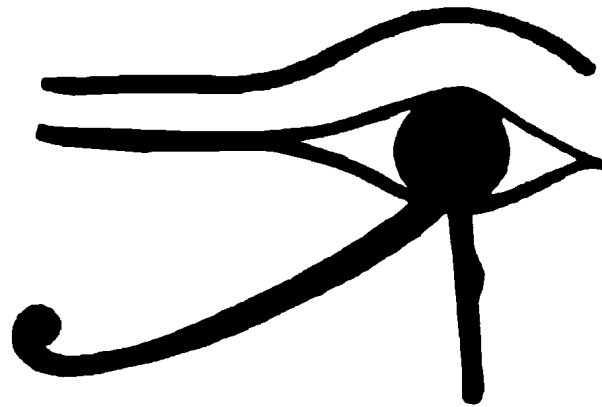


**The
Quarterly Circular
of**

**THE
EGYPT**



STUDY CIRCLE

**June Quarter 2001
Volume XVII No.10**

**Whole Series No. 197
Pages 221 - 244**

CONTENTS.

Officers 221, AGM 222, Meeting 223, New Members 224, Announcements 225

ARTICLES.

Flaw on First Portrait	Sherif El Kerdani	226
Civil Postal Markings of Heliopolis	V. Varjabedian	227
A Near Shipwreck in the Suez Canal	P.A.S.Smith	231
Hotel Parcel Card	A.J.Jansen	232
Extracts from the Journal Official	M.Murphy	233-240
Perfins Update	V. Varjabedian	241
Answer to Query 195/1 Xmas Seal	A.Gould	242
New Queries		242-244

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Forthcoming Meetings.

July 7 th	Instructional markings	P.R. Bertram
September 8 th .	10 sheets per member	All
November 10 th	King Fuad Second Issue	K. Pogson

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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Report of the Annual General Meeting, May 12 2001

Switching the AGM from a morning start to normal afternoon meeting time paid handsome dividends, even on FA Cup Final day, with 16 officers and members taking part in a wide-ranging and fruitful discussion.

PRESENT: John Sears (President), Robin Bertram (Chairman), Stanley Horesh (Deputy Chairman); and George Anagnostoulis, Peter Andrews, Mike Bramwell, Dennis Clarke, John Clarke, John Davis, Cyril Defriez, Ted Fraser-Smith, Edmund Hall, Hany Makram (Egypt), Mike Murphy, Brian Sedgley and Richard Wilson (United States).

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were received from Alan Jeyes, Tony Schmidt, Peter Grech and Peter Feltus.

1. Minutes of the last AGM, previously circulated, were approved.

Matters arising: Stanley Horesh raised the question of cash on deposit, and pointed out a number of advantageous interest rates. It was agreed that his suggestions be passed to the Treasurer, Alan Jeyes.

2. Election of Officers. As Alan Jeyes had indicated that he wished to stand down as Hon Secretary, all other officers were re-elected en bloc, and the Chairman announced that there had been one nomination for the vacant post. Mike Murphy (proposed Robin Bertram; seconded Edmund Hall) was elected unanimously, and the Chairman welcomed him and paid tribute to the work done over the past five years by Alan Jeyes, who has for the time being agreed to continue as Hon Treasurer. Mike can be reached at 109 Chadwick Road, Peckham, London SE15 4PY, 020 7639 0853, or by email at egyptstudycircle@hotmail.com. As his change of role from committee member to Hon Secretary leaves the numerical composition of the committee unchanged, there was no further committee vacancy.

3. Accounts 2000. The Chairman presented the accounts in the Treasurer's absence, and indicated a £237 deficit on the year, caused largely by increases in costs in the production and postage of the *QC* and losses on the Auction fund, previously providing a welcome boost to Circle funds. In light of discussion to come, the accounts were adopted. Members may obtain copies of the accounts from Alan Jeyes.

4. Level of annual subscription. The Treasurer had made two suggestions to help to reduce the deficit: trim the number of *Quarterly Circulars* to three a year; and raise subscriptions to £15 from the present £12.50. There was much discussion, and the meeting felt that to reduce the frequency of the *QC* would be very much a retrograde step, as it formed one of the vital planks of Circle life for overseas members especially. On the other hand, the subscription level had remained stable for nine years. With two votes, members agreed unanimously to retain the *QC* at four issues a year, and to raise the annual subscription to £15.00 from January 1, 2002.

5. Any Other Business.

a. Members' voting having been completed on the newly inaugurated trophy for the best *QC* article, the Chairman was pleased to present the Scribe award for 1999 to Edmund Hall for his article on *Station Postmarks*. Because the winner, Peter Grech, was absent overseas, his award for 2000 (*The Ramleh Electric Tramway*) will be made on his return. Members applauded the inauguration of a trophy intended to encourage more original research in *QC* articles.

b. The meeting welcomed Edmund Hall's announcement that, encouraged by recent Circle decisions, he had built a prototype of a Circle website, news of which had been circularised to some members. Because, however, it is acknowledged that such a website must be very carefully produced and maintained to reflect the aims and interest of the Circle as a whole, members decided that further consideration was required before any decision about whether or

when it should go live. It was agreed that a small sub-committee should be formed, its first task to set the parameters of whether the Circle should have a website at all, and if so, what form it should take. Edmund Hall, Mike Murphy and Peter Grech were invited to form the sub-committee and to report their recommendations to the members.

c. John Sears thanked members for being able to report a most encouraging response of some 40 replies to his recent circular letter seeking suggestions for ways to put the Auction back into profit to the benefit of Circle funds. There was much discussion about several possibilities: co-ordination of timing with the *QC* to save postage, using lighter weight paper and email to secure the same aim, and introducing a seller's commission were just some of them. Since the autumn 2001 Auction has already been cancelled, it was agreed that the list of suggestions merited forwarding to Committee members for further discussion. Auction 33 in spring 2002 will be carried out under new and potentially more financially suitable conditions.

6. Next Meeting. It was announced that the next Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday May 11, 2002, with a normal afternoon starting time.

The Chairman thanked all members of the committee for their efforts and assistance during the year, and closed the annual meeting.

Report of Meeting, May 12 2001

PRESENT AND APOLOGIES: as at the Annual General Meeting.

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming George Anagnostoulis, attending his first meeting, and two overseas visitors, Hany Makram (Egypt) and Richard S Wilson (United States), both returning to pastures old.

Visit to Egypt: It was announced that one member had had to withdraw from the visit through illness, leaving one place open. Any member wishing to join the trip (October 2 for up to 12 days) should contact Alan Jeyes, who has made all the arrangements*. Mike Murphy has volunteered to secure visas from the Egyptian Embassy in London and will write shortly to all those who are going; and Robin Bertram will also write with details of the itinerary, though it is stressed that the aim, unlike Cairo 1991, is generally to be as informal and ad hoc as possible. A number of visits will be arranged, but there will be plenty of opportunities for individual pursuits and enthusiasms.

*Please note, this place has now been filled.

Invitation from New Zealand: The NZ chapter of the Circle is arranging its 2002 biennial conference for Matarangi Beach (February 25 to March 3, warmest period of the year), and all members are cordially invited to attend not only to discuss the stamps and postal history of Egypt but to enjoy true Kiwi hospitality, with sightseeing, tennis, golf, swimming and fishing - not to mention excellent wines! - within easy reach. Overseas visitors tell fascinating tales of the 1996 and 2000 visits. See page 225.

Midpex 2001: The annual Midpex meeting will take place at Coventry on June 30. Robin Bertram canvassed volunteers to help to man the Study Circle stand. Any member not present at the meeting who is attending and can assist should let Robin know on 01480-810956.

Auction 32: Mike Murphy reported that the Auction was about to close, and it appeared that there would be something over 60 bidders, with approximately three-fifths of material sold. There may still be bids to come in, but the prognosis was again that, though the Auction proves an invaluable service to about a third of our members, Auction 32 will probably again prove a drain on Circle resources rather than adding to them.

Carried by Sea: John Davis then presented the day's topic, a continuation of the subject opened at the September 2000 meeting. Since prior to the air mail service opening up virtually all mail sent abroad was carried by sea on at least some part of its journey, the question posed was: What areas of "carried by sea" should form the core of the topic under discussion?

John showed a fascinating display of material, ranging from Circle records of postal markings via covers and stamps bearing those markings, to ships' mail, mail addressed to vessels, military mail arriving back in Britain with its characteristic markings, shipping line stationery and cards bearing illustrations of ships or mentions of shipping matters. Discussion ranged far and wide, from the service (or disservice) done to Egyptian philately by Mr Hendry to whether a postcard showing an Egyptian scene but used from Denmark might qualify as sufficiently Egypt-related.

The Chairman thanked John for his display and the hard work he had put into it and said he hoped it would trigger off further research/meetings on different aspects of this wide subject. Members present showed their appreciation in the traditional manner.

Happily for this writer, John Davis will put his thoughts in concrete form for a forthcoming issue of the *QC*, when all those who attended will feel gratified at having been present at the birth of a resurrected and intriguing study area.

New Members.

ESC 539 Mr. D. Kossmann
Hochkalterstr. 28
D 90471 Nürnberg 50
Germany

ESC 545 Mr.M.M. Abd Azim
8A El Saryat
Abbassya
Cairo
Egypt

ESC 546 Mr. Frank.R. Wagner
3132 Rebecca Drive
Chesapeake
Virginia 23322
U.S.A.

Deceased

ESC 132 Bill Andrews

Reinstated

ESC 399 Dr. Michael G.C. Dahl
3 Adeline Gardens,
Gosforth,
Newcastle upon Tyne,
Tyne & Wear, NE3 4JQ.

The New Zealand Chapter of the ESC Invitation

Biennial Conference 2002, February 25 to March 3

It is with great pleasure that we welcomed John and Pat Sears and Ted and Judy Fraser-Smith to our Biennial Conference in the year 2000.

We would be delighted to include an even larger contingent at our 2002 Conference to be held between Monday February 25 and Sunday March 3 next year.

The combination of a seaside holiday in comfortable accommodation alongside a tennis court, sightseeing around the scenic Coromandel Peninsula, and serious sharing of philatelic interests has proved to be an excellent arrangement. Using two houses extended our "conference centre" and added little to the cost, which was rather less for the week than the cost of one night at a country hotel; and the caterer among our number feeds us well.

In the hope that more overseas members will be able to join us next year we are negotiating the use of a third house for the week, but this depends on an early expression of interest from intending visitors.

Questions and firm or tentative bookings should be addressed to Tony Chisholm (ESC 288), 13 Arden Way, Wilton, Wellington 6005, New Zealand. E-mail j_t_chris@clear.net.nz

Enquiries by phone 64-4-4729866 or fax 64-4-4729865 are welcome between the hours of 7am and 11pm New Zealand time.

TPO Study

At the ESC meeting in March 2000 it was agreed that Anatole Ott (ESC 261) will be the new Study Leader for the TPO study. If you have any queries about TPOs or have any information that might be of interest, please contact Anatole. Please don't forget the *QC*, though, for any new and interesting finds.

Anatole Ott
Södermalmsbrinken 6
S-43169 MÖLNDAL
Sweden

Forces Postal History Society meeting July 21st.

The FPHS meeting on July the 21st. is billed as "*Foreign Forces (Non GB) in Egypt*". All ESC members are invited to attend and bring anything of interest that fits the bill. The meeting could therefore cover a wide range, from Napoleonic covers through to the present time. With the wealth of material held by members of the FPHS it should be well worth the visit.

The meeting is held at the Union Jack Club, Sandell Street, London SE1 just opposite the Jubilee exit of Waterloo Station. The meeting room is open at 1.30 p.m. and the meeting proper starts at 2 p.m. I shall definitely be going and look forward to seeing other ESC members there. Ed.

Flaw on the 100 Milliemes of the First Portrait Issue

Sherif El Kerdani (ESC 456)

The first portrait issue of King Fuad (1923-24: SG 111-122, Balian 223-234, Zeheri 82-93) was a rather “trial-and-error” piece of work in photogravure by Harrison and Sons, which resulted in many flaws and retouches. Extensive studies have been made by eminent philatelists over the years to describe and locate these flaws, to the extent of plating some of the lower values.

One common type is the White flaw, which was described by John A. Grimmer⁽¹⁾ (ESC 164) as having occurred during etching of the printing plate: after application of the gelatine multipositive to the non-etched plates, bitumen powder was sprinkled over and the etching acid applied to create the recesses in the printing plate which would hold the ink. If the bitumen powder is very thick, this area will be masked from the acid and no etching will occur, hence no holding of ink - and the result is a white spot on the stamp. Large spots were retouched, but smaller ones were overlooked.

This 100 milliemes stamp (Bal 232), the left one if Fig.1, shows a white flaw below the Arabic character underneath the hamza in the word *ma'a* (hundred) in the right-hand panel in position D8⁽²⁾ which has not previously been described. Fig.2 shows the flaw magnified.

The stamp is number 99 in the pane of 100 (as evidenced by the selvage), which can help in plating the pane. The colour is dull purple⁽³⁾ and the stamp comes from a “no control number pane” with ink drag to top and perforations through left and bottom sides, according to the study by John Sears⁽⁴⁾.

Notes:

⁽¹⁾ John A. Grimmer, *The First Fuad Portrait Issue* (QC X 4, whole number 108, December 1978, pp. 89-101).

⁽²⁾ The Thirkell philatelic position finder.

⁽³⁾ Stanley Gibbons stamp colour key.

⁽⁴⁾ John Sears, *Egypt: The First Portrait Issue, A Compilation since 1928* (self published 1997).



Fig. 1

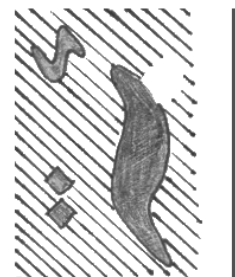













Fig. 2







Civilian Postal Markings of Heliopolis






Vahe Varjabedian (ESC 390)

Following are the civil postmarks of Heliopolis with their dates I have recorded so far. Would members please forward any other postmarks or new dates to the editor or myself.

CDS-TYPE-NO	Diam, mm	Colour	Earliest Date	Latest Date	Remarks
 HEL. 1	25	Black	15.9.1909		
 HEL. 2	23	Black	6.2.1910	13.2.1910	The Heliopolis Air Meeting
 HEL. 3A	26	Black	10.1.1910	5.12.1912	Month in Roman Numerals
 HEL. 3B	26	Black	28.7.1915		Month in Letters
 HEL. 4	26	Black	15.9.1910		

CDS-TYPE-NO	Diam. mm	Colour	Earliest Date	Latest Date	Remarks
 Hel. 5	24	Black	19.7.1915	24.2.1916	
 HEL. 6	27/28.5	Black	4.9.1916	22.6.1920	
 HEL. 7	27	Black	15.3.1918	24.3.1922	
 HEL. 8	27	Black	15.3.1925	16.9.1927	
 HEL. 9	27/28/30	Black	12.9.1928	11.3.1934	
 HEL. 10	29/30	Black	2.3.1928	27.7.1934	

CDS-TYPE-NO	Diam. mm	Colour	Earliest Date	Latest Date	Remarks
 <p>Hel. 11</p>	27	Black	20.1.1937	31.8.1944	
 <p>HEL. 12</p>	30	Black	29.11.39	24.7.1940	
 <p>HEL. 13</p>	30	Black	15.2.1937	13.1.1938	
 <p>HEL. 14</p>	30	Black	19.7.1939	18.7.1941	
 <p>HEL. 15</p>	26	Black	3.7.1944		
 <p>HEL. 16</p>	30	Black	22.9.1944	26.9.1944	There are some cancellations with a dent in the side

CDS-TYPE-NO	Diam. mm	Colour	Earliest Date	Latest Date	Remarks
 Hel. 17	27	Black Blue	24.4.1948	30.7.1948	Same as Hel.12 but with T instead of R
 HEL. 18	26	Blue	25.2.1949		
 HEL. 19	29	Black	12.4.1950		
 HEL. 20	29	Black	26.2.1951		
 HEL. 21	29	Black	16.5.1953		

A Near Shipwreck in the Suez Canal^[1]

P.A.S. Smith (ESC 74)

The illustrated cover from the British Office in Suez, dated SP 10 75, enclosed an unusually interesting letter, the front page as written and a transcription of most of the text of which is given below.

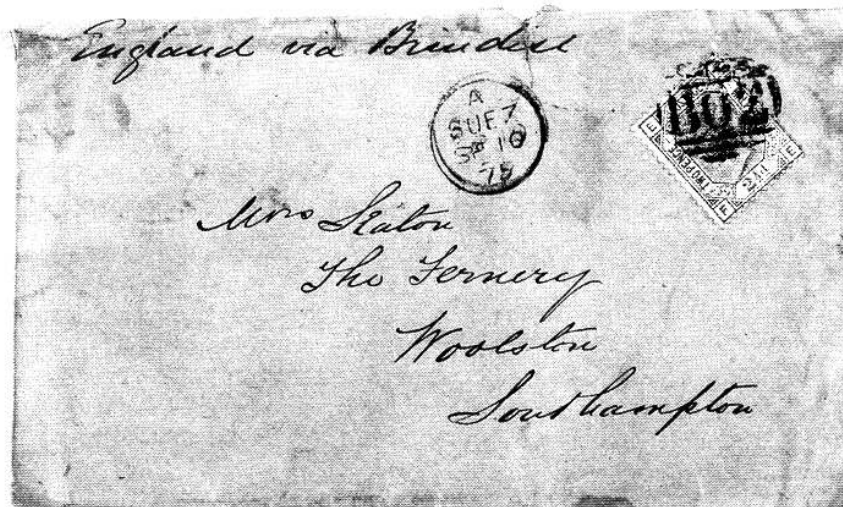
My Dear Pozie:

As I have a few minutes to write to you I must not let the opportunity pass or I may not have another chance. We left Malta last Saturday evening at 6 & had a capital passage to Port Said a fine fair wind the whole way - We entered the Canal yesterday morning at 7, had gone along 25 miles as straight as could be when all at once near a station the ship took it into her head to run ashore and stick fast. This was yesterday at noon. We at once got out lines to the shore and tried to heave the ship off but without success but broke all our lines. We then got out our largest hawsers & tried again but she would not move so we then determined to get all the cargo out of the fore hold & shift it right aft & put the chain cables overboard. We had a very hard time of it till midnight when we tried again & to our delight the ship came off but we had lost 12 hours time etc. This morning at 5 we started again & got safely to Lake Timsah by noon, across the Bitter Lakes by 3, are now fairly on our way to Suez, which place we hope to reach about 6 or 7 this evening if we can do so. It means a whole night's work for we have a large quantity of cargo to put out & and all our cargo that we got on deck to put below again. The weather is very hot during the day but the nights are cool pleasant if it were not for the sand flies. Capt. Murray is so different to Wolcott. As soon as he possibly could, he sent the men & myself to get some sleep & I have had a good nap this afternoon & now feel ready for anything. I wrote to you my love from Malta, and got all my clothes there all right & paid what I owed to the tailor about £1.6s. We are due in Suez today, so if we get there tonight we shall not have lost anything by our mishap, but shall have had a good deal of extra work. The ships now are really so short of men that at a time like this they soon get worn out. Ours is not a particularly strong crew. Our steam winches & capstans are bad. The Quarterdeck capstan crumbled up yesterday under the heavy strain put on it. One man was badly hurt. It is a mercy no one was killed. The old windlass too broke down & it took us 3 hours to get the chains in. It could have been done in 3 quarters of an hour on the Pekin. However we have got thro this trouble so it is all right.

The rest of the letter consists of small talk about family matters.

The letter shows that about a day and a half was required to navigate the Suez Canal at that date. It demonstrates quite well the remark that real letters are unique and can be dramatic - and a contrast to "machine made" ones.

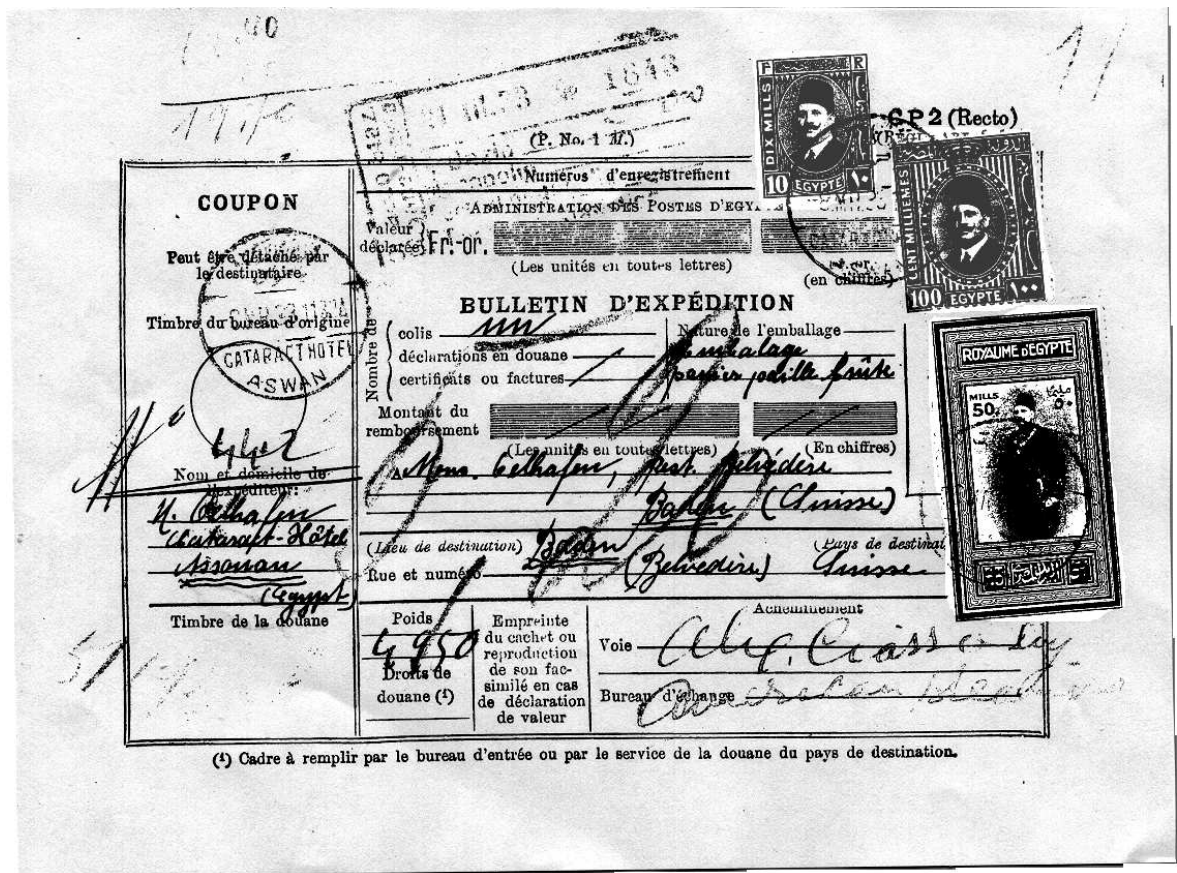
[1] Originally published in the *Collectors Club Philatelist*, January-February 1999.



Hotel Parcel Card

Anton J.Jansen (ESC 383)

Recently I found a parcel card cancelled 'Cataract Hotel Aswan 6 MR 33' in blue (Beninans Type HCA 3a). On the back it bears an 'Alexandria - Exchange office - Foreign Parcels Post 10.III.33' and arrival 'Baden Schweiz 22.111.33'. As I myself never saw one or heard of the existence of hotel parcel cards I would be very interested to hear from other collectors.



Editorial

As you have no doubt read, on page 222 section 4, there was a proposal to reduce the QC to three issues a year to save costs. This was unanimously voted down. This could however become quite an academic argument. To paraphrase part of another study circle's web site "...the magazine is published three times a year if sufficient articles warrant it...". The message then is get warranting.

Extracts from early issues of the *Journal Officiel*

Mike Murphy (ESC 240)

Some years ago, when I seem to have had more time, I was able to contribute to the *QC* (Whole Series 123, Vol XI, No 7, September 1982, p.197, and thereafter Whole Series 126, 133, 136-140, 143-153) material relevant to Egyptian philately and postal history extracted from the filecopies of the Egyptian Government journal, the *Journal Officiel*, held by the British Library. Those items extended from 1912 to 1929, and with any luck I shall be able to return to them soon, taking the extracts forward from 1929.

In the meantime, however, I have been lucky enough to come across some 19th century copies of the *Journal Officiel*, and can offer the following primary source material, dating (with gaps) between 1886 and 1891.

1886

No 1, page 2. January 2 1886.

□ *Postal Administration.* From January 1886, the post office at Kamoula, on the Upper Egyptian [rail] line, between Asyut and Aswan, will be closed and that area will continued to be served by the Asyut-Aswan travelling office.

From the same date, a post office will be opened at Daraw, on the same line, admitted to all branches of the postal service except specie. Notice dated 23 Dec 1885.

□ From January 1 1886, it will be possible to exchange postal orders with Austria-Hungary at the same rates and conditions as with other countries in the [Universal Postal] Union.

Public attention is drawn to the fact that the orders will be issued in francs by Egyptian post offices, and paid in Austria-Hungary in the equivalent in florins (paper money), at the rate fixed by the Stock Exchange of Vienna or Budapest, for the 20-franc piece, the day preceding the entry of the certificate into Austria-Hungary. In the other direction, the orders will be issued in florins, converted into francs at the rate set by the Stock Exchange of Vienna or Budapest on the day preceding the departure of the certificates, and paid in Egypt with reference to the product of that conversion. 24 Dec 1885.

No 41, page 251. April 5 1886.

□ *Khedivial Postal Paquebots Administration.* On the occasion of the Easter holiday, the public is informed that from the 25th(!) and up to the 22nd April inclusive, departures from Alexandria directly to Jaffa will take place each Thursday after the arrival of the Brindisi mail. The duration of the journey between Alexandria and Jaffa is 26 hours. 20 March 1886.

□ The Administration has the honour to inform the public that from April 1 1886 the paquebot service between Alexandria and the Syrian coast will become weekly. Leaving Alexandria each Thursday, at 10am, after the arrival of the Brindisi mail; arriving at Alexandria each Saturday morning. 27 March 1886.

48, 300. 21 April 1886.

□ *Postal administration.* Because of the quarantine conditions in regulation on the Adriatic coast of Italy, English paquebots of the Brindisi line will, until further notice, land at Port Said instead of Alexandria. The packets carried by the said paquebots will be forwarded via Port Said and arrive in Alexandria and Cairo on Friday instead of Thursday.

The public will each month be notified, by special notice, of the time of arrival of the packets at the Alexandria and Cairo offices.

No change is expected, at the moment, in the forwarding of packets for Europe via Brindisi, the English paquebots of that line continuing to leave from Alexandria. 19 April 1886.

55, 352. 10 May 1886.

□ *Khedivial Postal Paquebots Administration.* The Administration has the honour to inform the public that because the couriers from the Peninsula carrying the Brindisi mails land at Port Said instead of Alexandria, the departures of the Khedivial paquebots from Alexandria for Syria will be carried out on Wednesdays, at 11am, instead of Thursday, and the arrivals at Alexandria each Friday morning instead of Saturday.

This change to departures and arrivals from Alexandria will take place from the next Alexandria departure, fixed for Wednesday May 5. The next arrival at Alexandria will be on Friday May 7 instead of Saturday May 8 1886. 1 May 1886.

93, 618. 21 August 1886.

□ *Postal Administration.* From September 1 a new post office admitted to all postal services will be opened at Gamalia, on the Bahr el-Saghir canal, Dakahlieh province. 17 Aug 1886.

□ The public is informed that, from the present day, it is possible to exchange postal orders with Luxembourg, either ordinary or telegraphic, at the same rates and conditions as with other countries in the Union. 17 Aug 1886.

1888**No 19, page 164. 13 February 1888.**

□ *Postal Administration - Cairo office.* Departures and arrivals of principal carriers, up to 19 February 1888.

Sunday 12. Departure of English paquebot of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, via Port Said. Closure of windows: Registered correspondence 5pm; ordinary correspondence 5.30pm.

Monday 13. Departure of English paquebot of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, via Alexandria. Closure of windows: Registered correspondence 8.20am; ordinary correspondence 8.50am. Departure of Austrian paquebot. Closure of windows: Registered correspondence 10.00pm; ordinary correspondence 10.30pm. Arrival of Italian paquebot.

Wednesday 15. Arrival of Austrian paquebot.

Thursday 16. Arrival of English paquebot, via Port Said.

Friday 17. Departure of French and Italian paquebots. Closure of windows: Registered correspondence 10pm; ordinary correspondence 10.30. Arrival of French paquebot. 11 Feb 1888.

38, 360. 28 March 1888.

□ *Postal administration.* From April 1 the following will be put into circulation:

1. Stamps of 5 milliemes, which will replace the present stamps of 20 paras.
2. The new postal cards, in a size a little larger than the present cards, which will carry a new stamp of 5 milliemes. The price of the simple postal card will be 5 milliemes, and that of the reply-paid card will be 10 milliemes (1 piastre).

During the month of April post offices will sell simultaneously the new 5 millieme stamps and the present stamps of 20 paras, as well as both the new postcards and the present cards.

The 20-para stamps and the present postcards will stop being sold on May 1, but may continue to be used until October 31 1888. From that date they will no longer be valid. 24 March 1888.

□ Following a new Convention between the Administration and the British postal administration, a parcels service between the United Kingdom and Egypt will be established from April 1 next:

Egyptian parcels for the United Kingdom will be sent: A. Via Port Said and Gibraltar; B. Via Alexandria and the Continent.

I. Forwarding via Port Said and Gibraltar.

There will be no change to the tax and conditions of forwarding by this route, that is, 3 piastres will be payable, with a minimum of 6 piastres, for each 500 grammes or fraction of 500 grammes, to a maximum of 5kg.

II. Forwarding via Alexandria and the Continent.

Parcels sent by this route will be divided into two categories:

1. Those below 1kg, for which the tax will be fixed at 12 piastres per parcel;
2. Those exceeding 1kg to a maximum of 3kg, for which the tax will be fixed at 15 piastres per parcel. This latter will exclude parcels containing tobacco.

From April 16 it will no longer benefit from the agency of the Continental Daily Express Parcels for the exchange of parcels between the United Kingdom and Egypt. 22 March 1888.

Weekly table indicating departures and arrivals of principal mail carriers to and from Europe up to March 31 1888:

Departures: Friday - Italian (to Naples, ordinary correspondence closing 10pm, registered 10.30pm), French (Marseille, ordinary 10pm, registered 10.30pm).

Arrivals: Tuesday - Italian (from Naples). Wednesday - Austrian (Brindisi). Thursday - British (Brindisi to Port Said). Friday, French (Marseille).

68, 799. June 9 1888

Postal Administration. The administration will receive offers for the sale of three of its vessels: the *Giafferieh*, the *Tor* and the *Kosseir*, taken out of commission in Suez.

The offers must be made on 3 piastre stamped paper and indicate separately the price offered for each vessel. These offers should be addressed to the Postal Administration before June 30 1888, at midday, under separate covers, and carrying the indication "Offer to buy vessel".

People wishing to take advantage of this offer may visit the Administration's agent in Suez, to see the abovementioned vessels and to take cognisance of the conditions of the sale.

The administration will not accept increased bids, nor respond to any submissions presented.

17 May 1888.

70, 822. 16 June 1888.

Postal Administration: Weekly table indicating departures and arrivals of principal mail carriers to and from Europe up to June 23 1888:

Departures: Monday - British (Brindisi from Alexandria, ordinary correspondence closing 8.15am, registered 8.45am), Austrian (Brindisi, ordinary 10am, registered 10.30am). Tuesday - French (Marseille). Friday - Italian (Naples, ordinary 10pm, registered 10.30pm), French (Marseille, ordinary 10pm, registered 10.30pm).

Arrivals: Tuesday - Italian (from Naples), French (Marseille). Wednesday - Austrian (Brindisi). Thursday - British (Brindisi to Port Said). Friday, French (Marseille).

Railways, Telegraphs and Alexandria Port Administration: The administrative council has the honour to inform the public that from June 15 the timetable of Train 63, leaving from Abu Kebir at 9.40am for Faqus, will be modified as follows: leave Abu Kebir 12.30pm, arrive Faqus 12.52pm. 13 Jun 1888.

76, 888. 30 June 1888

Postal Administration: Weekly table indicating departures and arrivals of principal mail carriers to and from Europe up to July 7 1888:

Departures: Monday - British (Brindisi from Alexandria, ordinary correspondence closing 8.15am, registered 8.45am), Austrian (Brindisi, ordinary 10am, registered 10.30am). Tuesday - French (Marseille). Friday - Italian (Naples, ordinary 10pm, registered 10.30pm), French (Marseille, ordinary 10pm, registered 10.30pm).

Arrivals: Tuesday - Italian (from Naples). Wednesday - Austrian (Brindisi). Thursday - British (Brindisi to Port Said). Friday, French (Marseille).

□ From July 1 a post office admitted only to ordinary and registered correspondence will be opened at Chiblanga (Benha-Zagazig line). 26 Jun 1888.

□ *Railways, Telegraphs and Alexandria Port Administration*: The administrative council has the honour to inform the public that the telegraph offices at Gimse and Zeitieh have been closed. 27 Jun 1888.

□ The administrative council has the honour to inform the public that M Skander Enzel, telegraphist at the Gimsa telegraph office, has been named chief of the Damanhur telegraph office, at an annual salary of LE96, from July 1 1888. 27 Jun 1888.

78, 906. 4 July 1888

□ *Postal Administration*: Weekly table indicating departures and arrivals of principal mail carriers to and from Europe up to July 7 1888:

Departures: Friday - Italian (Naples, ordinary correspondence closing 10pm, registered 10.30pm), French (Marseille, ordinary 10pm, registered 10.30pm).

Arrivals: Thursday - British (Brindisi to Port Said). Friday, French (Marseille).

□ *Railways, Telegraphs and Alexandria Port Administration*: The administrative council has the honour to inform the public that from tomorrow, July 1, Train No 12 which leaves Suez at 11.30am and arrives at Cairo at 6.20pm will make a two-minute stop at Shubra to allow passengers to embark and disembark, arriving at 6.11pm and departing at 6.13pm. 30 Jun 1888.

91, 1076. 6 August 1888

□ *Postal Administration*: Weekly table indicating departures and arrivals of principal mail carriers to and from Europe up to August 11 1888:

Departures: Friday - Italian (Naples, ordinary correspondence closing 10pm, registered 10.30pm). Saturday - Austrian (via Brindisi, ordinary 10pm, registered 10.30pm).

Arrivals: Tuesday - Austrian (Brindisi), Italian (Naples). Wednesday - French (Marseille). Thursday - British (Brindisi).

□ An immediate vacancy occurs for a postal officer (*commissaire*), at a monthly salary of LE7, on the postal boats on the Asyut-Aswan line.

Candidates should in the first instance submit a written application, on 3mm stamped paper, to the Post Office headquarters in Alexandria, accompanied by the following documents: 1. Extract from birth certificate or similar evidence. 2, certificate of good health, mentioning also family situation and, if applicable, previous experience. 3. Any educational diplomas or certificates which might have been gained.

The candidates will be called to the Post Office headquarters, at 10am on August 16 to take part in an open competition. Age limits are 25 to 35, and knowledge of Arabic and English languages is indispensable. Preference will be given to former Government employees. 3 Aug 1888.

96, 1132. 22 August 1888

□ *Postal Administration*: Weekly table indicating departures and arrivals of principal mail carriers to and from Europe up to August 25 1888:

Departures: Friday - Italian (Naples, ordinary correspondence closing 10pm, registered 10.30pm). Saturday - Austrian (via Brindisi, ordinary 10pm, registered 10.30pm).

Arrivals: Thursday - British (Brindisi).

□ *Railways, Telegraphs and Alexandria Port Administration:* The administrative council has the honour to inform the public that from today the carriage between Alexandria and Cairo of ice, fruit, vegetables, fresh meat and fish, poultry and game, will be made via the night trains 21 and 22, at the tariff of the slow trains.
16 Aug 1888.

135, 1560. 21 November 1888

□ *Postal Administration:* Weekly table indicating departures and arrivals of principal mail carriers to and from Europe up to November 24 1888:

Departures: Friday - French (Marseille, ordinary correspondence closing 10pm, registered 10.30pm). Saturday - Italian (via Naples, ordinary 8.15am, registered 8.45am). Austrian (via Brindisi, ordinary 10pm, registered 10.30pm).

Arrivals: Thursday - British (Brindisi). Friday - French (Marseille).

136, 1570. 24 November 1888

□ *Postal Administration:* From December 1 it will be possible to accept ordinary parcels for Djedda, up to a maximum of 5kg per item. The tax will be fixed at 90mm (9PT) per parcel.
22 Nov 1888.

□ Weekly table indicating departures and arrivals of principal mail carriers to and from Europe up to December 1 1888:

Departures: Sunday - French (Marseille). Saturday - Italian (via Naples, ordinary correspondence closing at 8.15am, registered 8.45am). Austrian (via Brindisi, ordinary 10pm, registered 10.30pm).

Arrivals: Tuesday - Austrian (from Brindisi), Italian (Naples). Wednesday - French (Marseille). Thursday - British (Brindisi).

1890

No 21, page 268. 17 February 1890

□ *Postal Administration:* From March 1 the administration will inaugurate free house-to-house delivery of correspondence in the towns of Cairo, Alexandria, Tanta, Mansura, Zagazig and Chibin El Kom. This service will be limited to ordinary and registered correspondence.

Persons desiring to take advantage of this delivery should make their requests on special form available to the public from today in post offices in the localities indicated below.

In order to facilitate the sorting of correspondence, those who wish to avail themselves of this service are asked to invite their correspondents to indicate on the addresses, as far as possible, the name of the street and also where necessary, the number of the house.

To speed delivery, the postmen will not climb to upper floors and so persons living above the ground floor should place at street level a letter-box in which the postman might deposit the letters. They will climb to upper floors only to deliver registered or taxed correspondence.

The public might take delivery of these letter-boxes at the post office, for a price of 400mm (PT 40) per box.

All disputes concerning house-to-house delivery must be taken up directly with the head of the post office. It should be understood that the system of special boxes for distribution at the post office counter will continue for those who prefer this method.
12 Feb 1890.

□ *Railways, Telegraphs and Alexandria Port Administration:*

The administrative council has the honour to inform the public that from February 16 the 5pm Sunday train from Belcas will change its itinerary as follows: Train 103: Belcas 6.30, arrive Bassandila 6.46, leave Bassandila 6.51, arrive Cherbine 7.15. There is no change in trains running from Cherbine to Belcas

11 Feb 1890.

□ The administrative council has the honour to inform the public that from February 20 the itinerary of passenger trains circulating between Cairo and Fechekana station will be modified as follows:

	229	231	217
		<i>Fridays</i>	
Tel Nasr dep	0600	1000	
Cairo arrival	0610	1010	
departure	0615	1015	1430
Demerdash arr	0622	1022	1437
dep	0623	1023	1438
Abbasia arr	0627	1027	1442
dep	0629	1029	1444
Kaid Bai arr	0637	1037	1452
dep	0639	1039	1454
Meghaouri arr	0645	1045	1500
dep	0647	1047	1502
Fechekana arr	0650	1050	1505
	230	232	216
Fechekana dep	0800	1330	1645
Meghaouri arr	0803	1333	1648
dep	0805	1335	1650
Kaid Bai arr	0811	1341	1656
dep	0813	1343	1658
Abbasia arr	0821	1351	1706
dep	0823	1353	1708
Demerdash arr	0827	1357	1712
dep	0828	1358	1713
Cairo arr	0835	1405	1720
dep	0850		
Tel Nasr arr	0900		

Trains numbers 229, 230, 231 and 232 do not run on Wednesdays. The price of single and return tickets are the same as those in force on the Mataria line. 15 Feb 1890.

22, 278, 19 February 1890

□ *Postal Administration*: The Bahr Chibin river mailboat service between Chibin el Kom and Barrage, and the Bahr Saghir service between Mansura and Manzala, which have been suspended because of the dredging, have returned to regular itineraries. 18 Feb 1890.

□ *Railways, Telegraphs and Alexandria Port Administration*: Tel Nasr-Fechekana railway notice (see above) repeated.

87, 1011. 9 August 1890

□ *Postal Administration*: Following a communication from the Italian postal administration, the itinerary of Italian postal paquebots on the Red Sea line will be amended as follows: Leaves Suez for Massawa and Assab each second Saturday at 5am, from today; and every second Friday, at 10am, from August 8. Arrives at Suez from Assab and Massawa each second Sunday, starting from August 3, and each second Tuesday, starting August 12. 2 Aug 1890.

□ *Railways, Telegraphs and Alexandria Port Administration*: The administrative council has the honour to inform the public that from August 10 the bi-weekly train leaving Bulaq Dacrour at 7pm and that leaving Asyut at 9pm will stop at Matai to allow passengers to embark and disembark, according to the following

timetable: From Bulaq-Dacrour, Train No 76 (1,2, and 3 class): Arrive Matai 12.22 pm, leave 12.23; from Asyut, Train No 75 (1,2,3 class): Arrive Matai 1.34am, leave 1.35am. 2 Aug 1890.

□ The administrative council has the honour to inform the public that the great Tanta festival, due to start on August 8, has been postponed to mid-October. As a result, the supplementary services arranged and already notified are nullified and should be considered as not taking place. 6 Aug 1890.

□ *Khedivial Postal Paquebots Administration*: The administration has the honour to inform the public that on account of sanitary measures adopted in respect of those coming from the Arabian coast, the regular paquebot service in the Red Sea is suspended until further notice. 7 Aug 1890.

87, 1011. 9 August 1890

□ *Postal Administration*: Following agreement with the Greek postal administration, a parcels service is to be introduced on the following conditions: 1. Parcels may be exchanged with the following: Aghion (Vistiza), Argostoli, Arta, Athens, Calamata, Calchis, Corfu, Corinth, Lamia, Larissa, Messolonghi, Nauplia, Patras, Piraeus, Pyrgos, Sparta, Syra, Triccala, Tripolitza, Volos and Zante. 2. The tax is fixed at 80mm per parcel to a maximum of 3kg. 3. A single Customs declaration is required. 4. Insured and COD parcels are not admitted. 5. Parcels will be carried each week by the khedivial paquebot which leaves Alexandria on Wednesdays. 1 Aug 1890.

□ The postal-boat service which circulates on the Bahr Saghir between Mansura and Manzala, suspended because of the dredging, is back in regular service. 1 Aug 1890.

□ Henceforth it will be possible, under the conditions indicated below, to send ordinary parcels - that is, non-insured and non-COD - to the Moroccan ports of Casablanca, Mazagan, Mogador, Rabat and Safi. The tax is fixed at 170mm up to 3kg for parcels sent via Italy or France, and up to 5kg via Austria (these parcels will in fact be sent from Germany, whence they will be forwarded to destination via the intermediary of the paquebots on the Hamburg-Morocco service). Parcels via Italy or France must be accompanied by four Customs declarations, while three forms are sufficient for those via Austria. 1 Aug 1890.

127, 1570. 15 November 1890

□ *Postal Administration*: On the resumption, from the 14th following, of the regularly fortnightly khedivial postal paquebots service in the Red Sea, it remains possible to continue to send, as in the past, parcels to Jeddah and groups to Jeddah and Hodeida. 1 Nov 1890.

□ Postal parcels will henceforth be accepted for Bangkok (Siam), on the following conditions: The tax is fixed at 210mm per parcel up to 1kg, and 340mm between 1kg and 3kg. A single Customs declaration per parcel is sufficient. In addition to the regulation that all inflammable and dangerous matter is not allowed in postal parcels, weapons are specifically banned from parcels sent to Bangkok. 12 Nov 1890.

□ *Railways, Telegraphs and Alexandria Port Administration*: The administrative council has the honour to inform the public that the itinerary for trains of the Ramleh-Aboukir line published on October 29 will be annulled from the 15th of this month and the running of trains on this line will revert, on that date, to follow the regular itinerary (winter season) published on 1 November 1890. 11 Nov 1890.

145, 1805. 27 December 1890

□ *Railways, Telegraphs and Alexandria Port Administration*: The administrative council has the honour to inform the public that from December 24, the trains No 5 leaving Cairo at 8am and No 8 leaving Suez

Docks at 10am will stop at Genefa Halt for one minute, as follows: Train 5: Arrives 1.58pm, leaves 1.59pm. Train 8: arrives 11.09am, leaves 11.10am. 21 Dec 1890.

1891

No. 8, page 108. 19 January 1891

□ *Railways, Telegraphs and Alexandria Port Administration:* The administrative council has the honour to inform the public that, from the 15th of this month, if the P & O steamer arrives at Ismailia too late to allow special train No 10 to leave Ismailia at 9pm on the Thursday, the departure of the special train will be deferred until the following Friday, at 8am. In this case the train's itinerary will be: Leave Ismailia 8am; arrive Zagazig 9.55; Leave Zagazig 10.05; Arrive Cairo 11.55am. 12 Jan 1891.

□ *Postal Administration:* Money Orders will now be issued at the German Post Office at Shanghai (China) and also at Finschafen in the German Protectorate of New Guinea. The rates and conditions for these orders will be the same as for orders payable in Germany. 16 Jan 1891.

□ The service by Postal Steamer on the Bahr Chibin which had been interrupted on account of the recent dredging operations in that town has been resumed regularly. 17 Jan 1891.

□ *Ministry of Public Works:* The Inspector of Irrigation 2nd Circle, Cairo, informs the public that the Cherbine Canal will be closed for clearance for 45 days from the 1st February 1891.

□ The closure of the Sahil Murqus Canal and its branches will take place from such date as will be agreed on in the Mudiriyah for a period of 20 days. The Canal will then be opened for 20 days and again will be closed for 20 days. Seven days notice of a closure will be posted in the Mudiriyah.

119, 1360. 21 October 1891

□ *Postal Administration:* During the continuance of the Quarantine measures against arrivals from Syria a Post Office for Ordinary and Registered Correspondence will be established in the Quarantine Quarters at Gabbari (Alexandria). 16 Oct 1891.

□ *Railways, Telegraphs and Alexandria Port Administration:* The administrative council has the honour to bring to the knowledge of the public that the Mazgouna telegraph office is open daily from 8am to 8pm for reception and transmission of private telegrams in the Arabic language. 17 Oct 1891.

□ On account of the Sidi Bishr fair which will be held next to the mosque of that saint, between Ramleh and Mandara, the following trains from Alexandria and Aboukir will stop at that point on the ensuing Thursday and Friday, 22nd and 23rd, to allow passengers to enter and depart, viz:

From Alexandria: Trains 86 (6.30am), 92 (8.35), 96 (12.30pm), 98 (3.00), 104 (5.30), 106 (7.10), 108 (8.45).

From Aboukir: Trains 87 (8.00am), 89 (9.45), 91 (10.15), 95 (2.20pm), 101 (6.40), 105 (8.10), 107 (10.10).

In addition to these trains, a supplementary train will leave Sidi Bishr on Friday October 23 at 1.15pm. The price of return tickets from Alexandria to Sidi Bishr will be the following: 1st class, 60mm; second class 45mm; third class 15mm. 18 Oct 1891.

□ *Khedivial Paquebots Administration:* The administration has the honour to inform the public that on account of the regulations against cholera emanating from Syria the regular khedivial paquebot postal service with Syria is temporarily withdrawn and replaced by a weekly service from Alexandria to Jaffa, Beirut and Tripoli, with return direct to Alexandria. Leaves Alexandria each Thursday at 10am; returns each Monday morning. 19 Oct 1891.

Perfins On Egyptian Stamps

Vahe Varjabedian (ESC 390)

The following is the third list of perfin stamps not mentioned in my book.

Name Of Firm	Page	Seen On Stamps (Sg. No.)
ABE	5	166
BCIE	7	148, 154
BIE	8	230, 276, 277, 278, 420, 429, 493, 500 , 560, 629
BM	9	61
CLA	10	55, 157A, 250, 252, 254
CLA(FRENCH OFFIC.)	10	59, 81
CLC	11	61, 183, 234, 492
CN (8, 13)	12	74, 78, 79
CN (13, 19)	13	90
C&CO	15	54, 56
IOB	18	90
K & HA	20	55
K & HC	21	55
IOB	23	157A, 159, 162, 163, 167, 226, 205, 263, 278, 282, 330, 332, 333, 339, 375, 438, 441, 443 444 494
ROL	25	55, 61
R&CO	26	62, 92, 102, 111, 117, 148, 152, 166, 256, 276, 421, 426, 428
SB	28	559, 61
THOS COOK	29	80, 85, 87, 148, 150, 159
V & OCO	30	79, 167, 225, 238, 281, 291, 292, 295, 258, 243, 301, 342, 383, 388, 423, 448, 479, 521, 550, 554, 582, 717

Editorial

Thank you to those members who took the trouble to vote for the best article prize. It was interesting to note that articles drawing the most votes involved postmarks. The *station postmark* winner for 1999 was only possible due to the combined efforts of many members who are owed equal billing to the author. The *stations* only worked with members supplying photocopies/scans of their postmarks. Such a study does however take a lot of work, but by the response seems worthwhile. It has long been my contention that postmarks can only be done by such joint effort. Those already covered are of course *Airs* in John Sear's book, *Propriety(hotels)* by M.Murphy in the *QC*, *TPOs* by Peter Smith and now by A.Ott, *Classic Types I to Seals* by P.Feltus. Some of these could be updated or extended. Does this only leave those categories of little interest and not worth the study? If you think any particular postmark subject is worth a joint *QC* venture similar to *stations* then please let me have your suggestions. How about *registration*, a full drawing list of *star and bridge* along with *star and crescent* etc? I know individual studies are being undertaken, so if any member wishes to make prior claim to a particular subject please let me know.

Answer to Query Q195/1: 1935 Provisional Xmas Seal.

Andy Gould (ESC 393)

In response to the question from S Horesh (QC 195), I have the following observations:

I also have a complete booklet of the 1935 Provisional Christmas Seal in my collection, No A4254. In examining the panes for the constant varieties referred to in the question, I found the following:

Pane 1 Position 13, Break in right leg of first 'M' is present along with scratch marks
Position 18, '3' in 1935 is clipped

Pane 2 Position 13, No break to 'M', just scratching
Position 18, Clipping to '3' is present, but less pronounced

Pane 3 Position 13, Break to 'M' is present
Position 18, Clipping to '3' is less pronounced, with a break at right of upper loop to the '3'

Pane 4 Position 13, No break to 'M', just scratching
Position 18, No clipping, but a break at right of upper loop of the '3'

Pane 5 Position 13, Break to 'M' is present
Position 18, No clipping, but a break at right of upper loop of the '3'

I also have a loose pane of 20 similar to Pane 1 above.

Perhaps it is worth remembering the method of preparation of these overprints. Complete booklets of the then current 1-piastre carmine label, perf 13.5 x 14, were dis-assembled, the panes of 20 stamps overprinted, and the booklets re-assembled. Complete panes with the left selvage normally show the second set of staples used.

On the subject of these booklets, my booklet has an extra set of selvage stapled into it, making six panes. I can only assume that this was carried out in error at the time of preparation, and the offending pane removed (minus its selvage).

I trust these notes are helpful.

New Queries

Q197/1 From Anatole Ott. (ESC 261)

Possible maritime mail shipped by an Egyptian - Belgian shipping company.

Recently I read the book, *The Ghost of King Leopold* by Adam Hochschild about the Belgian King Leopold II's governing in the Belgian Congo during the second part of the 1800. There it was mentioned that he as crown prince in 1854 - 5 visited Egypt and agreed with the Khedive of Egypt to establish an Egyptian - Belgian steamship company for traffic between Alexandria and Antwerp. Does anybody know more about this shipping line, whether it ever went into operation and perhaps even was mail carried.

Query 197/2: Other Forces in World War II. From Edmund Hall (ESC 239)

The forthcoming meeting of the Forces Postal History Society (*see page 225*) reminded me of an obituary of Dusan Stanic⁽¹⁾ I kept from *The Times* last year, from which some of the following is taken. He was one of a small band of Royal Yugoslav Navy Air Force officers who escaped when the Germans invaded in 1941 and made their way to Egypt, where they offered to fight for the British.

In the summer of 1940, with war yet not involving Yugoslavia, he was serving with the 25th Seaplane Squadron, flying German-built aircraft. When the Germans invaded in April 1941, Yugoslav naval air squadrons withdrew southeast to Kotor, intending to carry on fighting from Greece. But this was already being overrun and when Stanic's squadron flew on to Crete he found that, too, in Axis hands. Desperately short of fuel, the squadron managed to reach Alexandria. For the next three years Stanic fought alongside the RAF, first in a Yugoslav seaplane unit, and then as leader of a Royal Yugoslav flight in an RAF squadron. I have seen pictures, somewhere - which no doubt I have filed among my notes - of the Dornier Do22s at Alexandria.

Stanic led the seaplane squadron on its first combat reconnaissance, on May 7, 1941, announcing to the Germans that the Yugoslav Naval Air Force was still in being. However, no spares could be obtained for its Dornier Do22 seaplanes, which had to be cannibalised to provide spares to make good wear and damage. The squadron's aircraft were gradually worn down by sheer attrition, and within a year not one was in a fit state to fly. Nothing daunted, Stanic and his colleagues accepted being drafted into an infantry unit, with which they manned defensive trenches on the outskirts of Cairo as Rommel advanced to El Alamein in the summer of 1942. When the crisis in the Middle East was over a new opportunity came for the Yugoslavs to fly, and Stanic joined 94 Squadron of Spitfires, one of whose flights consisted entirely of Yugoslav pilots. From November 1943 he was the commander of the Royal Yugoslav Flight in 94 Squadron, and led it in missions in the Eastern Mediterranean and in dogfights, in which he shot down at least one German fighter.

Alongside the Yugoslav aircrews the 1st Battalion Royal Yugoslav Guards was formed at Alexandria soon after the fall of Yugoslavia. Besides the normal Dominion troops, ie, Australia, South Africa etc., were forces from the Royal Greek Army based at Almiriya, the Royal Greek Navy at Alexandria, a Belgian colonial motorised brigade served at Suez and an infantry regiment of the 1st Czechoslovakia Division was at Mersa Matruh and later attached to Polish forces for the defence of Tobruk.

I can find little philatelic evidence of their existence: labels of Czechoslovakian soldiers in pith helmets in the Middle East are around, but I have been told that these are fantasies manufactured in Paris. I have begun to put together some notes on the subject, but would ask if members could send me scans or photocopies of any related material with a view to publishing something in the *QC*.

The question posed is: what were the postal arrangements of these Allied forces while in Egypt, and how are these arrangements represented philatelically?

A little has been written about the French in Egypt during WWII, including one article in *L'OP*⁽²⁾. I have recently acquired a cover which appears to be a new French military marking from Egypt for that period. So include all your French covers as well. The Polish forces have been well documented philatelically for WWII, though this did not seem particularly well known at the London 2000 meeting when a member showed some material. So again, an article in the *QC* would seem worthwhile. Please send me anything you have in this area. Chapter XXXI of Peter Smith's excellent book⁽³⁾ makes mention of some of the "other forces", but others not at all.

Not to be left out, of course, are the Egyptian troops who in 1940 were in many respects better and more plentifully equipped than some British units. At that time the Egyptian Army numbered around 30,000 officers and men, and the Air Force, supported by British technical staff, grew to four or five squadrons by May 1940, equipped with British Westland Lysander, Gloster Gladiator and Hawker Audax aircraft.

Initially they provided patrols along the western frontier; defending the desert south-west of Cairo; protected the railway between Alexandria and Mersa Matruh; provided units to help to defend Alexandria (including coastal artillery); and to protect against sabotage.

At the end of August 1939, British and Egyptian units began moving into position, with the Egyptians deploying according to the Anglo-Egyptian agreement. Foremost in these moves was the Sudanese-manned Frontier Force of five squadrons mounted on Ford pick-up trucks. Two squadrons took up places at Siwa and others at Sollum. The frontier was then almost entirely in Egyptian hands, in accordance with the treaty and the British strategy of not provoking the Italians. The southern desert flank was covered by the "South Western Force" of Egyptian light tanks (six Mk VIB), motorised units and No 1 Squadron of the Royal Egyptian Air Force (Lysanders). Commanded by Prince Daud and first stationed at Bahariya oasis, this force later moved to Cairo and then to Kassaba.

When the war began, relations with the Axis were severed but Egypt remained neutral (war on the Axis was not declared until February 1945). Italy declared war on Britain, but not Egypt, on June 10, 1940. Still the mobile units continued to patrol the frontier. The Frontier Force squadrons at Siwa were reinforced by four old British Vickers Medium Mk IIA tanks, with crews trained by the Royal Tank Regiment, and a flight of REAF Lysanders. In August 1940, Second Lieutenant Pat Clayton led the first mission of the unit that was to become the Long Range Desert Group (LRDG), from Siwa across the sand sea into Libya. The patrol was supported by seven Sudanese-manned Frontier Force trucks carrying petrol, under the command of an Egyptian *mulazim awal* (lieutenant). Though under orders not to, the Egyptian trucks travelled across the frontier, perhaps becoming the only Egyptian Army troops to operate in Italian territory during the war.

As late as the summer of 1940, Egyptian forces were still included in British plans for the defence of Egypt. For instance, in the event of an attack across the frontier, a light detachment of 7 Armoured Division would be supported by the Egyptian Light Car Regiment and an Egyptian 3.7in howitzer battery. Other Egyptian units would also have fought under British command, as Egyptian brigades were essentially administrative formations and brigade headquarters were incapable of any command function in the event of war. Frequent changes of leadership could only have made matters worse: between August 1939 and October 1942 there were five Egyptian chiefs of staff.

The British relied heavily on the Egyptian Army for anti-aircraft defence, and by mid-1939 most of the AA defences of the Delta and the Suez Canal were Egyptian-manned. Only 22 guns and 24 searchlights in Alexandria and 16 guns in Cairo were manned by British troops. After the first Italian air raids the Egyptian AA gunners proved to be their army's most effective soldiers and during the subsequent campaign were to shoot-down a number of Axis aircraft. They could even beat their British counterparts in competition, though one Egyptian commander, a good Muslim, was bemused by the prize - a crate of whisky. Egyptian gunners also manned coastal artillery in Alexandria.

The Italian invasion of Egypt began on September 13, 1940, and Egyptian troops along the frontier were soon withdrawn as a result of political moves intended to placate the Egyptian Government and British doubts as to their reliability. Interestingly, this move was missed by Italian intelligence - who in November reported that the British were making use of large numbers of Egyptian troops. Some Egyptians continued to fly on patrol in British planes with British crews, however, and an Egyptian naval service was formed with a few British-supplied patrol boats, and by the second battle of El Alamein the Egyptian forces were over 100,000 strong.⁽⁴⁾

Have any members any idea of the postal arrangements for the Egyptian forces? The only reference I have seen to date is that in Peter Smith's book.⁽³⁾

(1) *The Times*, February 7, 2000. (2) Dr A Winter, *The Mail of the Sailors of the French Ships detained in Alexandria in 1940-1943* (*L'Orient Philatelique* 127, October 1973, pp 336-347). (3) Peter Smith, *Egypt: Stamps & Postal History, A Philatelic Treatise* (1999). (4) *Army Quarterly & Defence Journal*, Vol 128, No 2.