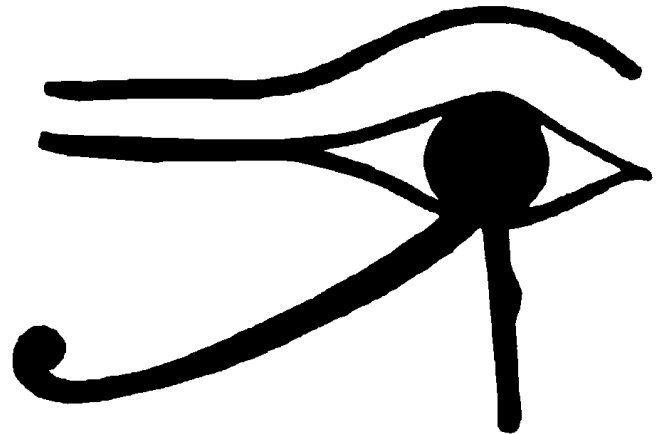


The
Quarterly Circular
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THE
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Forthcoming Meetings.

September 25 th . The 'Service De L'Etat' no value stamp & 'Novelty Revenues'	P.R. Bertram M.N.A. El-Hadidi
November 20 th . Alexandria to Ramleh Tramway & 'Avis de Reception'	P. Grech P.R. Bertram

Meetings are normally held at the Victory Club, Seymour Street, Marble Arch, London. Members usually congregate in the bar from 1.00pm onwards and meetings commence at 2.00pm.

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MEETING HELD AT THE VICOTRY CLUB ON JULY 17th 1999

Subject A second look at Meter mark..
 Present R.Bertram, M.Bramwell, D.Clarke, C.Defriez, J.Davis, P.Goodwin (NZ), P.Grech. E.Hall,
 S.Horesh, A.Jeyes, S.McIntosh (NZ), B.Watterson.

Apologies P.Andrews, T.Chisholm, P.Feltus, M.Freeman, P.Glyn-Jones, H.Makram, M.Murphy,
 L.Said, J.Sears.

Our Chairman, Robin Bertram, welcomed all present to the meeting, especially Sue McIntosh and Peter Goodwin, two of our three New Zealand members.

The meeting, led by Denis Clarke, took a further look at Egyptian meter marks.

Denis showed not only commercially used covers, but specimens, publicity envelopes, some (but not much) philatelic usage and advertising. The scope of the display - which was set out by the machines used - was extremely comprehensive.

Details were particularly given of early machines, the first by Moss of New Zealand being in use for only one month in 1922 and examples being scarce. It was 12 years (1933) before a further machine was purchased but thereafter meters came into much wider use. These included Neopost, Franko, Universal Postal Frankers, and the short lived Nessin - one machine only for 145 days.

<u>New Members.</u>	ESC 527	N.Knepper 460, S.W.Tanglewood Tr Stuart FL. 34997 USA
	ESC 528	J.David P.O.Box 16451 Phoenix Arizona USA
	ESC 529	D.J.Hardwick 47, Rugby Road Clifton Rugby CV23 0DE
<u>Change of Address</u>	ESC 179	Trenton K. Ruebush NMRCD. Lima Unit 3800 APO. AA 34031 USA
<u>Deceased</u>	ESC 161	P.Woodland.

TIME TRAVEL, Some 19th Century Observations about Egypt's Postal System.

Peter R. Feltus ESC 114

Have you ever thought about time, travel, about going back in time to visit Egypt when the classic stamps were in use? I certainly have. I imagine visiting Ymcenzo Penasson at his workshop in Alexandria in 1867 (and again in 1869) to see the production of the second issue and to buy proofs and sheets of every printing of each stamp. And I imagine visiting the Government Printing Works in Boulac in late 1871 to see the third issue being made and to learn why two values were both typographed and lithographed. I also imagine visiting the many Egyptian post offices, in Egypt and abroad and most certainly including Jaffa, to post to myself many lovely covers (addressed to me at Shepheard's Hotel, where I would choose to stay) and to take many photographs. (Have you ever seen any 19th century photos of Egyptian post offices, exteriors or interiors? If so, please let me see them. I haven't seen any yet.) And I imagine visiting various Egyptians in the 1880s to buy their waste paper to retrieve their classic covers, to make sure the stamps (and perhaps some interpostal seals!) are not washed off in the following decades. And I would acquire early Egyptian post office guides, and interview post office people about their work and the mails.

As a poor substitute for what we might write about 19th century Egyptian postal matters if we could first visit as I've imagined, I've searched for any such things written by travellers in Egypt in those years. I've collected such travel books for many years, and I have sixty by people who visited Egypt in the 19th century. Twenty are about travels between 1800 and 1861, and forty are about travels between 1863 and 1900. (I've been keenest to acquire books by people who were in Egypt between 1866 and 1880, the era of the classic stamps.) Although rather few mention the postal system at all, and these say much less than we would like, what I've found is worth recording in detail here.

There is a catalogue of these travel books. It is *Nile Notes of a Howadji: a bibliography of travellers' tales from Egypt, from the earliest time to 1918*, by Martin R. Kalfatovic, published in 1992 in New Jersey (463 pages). Though not complete (I have several that should be listed but aren't), it describes more than 1200 books. Most are in English; the remainder are in French, German, and other European languages. They are arranged chronologically, not by publication dates but by dates of travel, beginning with *The History* by Herodotus, who went to Egypt in ca. 450 B.C.

So, here are excerpts about the posts from nine of my books.

1850. *A Pilgrimage to Egypt* by Jerome VC. Smith, published in Boston in 1852 (398 pages, with 43 unimportant little engravings). Smith, an American medical doctor and editor of *The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*, wrote of his three months in Egypt. On page 10 he describes arriving in Alexandria on the first of November, 1850. After a dozen pages about disembarking and the city, he writes:

“There are two post-offices. One belongs to the government and was kept in a dark apartment under my lodgings. [On page 17 he wrote ‘Lodgings having been procured, a general survey of the town commenced.’ He didn't say more about the lodgings.] A mail comes down on horseback from Cairo, and another returns daily. Some idea may be formed of the native correspondence between the two great cities of Egypt, Alexandria and Cairo, by the fact that each day's accumulation of letters from all sources makes a package easily transported in that manner. About nine o'clock in the morning, Franks and natives begin to cluster about the door. When the contents of the bag are assorted, the window opens for delivery. Postage is dear. My impression is that the cost of a single letter to Cairo was not far from eighteen cents.

“All papers, letters and packages, destined for Europe or America, must be prepaid at the transit company's post-office, at the easterly terminus of the square [Consul's Square].”

1867. *The Far East; or, Letters from Egypt, Palestine, and Other Lands of the Orient* by C.N. Burt, published in Cincinnati in 1868 (396 pages with some drawings & maps). These letters were originally published in the Cincinnati Gazette. Those from Egypt were written between January 3 and March 11 of 1867 and apparently don't mention the postal system, but in the last chapter, written in July, he said:

"In bringing this series of letters to a close, I can hardly refrain from a word of comment on the postal arrangements of the world at large.

"Of some fifty letters which I posted to the Gazette, from various foreign countries, every one, as I learn, came to hand in good time. Of a hundred others, sent mainly to private friends, the same thing may be said. And of the letters written to me while abroad - perhaps a hundred - all, so far as I know, except one, which was misdirected, were duly received. Correspondence between foreign countries and our own can be carried on with almost entire regularity and certainty. The postal arrangements of the world are so perfected as to secure the safest and speediest transmission of letters possible. Even in Egypt, where the mails are transmitted by dromedaries, or by runners, as often as by steamers, the mails are relied on by merchants even for the conveyance of money. It was not without hesitation that at Thebes I committed to the native mail an amount of written matter, which had the writing been done on ordinary note-paper, in an ordinary business hand, would have made one hundred and fifty pages. Yet, in about a month, the contents of the package were in the hands of the various persons in America for whom they were intended. The era of cheap ocean postage is only just dawning."

1869. *Journal of a Visit to Egypt, Constantinople, Greece, & in the Suite of the Prince and Princess of Wales* by Mrs. William Grey (née Catharina Therese Fouche, in Sweden), published in London in 1869 (203 pages) and in New York in 1870 (215 pages). Theresa Grey travelled with important people in extreme luxury. On February 6, after three days as a guest of the Viceroy in Cairo, she and the others began their voyage up the Nile. She says, "Our party was large, and the number of vessels provided for us formed really a little fleet..." On March 2 they reached Wadi Mfah and on the 16th they were back in Cairo (the trip from Minieh to Cairo was by rail). The book is adapted from her diary, with each entry dated. Here are the brief allusions to her mail.

"February 9. We ... reached Minieh at 6 P.M.. - 170 miles from Cairo. Here we found the mail arrived, but I had no Swedish letters, which rather disappointed me.

"February 17. Got up at six o'clock ... and went to the west side of Thebes ... to the Tombs of the Kings and got home, as we may now call our dahabeah, by five o'clock. The English mail arrived.

"February 19. Left Thebes at six A.M. ... and stopped at Esne for coaling at twelve o'clock. Started again at one o'clock, and arrived at Edfou at 5:45. The Princess and I landed, and looked at some very stupid sword-dancing, which was accompanied by a man screaming as loud as he could. Wrote some letters for the mail, having received some from Sweden the morning before - the first since we left Cairo. Thank God! all well at home.

"February 25. The Princess and I drew and painted all the morning... At three o'clock we stopped, Major Teesdale having seen a crocodile through his glass, on some rocks, which caused great excitement. The Prince and Samuel Baker went in a boat, and landed a long way off, in the hope of being able to stalk him; but, in spite of the caution with which they advanced, they had not got more than half way when the beast took alarm, jumped into the water, and disappeared. It seemed enormous, and they guessed it to be from fourteen to sixteen feet long...

"The mail arrived from England, but I got only one letter from my mother, of the 3rd. "February 26. Went on all day. Wrote a letter home for the mail which goes to-day.

“March 3. Awoke [at Wadi Halfah] quite fresh and rested after a good sleep. This is, indeed, the case every day here. I hardly ever feel tired; I sleep better than I ever did before; and I can hardly remember that I ever felt so strong and so thoroughly well as I have done during this month in Egypt. It is certainly a most healthy and pleasant life, and one I should recommend to every body who longs for physical and moral rest. For the first few days you feel quite lost without any post or papers, but after that I must confess (horrible as it sounds) that the feeling that no means exist of either receiving or sending letters becomes delightful. You live, so to say, in another world!

“March 6 [at Wadi Halfah]. The English mail arrived early in the morning, and I got some letters just a month old. Again a very hot day. Early in the morning the thermometer was at 106; at twelve o’clock 140 in the sun, and 108 in my cabin...

“March 8 [at Assouan]. After luncheon to-day, the Prince and Princess, with myself and Sir S. Baker, crossed the river to pay Lady Duff Gordon a visit in her dahabeah, which she has now made entirely her home; living on board up here on account of her health. We had coffee and pipes, and returned home about five o’clock. Received letters to-day from Sweden, but they were again about a month old.

“March 12 [approaching Minieh]. We went on all day without stopping, and at night the post arrived, with good news from both my homes. It certainly is one great drawback to the long intervals between the arrival of the mails, that you can not help, at times, working yourself up into a certain degree of anxiety for A those you love, till you tremble at what may have happened since you heard last! At least I have often given way, in spite of myself, to such thoughts.

“March 16 [at Cairo]. I must add here, what I have omitted to mention in the proper place, that, on our way down the Nile, the Prince received letters to say that the differences between Greece and Turkey had been happily settled, and that their Royal Highnesses were now free to pay their proposed visits to Constantinople and Athens. The original plan will therefore be adhered to, and Mr. Elliot, our Ambassador at Constantinople, has been written to say that he may expect us there, after visiting the Suez Canal, about the end of the month.

“March 27 [at Alexandria, aboard the Viceroy’s yacht Mahroussa]. At breakfast the English mail came in, but I had no letters. “

1870. *Sailing On the Nile* by Laurent Laporte, published in Boston in 1872 (295 pages; this is a translation of *L’Egypte a la voile*, published in Paris in 1870). This book is adapted from letters. Laporte, a Frenchman, wrote home to his friend Etienne about his trip from Cairo to Aswan. In chapter seven, about Asyoot, he said:

“The consular agent, who was seated on the gallery, received us with the usual extravagant Oriental courtesy, winch we returned m kind, and ordered coffee and chibouks.

“For my own part, I confess that I thought it extremely doubtful whether our poor letters would ever reach their destination; but it seems that I did Egypt injustice, since it really has a well organised postal service. Their system is a primitive one certainly, but your letters are safe enough. A strong, sure-footed man (the regular old-fashioned courier) sets out from the farthest limits of Nubia, and runs as rapidly as he can for several leagues, ringing his bell, and followed by the good wishes of A he meets: he does not relax his speed until he is relieved of his burden by a second courier, whom he meets at an appointed village. Thus they advance from station to station until connection is established with Cairo. The service is not regular, but it does really exist; not indeed for the benefit of the public, which is a word without meaning in this region, but for that of the government. You see, my dear friend, that civilisation proceeds slowly on these beautiful shores of the Nile. Egypt can boast of her steamboats, her swift

horses, and fleet-footed dromedaries; but the life of a man is considered of less value than that of beasts.”

1873-74. *A Thousand Miles up the Nile* by Amelia Edwards, published in London in 1877 (732 pages, with many illustrations and two maps). Miss Edwards, a novelist from England, was so fascinated by Egypt during this trip that she dedicated her remaining 17 years of life to Egyptology; she founded the Egypt Exploration Fund in 1882 and endowed a chair of Egyptology at the University College, London. This book, her most famous, is one of the most popular and influential travel books on Egypt and is frequently reprinted. Unfortunately, she mentions postal matters only three times, in chapters VIII, XIII and XVIII, excerpted below. (If you ~ you read these excerpts before in this journal, you are right; they were presented by Michael Murphy in the Q.C. of December 1985.)

“The polite postmaster [of Luxor] is a Copt... The postmaster (an ungainly youth in a European suit so many sizes too small that his arms and legs appeared to be sprouting out at the ends of his garments) was profuse in his offers of service. He undertook to forward letters to us at Assouan, Korosko, and Wady Halfah, where post-offices had lately been established. And he kept his promise, I am bound to say, with perfect punctuality - always adding some queer little complimentary message on the outer wrapper, such as ‘I hope you well my compliments;’ or ‘Wishes you good news pleasant voyage.’ As a specimen of his literary style I copied the following notice, of which it was evident that he was justly proud:

“NOTICE: On the commendation. We have ordered the post stations in lower Egypt from Assiut to Cartoom. Belonging to the Post Kedevy Egyptian in a good order. Now to pay for letters in lower Egypt is as in upper Egypt twice. Means that the letters which goes from here far then Assiut; must pay for it two piastres per ten grs. Also that which goes far than Cartoom. The letters which goes between Assiut and Cartoom; must pay only one piastre per ten grs. This and that is, to buy stamps from the Post and put it upon the letter. Also if somebody wishes to send letters insured, must two piastres more for any letter. There is orderation in the Post to receive the letters which goes to Europe, America and Asia, as England France, Italy Gemany, Syria, Constantinople etc. Also to send newspapers patterns and other things. Luxor the 1st January 1874. L ‘spettore, M. Adda.’

“This young man begged for a little stationery and a pen-knife at parting. We had, of course, much pleasure in presenting him with such a modest testimonial. We afterwards learned that he levied the same little tribute on every Dahabecyah that came up the river; so I conclude that he must by this time have quite an interesting collection of small cutlery.

“From the point where the railroad ends, the Egyptian and Nubian mails are carried by runners stationed at distances of four miles all along the route. Each man runs his four miles, and at the end thereof finds the next man ready to snatch up his bag and start off at full speed immediately. The next man transfers it in like manner to the next; and so it goes by day and night without a break, till it reaches the first railway station. Each runner is supposed to do his four miles in half an hour, and the mail which goes out every morning from Luxor reaches Cairo in six days. Considering that Cairo was 450 miles away; that 268 miles of this distance had to be done on foot; and that the trains went only once a day, we thought this a very creditable speed.

“It was half-twilight, half-moonlight, by the time we reached the mooring-place [at Korosko, on her way south]; where Talhamy, who had been sent forward in the small boat half an hour ago, jumped on board laden with a packet of letters, and a sheaf of newspapers. For here, where the great caravan-route leads off across the desert to Khartoom, we touched the first Nubian post-office. It was only ten days since, we had received our last budget at Assouan; but it seemed like ten weeks.

“[16 February 1874, sailing north, after visiting Abu Simbell On arriving at Korosko, where there is a post-office, he [a painter in the group] also despatched a letter to the ‘Times’, briefly recording the facts here related. That letter [was published] on the 18th of March following...”

1876. *An Englishman's Recollections of Egypt* by Baron Samuel Selig de Kusel, published in London in 1915 (367 pages, with some good photographs). Kusel, in Egypt from 1863 to 1887, served in the Khedivial government in many positions including American consul in Alexandria (1885). the book contains many good anecdotes about business and politics. In chapter four, about the years 1872 - 1878, he wrote:

“On May 17, 1876, I married an Italian lady, the Signorina Elvira Chini, eldest daughter of Cleto Chini of Leghorn and Cairo.

“The Chini Brothers introduced the first postal system in Egypt; about the year 1820 they organised a splendid service to deliver letters, specie, etc., as in the early days it was necessary to deliver groups of gold and silver dollars to the villages for the purchasing of cotton, for there were no banks existing in the Interior at that time. As no stamps were issued, all letters, etc., were paid for on being posted, there being no question of payment on delivery.

“Native runners were employed between the villages in the Interior: the Nile and the Canals were utilised, and when the railway line was established between Alexandria and Cairo this also was utilised. As the years went by and the country developed, the monopoly held by the Chini Brothers was of much importance, and finally the Egyptian Government decided to take it over themselves, buying back the concession for a considerable amount of money.

“At the present time the Egyptian postal service is second to none in the world. “ Even in the Middle Ages Egypt had a postal service, quite well organised, and Lane Poole describes how Baybars, one of the Sultans, established a thorough system of posts. He writes –

‘Relays of horses were in readiness in each posting house, and twice a week the Sultan received and answered reports from all parts of the realm. Besides the ordinary mail, there is also a pigeon post, which was no less carefully managed.

‘The pigeons were kept in cots in the Citadel and at the various stages, which were further apart than those of horses; the bird was trained to stop at the first postcot, where its letter would be attached to the wing of another pigeon for the next stage. The Royal pigeons had a distinguishing mark, and when one of these arrives at the Citadel with a despatch, no one was permitted to detach the parchment save the Sultan himself, and so stringent were the rules that were he dining or sleeping or in the bath, he would nevertheless at once be informed of the arrival, and would immediately proceed to dis-eneumber the bird of its message.

1894. *A Private Journal in Egypt* by Dr. D. Harvey Atfield, published in London in 1895 (271 pages, with a map and a photograph of the doctor). Dr. Atfield, born in England in 1866, spent a year in Egypt as a Sanitary and Quarantine Medical Officer at the Port of Suez and the nearby Sanatorium of Moses' Well, and at Tor. The book is composed of instalments sent weekly to England; in the Introduction he explains: “This journal, gladly undertaken at the suggestion of my father, will be written with my ‘Densmore’ typewriter, four copies at a time, by the usual single-stroke operation; one for home, one for relatives on the maternal side, one for those on the paternal, and one to be retained for

reference. It will be run off in trains, steamboats, carriages, even on camelback, or in the quietude of hotels or private quarters.” ‘Re excerpts below were written in Tor and Suez in 1894.

“Sunday, June 10. [Tor] A camel-express post has just started for Suez, and I only had bare time to enclose triplicate copies of my journal (relating to Suez, June 4 to 7) in envelopes addressed to Hadley, Mistley, and Watford. I may be able in future thus to take advantage of any similar suddenly despatched official messenger. The ordinary postal service at Tor is very uncertain, depending as it does on the Khedivial boats, which are supposed to run a fortnightly service up and down the Red Sea including its northern extension of the Gulf of Suez, on the eastern shore of which Tor is situated. But, like many things in these districts, the service is Rely to be deferred till ‘bouckra,’ a word that even literally means ‘to-morrow,’ but is commonly equivalent to ‘any future time.’ Hence important letters are despatched by a native on a camel across the desert, but on a route parallel with the east seashore.

“The four-footed ‘ship of the desert’ is not the common weight-carrying camel, but of a more fleet breed. He can shamble along at the rate of eight miles an hour for nine or ten consecutive hours and for twelve or fourteen consecutive days. He can even manage fifty rallies a day for five days without drinking. I thought my friends might like to have notes from me by so novel a letter carrier. The envelopes will show by the postage stamps and the obliterating stamp marks that this camel service is made a part of the ordinary international postal system. One piastre (two pence halfpenny) per ounce pays everything; camels, trains, steamers, horses, postmen; door to door.

“Monday, June 18. This morning ... letters arrived from home dated June 5; brought in by camel post. A letter dated last October has just been found in the post office, directed to Zachariadis; giving, he says, a fair idea of how ‘business,’ so called, is carried on in these out-of-the-way places.

“Saturday, June 23. To-day has been one of great excitement, as the fortnightly post steamer was due to arrive. The whole village turned out on the quay soon after six, when she was reported in view, and within half an hour Zachariadis, our ‘chef de commis,’ and the writer went off to board her in our small boat. The steamer having come to anchor, we soon were comfortably seated on the quarter deck, discussing the latest news from Egypt to the invariable accompaniment of cigarettes and coffee. An iced drink afterwards was very acceptable, the more so as it was the first for a fortnight, and ‘toujours’ goatskin-carried water becomes insipid. On board we found the remainder of our ‘personnel,’ namely, some one hundred soldiers, for forming the tent cordons, and about the same number of porters, guards, hospital orderlies, and other officials to be attached to the various tent ‘sections.’ On Monday I will give a detailed description of the general arrangement and workings of the quarantine camp. On again reaching terra firma we went to the post office, and being ‘big bosses,’ were allowed inside while the sorting was proceeding, and, in consequence, obtained our letters considerably in advance of the ordinary mortals waiting outside. For me there was a large budget, including letters from grandma, Auntie Nell, mother, Gertie, Evelyn Morrison, Tom Farries, Harry Domian, and last, and by no means least, one from the governor. Thanks many, to each and all. The dates are all between the seventh and eleventh of June inclusive, so they have been about fourteen days on the journey. A ‘British Medical Journal’ reached me, dated Saturday, June 16: that is to say, it only took just over a week to travel from London to Tor. ‘Re “Bergfeld” filter from Bloomsbury also arrived, in good condition, the post office, people charging me five shillings for duty. Was glad to have it, as I have not yet analysed the water here, and know but little of the filtering qualities of the native porous earthen-ware ‘ziehs.’ The latter are used all over Egypt, though admittedly for cooling the water by evaporation rather than as true filters.

“Saturday, August 4. The fortnightly mail is due to-day, and in consequence, everyone is more or less excited. The Messir was reported in view soon after 6 a.m.; by seven we had boarded her, and soon after we received our very welcome letters. There were for me warm cousinly ones from Hadley, dated July 15, M.A. 15, G.A. 16, J.A. 24, and one from my old friend Arthur Manning, of the same date. Thanks, many thanks. Stayed on board for two or three hours, and fed with the engineers, who are very

pleasant English- men. The first, by name Brewitt, gave me a Soudanese knife - a most murderous-looking weapon.

“Wednesday, September 26 [Suez]. At 5 o’clock a.m. a P. & O. ship arrived, and on going on board found that the captain was Langbourn, a friend of Tom Fardes, under whose hospitable roof at Watford I had met the captain just before leaving England. Today a mail came from home bringing letters from the father, sisters May and Gertie, and also one from my old German friend Steeb, of Wurtzburg; all dated either the 18th or 19th. Correspondents will please note that I record every letter-date.

“Thursday, September 27. Little of interest today, beyond the arrival of another mail. Three lots of letters this week! Among those of to-day was one from our family’s good friend Mrs. Flint. I do so appreciate these links with old England. The pen-gossip of any reader of my journal will be welcomed.

“Tuesday, October 2. Nothing of note to-day beyond the ever welcome arrival of a mail; in this case bringing letters from the father and from Blackheath, dated September 21, and a card and a book from Mistley postmarked September 22. My friends will please make inquiries respecting any of their letters the date of which is not mentioned either in my journal or in my more private letters.

“Friday, October 19. By the mail which arrived last Thursday there were letters from the father, October 8, and from sister Gertrude, of the 4th, and a long one from the mother, dated September 30. Thanks, many.

“Wednesday, October 24. This evening arrived a welcome and abundant mail, in which were two letters and a card from the father, and one each from the mother and May, the dates being from the 15th to the 17th inclusive. Thanks, many, for these, for the usual weeklies, and to some kind Watford friend, probably T.F., who has sent me ‘St. Paul’s’ and the ‘Field.’

“Monday, October 29. Had a busy duty yesterday, and ships were coming up all through the night. A mail arrived with letters from Uncle Smith and Auntie Nell, both dated October 22, also one from sister Gertrude with a packet of Kodak pictures bearing date 21st, one also from my dear old grandmother (born 1813) in her own handwriting. Many thanks to A. Letters from home relations and friends are indeed welcome in this far-off place.

Monday, ‘November 5, Guy Fawkes Day. Was this morning in the office of the chief of the Post here, when one of his subordinates brought in to him a letter full of fire crackers, and these not being considered things to be allowed in the mailbag, we experimented with several and so kept in mind the ‘gunpowder treason and plot.’

“Tuesday, December 25, Christmas Day. On returning to Suez from the docks this morning, found a large collection of letters and cards from my numerous relations and friends in England. It was indeed pleasant to realise that though separated by nearly 3,000 miles of sea and land one was by no means forgotten. I had eight letters and eighteen cards. Thanks, very many, to all for these welcome reminders of home.”

1897-98. *A Homely Diary of a Diplomat in the East, 1897-1899* by Thomas Skelton Harrison, published in Boston in 1917 (393 pages, with many fine photographs of important Egyptians and Europeans). Harrison, from Philadelphia, was the American Consul General in Cairo for two years. This delightful book records daily details of his life and duties (and his wife Louise’s), with many amusing anecdotes of meetings and luncheons and delicious dinners with notables and travellers of the time. There are scores of references to reading his mail and writing letters, but without details and not worth quoting. And there are three short references to stamps and postal matters that are.

‘November 19, 1897. In the afternoon Louise and I were driven out to the palace of Prince Fuad, a son of Ismail, and young uncle of the Khedive; she to visit his wife, whom she has known since 1895, and with whom she had been in frequent correspondence (the Princess to whom she had sent the postage stamps), and I to return a visit that the Prince made to me on the 16th. inst.’ [in an editor’s footnote, written years later, we are told, “Eventually, the Princess, who was said to be the wealthiest woman in Cairo, separated from Prince Fuad.”] (Now, we can wonder whether the postage stamps mentioned were American, which seems likely, and became part of King Fuad’s collection.)

“January 3, 1898, Monday. Having moved into my new quarters, and having had a circular sent to me from the Department requiring a description of them [and my duties], a report was prepared and sent under cover to one of the Assistant Secretaries of State, with the request that it be filed if he saw no objection to the humorous vein in which it was written...

“Duties: It is almost a jest at the expense of the Agent and Consul-General of the United States in Egypt to direct him to ‘describe the character of his official duties’ briefly. What with Americans who are taken halfway up the Pyramids and deserted there, Americans whose landladies cannot get rid of them, Americans who want to be presented to the Khedive, Americans who speak only the English language, Americans whose trunks have disappeared, Americans who have disappeared themselves, and Americans who are collecting postage stamps, the ‘social’ side of the duties, to employ the current euphemism, is in a state of expansion that is as constant as it is indefinite... The routine duties, on the other hand, are almost nominal.

“February 23, 1898, Wednesday. I had a very pleasant visit by Saba Pasha, Postmaster-General, located at Alexandria. He had been to the United States as Delegate from Egypt to the International Postal Convention, and it was largely through him that Judge Batcheller got his position here. He spoke English very well.”

1899-1900. *Our Houseboat on the Nile* by Mrs. Lee Bacon, published in Boston in 1901 (297 pages, with black & white illustrations derived from water colours by her husband Henry Bacon). The Bacons, Americans, hired a dahabeah and crew and cook in Shellal (six miles south of Assouan) to spend six weeks sailing between the first cataract and Abou Simbel. The book is an unusually pleasant account of the preparations and the travels (throughout which Lee refers to herself as Sitt and to Henry as the Howadji), with amusing references to postal matters.

“[November 1899, while negotiating for the dahabeah] The questions of our fresh meat supply and our mail delivery were next in order, and these were settled by concluding to do almost without the former, and through a personal courtesy from the war office as to the latter. The manager of the Upper Nile mail service agreed, as a special favour, that its boats should slow up and lower the mail into our row-boat, which would be towed along by a line while the mail and our weekly supply of bread were delivered.

“But how we should put our mail aboard the post-boat on its down trip was a question he was not prepared to answer, for these boats fly along with the stream, and a small boat could not approach with safety. He advised leaving letters at some side river post-office.

“This weekly passing of the post-boat will be our only glimpse of white faces for the next few weeks, for the river is this year so low that dahabeahs from the lower river cannot be got up the cataract...

“[Some days later] After examination it is found that matches and stamps are the only things which have been forgotten, and an early visit to the bazaars must be put through before we can weigh anchor and leave the friendly neighbourhood of Cook & Son, of Pagnon, of civil hospital where drugs must be bought, and of government post-office where mail is made up.

“Matches and stamps are now on board, and A waiting for the English mail, in which we hope there will be a bundle of letters and papers to take with us on our way. We had hoped to be off early in the morning, but since there is an English mail at noon we decided to wait, and carry off the late news from the scat of war in South Africa, with letters from friends at home; and moreover, there is no wind; and, still further, the caulking of the small boat has not been finished.

“As we sit on the deck opposite Philae... Opposite Philae are the government headquarters, a new post-office, a brigade, a hospital, a freight depot...

“The mail has scarcely been aboard five minutes when Sitt notices a little wind stirring in the tops of the palms, and the first noon blast has scarcely sounded when the reis is notified to untie our houseboat, for we are going.

“[Several days later] We are making good headway and coming gradually to a point opposite a white-washed building which has been for some time in sight. As we approach, a man, who has been lying on the bank, gets up and unlocks the door of the whitewashed house, evidently expecting a visit from us; for this is our first Nubian post-office. We are, however, so taken with the love of sailing before the wind, a condition which has been held up to us as an ideal one, that we continue on our way while he stands waiting...

“[Some days later, near Korosko] We have been watching for the down post-boat, intending to board her in spite of having been warned that, owing to her speed when going with the current, it would be difficult to do so, for our Christmas null must get on its way as soon as possible. While at dinner the crew sights her, and the felucca is soon manned, with Alli, as coxswain, carrying a lot of letters and Christmas cards, stamped, and tied into neat packages. He feels his importance, and salutes as the felucca pushes off. The post-boat comes surging do”, her furnace doors wide open for coaling, and the glare of her fires shining far ahead. Our little boat approaches her with lantern swinging high and men shouting, but she neither whistles nor slackens speed, and noisily keeps on her way. There is such disdain in the way the beck paddle-wheel shakes the water off its flanges almost into our poor little felucca, and such disappointment on the men’s faces, and in our hearts, for we had calculated to a nicety upon catching the London mail, and to lose a whole week is more than our equanimity can stand. “The men return, saying it was not the post-boat, but Alli says,- ... Think it bosta;’ wisely adding, ‘when you get Korosko you know.’

“This incident rather spoils our appetite for pancakes with brown sugar and rum sauce, and we go early to bed to try to sleep off our disappointment.

“[Late the next day] Here we are at Korosko... where Gordon once had his headquarters, and where Conan Doyle laid the scene of his little tragedy, is a clean quiet settlement, running along the river bank, as do most of the villages, with a few people loafing here and there. We confide our package of letters to the accommodating postman, who promises to put them aboard the next down post-boat. (Most of these letters, after a voyage of six thousand miles, were delivered in America on Christmas day.) One was due last night, he declares, and a boat did indeed go by, but since it did not stop, it could not have been the mail- boat.

All same, think bosta, never you mind,’ avers Alli in a stage aside.

“Though Alli has been the Howadji’s faithful servant for years, his master has never been able exactly to understand what Alli means when he says, Never you mind.’ Tell him that the bread is out, and you fear he may have no dinner, he replies, Never you mind.’ Lose your temper and rate him soundly, it is the same, Never you mind.’

“[Some days later, near Abou Simbel] The mail-boat, with all its pounds of steam pressure, with all the revolutions of its stem wheel, and all its puffing and blowing, is not so well up to her schedule time as our houseboat, which depends solely upon the wind, which blows or blows not, as it likes, from the Libyan desert. We expected to see the steamer at sunset, felt confident we should see her by eight in the evening, would have sworn she could not be so late as midnight; but not until four in the morning do we hear the pulsing of her engines, and only then by putting our heads on our pillows, which serve in some way to bring us in direct communication with the water, the planks of the boat, and so on; when we open the cabin windows and stick forth our heads into the cold night, all sound is lost. We do so long for those letters, we so need that bread, that when, at the end of an hour, the throbs are still no clearer, we feel that we may have imagined them, that our wishes, perhaps, have been father to those sounds. Yet no sooner do we try to settle to sleep, and Sitt’s ear is again on the pillow, that she distinctly hears that machinery throbbing in the silent night.

“How many times Howadji opens and shuts his windows, how many times he goes upon deck, and how many times he is about to rouse the sleeping crew, we do not count. Thus pass the hours from 3 to 5 A.M., and by sunrise Sitt feels as if it must be some time in the afternoon. All hours at the best get mixed on a Nile journey, and our experience is the exact reverse of that of the shark, who ‘frequently breakfasts at 5 o’clock tea and dines on the following day,’ for we often eat our breakfast so early that by nine or ten we are ready for luncheon, and in the evening are sleepy before Americans of the last generation would have begun to think about dinner.

“At length bread, letters, and Abou Simbel come all at once. “ Which can best wait? Not bread, for we, who have virtually been up all night, are ready for our breakfast; not the sunrise tints on the wondrous temple, for there are no Joshuas ready to command the sun to go back, not our first telegrams and home letters. A fitting of all in at the same time is arranged by having breakfast served on deck, sorting and reading letters between bites, and between watching the sun as it gilds one hill, then another.

“There being no wind, it will take two hours’ tracking to do what fifteen minutes of yesterday’s wind could have done for us. On this morning, however, we do not complain, for while the men track we breakfast, read the more important of our letters, and are ready by the time we are near enough to salute Ramses in all his glory, and give him our undivided attention.

“The Howadji had caught sight of a white face as the mail-boat steamed by, and would have very much Red to inquire from its owner the day of the week and the hour of the day. We feel sure it is Monday, but the crew are just as sure that it is Tuesday.. As to the hour of the day, there is over three quarters of an hour’s difference between [our two watches]... There is also the remainder of the mail to be sorted; the week’s bread to be put away where it will keep moist; many things are to be done which we only can arrange. How far off concerts in London and Paris seem, and how meaningless the rise and fall of New York stocks, as we read of them in three weeks’ old newspapers; and how many engagements there must have been in South Africa!

“[A few days before Christmas, still at Abou Simbel] Our nearest post-office is a mile up shore on the other side of the river; or more accurately, sometimes one mile and sometimes two, for it is in reality the capacious pocket of an old native, trusted by the government. We never know exactly where we shall find it, when we go over to post letters, unless by some chance an unexpected post-boat coming along does us the kindness to stop. Such is the Feraig post-office, marked with a star on the maps, and relied on by all the surrounding fellaheen....

“The purser of the last up-going mail-boat promised to invest some shillings for us in bread at Halfa and to show up the next day on his down voyage to pass the bag over to us. The servants were expectant, and were the first to hear the steamboat’s paddlewheels. Hastily the felucca was manned, and rowed out in midstream to meet her; but away went flying downstream boat and bread and crew’s stores. We are at a loss to know what has become of the purser and his promises. Why such treatment,

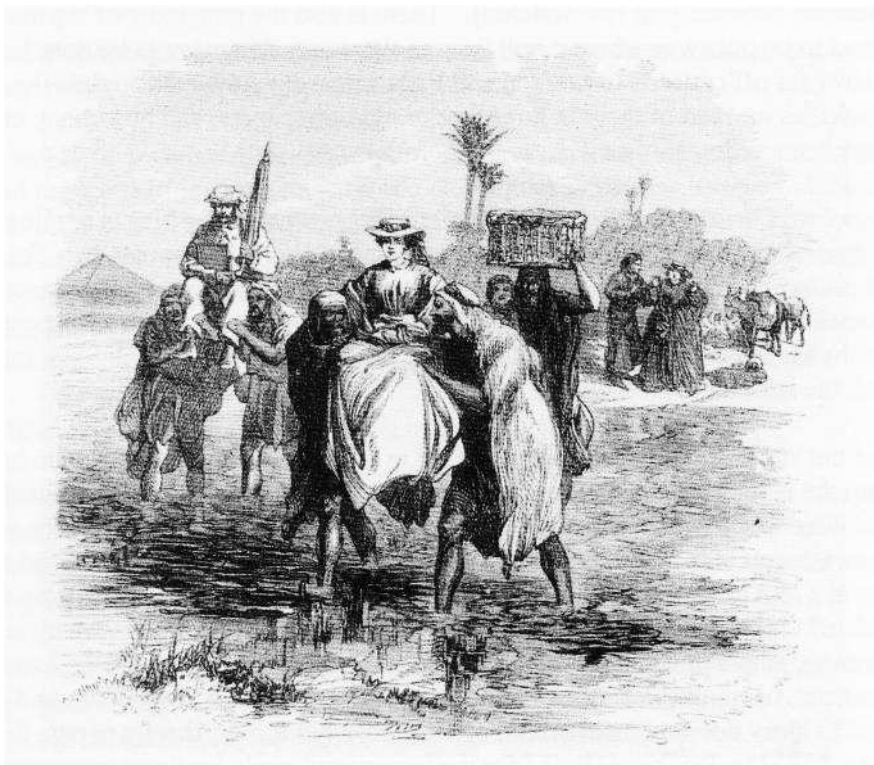
why such disdain? Of course, all our guesses prove wrong. and we only learn why by accident, when some excursionists, who come downstream a few days after, report that the Sirdar, Lord Kitchener, was aboard that steamer. having been telegraphed to drop his land schemes, his college and city projects at Khartoum, and to hurry down to meet certain of Her Majesty's forces, shortly to pass through the Suez Canal on their way to the Transvaal. Bread for the hungry and mails for the stranger were of no account to His Majesty the Sirdar. Sitt says she shall not feel avenged until she writes to the 'Times' about it.

"So our sailors eat our stores, and our mail is left over for another week, and we make many bitter remarks, - for one feels so far from enlightenment and civilisation when mail facilities fail, - which remarks are borne away by the soft, gentle breezes of this sweet Nubian air, and never hurt any one or any thing. The pocket of the peripatetic post-office must be full of letters by this time. We shall have a week to add postscripts to them, and perhaps before the week is over we may be ready to take them downstream ourselves...

"[A few days after Christmas. sailing north, near Dakkeh] Later on to-day we watch the clouds and wait for the mail-boat, which we announce to Reis Mohammed will be along by 6 P.M. He looks incredulous, and when exactly at 5:45 we point out to him the wabur (steamboat) in the distance, he declines to admit that she is a bosta until she warns us by a shrill whistle that she has something aboard for us. Only then is he willing to send the felucca to board her. Had he realised how carefully we had counted the hours since she left Shellal with our mail and bread, he would have realised that we could not be mistaken.

"[January 2 or 3, 1900, back at their starting point] Shellal, with its shanties, its bazaars, its railroad shed, its post-office, its military headquarters, its mixed population of Greeks, Italians, Germans, and Arabs, has sprung up as in a night. This mushroom growth has about six years of life before it, for then the barrage will have been finished. and its waters will have risen, and Shellal will be like a city at the bottom of the Dead Sea.

"Four years ago there was not so much as a post-office here; now, when the English mail reaches Shellal, lo! two or three officials and several aids have to 'step lively' to sort and arrange it. They dive into as big sacks as any received elsewhere, and bring out great bundles of letters and papers. 'Re pigeon-holes are more than full, and yet the 'Reservoir mail' is not even sorted here, but goes to the sub-office at the Reservoir, where the hundreds of men employees are expecting to hear from their families in almost every point of the globe."



Unknown perfin?

Anton J.Jansen ESC 383

I am rather puzzled by this cover. From the photocopy, unfortunately it cannot be seen very well that the stamps are 'perforated'. Studying this carefully together with a Dutch colleague who has examined thousands of Egyptian perfins, we came to the conclusion, or at least hypothesis that we have to do here with a perfin unknown so far. The perforation of the initials E.A. (Elie Agouri) Fig. 1 can be found in all three stamps, but its quality is deteriorating very much from left to right. In fact, we cannot imagine that this perforation was made with one of the 'regular' perforating machines, but that Messrs Agouri & Fils used a device of their own construction.

The cover - which is in rather battered condition, probably also because it was returned to the sender - doesn't look like being tampered with. Is there anyone who could add to this information or expand on our hypothesis?

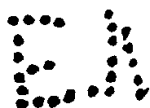
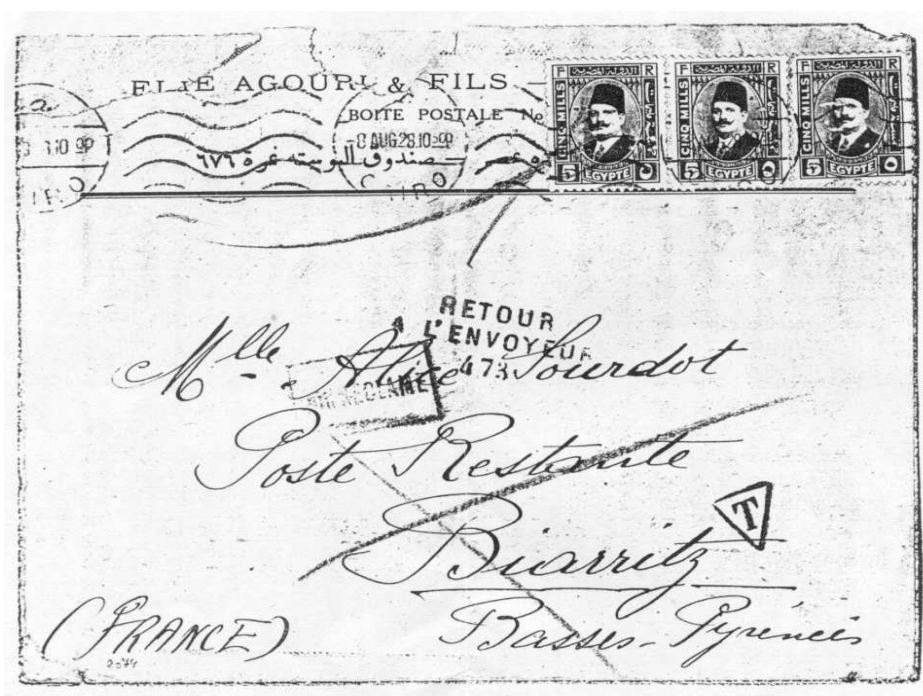


Fig. 1



The French Port Said Provisionals of November, 1899

Peter A. S. Smith ESC 74

When the decree of October 6th, 1899, was enacted, requiring the use of special stamps at the offices in Alexandria and Port Said, instead of simple French stamps, the special stamps had not yet arrived. A preliminary shipment, of the 10 centimes only, reached Port Said on October 10th. The celebrations for the 30th anniversary of the opening of the Suez Canal, and the raising of a statue of Ferdinand de Lesseps, were imminent. The French postmaster obtained permission from the French Consul to overprint stamps locally, so as to have them available at the time of the celebrations.

The 10 centimes provided the model to be used, and a local printer was given the job. It is said that all values of the current French stamps, except the 2 francs, were overprinted, each in red, and each value in the same quantity, stated to have been 200 stamps (one sheet of each) (presumably the 10c. was not included). They were put on sale on November 17th, and remained on sale until the arrival of stocks from Paris, November 24th. The typeface used was sans serif, unlike the Paris printing, however. Examples are known used on covers, but they are distinctly rare.

The foregoing information appears in the recently published Egypt book, and is largely drawn from an article by N. Bertrand (L'OP No. 36, 247-8 (1938)). Nothing further has appeared in the philatelic literature known to me, although it is quite possible that something additional might be found in the French literature. However, no catalogue known to me lists these provisional overprints, not even the specialised catalogues. The reason for writing about them now is to record the appearance in a United States auction of several values in unused condition.

In the Cee-jay auction of June, 1999, these stamps were offered in 15 lots, each including the description 'Unissued sans serif overprint'. Seven different stamps were offered: 3c., 4c., 5c., 15c., 20c., and 25c. These included additionally the 5 centime dark green, as well as the yellow-green colour. They were lotted as singles, with an estimate of \$30-40 each, and as blocks of four from the upper right corners of the panes (some had complete sheet margins, and some had a margin on only one side). The millesimes were 8, when the right sheet margin was present (it is reasonable that 1898 printings should have been available toward the end of 1899). Estimates for the blocks were \$125-\$200, the higher estimates being for blocks with two sheet margins.

The upper right corner stamp in each block shows the variety, 'dropped hyphen'. The variety is well marked, the hyphen being at about the level of the bottom of the letters t and S. The position corresponds to no. 5 in the pane (of 25). The quantity printed is given only in the description for the 5 centimes dark green: 'Only one sheet of 150 ovpts and only 6 copies of Pos. 5 can exist.' (The sheets were divided into panes of 25, so presumably overprinting took place as single panes.) The overprints are typeset, and are deeply impressed.

The source of the information was not stated. I wrote to the auction house, asking for any additional information that they could provide, including the source. The reply was 'We regret that we cannot give you the information. We received the lots already written and do not have access to the consignor at this time.' This is indeed a pity, for there is some information in the lots that was not given by Bertrand. Bertrand did not mention the 5 centimes dark green. The quantities given by Bertrand, 200, were not included in the descriptions of the lots (the quantity 150 for the dark green 5c. does not necessarily imply that only 150 each of the other values were printed).

The source of these mint stamps is an intriguing mystery! However, it was said a few years ago that the family of the French Port Said Postmaster had inherited his effects, among which was much philatelic material. It seems reasonable that the family would eventually try to liquidate the material, and it also seems reasonable that the holdings would include quantities of the 1899 provisionals. Perhaps a reader of the QC who knows more about the situation will be able to provide a solution to this

problem. Meanwhile, I show some values in blocks with the dropped hyphen. The red overprints may not show up equally well for each value, owing to poor colour contrast. I had intended to show a piece franked with a pair of the 5c. as Fig. 26 (p. 107) in the Egypt book, but unfortunately it did not appear, due to human error.



Overprint from top two stamps the right one showing the dropped hyphen.

PORT-SAID PORT-SAID

Report of the David Feldman Auction

Kurt Wolfsbauer ESC 197

This auction was changed from autumn, 1998, to February 1999, taking place from the 15th to the 19th, in the Swissotel, Zurich. The catalogue, in seven separately bound parts, was as always sent out many weeks before the sale to all parts of the world. It promised to be sensational for Egypt philatelists. I have collected Egypt for over 30 years and not since the legendary Byam auction of 1961 has there been an auction with such choice material with many of the items being unique.

The first catalogue is devoted largely to Egypt with a small Sudan section. The cover, and especially the text, being very attractively presented. The majority of the lots were consigned to auction by two collectors of Egypt, of many years' standing, both are members of the ESC (Mr. Fikry and Achterberg).

The first part- Egyptian postal history-was the property of the Swiss collector, who built it up under the pseudonym "Oscar". Because the owner of this collection seldom exhibited at international exhibitions, only a few of us have had the possibility of seeing this collection.

The second part-the traditional stamps -comes from the Egyptian collector, who had gained many high awards at international exhibitions with this collection

In these times when the European economy is supposedly weak one could be anxious about how such a large quantity of material could be readily absorbed. I however generally, there was a true duel over every lot! 'f he description of the lots was professional, the starting prices were realistic and according to the market. The prices realised were often several times that of the starting prices. There were very few unsold lots. In the entire catalogue I saw only one forgery; it was lot 10331, with a certificate from the BPA (!), which was described with "sold as is" appended. It remained unsold. Also with lot 10409 there was a question whether it had been faked. In my opinion this cover was genuine; and it sold for SF 3600, many times its starting price.

To my special pleasure, James Bendon brought from Cyprus the recently-published book of the doyen of Egyptian philately, Prof Peter A. S. Smith of Ann Arbor. Within in few minutes all the available copies were sold. This book is a MUST for every Egypt philatelist. Please buy it quickly, before the edition of 500 copies is sold out.

Two days before the auction the inspection room was already well occupied. Many Egypt collectors from many countries were in attendance. I saw collectors from Austria, Germany, Switzerland, France, England, Greece, Cyprus, Turkey, Egypt, Israel, USA, and Canada. At the start of the auction all available seats were occupied. Then began the great battle for the best pieces of the philately of Egypt known to us.

Now a short report (with realisations) of the auction. The results are given in Swiss francs. With the buyer's commission, one can say that SF 2 = £1 approximately.

First Part, Postal History, lots 10000 to 10242

Napoleonic covers.

Almost all known postmarks were represented. The strikes were all very clear and fine. Especially SIOUTH was striking for its clarity and brilliance of color (SF3600). I do not know of a second cover of this beauty.

Posta Europea.

Such an offering has not been seen in any other auction. Most prominent is lot 10022, a letter from Cairo by the Posta Europea to Alexandria, then by the Austrian Post to Corfu, and there taxed with 1d inland postage - a letter handled by three postal administrations (SF1900).

A cover from Cologne franked with six stamps of 2 silbergroschen to Cairo (lot 10020) realized SF 10,000, and a cover from Samanud (lot 10026), Posta Europea Type V, to Alexandria and from there to England by the French Post, franked 20c. + 40c. cancelled 5080, made SF 2200.

Overland Mail.

Thomas Waghorn.

It was fantastic material! Almost all the cachets that were used were represented. The peak price, SF 20,000, was achieved with a cover with the cachet "Care of Mr. Waghorn & Co., London Alexandria" (lot 10045), and a cover (lot 10046) with the red cachet in an oval, "Care of Mr. Waghorn/Alexandria", made SF 18,000. Lot 10040 consisted of two letters with the same content from London to Calcutta: one going by the Waghorn service in 82 days, the second going via the Cape in 145 days (SF 2,000). There was also a letter (lot 10053) handwritten by Waghorn personally and signed (SF 150).

Other Forwarders.

Especially worthy of attention is a cover (lot 10056) from Madras to Wolverhampton with the cachet "G. W. Wheatley & Co." (SF1800). Another is a cover from NAZIO & CO., and also three covers of BRIGGS & CO. (SF650 to 950). British Hotel Cairo (Shepherds), There were two covers with this rare handstamp, of which lot 10057, a cover via Suez, British Post, to Bangalore, deserves special mention; it is probably the finest example of this rare handstamp (SF3600).

Egyptian Transit Company.

A cover (lot 10063) from Cairo to Alexandria brought SF7000, but one from Cairo to Edinburgh (lot 10064) failed to find a buyer. In my opinion, the cachets on neither of these covers is a transit handstamp. The cachets on these covers are the sender's handstamp of the firm, and occur on very many covers. Only covers that come from Europe, or were forwarded from Alexandria to Suez and onward to the East can be considered to have true transit marks. Obviously, the same holds for covers coming to Suez from the east and from there forwarded to Alexandria and on to Europe.

The Suez Canal Story. Cancellations

Of five lots with the cancellations of CHANTIER VI, KIL. 34 and KIL 83, special attention goes to lot 10069, a strip of 4 of the Second Issue 10 paras cancelled with three clear strikes of CANAL DE SUEZ /CHANTIER VI, 18 SEPT. 68 (SF1700).

One of the high points of the auction was lot 10071, a cover franked with a pair of the 20 paras with the foregoing cancellation in combination with Lombardy-Venetia 15 soldi tied to the cover by the Austrian Alexandrien date-stamp 22.10.1868, to Cattaro (SF44,000). Lot 10072, a cover franked with a pair of the 20 paras cancelled CHANTIER VI in combination with France 40c. tied to cover by the 5080 obliterator of Alexandria, to Digoin, France brought SF36,000. The cover-front (lot 10073) to France (very bad condition) with 1 piaster cancelled with Type II of POSTE EGIZIANE/KILOMETRO 83 dated 13 SETT. 69 in combination with France 40c. cancelled 5080 brought SF12,000 (the only known cover with KILOMETRO 83 cancellation?).

1868 Suez Canal Company Issue

Fourteen lots with various cancellations (none of the rare ones) and blocks filled this section. Lot 10068, the specialized exhibition collection with complete sheets of 120 from the Jean Boulad collection (estimated 80,000-100,000) did not sell.

Austrian Post Offices

Alexandria

A few lots of prephilately included nearly all the known types of postmarks of the Austrian Post Office in Alexandria. Lot 10090 had the single-line postmark ALEXANDRIA (SF1100). In lot 1097 were five incoming letters to Alexandria with the very rare postmarks Col Vapore da Trieste and Col Vapore da Berutti - a wonderful lot (SF900). Lot 10098 was a cover with the two-line red boxed postmark PIROSCAFI POSTALI AUSTRIACI; only three such covers are known (SF4200). Then came a few lots with loose stamps, and covers with the rare postmarks COL VAPORE DA BERUTTI / BERUTTI / SMIRNE, among others. Lot 10103 from Triest to Cairo franked with a 15kr. stamp of the Eagle issue of Austria and the Posta Europea handstamps of Alexandria and Cairo reached SF4200. Lot 10106 was a cover with mixed franking: Egypt 1 piaster First Issue cancelled at Cairo in red plus a Lombardy-Venetia 15 soldi stamp cancelled with the straight-line ALEXANDRIA. Unfortunately the cover was of only second quality (a tear went through the 15s. stamp and the cover had many foxing spots; otherwise, this cover would have been quite a big rarity (ex Byam; SF 15,000). Lot 10108 was another high point. It was a unpaid cover of 1866 to Costantinopoli, bearing the same straight-line ALEXANDRIA (SF1900). This postmark is a pre-stamp one that was only in use until 1845. It was later used for marking receipts. In the year 1866 we know of only three franked covers and the foregoing unfranked one in which the handstamp is used as a cancellation. I presume that the circular date-stamp in use in those times had been mislaid or perhaps had to be repaired. A further high point was lot 10109. a registered mixed-franking cover with 2 copies of the 2pi. Second Issue plus a 15 soldi, and on the reverse a 10 soldi for the registration fee, cancelled with the very rare single-circle ALEXANDRIEN/ RECO, to Berlin (SF17,000). Lots 10115 to 10119 were all covers with the Austrian Lloyd postmarks; all of them sold at many times the starting price (SF1300 to 2200).

Port Said.

Lot 10120, a cover that because of the quality was not very pretty (in spite of being a cover rarity of the first rank), to Syra franked with two stamps each of the 2s. and 3s. of the 1867 issue, and for the Greek postage due part a 20 lepta stamp, made SF 26,000. Lot 10121 was the only known franchise cover, paid in cash, of the Austrian Post Office in Port Said. It was addressed to Mainz to a French soldier at a prisoner-of-war camp (Franco-Prussian War). A cover rarity, it brought SF11,000.

British Post Offices

At the beginning were two covers from British forces in 1801-2. One was from Abou Kir Bay and the other from Alexandria (SF 1100 and 2200).

Alexandria

Lot 10128 was a cover from Suez with crowned-circle "Paid at Alexandria" applied in transit; the cover was marked "per overland dispatch" in manuscript, and was evidently carried outside the mails from Suez to Alexandria (SF2400).

Lot 10130 was a rarity, a cover franked with French stamps were cancelled with the boxed ALEXANDRIA/MB handstamp, and again with French grid CP3, addressed to Paris, but entering France via Calais (SF5500).

Lot 10131 consisted of a cover wonderful to the eye, with a strip of six of the 2d. blue cancelled B01 (SF3200). Three lots, 10139, -40, -43, were covers all showing the rare POSTED AFTER DEPARTURE OF PACKET handstamp (SF700 to 1300).

In the middle of the British lots a cover was found that showed the international cooperation between the Austrian and Russian posts in Egypt. The cover was posted in the Austrian post office, which turned it over to the Russian P. O. for forwarding to Aleppo; on the back was a transit handstamp of ROPIT Alexandretta (SF1300).

Cairo

A cover with the crowned circle of Cairo , to Manchester, did not find a buyer. **Suez** Lot 10157 was the finest cover with the crowned circle “Paid at Suez” that I have seen, via London to Woking (SF13000).

French Post Offices

Alexandria

The first few lots were pre-stamp covers with varied postmarks of Alexandria. Then came a few covers with the 5080 cancellation and some mixed-franking covers with the First and Second Issues. Among these, lot 10181, a cover with 1 pi. Second Issue cancelled at Ismailia and 40c. cancelled 5080 brought SF 4000.

Suez

Lot 10187, an 1863 cover to Lyon franked with a pair each of the 10c. and 40c. cancelled 5105, bearing the date-stamp SUEZ/ Bau FRANCAIS, very pretty, made SF5500.

Greek Post Office.

At the beginning were two pre-stamp covers from Alexandria to Navplio in 1834, Lots 10191 and 10192, with the large intaglio cachets reading (translated) CONSUL OF GREECE IN EGYPT (SF7500 and 10,000). They were fine covers, but in my opinion the strikes were not postmarks. Therefore to me the prices realized by these two lots were incomprehensible. In this period there were covers from Egypt to almost all European countries at reasonable prices. There followed a series of lots with covers having different frankings and cancellations. Among these was a cover from Corfu to Cairo with mixed franking with the 1 pi. Second Issue and a Greek 40 lepta stamps cancelled with the 106 numbered grill; on the back was the postmark of the Greek post office in Alexandria and the Egyptian post office in Cairo (SF8000).

Italian Post Office

This part was the strongest of the foreign offices in Egypt. Offered were some marvelous covers with Sardinian franking with different cancellations.

Lot 10209 was a cover with Sardinia 80c. cancelled with the large blue boxed cancellation PIROSCAFI POSTALI FRANCESI, to Naples (SF19,000). Lot 10210 was a mourning letter, franked with a pair of the 10c. and a 40c. of Sardinia cancelled with the small blue boxed cancellation PIROSCAFI POSTAL ITALIANI, to Florence (SF7000). Lot 10212 was a cover with the same stamps with the same cancellation, but in black, to Milan (SF18,000). Lot 10224 was a cover with mixed franking: 1pi. First Issue cancelled by a retta, with accompanying POSTE VICE-REALI EGIZIANE CAIRO date-stamp in red, and a 60c. Italian stamp cancelled 234, to Pesaro (SF4800).

Russian Post Office

This group was small but strong. Lot 10235, a cover from Alexandria to Tripoli, franked with a pair of the 186&ROPiT 2pi. cancelled 785, ex Antonini, brought SF7500.

Lot 10241 was a cover from Alexandria to Beirut, franked with a pair of 3k. Russian Levant cancelled with an “indistinct triangle of dots”, backstamped with the date-stamp ALEXANDRISKOE ROPIT AGENTSVO; it made SF 3800.

Another cover, lot 10242, from Latakia to Alexandria franked with 1 and 5k., with the same date-stamp but on the front, realized SF 3200.

Part 2, The Classic Issues from Lot 10243

This part of the auction was especially strong in the first and second issues many in blocks. A considerable number of these had been in the collections of King Faruk, Cotta, MacKinzie Low Abbott, Byam, Danson and Antonini. These lots caused a lot of fierce bidding with bidders paying high prices for stamps and covers alike.

1866 First issue:

5 Para: mint block of four (Lot 10247 sfr 1000), used pair with upright WMK (Lot 10252 sfr 1800).

10 Para: unused block of 21 (lot 10255 sfr 3200), mint block of four (Lot 1026 sfr 1900), mint block of four double perforation (Lot 10257 sfr 1200), envelope from Zagazik to Caire with block of four (Lot 10259 sfr 8500, three cover known), one 10 p on cover to Cairo (Lot 10260 sfr 1400).

20 Para: min block of ten largest known (Lot 10266 sfr 5500), block of four, imperf. (Lot 10270 sfr 800), one unused perf. 13 (Lot 10271 sfr 700).

1 Piaster: Pellas Proof block of four (10273 sfr 1300), mint block of 53 (Lot 10275 sfr 7500), unused block of four, show broken arabic character (Lot 10276 sfr 900), mint imperf. Block of 18 (Lot 10282 sfr 6500), mint block of four, showing both horiz. Pairs imperf. (Lot 10284 sfr 2200).

2 Piaster: mint block of four (Lot 10288 sfr 2800), mint pair imperf. (Lot 10289 1500), cover from Alessandria to Suez with diagonal bisect 27.7.1867 (Lot 10290 sfr 4400), detto from Cairo to Alessandria (Lot 10291 sfr 4400), mint block of four perf. 13 x 12 ½ (Lot 10292 sfr 1700).

5 Piaster: mint block of four (Lot 10294 sfr 8500), mint imperf. between pair with inverted WMK (Lot 10297 sfr 1500), mint imperf. between pair (Lot 10298 sfr 1600), unused imperf. pair with surcharge of 10 pi (Lot 10302 sfr 2200).

10 Piaster: mint block of four (Lot 10306 sfr 13.000), mint pair, imperf. between (Lot 10307 sfr 1900), mint pair slightly misperf. (lot 10308 sfr 1400), unused, perf. 13 (Lot 10312 sfr 2000).

1867 - 69 Penasson:

5 Para: mint block of 24 (Lot 10317 sfr 550), mint block of four, perf. 23 x 12 ½ (Lot 10319 sfr 650), 5 pa tied Cairo 11.3.1870 on newspaper LA STAFFETA to PerugiaItalia with Italy 1867 20c applied in Alexandria and tied 234 (Lot 10323 sfr 10.000) ein für das Auge wunderschönes Stück.

10 Para: mint block of 35 (Lot 10325 sfr 3400), mint block of 12, one shown deformed 1 (lot 10326 sfr 1300), bisected on fragment and re-joined (as ever) to complete LA TROMBETTA (Lot 10330 sfr 1200).

20 Para: mint block of 15 (Lot 10332 sfr 4000), mint strip of five (Lot 10333 sfr 850), mint block of 23 (10336 sfr 2800), mint block of 10 one shown carthweel variety (Lot 10337 1600).

1 Piaster: mint block of 15 (Lot 10339 sfr 900), 1pi tied Cairocds on 1869 folded entire to Jerusalem, bearing boxed AFFRANCATURA/INSUFFICIENTE and rate 3 Piaster in Alexandria and handed over the Austrian Office, bs`d Austroan office arrival bs and taxed 15 (Lot 10344 sfr 2000), unused imperf. strip of 3 (Lot 10347 sfr 550).

2 Piaster: mint block of four showing all 4 types (Lot 10349 sfr 3200), mint block of 4 (Lot 10350 sfr 1900), unused imperf. block of 6 (Lot 10353 sfr 1500), unused imperf. between vert. pair (Lot 10354 sfr 1900).

5 Piaster: mint block of four (Lot 10356 sfr 5500 only 5 blocks known), mint showing WMK impression on face (Lot 10357 sfr 550).

1872 - 75 Penasson:

20 Para: vert. pair on cover cds Alessandria to Constantinopel (Lot 10360 sfr 1400),

1 Piaster: pair on cover tied double-ring Poste Khedive/Cairo to Italy, the cover was underfranked hence additional 20 Para applied and cancelled in transit in Alexandria, than handed to Italian office (Lot 10363 sfr 3200).

2 Piaster: 2pi+2pi+20pa+10pa+5pa on cover from Cairo via London to Philadelphia/USA rare 4-colour franking (Lo10367 sfr 8000).

1874 Boulaq:

1 Piaster: perf. 13 ½ : 12 ½ a complete mint sheet of 200, all margins intact, with one stamp TETE-BECHE (pos.114), fresh and very fine (Lot 10373 sfr 6500).

5 Piaster: perf. 12 ½ on envelope, tied Cairo 21.2.1875, double rate to USA (Lot 10377 sfr 5500).

Egypt used abroad:

Constantinople: registered cover to Alexandria franked 1866 5 Piaster (Lot10397 sfr 9500), large envelope to Cairo franked 1867 Penasson 20 Para pair (Lot 10401 sfr 1600), envelope to Alexandria franked 1874-75 Bulaq 5 para strip of 4 + 1 Piaster (Lot 10404 sfr 2000).

Dardanelles: large part cover to Constantinople franked 1872-75 Penasson 1 Piaster tied double circle Poste Egiziane Dardanelli (Lot 10405 sfr 7000).

Galliopoli: small fragment bearing 1872-75 2 Piaster BISECT (Lot 10406 sfr 1100).

Lagos: fragment franked 1867 Penasson 1 Piaster (Lot 10407 sfr 700).

Rhodes: fragment 1872-75 1 Piaster + bisect (Lot 10408 sfr 550).

Smyrna: envelope to Alessandria franked pair 1866 20 Para (Lot 10409 sfr 3600), cover to Cairo, franked vertical strip of four 1866 1 Piaster Lot 10410 sfr 6000), registered cover franked 1867 Penasson 5 Piaster to Constantinople (Lot 10412 sfr 7500), cover to Sayra franked 1 Piaster 1867 Penasson + 20 lep Greek for internal postage (Lot 10423 sfr 3400).

Volo: folded entire to Constantinople franked 1 Piaster 1867 Penasson (Lot 10416 sfr 4600).

Essays:

35 Lots different from the 1866 Riester Zeheri No. 18 to 1920 Zeheri No 67a

1914-22 Pictorials:

32 Lots includes Essays and Lots

1922-36 King Fuad

189 Lots. mint, covers- Essays. in\ cried overprints, misplaced overprints, mis-perforated, double Surcharge.

Postage due:

1884 10 Para to 5 Piaster specialised collection, mint, used, multiples, covers (Lot 10726 sfr 1500). 1888 2m to 5 Piaster. specialised collection, mint, used, multiples, covers 8Lot10732 sfr 46011). Then some Lots Airmails. Service, Officials. Official Seals, Postal Stationery, Booklet, Cancellations, Egyptian Occupation of Palestine- Gaza (1948-67), British Forces, Military, Maritime and Revenues.

Sudan:

76 Lots Die Proofs from 1897 to 1950

Lot 10776 with a envelope sent from Chartum overland by camel runner up to the first available river post office in Egypt and arrived in Cairo where blue POSTA EUROPEA/CAIRO 17.9.1863 cds was applied, further step to Alexandria where Austrian Levant 15s pair was tied Alexandrien/18.9 to pay the postage to Vienna. Only 3 covers known (Sir 28.000).

So as the auction began - with prime pieces of Egyptian postal history so it ended with a marvelous cover from Sudan. "Some happiness some sadness" T he vendors might have been sad, seeing their collection being dispersed all over the world. The buyers happy to add their newly won gains to their collections. All Egyptian collectors will remember this day for a long time. It had been a momentous day for the sellers, the auctioneer and the buyers alike.



Lot 10356 Second Issue 5pi Brown block of four. One of only 5 blocks recorded