal Stationery of the  
Sudan, by Higgins and Gage, which would be available on request.  
For further information please contact the Keeper of the Record.

The Chairman was pleased to introduce our new member Mr. John  
Sears.

The Chairman requested that any members bringing pertinent material  
to a meeting should present it half an hour before the commencement  
of discussion on the subject so that it could be included.

The question of back numbers of L'Orient Philatelique was raised,  
and all requests should be made to the Editor of the Quarterly Circular  
who kept a record of back numbers required. These become available  
from time to time and are distributed in rotation. (The same applies,  
of course, to back numbers of the Quarterly Circular - stocks of the  
last few years are extensive).

The main subject of the meeting was then introduced by John  
Firebrace (ESC No. 71), who gave a most interesting and informative  
display of 'The British in Egypt 1882 and 1884/85'.

Before the meeting was closed the subject of 'The Book' was raised.  
It was a matter of concern to all that many articles were appearing  
throughout the World, using the results of researches carried out by  
members on behalf of the Circle and indeed in some cases using Circle  
Records as source of information, without giving credits where due. The  
Chairman stated, with the agreement of all present, that he would take  
immediate steps towards publication of some parts of our studies.

The meeting was closed at 7.15 p.m..

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NOTES FROM THE KEEPER OF THE PHILATELIC RECORD

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

Cancellations of Air Mail Etiquettes, 1930-1936.

Although the article on pages 71 - 72 was not illustrated, we are now able to provide drawings of the three cancellations to which reference was made, together with further details of similar examples.



a) The St. Andrew's Cross (applied in Egypt).

Registered air mail cover from Cairo 11 JU 34 (struck twice) to Germany (arr. 17 JU 34) with ms 'Via Imperial Airways'. The air mail etiquette (in English and French) has been cancelled by the St. Andrew's Cross. However, a second etiquette (in Arabic and French) has been stuck over the second strike of the cds. Rate 53 milliemes. (P. Andrew's collection - appropriately enough!).

b) Karachi - Cancelled

This is of course purely an Indian mark. One example dated 8 OCT 34 occurs cancelling a ms 'Imperial Air Service' on a cover from Port Said 5 OC 34 via Cairo to Bombay (arr. 11 OCT 34). Rate 60 milliemes. (Minett collection).

Incidentally, this cachet is found on some World War II covers from Egypt addressed to India. Military covers of January 1941 (40 milliemes concession rate) to Chaklala and May 1942 (8 annas concession rate) to Murree are recorded (Firebrace and Minett collections) together with a civilian cover of March 1942 (47 milliemes rate) to Ranikhet (Minett collection).

c) Parallel Bars (applied in Egypt)

The April 1931 cover described by Mr. Hunwicks is a twin of one in the collection of the late John Gilbert. Addressed to Australia each was franked at the 27 milliemes rate.

Another example from Port Said (7 OC 30) via Cairo and addressed

to Bombay (arr. 14 OC 34) carried a rate of 30 milliemes (Gilbert collection).

d) Red Bars (applied in Egypt) . Not illustrated.

A cover from Cairo 23 NO 36 to Johannesburg with the rate of 33 milliemes has what appear to be parallel red bars approximately 55 x 7 mms. spaced 5 mms. apart cancelling one stamp (30 milliemes) but not the air mail etiquette. (Minett collection).

Clearly this subject needs further research together with a detailed consideration of the rather complicated rates.

The 'B.A./E.' Killer of the 1882 revolt (See Quarterly Circular VIII page 45. December 1973).

We are grateful to R. Seymour Blomfield (E.S.C. No. 15) for a photo-copy of a third example of this rare thirteen-bar cancellation on a Queen Victoria 1d. lilac (16 dots) on small piece. The strike is almost complete and on it there is superimposed the cds of the BRITISH POST OFFICE/EGYPT ?/OC 20(?)/82.

Note: On page 46 of the QC VIII, second line, there is an error. Six impressions (not four) of the seven-bar handstamps were made on 25th February 1885 at the G.P.O., London.

Egyptian Government Labels

Further to the reports published in the QC VII page 212 and QC VIII pages 3 and 26, I have found examples of these labels used on local correspondence from the Ministry of Communications to the late Capt. Douglas McNeill (ESC No. 31) at the time when he was preparing notes on the overprinted official stamps.

Three letters dated 14th April, 26th April and 27th May 1939, on official foolscap paper of the Ports and Lights Administration, have been folded each to form an entire with the address showing and fastened by means of two or more of the labels. All three have received the dispatch mark of RAS EL TIN/T.



It will be noticed that the label is similar to the one illustrated on page 213 (QC VIII) and bears the same form number but has the Arabic above the English, apparently in accordance with Government policy then current. (Note: Generally speaking, although there are exceptions, the positioning of Arabic placenames in the upper segments of datestamps appears to date from c. 1914).

It is of interest to speculate whether Arabic and French were introduced on any subsequent issue of the label.

DETAINED IN ALEXANDRIA IN 1940 - 1943

by

Dr. A. Winter (ESC No. 149)

At the beginning of the Second World war, the conditions of the armistice asked by France came into force on 25 June 1940.

At that time a French fleet was anchored in the port of Alexandria; it was the squadron of the Eastern Mediterranean, called more briefly "X Force". This fleet was then detained in the port by the British until June 1943.

It included the following ships: the battle-ship 'Lorraine', the cruisers 'Duquesne' (flagship), 'Tourville', 'Suffren', 'Duguay-Trouin', the small destroyers 'Basque', 'Forbin', 'Fortune', the net-layer 'Gladiateur'. This last managed to leave Alexandria and rejoined Beirut on 25 June 1940. The day after, a submarine, the 'Protee', joined the other ships on station at Alexandria.

The battleship 'Provence' was not with the fleet which remained in Egypt, which is contrary to what Mnsr. Gabriel Boulad supposed in 'L'Orient Philatelique' of January 1952, page 324. As a matter of fact the 'Provence' was scuttled with the French fleet in Toulon on the 27th November 1942.

The Naval Postal Agencies of X Force.

These agencies were installed on board ships which had a crew of at least 500 men, in accordance with the regulations of all the French fleet.

The naval postal agency used the name of the ship on board which it was established. For the X Force only five ships were important enough to possess an agency: They were the battleship 'Lorraine', and the cruisers 'Duquesne', 'Tourville', 'Duguay-Trouin', and 'Suffren'. The agency was managed by an authorised postman, who had been trained in a civil post office.

The date stamps used

These are quite distinctive, of an hexagonal shape with a periphery of broken lines (see illustration).

The distance between two parallel sides is 26 mm.. In the upper part we find the name of the ship including, in some cases, a hyphen, and in the lower part a small anchor of varying shape. The indication of the hour of collection of the civil markings is replaced here by a star. These markings are, as a rule, struck in black. The letters coming from ships the crew of which were under

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Conveyance of the Mail

A general convention signed on 7th July 1940 between the French vice-admiral being in command of X Force and the British admiral commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean included the freedom of French sailors to go ashore and correspond by letter, without prejudice of the censorship rules.

i) Mail from Egypt to France The transmission of the mail towards France was effected along different routes and with varying degrees of success.

At the beginning (July - August 1940), the sailors entrusted their letters to small boats sailing to and fro between Alexandria and Beirut where the letters were sent, or gave them directly to the Egyptian post-office, the letters bearing then only Egyptian stamps with civil cancellations and Egyptian and/or British military censorship markings. It was also at that time that the French steamers 'Providence' (see reproduction of its marking in 'L'Orient Philatelique' Number 77 page 323) and 'Athos II' left Alexandria, taking the reservist personnel of X fleet home to France; those ships may have carried some mail.

But the usual conveyance was done by road, between Alexandria and Beirut, then by rail through Turkey, the Balkans and Austria. These letters bear various English, French and German censorship markings. The journey was long and the sailors often did not receive an answer until three months after the despatch of their letters.

These delays were increased again when military operations made the usual ways unfit. The letters were then sent through the Cape of Good Hope, Great Britain, Portugal and Spain; they bear in these cases South African censorship markings. The cycle - letter and answer - lasted at least six months.

Sometimes, the armistice commissions authorized the direct transport of letters between Beirut and Marseilles by sea or air. In these cases, it seems Egyptian markings and censorship bands only are found on letters. Most letters travelled post-free (there is often a manuscript 'F.M.' - Franchise Militaire).

At the end of 1941, beginning of 1942, a clear improvement occurred in the transmission of the mail by using the British air-line to London, and the mail when passing through Lisbon was placed in the hands of the British Ambassador, then of the French representative who sent the letters to France by pouch. When they arrived at the French Admiralty in Vichy they received on the verso a handstamp on five lines with a number comprising six figures. There are several kinds of these. The text is: "Pour parvenir par meme voie/votre reponse doit peser/moins de 5 gr. et reproduire/avant l'adresse le num ro de/6 chiffres qui l/accompagne" which translates "To be

transmitted by the same way/your answer must weigh/less than 5 gr. <sup>69</sup>  
and indicate/before the address the number of/6 figures which goes  
with it".

Pour parvenir par même voie  
votre réponse doit peser  
moins de 5 gr. et reproduire  
avant l'adresse le numéro de  
6 chiffres qui l'accompagne.

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ii) Mail addressed to Egypt The letters coming from France  
were addressed as follows:  
Name of the addressee, name of the ship, and the endorsement "Marine  
Beyrouth - Marseille Gare Etranger" or only this last indication.

They travelled post-free, sometimes authorised by a manuscript  
"F.M." or by a marking "Marine Nationale - (anchor) - S.L.O.M.  
Marseille" or by the usual handstamp "Marine Nationale - (anchor) -  
Service a la Mer".

On arrival, the letters received different censorship markings  
and sometimes a special cachet on two lines "Batiments Francais  
Stationnes/a Alexandrie". The letters sent by air mail from France  
could also have a large handstamp "FRENCH NAVY" struck in purple by  
the British post. These two markings are illustrated in "L'Orient  
Philatelique" No. 77 page 324.

**FRENCH NAVY**

Bâtiments Français stationnés  
& ALEXANDRIE

Another cachet has been seen on a letter sent from Turkey on  
18th September 1942 to a sailor of the 'Lorraine': "SERVICES/des  
belligerants internes".

Some of these letters unfortunately never reached their  
destination and were stopped in Beirut (stamp "Poste aux Armees"  
with or without number 600 and often the civil cds of Beirut R.P.)  
then returned to the sender. A red cachet on two lines was sometimes  
put by the German post "ZURUCK/Retour".

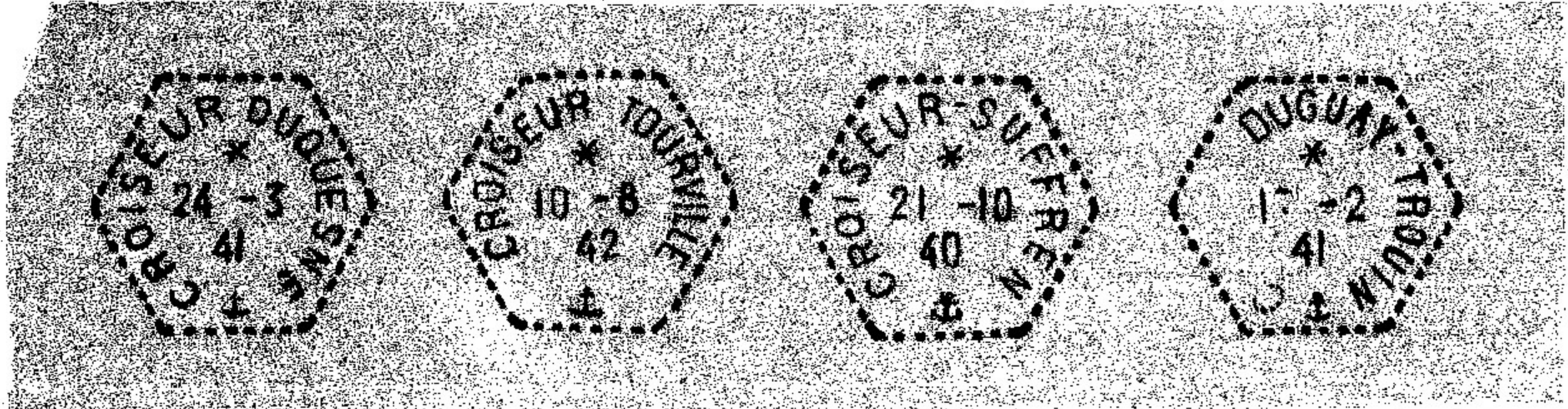
#### Transmission of the news through wireless

Once a week a communication was established by wireless between  
the cruiser 'Duquesne' and the French Navy in Toulon and Vichy.

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The sailors messages, necessarily very short, were transmitted by night 'in the clear'. Upon receipt, they were copied onto postcards and transmitted to their destination. This system was reciprocal.

No postcards containing such messages are recorded to date.



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### The Chairman's Page

Continued from page 62.

Africa for a most unusual and outstanding display. Hans Ebert of Austria gained a silver award.

Since Internaba was celebrating the Centenary of the Universal Postal Union, Postal Administrations from all over the World were showing, in a non-competitive class, some of the stamps produced by them. I was very much impressed by the Egyptian Postal Administration's effort; the artistry and selection of material made such a wonderful combination, that they outshone everything in their vicinity. No wonder more and more people are finding Egypt a very satisfying and interesting country to collect.

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CANCELLATIONS OF AIR MAIL ETIQUETTES 1930-1936

The following article, which is reprinted by kind permission of The British Society of Australian Philately, appeared in 'The Bulletin' of that Society in March 1974 (Volume 28, number 12).

Query 134 - Reply by S. A. Hunwicks.

I believe there are one or two precedents where questioners have answered their own Bulletin queries but feel this example shows the co-operation which can be forthcoming from philatelists with the main object of our hobby at heart - sharing information.

This query was posed some time ago (The Bulletin 28/5) and concerned a cover from Alexandria, Egypt, to Sydney, probably intended to catch the second experimental flight from London (25 April 1931) to Melbourne (14 May). A brief description is: Posted Alexandria 25 April and backstamped Sydney 1 June; bears "Unclaimed Sydney 1 July", "Sydney Dead Letter Office 3 July" and "Return to Sender 11 August" marks, the last being applied in Egypt. In addition, on the back, there is in pencilled manuscript: "Intended for second flight to Australia but flown to India only" and some very faint marks in red. These latter were not noticed originally but have proved to be in Arabic and translate as: "Return to Alexandria - address on back (C.H.Tsopolidis). Redirected and (rubbed out)". Finally, and interestingly, the blue Egyptian Air Mail label is 'cancelled' with two black bars.

In the event it was not surprising that there was no direct response from BSAP members. Unknown to me, however, the Bulletin editor kindly referred my query to Mr. John Gilbert, R.D.P., F.R.P.S.L., a member of the Egypt Study Circle and a well-known authority on Egypt. In turn, Mr. Gilbert discussed the cover with Mr. Charles Minett, Keeper of the Philatelic Record of that Society, and it was Mr. Minett who translated the faint Arabic manuscript referred to above. What follows is largely the result of their study and I am very grateful to these gentlemen for their work and the helpful and pleasant correspondence I have had with them, both direct and through our editor.

They sent me for inspection two covers with similar markings, mentioned in 4 (c) below, and the main points revealed are:-

1. The 27 milliemes rate (10 + 17 air) was correct for Egypt-UK in 1931, but the rate Egypt-India (only) was 35 milliemes (10 + 25 air).
2. There is no use of the Egyptian marking "Postage Insufficient for Air Mail."
3. There is no Indian datestamp or transit marking.
4. Messrs. Gilbert and Minett have checked through many covers for

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marks cancelling Air Mail labels and have found:

- a) An elongated (St. Andrew's) cross on mail going to Italy.
  - b) A boxed "KARACHI/CANCELLED/(DATE)" on mail going to India in 1933 and 1936.
  - c) The two covers sent to me for inspection have parallel bars - one cover is to the same addressee as my cover and the other went to India in 1930.
5. Although not proof, 1-4 above lead to the conclusion that the two-bar cancellation to the Air Mail label on my cover was applied in Alexandria.
  6. The itinerary of the second Imperial Airways experimental flight was London 25 April 1931, Calcutta 5 May and Sydney 14 May. (British Air Mails, N.C. Baldwin. Aero Field Handbook No. 8, 1947, page 50). Alexandria is not mentioned but I believe that the aircraft called there on 28 April. My cover could therefore have caught the flight.
  7. The Sydney arrival date, 1 June 1931, giving a transit time of 37 days, shows conclusively that it did not go all the way by air.
  8. My cover's return trip 3 July to 11 August (39 days) was certainly by sea.
  9. A letter to me from Lloyds, dated 9 November 1973, details the voyage of the P & O steamer "Mongolia". Lloyds say the details "would appear to be fairly typical of the vessels on the United Kingdom to Australia route at that time". The particularly relevant ports and dates are: Arrived Port Said 28 April, sailed Suez 29 April, arrived Sydney 28 May. Thus the typical trip time from Port Said to Sydney was 30 days. My cover could even have gone on "Mongolia" but the lapse of 2-3 days before back-stamping in Sydney (applied at 8 a.m. on 1 June) would need explanation.
  10. I have no firm information on the trip time from Karachi to Sydney in 1931 but have been told it was about 31 days - it is unlikely to be much more than Port Said to Sydney.

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Editor's Note: Please refer to the Notes by the Keeper of the Philatelic Record in this number, for illustrations of a) b) and c) referred to above.

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1923 - 1926 FIRST PORTRAIT ISSUERETOUCHES AND FLAWS

by

Ibrahim Chaftar (ESC No. 42)Continued from Volume VIII - page 61.

Harrison and Sons printed also the 1923/26 First Portrait Issue in booklets by this new process: Collograve (their trade name for photogravure).

It is known that a 5 milliemes booklet containing four panes of six stamps 5 milliemes each (120 milliemes); and a composite booklet containing two panes of six stamps of the 5 milliemes, one pane of the 10 milliemes and one pane of the 15 milliemes, were issued. The dates when these booklets were put on sale in Egypt seems not to have been recorded.

Mr. A.J. Revell wrote to Harrison and Sons who replied that they were unable to give any information regarding the dates of issue, quantities printed or make up of the printing sheets.

We know that the first previous booklet delivered by these printers to the Egyptian General Post Office, issued 12th June 1921, was of the 5 milliemes lake. Information given by letter from E.C. Ehrmann to Mr. Revell (August 1964) quotes that the Egyptian booklets printed by Harrisons followed the British style formation as the contemporary booklets of Great Britain:

'The lay out of the sheet from which these British booklets pages were cut was 12 stamps wide with gutter margin of half stamp width in the centre to provide selvages and the stamps are in groups of three tete-beche.

Vertically, the sheet measures 20 rows and from these 12 x 20 stamps, forty booklet panes would be cut. The arrangement has not been altered during the Egyptian period, but there will be some difference in the marginal printing.'

All the panes of six seen by Revell (lake, pink, pink crown overprint, and Fuad) bear normal watermarks. Although he has in his collection three used single stamps pink, without doubt from booklets owing to the clipped perforations - one with normal watermark and two with inverted watermarks. He states that this would bear out that they were printed tete-beche.

I have, as pink 5 milliemes stamps originating from booklets: a complete mint pane of six, two used blocks of four, a used horizontal strip of three top pane, a used horizontal pair bottom edge, four used bottom right edge, and three top right edge. All are with normal

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watermarks and from panes left binding. Besides I have thirteen used stamps, ten from top and three from bottom panes, also only two singles top pane with inverted watermarks. Which makes 39 stamps normal watermarks against two only inverted.

The First Portrait Issue booklets (No. 7 and 8) are scarce and it seems that practically nothing has been collected in Egypt. The Koubbeh Palace sale did not specify any lot including any of these booklets. Revell has seen an unused pane of six 5 milliemes and he has in his collection three pairs and a strip of three all used and all with normal watermarks.

In my collection I have, as stamp booklet No.7, a complete mint pane of six, and a complete mint 120 milliemes booklet containing four panes of six stamps. All these stamps are with normal watermarks, left binding. Besides I have 159 used stamps originating from booklets which include a horizontal bottom pair. All these are with normal watermarks.

Fortunately the Dr. Byam sale included twelve booklets in two lots:

Lot 738 A selection of booklets (6) with four panes of six stamps of 5 milliemes (2), two panes of six stamps of 5 milliemes a pane of 10 milliemes and a pane of 15 milliemes - the last two exploded and incomplete with three panes of six stamps of 5 milliemes, one of the last booklets with inverted watermarks. (132 stamps).

Lot 739 Four 12) milliemes booklets with pink covers containing four panes of six 5 milliemes dark red brown with the various flaws annotated on the back of the booklet (96 stamps).

All these twelve booklets were with normal watermarks except the one incomplete booklet of 5 milliemes with inverted watermarks. There is no indication as to whether the binding is on the left or right.

If the general lines of the lay-out indicated by Mr. E.C. Ehrmann were followed half of the booklets (Nos. 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8) printed would have inverted watermarks.

This has not been the case of the known booklet stamps which have been described above (except the incomplete booklet from the Byam sale lot 738).

Lately I read a very interesting article by Mr. Tony Wisemann in the 'Stamp Lover' of March/April 1970. A detailed description of the lay-out of the printing sheet intended for booklets (Great Britain) attracted my attention and I find it useful to quote its description here:

'Because the panes must be bound on the left, the ordinary sheet of stamps presents problems because only the left hand margin can

be used for this purpose. In order to make use of the width of the special paper on which stamps are printed, therefore, it is necessary to make suitable plates. Any of the standard works of reference describe one method of laying out stamps on each row, first a binding margin then three stamps printed the right way up, then immediately adjacent three stamps printed upside down. This means that the third and fourth stamps of the row are what is known as tete-beche.....

After the first six stamps of the row is a gutter margin sufficient to take two booklet bindings, this is followed by a further six stamps, the first three of which are the right way up and the second three of which are again upside down. On the right side there is a further booklet binding margin. There are, therefore, on any row exactly six stamps the right way up and six stamps upside down. The stamps which are upside down when looked at the right way up have inverted watermarks.' \*

The lay-out described above certainly means that exactly half the booklets printed from these plates have the watermark inverted. It should here be noted that the make-up as described for Great Britain also ensured the 'Crown' watermark (Edward VII) being centrally placed on each stamp. With the Egyptian stamps of this period the paper used had a multiple (Star and Crescent) watermark which made any such centring unnecessary.

From a quantity of 8,000 used stamps 5 milliemes Fuad 1923-26 I sorted out 159 stamps, doubtless from booklets owing to the clipped perforations. All were with normal watermark except four only with inverted watermark.

The result was a surprise to me. I remembered the same fact for the 1920-22 issue: from a lot of 2,600 used 5 milliemes pink I sorted out only nine stamps with inverted watermarks, two of them from booklets.

I suspected that the make-up of the plates to print the stamps intended for booklets could perhaps have been different from what has so far been indicated.

I looked again more carefully to the 159 booklet stamps Fuad 1923-26 and I was astonished to find that the same varieties of the normal sheet C/23 and the 'No Control' sheet were reproduced on some of these stamps. I show a photograph of twelve stamps, six of them from booklets and above them the same six varieties from normal sheets.

(These six varieties are described on the next page, Editor).

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\* "Stamp Booklets - Great Britain. A Make-Up Mystery"  
by Tony Wiseman. 'The Stamp Lover' March/April 1970.



5 milliemes First Portrait Issue 1923-26

Varieties on Booklet Stamps

1. Inclined coloured dash right to left on the white edge of the right label containing Arabic characters, nearly at its lower end.  
I have this variety on two vertical strips of three and one of them with upper margin. The variety is on the third row of a sheet.
2. Protruding colour under the first Arabic letter in the white edge of the right label containing Arabic characters.  
I have this variety in a block of 3 x 3 and in a vertical block of ten, 2 x 5 variety imperforate watermark IX with bottom margin. The variety is in the ninth row of a sheet.
3. Coloured dash 2 mms. long on the right bud.  
I have this variety on two vertical strips of three.
4. This is the famous variety Dr. Byam described in his article quoting that it is the only attempt to retouch the Arabic writing he has seen. The Arabic word in the left hand label, the letters under which there are two dots, have been roughly re-shaped by three (scratched) lines. Byam had this variety on a used block of eight. Some years before he had also seen a single stamp with this variety.
5. Additional white dash on the last Arabic letter of the same word as variety '4'.  
I have this variety on the top stamp of a vertical strip of three. Also in a block of four from a used booklet pane. The variety is on the second row from a pane, normal watermark, and left opening.
6. This is the famous variety described by Douglas MacNeille and Dr. Byam 'Tuft of hairs in the ear'. This is stamp No. 35 in two different Control C/23 and a sheet No Control.  
I have this variety on an upper vertical block of ten 2 x 5 with margin attached, imperf rate, watermark IX. The variety No. 35 is in the fourth row.

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The booklet stamps originate without doubt from the same multi-positive as used for the normal sheets, because these varieties appear in blocks or vertical strips which indicate that they are essentially from post office sheets and not from booklets.

How can booklets be cut from normal post office sheets which do not provide enough selvedge for binding? If special cylinders have been used, with the necessary selvedge for the booklets, from a carbon tissue from a multipositive intended for normal post office sheet, how could the carbon tissue be used to prepare a cylinder?

In the article on 'Egyptian booklets printed in Great Britain' the authors Jean Boulad and John Revell suggest that the make-up of the plate for booklets was on the basis of tete-beche disposition, so that all the booklets could have left binding notwithstanding that there would be stamps with inverted watermarks.

How can an available multi-positive be used to fulfill such conditions?

The easy way, in my opinion, is to build up a new special multi-positive for the booklets, but certainly, then, the flaws of the previous multi-positive will not be repeated.

Besides, in my opinion, the tete-beche disposition is not imperative for this issue as the new watermarked paper adopted during the Harrison contract (the small multiple treble crescent and star) allows shifting in all directions for every stamp on the sheet to bear the watermark or parts of it.

In 1945 looking through the G.P.O., Cairo, records I came across a letter and its answer relative to proofs of the London Crown Overprint 1923. I took an exact copy of these two documents and I remained 27 years hesitating publication fearing that I had failed to copy them correctly.

In this letter, dated 12.1.1923, a Director of Harrison and Sons Ltd. informs:-

'In accordance with your instructions of the 27 Nov. 1922 we beg to submit proofs consisting of:-

|                            |   |             |
|----------------------------|---|-------------|
| One sheet of 5 milliemes   | } | all 240 set |
| Two sheets of 1 millieme   |   |             |
| Two sheets of 15 milliemes |   |             |

showing the overprint from the plates which we have prepared for the smaller size.

As the colour of the 1 and 15 milliemes renders the overprint rather indistinct in black, we are submitting alternative proofs surcharged in red for these values.

We will arrange to proceed with the overprinting immediately we receive your instructions.'

In reply, the Postmaster General, Cairo, wrote on the 6th February 1923:-

'Gentlemen,

With reference to your letter BGH/BK of January 12/23 I have to inform you that the printing of the surcharge is considered to be satisfactory.

It is suggested, however, that the printing should be slightly heavier especially over the darker coloured stamps.

Surcharge should be printed exclusively in black and not in red.'

These documents remained to me a puzzle from that time, till lately when I was thinking about the plate make-up for the Egyptian Booklets for that period.

I was puzzled by the 240 units in a sheet of the 5 milliemes stamp knowing that Harrisons printed the ordinary stamps in a post office sheet composed of two panes of 100 (10 x 10) one on top of the other.

Now that the 1920-22 booklets issue is suggested to have come from a printing plate of 240 units the matter makes sense, this explains why the stamps with the black London Crown overprint formed a sheet of 240 units for the 5 milliemes. It was a stand-by plate then used for printing stamp booklets.

In typographic printing it is easy to arrange stereotypes to provide proper selvages for a special post office sheet from which could be obtained 40 booklet panes of six stamps each, watermark falling in the same direction or disposed in such a way as to be tete-beche. Also the selvages (gutters) can be disposed in several manners allowing binding at left for all the booklets, giving half the quantity inverted watermarks or not, and disposing the stamps the head of the sphinx right way up or not - all these dispositions depending on the paper size in hand, or to be provided. The watermark appearing on every stamp has been assured by the multiple treble crescent and star watermark.

A plate of 240 units for the 5 millieme being on hand in January 1923, Harrisons used it as the order had been fulfilled for the booklets, to pull a sheet overprinted in black as proof for the crown overprint.

If the sheet had had a tete-beche make-up, this sheet or part of it would surely have survived with the red overprints of the 1 and 15 milliemes - the people manipulating the stamps in that period in the General Post Office were high experts!

This for the 5 milliemes sheet, but for the two sheets of the 1 and 15 milliemes I suppose that Harrisons sent two split sheets of 120 for each of these values (to complete the 240 set) - one sheet overprinted

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in black and the other of same size and formation overprinted in red. The plates of the overprint being arranged to suit the split sheets.

Those split sheets of 120 each must have been a complete upper pane (control attached) and 20 stamps (2 rows of 10) from the lower pane with the gutter between the panes untouched.

Dr. Byam had in his collection (lot No. 682 in the Byam sale catalogue) the control block of four of the 1 millieme and a similar block for the 15 milliemes B/25 overprinted in red. Mme. Wissa showed at the First Cairo Exhibition 1946 the left bottom block of four with the variety of no dots on stamp no. 100 and the broken frame variety on stamp no. 90 overprinted in red for the 1 millieme.

We do not know of any other control block of four, or left bottom corner block top pane overprinted in red.

The remaining stamps overprinted in red are spread about the whole world amongst collectors and specialists of Egypt. From early times it had been known that only one pane of each value (1 and 15 milliemes) was overprinted in red. But nobody had come across or knew about the existence of a 5 millieme tete-beche crown overprint in black. The 5 millieme sheet of 240 was overprinted in black and if it had a tete-beche it would certainly have been retained by the very clever people who scattered the overprints. The black overprint of the 1, 5 and 15 mills. were very common when the issue was on sale and they have not attracted attention.

Certainly Harrisons arranged their ex-booklet plate of 240 units of the 5 milliemes to receive the crown overprint in a normal way. How thrilling it would have been if that sheet had been kept and reached the philatelists.

I have in these lines put forward this 'make-up mystery' and I hope that the explanation will give good satisfaction to that query: what was the make-up of the plates for the Harrison booklets Nos. 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8; and more especially for the First Portrait Issue booklets Nos. 7 and 8, bearing in mind the ad hoc multipositive difficulty?

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To be concluded

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