

ISSN 0269—252X

The
Quarterly Circular
of

THE
EGYPT



STUDY CIRCLE

June Quarter 2010

Whole Series No. 233

Volume XX No. 10

Pages 229-252

CONTENTS.

Officers 229, Meetings 230-232, In Memoriam 231, Members 233,
Suez Canal “Great Collection” 239, Anyone for Cairo? 245,
“Invitation” to Japan 252, Accounts iii, Announcements iv,

Book reviews:

EGYPT; THE RURAL POSTAL SERVICE, 233

Egypt: Postal Services in the Suez Canal Zone 1838-1880 234

RAMLEH ALEXANDRIE: Its Development and Postal History, 1863-1929 240

ARTICLES.

Maritime Markings from 1890	John Sears	p234-237
Antverpia 2010	Richard Wheatley	p237
Paquebot Marks – Response	John Sears	p239
Military Matters: German PoW Working Companies	Edmund Hall	p241-247
Replies to Q71 and 72		p248
Queries 74, 75,76, 77, 78,79, 80, 81, 82, 83		p248-252



www.egyptstudycircle.org.uk



**Carmichael
& Todd**
PHILATELISTS
PTS
GREGORY C.G. TODD

EGYPT.

Stamps: Classic from 1866 to Modern until 1980, Covers from rare early stampless maritime mail, First Issue covers and Proofs of all issues, Farouk Imperfs, Colour Trials, Specimens, Booklets. All facets of Egyptian Postal History bought & sold. Essays, Multiples, Postmarks, Overseas Usages, Suez Canal Company, All Foreign Post Offices and British Forces. In fact Everything for the devoted collector of Egypt!



Territorial P.O. in Massawa. 1875 (Nov 13): Cover from Massawa to Marseille franked by 1872-75 5pa. brown and 2pi. yellow (2) tied by "Poste Khedevie Egiziane-Massawa" datestamps in black; via Egyptian P.O. in Suez and thence via French P.O. in Alexandria (Nov 24). Charged 1 franc due on receipt in Marseille: whilst Egypt's membership of the UPU was active from 1 July 1875, France only activated the new reduced rates from 1 January 1876. Extremely rare cover.

**Quality Stamps, Proofs and Rare Postal History of the World always
required for Stock or on a confidential Private Treaty basis.**

**P.O. BOX 111 LYMINGTON HAMPSHIRE ENGLAND S041 6ZJ
Telephone 01 590 682 683 facsimile 01 590 681 999
Toddytripzinc@aol.com
VAT No. GB 561 9567 09**

Coming attractions on the Meetings list

- July 17: in York – David Sedgwick – Port Said and West Hartlepool;
John Davis – Postage Dues

York Fair July 16-17

- September 18: at Stampex – Acquisitions and Queries – All members

Stampex September 15-18

- Nov 6: Victory Services Club – Edmund Hall – Military in Egypt, 1882-1982

Philatex November 4-6

Meetings are normally held at the Victory Services Club, Seymour Street, Marble Arch, London.
Members usually congregate in the ground-floor bar from 1pm and meetings start at 2pm.

EGYPT STUDY CIRCLE OFFICERS

President:	John Sears, FRPSL, 496 Uxbridge Road, Pinner, Middlesex HAS 4SL.
Chairman:	Peter Andrews, 51 Elizabeth Road, Moseley, Birmingham B13 8QH ancientone@btintemet.com
Deputy Chairman:	Stanley Horesh, U.K. j-s.horesh@sky.com
Secretary:	Mike Murphy, 109 Chadwick Road, Peckham, London SE15 4PY egyptstudycircle@hotmail.com
Treasurer:	Brian Sedgley, Greenpeckers, Seven Hills Road, Cobham, Surrey KT1 1ER brian.sedgley~talktalk.net
Editor/Webmaster:	Edmund Hall, 6 Bedford Avenue, Little Chalfont, Amersham, Bucks HP6 6PT edmundhall@chalfont.eclipse.co.uk
Librarian:	John Davis, Church View Cottage, Church Rd, Upton Snodsbury, Worcs WR7 4NH davisatsnodsbury@tiscali.co.uk
Publicity Officer:	David Sedgwick, 9 Eastlands, High Heaton, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7YD -ann.david_@tiscali.co.uk
North America Agent:	Richard S Wilson, 53 Middle Patent Road, Bedford Village, NY. 10506, U.S.A dadul@verizon.net
Egypt Agent:	Dr Ibrahim Shoukry, Apt 1, 10 Kamal El-Tawil St (Ex-Montaza), Zamalek, Cairo, Egypt ishoukry@link.net
Antipodean Agent:	Tony Chisholm, 13 Arden Way, Wilton, Wellington 6005, New Zealand j_tchis@clear.net.nz
Committee:	Dennis Clarke. U.K.

All contents © copyright Egypt Study Circle, London, and the contributors.

[Website: egyptstudycircle.org.uk](http://egyptstudycircle.org.uk)

Report of the 75th Anniversary luncheon (March 7) and London 2010 Exhibition

There was an excellent turnout for the double celebration of the Circle's own 75th Anniversary at our usual meeting-place at the Victory Services Club, Marble Arch, and the ten-yearly London Exhibition held this year in the Design Centre, Islington, North London.

The gamble of holding our luncheon in the gap-day between the special Philatex Extra dealers' bourse and the opening of the big exhibition certainly seemed to have paid off when well over 30 members and guests from all over the world first met in the bar and then sat down to eat in the pleasant surroundings of the Victory Club's Grill Room. We were especially honoured by the presence of Professor Peter Smith, for long our guiding light, who had travelled across The Pond on the Cunard liner *Queen Mary II*.

Along one wall was a series of ten "silent displays" (single frame of 16 sheets) submitted by volunteers to give some idea of the range of our interests. The exhibits were closely pored over, and the Circle is grateful indeed to the following for having had the courage to put their material on open display:

Mostafa El-Dars (ESC 556) – Farouk and his Yachts

Peter Grech (ESC 266) – 1910 Heliopolis Air Meeting

Paul Green (ESC 128) – Egypt Zeppelin mail

Peter Goodwin (ESC 297) – EEF Stamps & Postal History 1917-1921

Edmund Hall (ESC 241) – Egyptian Army

Stanley Horesh (ESC 118) – The Gallipoli Campaign

Laurence Kimpton (ESC 591) – Early Air Mails

John Sears (ESC 188) – Alexandria

Brian Sedgley (ESC 268) – Overseas and Consular Offices

Vahe Varjabedian (ESC 390) – Star and Crescent markings



Those at the luncheon were (left to right, front): Sumalee Murphy, Judy Fraser-Smith, Helen Grech, Peter Smith, Sandy Chalhouh, Costas Kelemenis. Behind: Peter Andrews, Ted Fraser-Smith, Seppo Laaksonen, Sherif Samra, Marian Horesh, Anton Jansen, Vahe Varjabedian, Stanley Horesh, Alan Jeyes, Ronny Van Pellecom, Peter Goodwin, Dick Wilson, Joe Chalhouh, Paul Green, Cyril Defriez, Edmund Hall, Mike Murphy, Pat Sears, Lawrence Kimpton, Mostafa El-Dars (front), John Sears, Tanja Laaksonen, Peter Grech and Brian Sedgley. More photos in members section of our web-site.

Luca Daniele Biolato (ESC 417), 1939-2009

Members manning the Circle's stand at London 2010 were saddened to be advised of the recent early death at 70 of Luca Biolato, one of our outstanding collectors of early Egyptian postal material and the author of a comprehensive and magisterial book on the early years.

Born in Turin but brought up in Alexandria and by profession a diplomat, Luca was in turn Italian Ambassador to Hong Kong, Madrid, Warsaw (where he married his wife, Ania), Damascus, Abu Dhabi, Kuala Lumpur and then Warsaw again, eventually becoming an ambassador for Unesco. He was never at a loss for words, and with his patrician manner clearly fully at home in the world of diplomacy.

As an irregular visitor to these shores, he invariably astonished members with the material he was able to display, ranging from proofs and first examples of Interpostals to (perhaps understandably) rather scruffy but undoubtedly unique postal material emanating from the military adventures of Ibrahim Pasha, Muhammad Ali's son, in Palestine and Syria in 1831-32.



But his master-work in philatelic terms was *La Posta Europea nel contesto della storia postale dell'Egitto nel sec. XIX (1820-1865)*. Published in 1995 and awarded a Large Gold medal at the 1997 Italian National Exhibition, this is the fruit of 25 years' research, study and collecting. All aspects of the Posta Europea, including its relationship with foreign postal services and the transition to the Posta Vice-Reale, are described in detail in the context of the post of Muhammad Ali, private carriers and forwarding agents and the consular posts in Egypt.

Luca's early death deprives the world of the English translation on which he was working. But much more than that, it deprives members of a true friend and colleague.

– Mike Murphy

Meeting report continued.....

We were especially pleased to be able to help to celebrate the Golden Wedding of Judy and Ted Fraser-Smith, from Derbyshire, who for some unaccountable reason had chosen our luncheon day as their 50th wedding anniversary: a special table decoration (apparently the carved water melon survived the long journey home on the bus!) and a suitable card for the occasion were handed over with our sincere best wishes.

Our President, John Sears, proposed the toast to "Members and Guests", coupling the toast with a few well-chosen words of praise for the hard work of the present Committee in maintaining standards in the face of an apparent gradual decline if not in membership numbers then certainly in member participation, and added a few wry observations about the future and the potential turnout for our centenary. And indeed for the next ten-yearly London exhibition.

There were two responses to the toast – first, from Peter Smith, who astonished the meeting with the force of his words despite the apparent frailty of his frame now he has passed his 90th birthday and who shared a series of thoughtful and humorous reminiscences of the leaders of the past, including Dr William Byam, our founder, Charles Minnett and John Firebrace. He wished us well for the future, and suggested that we were in safe hands. Then the President of the Philatelic Society of Egypt, Dr Sherif Samra, offered his own words of support on behalf of our Egyptian colleagues, saying that visits between the countries were always much appreciated by both sides as cementing relations and offering new insights; and gave notice that the PSE is to hold another Egyptian exhibition in Cairo in the first week of November, to which all were most cordially invited. See page 245.

The meeting then heard of the recent publication of two new books by our members – *Egypt, The Rural Postal Service*, by Mike Murphy and Ibrahim Shoukry; and *Ramleh Alexandrie*, by Ronny Van Pellecom, Peter Grech and Alain Stragier. Several copies of both changed hands immediately. See reviews p233 and p240.

This is the place to record greetings from those who for one reason or another were unable to attend the luncheon. We would have been very happy indeed to see them attend, and are only sorry that we were unable to share the day with the following: Leon Balian, Margaret Chadwick, Tony Chisholm, Dennis Clarke, John Davis, Bob Perkins, Max Ryan, David Sedgwick, Ibrahim Shoukry, Greg Todd, Lucien Toutounji. For all of them, here's hoping for London 2020!

But back to London 2010 for a moment ... we were lucky enough to share a table with the Sudan Study Group in a prime position overlooking the main dealers' floor, and were astonished at the number of visitors from the world over who passed us by during the eight days of the exhibition. We met old friends, made new ones, sold books, QCs, ties, other odd bits including a copy of Peter Smith's tome, we gave away stamps to junior visitors, we gained half a dozen new members, we met a good many Circle members for the first time – including Angela Child, Andy Gould, Paul Grigg, Marianne Khouzam, Steve Speak – we acted as a centre of information and cloakroom for members and others, we had a thoroughly good time in meeting, greeting and chatting. Our visitors even included one John Gilbert, son of our former stalwart member – a real name from the past – who unaccountably collects GB!

Seeking volunteers to man the table for eight hours a day for eight days was not an easy task. It could not have been achieved without the infinitely gracious and undemanding tour of duty by Peter Goodwin, who came all the way from New Zealand and volunteered to fill the morning gaps for the Sudan Study Group. In the event he was there for virtually every minute of every day. Hats off to him – his good-humoured service was well beyond the normal call of duty, and was very much appreciated. Equally, thanks are due to all the other volunteers who put in their stints: Peter Andrews, John Clarke, John Davis, Peter Grech, Paul Green, Edmund Hall, Stanley Horesh, Brian Sedgley, Ronny Van Pellecom – thank you all. And special thanks also to Greg Todd, who lent us a space under his counter to store our books and bits and bobs overnight.

Placing of the exhibits (in two different sessions; is this really the way to hold an exhibition?) was made in an area of the Design Centre I had never before seen in action, and though the main room was well lit and airy, it certainly seems that some of our members' exhibits might have suffered by being hidden away in an ill-lit and crowded annexe.

Very many congratulations indeed to Greg Todd and Lucien Toutounji for their Gold medals for Egypt. Which is not to say that those who came away with lesser awards do not deserve recognition – anyone who has the temerity to put his material on display in such a hothouse atmosphere of fierce competition merits full praise just for putting his head above the parapet! The full list of Circle members' awards is:

Lucien Toutounji (ESC 264): Egypt Airmail 1910-1936; 93 Points, Gold

Greg Todd (ESC 585): Egypt: 1866 The First Issue; 90 Points, Gold

Jonathan Becker (ESC 647): The Conquest and British Military Administration of Palestine and (Greater) Syria: 1914-1920; 87 Points, Large Vermeil

Mahmoud Ramadan (ESC 358): Egypt: Celebrating the Kingdom 1922; 85 Points, Large Vermeil

Ibrahim Shoukry (ESC 423): Rural Service of Egypt 1889-1939; 85 Points, Large Vermeil

Karim Darwaza (ESC 504): Ottoman Post - Syria; 83 Points, Vermeil

Hisham Bassyouny (ESC 391): British Forces in Egypt Issues 1932-1939; 82 Points, Vermeil

Panayotis Cangelaris (ESC 635): The Kingdom of Egypt (1922-1953); 82 Points, Vermeil

Special congratulations should go to **Richard Wheatley** (ESC 168), who won a Gold (92 points) with his Netherlands East Indies, King Willem III Postal Cards & Envelopes; and to a young member of the PSE, Rafaat Hannalla Milad, who took Vermeil (82 points) for his Egyptian Stationery.

Excitement over for ten years, it's now on to the next Circle meet which, don't forget, is in York on July 17 – a good chance for those who live north of the Wash to attend, especially when the meeting coincides with the York Stamp and Postcard Fair on July 16-17.

Membership changes

New Members:

- ESC 648** **Marc Van Daele**, Avenue de l'Exposition 458 Bte 12, B-1090 Brussels, Belgium
(Egypt and Sudan to 1953 and 1956 respectively; Egyptian medals)
- ESC 649** **Frank Van Geirt**, Snapperstraat 20, B-Kuringen, Belgium
(Belgium, Egypt general, Alexandria postal history, thematic transport)
- ESC 650** **Bjorn Myhre**, Odinsgate 5A, NO-1608 Fredrikstad, Norway
(British Forces in Egypt 1932-36, International reply coupons, Norway postal history).

Deceased: ESC 417 **Luca Biolato**

Change of address:

- ESC 74** **Peter A S Smith**, 324 McCormick Place, Dexter, Michigan 48130, USA
- ESC 165** **Dennis Clarke**. Change of telephone. 01992 445967
- ESC 391** **Hisham Bassyouny**, 36 Mohiel-deen Abul Ezz Street, Dokki, Cairo 12311, Egypt
- ESC 505** **Samir Nabih Attiah**, Flat 3, 2 Mohandessin Asskarian Buildings, Youssef Abbass Street, Nasr City, Egypt
- ESC 617** **Vic Potter**, Regency Towers, 610 Lake St., Apt. 506, St. Catharines, Ontario, L2N 5T1, Canada

EGYPT; THE RURAL POSTAL SERVICE, by Mike Murphy and Ibrahim Shoukry. 191 pp., hardbound, Cairo, 2010. Price: hardback £25 plus postage (United States \$40; Europe 30 euros), softback £20 (United States \$35, Euroie 25 euros). Ten per cent special discount to ESC members.

This book is modestly titled "An Introduction", but it will undoubtedly last as the definitive work for many years (decades?). It treats the subject beautifully in three aspects: bountiful pictorial illustrations, detailed description of the operation of the rural service, and a carefully compiled description and listing of the rural service postmarks with everything illustrated. The magnitude of the subject is shown by the governmental report that in 1975 there were 17,622 rural stations served by 1,779 lines (routes) (!). Yet in spite of this immensity, rural service covers remain scarce: seldom seen and understood.

The Rural Service began operation on May 1st, 1889, and apparently still goes on, a tribute to the quality of the organisation by those who developed the system more than 120 years ago. The very first types of postal marking, requiring manuscript additions to identify the station of origin, are rare. Nearly all of those known are shown in colour. In addition are shown many more covers, including registered and AR. The datestamps of the terminal parent post offices or of the routes are illustrated in tables in alphabetical order according to the line. This listing is followed by a check-list arranged according to type (or style) of the marking, with each line using it denoted. No indication of scarcity is given, and indeed, it should not be expected. Considering the general paucity of material and the great number of types and routes, it would not be possible to produce a meaningful scarcity estimate. Any rural service cover should be regarded as scarce, and some are truly rare.

The first two chapters (36 pages) are delightful. They consist of a detailed description, in narrative form, of the origin of the rural service system and its day-to-day operation. This side of the subject is one not often found in treatises of philatelic history, and indeed, in most cases would be nearly impossible to put together without the aid of contemporary official postal bulletins. The account of the duties of the Rural Postman is precise enough that one can imagine a member of the ESC, with a rudimentary knowledge of Arabic and the proper equipment, being able to take on the job almost immediately. Chapter 2 is almost a training manual.

Altogether this is a fine addition, indeed an essential one, to the postal history of Egypt. Even if one does not at present collect Rural Service covers, the book can be appreciated, and might pique one's interest to the point of starting. In any event, it would be a pleasure to own!

Reviewed by **Peter Smith** (ESC74)

Editor's comment: having lived through some of the teeth-gnashing during the final phases of this book's gestation, I awaited its birth with great expectations. In no way am I disappointed. I agree with the review that the first two chapters bring the topic alive. The authors have tackled the great problem of "typing" in a realistic and meaningful manner, in so far as any typing system can satisfy these criteria. Needless to say, the book now graces my philatelic bookshelves. Highly recommended on all levels.

Maritime Markings from 1890

John Sears (ESC 188)

An attempt to consolidate what is known about these markings with a view to establishing first and last dates of usage. This is a study in progress, so the co-operation and assistance of members is essential. Please report your findings.

MARITIME MARKINGS - PORT SAID

PLEINE MER

Fig.1

Following a meeting of the U.P.U. in Vienna, 1891, when the rules regarding mail from ships at seas were drawn up, the Egyptian Post Office adopted the "PLEINE MER" cachet to identify such mail.

The cachet to be applied to the item (away from the stamp) by the Post Office which also cancelled the stamp with the normal CDS. Stamps of the country where the ship was registered were acceptable.

Dates of usage seen (*Fig. 1*) First recorded 21. IX. 93 Last recorded 22. XI. 98

These marks are occasionally seen somewhat distorted (was it a rubber stamp?) and with "ink spread".

A larger version, 37mm x 4mm (also unframed) is known on a postcard to Germany, franked 4m Egyptian stamps, cancelled 3. VI. 09. This is a very late usage, and perhaps, suspect. The dimensions almost correspond to the cachet used at Alexandria without the frame. Does any one have any knowledge of the marking?

At the UPU Conference in Washington, 1897, it was ruled that the Post Office receiving mail posted on board ship should cancel the stamps "adding handwritten or by stamp the word PAQUEBOT". This was adopted in Egypt.



Fig. 2

First used 18. 4.99
Last used ?? . ?? . 05.



Fig. 3.

First used 11. 3. 06
Last used 31. 3. 14

It seems that *Fig. 3* replaced *Fig.2*; there is no record of overlap.

PAQUEBOT

The French Post Office in Port Said had its own PAQUEBOT cachet, *Fig. 4*. Dates of usage have been reported from 10 SEP 00 (first) to 31 MAR 31 (last)

In 1914 a circular datestamp was introduced, and several varieties have evolved. None of the details on the handstamp are in Arabic.



Fig. 5 has illustrated the PAQUEBOT cds in various articles on this subject since 1954 onwards. In fact, it is a very scarce item with the time shown as "11 - 1", the writer has never seen one on cover. There was a similar observation by Lars Alund (ESC 105) - *QC* Mar 1982. The initials A/M or P/M always occur on the others. Perhaps "11 - 1" indicated a midday posting.



Fig. 6. A well-worn example to show P/M. The time can in fact be indicated as a single hour, 5 -, or 5.30, or as a two-hour spread 4 - 5.

First recorded 4. OC. 14 Last recorded - 25 SE 75

The diameters of these datestamps seem to vary, probably due to wear and / or ink spread. The earliest seen (4 OC 14) is a very well defined stamp measuring 27mm, but one dated (again sharp and clear) 28 JA 15 is certainly slightly larger. They can be seen larger than 28mm, but 27.5mm is probably a good average. Diameters of 26mm (otherwise exactly the same) have been recorded.

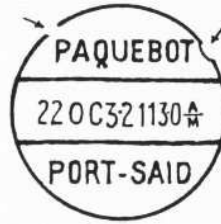


Fig. 7. Another familiar illustration that has appeared many times before showing the damage which became apparent in 1932. The flaw on the left can be described as “11 o/c”, that on the right as “2 o/c.”

First noted 22. OC. 32
Last seen 5 .MR. 61

The problem with examples of Fig.7 is that as years passed the definition of the flaws varied, sometimes disappearing altogether, then reappearing. This particularly applies to “2 o/c”, which is really only a distortion of the outer rim.



Fig. 8. This shows a very definite inverted “V” in the date line under the “Q” of PAQUEBOT. It does appear together with the “11 o/c” flaw, but only occasionally as the latter becomes intermittent.

First noted 10 SE 60 (with “11 o/c”)
Last seen 13 MA 67 (without “11 o/c”)

During the 1950s and 1960s the initial digit of the decade (the 5 or 6) often disappeared. There seems to be no explanation of this, perhaps the date slug was sometimes lost!



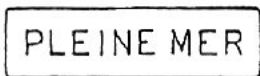
Fig.9 is an entirely different design, but still without Arabic. The date is “boxed”, the diameter is 26 mm / 27 mm.

First date 3.4.73
Last date 30.1.97

The Paquebot Port Said cds is also seen where the item of mail has been lodged with the ship’s agent who has applied its own machine franking and then passed it to the Post Office for further action.

MARITIME MARKINGS - ALEXANDRIA

Although (pre Air Mail) this was the port through which the very great majority of post from Egypt to abroad was despatched, ship mail entering the country is scarce relative to Port Said, Suez until c 1908 when Port Taufiq was used.



Nevertheless, a Pleine Mer cachet was produced, differing from those for Port Said and Suez in as much as it was framed. It is recorded on cover May 9 1896.



The framed PAQUEBOT cachet is 1mm shorter than that used initially at Port Said. Earliest date 7.10.07 Latest date 2.4.12.



PAQUEBOT

A circular datestamp incorporating PAQUEBOT was later introduced, precise date not known. It varies from those from Port Said and Port Taufiq because the Arabic for PAQUEBOT and ALEXANDRIE also appears.

Earliest date 22. 7. 23 Latest date 29 OC 60

The French Post Office adopted an unframed PAQUEBOT cachet similar to that used at Port Said. Normally seen on mail carried on French ships.

Earliest date 1.1.09 Latest date 24 AU 30

MARITIME MARKINGS – SUEZ

This was a relatively short-lived port of entry, being superseded by Port Taufiq, probably from 1914 onwards. No CDS incorporating PAQUEBOT was issued.

PLEINE MER

An unframed cachet, about 1mm shorter than those from Port Said and Alexandria.

Earliest date ? . ? . 97 Latest date

PAQUEBOT

There were two types of the PAQUEBOT cachet, the first was framed, with two tails to the "Q".

Earliest date 10.6.01

The second PAQUEBOT cachet has only a faint tail to the "Q".

PAQUEBOT

Earliest date 7. VIII 05 Latest date 12.2.09

MARITIME MARKINGS - PORT TAUFIQ

The use of the PAQUEBOT cachet with accompanying CDS continued for far longer than was the case for the other ports. Compared with Port Said, the amount of offloaded mail was much lower anyway, and the available covers may be considered just "less common"

PAQUEBOT

The first PAQUEBOT cachet appeared with two tails to the "Q"

Earliest date 28.II.08 Latest date 12 DE 22

PAQUEBOT

The second PAQUEBOT cachet has no tail to the "Q". Distortion, or disappearance, seemed to be the fate of the tails of the "Qs" on all the cachets.



The CDS incorporating PAQUEBOT was introduced only in the late 1930s. Again, it was all in English. This is the First Type.

Earliest date 11 FE 39 Latest date 10 MR 63.

Now for a few personal comments. Having had the benefit of the researches of Wheatley (ESC 168) and Davis (ESC 213), about 100 covers have been examined. I have come to the following conclusions:-

1. The Port Said covers originate from ships travelling eastwards, as evidenced by messages on postcards, or senders' addresses on the flap of covers. This would seem logical because vessels would have to wait before entering the Suez Canal. Ships from the East do not seem to call at Port Said - this mail would be dropped off at Port Taufiq.
2. Has anyone ever seen a Registered item with a Paquebot CDS?

3. I have not seen mail from ships other than those with British owners (or on charter to a British company) bearing a Paquebot marking, apart from mail from the French boats which would proceed via the French Post Office. Ships of the Nordeutscher Lloyd Line had their own Post Office on board, when offloaded at Port Said the usual CDS was applied. The same applies to the Italian ships.

4. Should we not adopt a system of numbering Paquebot cancellations as we do the Hotels? For example, PPS 1 for Paquebot, Port Said, 1; and PA 1 for Paquebot, Alexandria 1, and so on for Suez and Port Taufiq.

Notes on the Alexandria, Suez and Port Taufiq markings will appear later. These are inexpensive items, most members will have some examples, I urge you to examine them and let us know the result, please reply via the Editor.

Acknowledgements and References

Richard Wheatley (ESC 168 - *QC June 2003*)

John Davis - ESC 213 - Jan 2008).

J M Murphy (ESC 240 - *QC Dec 2005*)

Peter Smith (ESC 74 - *Egypt Stamps & Postal History* - 1999)

Lars Alund (ESC 105 - *QC Mar 1982*)

Charles Minett - *QC May 1966*)

J Boulad d' Humières - *Egyptian Topics* - Oct 1971

John Revell - *Holy Land & Middle East Philatelic Magazine* - Sep 1957

J Boulad d' Humières - *L'OP* - July 1954 & Jan 1952.

Antverpia 2010, European Championship of Philately

Richard Wheatley (ESC 168)

This exhibition was held between April 9 and 12 in a specially built exhibition hall. With good lighting, well spaced out display frames, many eating places and getting on for 100 dealers, what more could one ask for? These were the exhibits featuring Egypt:

Ibrahim Shoukry *Rural Posts of Egypt 1889-1939*. Gold award, 90 points.

An entry as near to complete as you are ever likely to see. Most of the marks were readable – obviously chosen for the delight of the owner and the viewer alike. The last page featured an Egyptian Government item carried free through the Rural Post!

Hany Salam *Egypt Maritime Mail Routes, 19th Century*. Large Vermeil, 87 points.

Here was a postal historian's dream. It began with a cover from the 14th century going from Cairo to Tripoli. Then came covers from the Venetian Post (1727-1753). After catching our breath we saw a document signed by Bonaparte in 1801, this was followed by two "Waghorn" covers and an item with the cachet "Forwarded by Messrs Briggs & Co". Maritime covers came next carried by the British, French, Austrian and Italian post offices, including mixed frankings.

Khaled Mostafa *The Postal Stationery of Egypt 1865-1930*. Vermeil, 83 points.

This started with 1869 Prevost & Penasson envelope essays, followed by mint & used examples. For the DLR envelope there were two large hand-drawn essays for the head of the Sphinx. The section on cards was followed by an unusual 1889 envelope letter in which the back flap had been torn and then resealed by a Port Said interpostal seal.

Magdy Soliman *Express Mail Adhesives*. Vermeil, 80 points.

The only Egypt "one framer" and admirably suited for 16 pages. There were booklet covers, items from the "Palace Collection" plus a few covers with "Postmen" cds.

Panayotis Cangelaris *The Kingdom of Egypt (1922-1953)*. Large Silver, 78 points.

Eighty pages crammed full of stamps and covers from this very collectable period. There was an extensive array of Harrison essays and proofs along with quite a number of items from the "Palace collection". I particularly liked the printing varieties.

Vahe Varjabedian *Star & Crescent cancellations*. Large Silver 75 points.

A delightful exhibit of these distinctive postmarks. I did covet the block of 50 10 mills Salt Tax stamps all tied by the Alexandrie Ras El Tin cds for 27 VI 92, these were on the back of a part Salt Tax form.

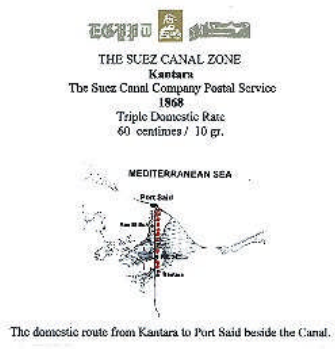
Abdel Rahman Mahmoud *Egypt: Postal History 2006-200, Local Mail*.

An exhibit in the Youth section for 13 to 15 year olds. This turned out to be postal history in the making, for it was concerned with present-day inland mail, including Express, Registered, Bus Post etc. Most unusual and to be commended for saving today's mail for posterity.

"Egypt: Postal Services in the Suez Canal Zone 1838-1880" formed by Samir Fikry FRPSL. One of a series in the Great Philatelic Collections, published by David Feldman SA, 175 route de Clancy, P.O. Box 81, CH-1213 Onex, Geneva, Switzerland. 75 Euros, which includes postage and a C.D. of the book.

This book makes a statement. With the gold blocked suede-cloth hardback cover and gold edged glossy pages it says "look what I have". And when you look at the pages of covers, you see lovely covers that have travelled to or from the Suez Canal Zone during those years. There are **six** Waghorn covers, **three** covers franked with Suez Canal Company stamps, many combination covers and a remarkable letter from Sweden addressed to a Count on board a ship sailing through the Canal on the inaugural passage!

There is an introductory page and a Table of Contents followed by 81 full colour pages from his delightfully written up collection. This is to be exhibited posthumously at Lisbon in October, however the great pity is that he will not be here to share his gems with us, for he passed away on 6th February 2010. I am sure that he will be looking down on us as many view the exhibit, or turn yet again the pages of this book that form a lasting tribute to an extraordinary collector of Egypt. Reviewed by **Richard Wheatley** FRPSL.



The domestic route from Kantara to Port Said beside the Canal.



CANAL DE SUEZ - KANTARA post mark



The only cover believed to be recorded as such.
This cover to Port Said franked with 60 cent., paying Triple Rate : 10gr. for this domestic trip, cancelled by 2 ink lines and the date of 28th July. Measurhille. This is the only 40 cent. of the Canal Company issue to date on cover from 4 covers mailed from Kantara recorded.
Ex. Antonia



Only two covers exist as such.
A 1871 cover from Kantara where it was cancelled by CANAL DE SUEZ KANTARA cds dated 5.10.1871 to the occupied AL-SACE, GERMANY via Port Said where it was franked with French 40 cent 'Boudesux Issue' cancelled by '5129' the French numeral obliterator of Port Said on 8.10.1871, and Marseille transit cds on 17.10 with Moyenvic arrival one dated 19.10.1871, on the reverse where it was taxed with 20 cent. as shown above to fulfill the exact rate needed for that trip.

Paquebot Marks – Response

John Sears (ESC 188)

With reference to the note by Richard Wheatley (ESC 168) *Paquebot Marks: East or West (QC 232 p205)*.

It may be that I have inadvertently misled Richard concerning mail carried by ships passing through the Suez Canal. The point I was trying to make was that mail bearing the Paquebot CDS of Port Said would have been “offloaded” there and entered the Egyptian postal system for onward transmission; the ship itself would normally have continued its journey eastwards.

Mail from the East, carried by a ship going westwards, normally bears the Paquebot CDS of Port Taufiq, or Suez. The ship would then continue northwards through the Canal.

This theory of mine is borne out by the messages on postcards referring to a pleasant voyage from India, and looking forward to passing through the Canal. I believe this to be fairly logical: most ships wishing to enter the Canal going either north or south, have to wait their turn by queuing up, giving an ideal opportunity for the mail to be taken ashore. It is the ultimate destination of the carrying ship which determines the application of the Paquebot CDS, rather than the address on the item of mail. However, there are exceptions, like the item illustrated by Richard. I show another one, but they are not common.

Please note that references to Paquebot CDS also apply to the PAQUEBOT cachets plus the datestamps of Port Said, Suez or Port Taufiq.

The cover Richard shows is certainly an oddity. It was definitely posted aboard a British ship which could have been sailing eastwards, but not calling at Karachi, or westwards from India (or the Far East). The timing of the datestamps is a mystery.

Below is a postcard addressed to the U.K., cancelled Port Taufiq 21.VIII.19, reading “left India on the 8th, and hope to be at Port Said on the 21st, it won't be long now”.



Suez Canal “Great Collection”

David Feldman, the Geneva-based auctioneers, announce that *Postal Services in the Suez Canal Zone*, the collection formed by our late member Samir Fikry as the follow-up to his outstanding Nile and Sphinx collections, has been added to its lavishly illustrated “Great Philatelic Collections” series of books. The collection won Large Gold medals in Germany and Italy last year; as an alternative to paying \$75 for the book, 32 of its sheets are displayed on Samir’s website at <http://www.philatelinegypt.com/postalhistorysuez.htm>

RAMLEH ALEXANDRIE: Its Development and Postal History, 1863-1929, by Ronny Van Pellecom, Peter Grech and Alain Stragier. 152pp A4, softbound, Antwerp 2010. Price: €45, £41, \$61 plus postage; discount to ESC members (€40/£36/\$54).

Breathtaking is the only word to describe the depth of painstaking research that has gone into producing this handsome volume. Lavishly provided with illustrations on virtually every one of its more than 150 pages, it draws on postal material, contemporary accounts, maps and postcards to provide a comprehensive picture of a large area of the Mediterranean's first city that started life exclusive and gradually became more and more popular as the built-up area stretched to accommodate a rapidly growing population.

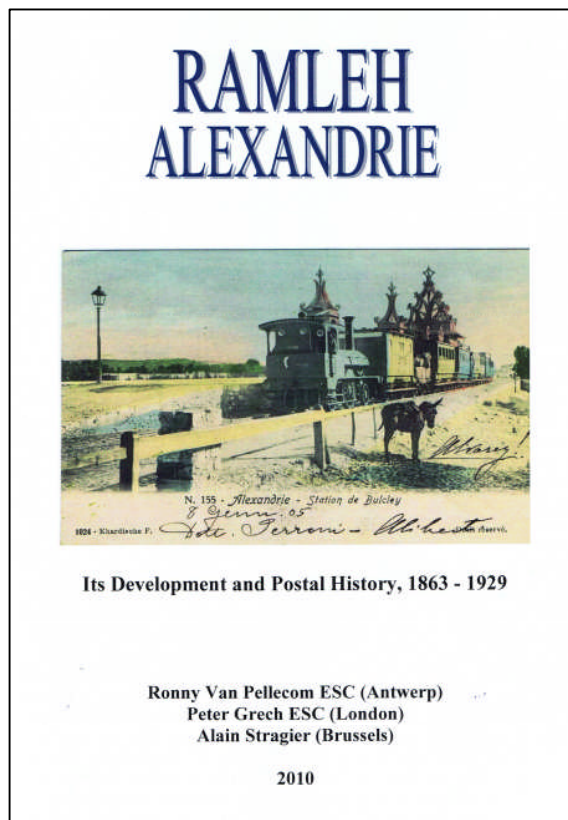
Based on Peter Grech's 2000 QC article on *The Ramleh Electric Tramway*, the book details the gradual extension of the tracks, the services provided and the development from donkey carriage to steam locomotives and on to an electrified line as early as 1903. Each of the 29 stations on the line is provided with a mini-history and illustrations, and, as each halt provided a postal opportunity, earliest and latest dates for all postmarks are recorded. The writers provide compelling evidence that two famous early TPO cancels, Alexandria-Ramle and Ramle-Alexandria (Smith type 8A7) were used on the private railway system rather than the state railway through Sidi Gaber.

There is a special chapter on the famous old San Stefano Hotel, owned by the Alexandria and Ramleh Railway Company, to which the Egyptian Government used to flee to escape the heat of a Cairo summer, but now replaced by seven-star luxury. The postal services provided by the hotel are fully detailed, including all four handstamps and both registration cachets.

The overwhelming charm of the book lies in its plethora of contemporary accounts and illustrations, culled from newspapers, historical accounts, guidebooks and almanacs, each new edition advancing the story a stage farther with new detail. Its use of postcard evidence in illustrating development of the various suburbs is a salutary lesson in what can be achieved with material often overlooked as unworthy.

Egyptian visitors to the recent London 2010 Exhibition were delighted and astonished to see "their" old school, the Lycée Français (the first Victoria College, in Chatby), illustrated in an old postcard. Even without that local knowledge, this book will appeal to all those who wish to know more about the Ramleh area, and especially to understand how closely bound up with the railway company was the successful development of the district. If there should be a note of criticism, the type size is for me a hint on the small side.

That said, however, apart from the San Stefano Hotel, I have never made any pretence at collecting Ramleh district material in any form or fashion. But this charming and infinitely detailed volume has reawakened dormant desires: has anyone a Station Mustafa cover to offer? Reviewed by **Mike Murphy** (ESC 240)



Editorial.

After the last bumper edition I had some concern that I would be a bit light for future material. As it was, when I got to sort out what I had it turned out to be enough for one and a half QCs, so I have an interesting find at London 2010 and a couple of good articles for the September issue. It seems our bumper issue was well received by our members, so thanks to those who told us so. One glaring error: p214 it's the 1879 provisionals not 1898, which don't exist. My error entirely.

Military Matters: German PoW Working Companies

Edmund Hall (ESC 239)

At the end of the Second World War Egypt contained many British and Commonwealth troops and some 100,000 German prisoners of war. These former adversaries had a common concern, repatriation back home to their families and distrust of the authorities who kept lengthening the date of repatriation on account, it was said, of a shortage of shipping.

For the British troops the magic words “Demob by Christmas” were being uttered and many were without useful work, being left to idle away the time. They were free to leave the camps and take the tram into Cairo, even to spend weeks in private houses and to wear civilian clothes. Provided one kept in touch “to see if a posting came up on the board”, no regulation was infringed - or if it was, no one paid any attention; whereas hanging about the camp dutifully and aimlessly meant that one could always be called upon for routine tasks.

The people in charge were the camp police and mail had to be picked up from their guard-room as a check that troops had not disappeared without trace. Those responsible were merely unpaid lance-corporals, themselves stuck in transit, sometimes because the unit to which they were attached had moved on while they were in hospital.

The overwhelming majority would not even leave the barracks, believing themselves under siege. To walk out into the street and mingle with the crowds seemed to them the height of foolhardiness with the likely outcome a slit throat down some dark ally. Others had “gone private”, being able to pick up pay for people in return for the odd favour.

People were left lounging round in such circumstances, living a pointless existence just because somebody in Whitehall thought that someone might run off with the Suez Canal; and with an indeterminate date of service, boredom easily set in. Many sought out jobs around the transit camp, for instance in the cookhouse, simply for the sake of something to do. During the war, people could be persuaded that staying in the Army was inevitable or even worthwhile. But even that consolation had been deprived the minority held back from the front by policy; now the enforced time-wasters were in the majority. Under the slogan “Roll on demob”, the background developed for Soldiers’ Councils.

When it was announced that fewer ships could be spared for demobilisation purposes, and that return to the UK had to be slowed anyway because of resettlement difficulties at home, an unofficial meeting was held in Ezbekieh Gardens in the centre of Cairo. The decision was taken to send a respectful enquiry to GHQ at Kasr-el-Nil, comprising a few soldiers making legitimate enquiries of welfare officers before any protest action was taken. A sympathetic non-career officer explained that frontline service was still needed in Greece, Palestine and Malaysia, as well as holding down liberated territories against the Russians, and that was why demob was held up. It wasn’t a question of punitive action.

This, conveyed back to the next Saturday meeting at Ezbekieh Gardens, caused an uproar. One after another squaddies got up to call for action. A call was made to set up the Soldiers’ Councils, and soon a strike was called for. Though it was agreed to suspend all drill, rosters and work, the majority would not agree not to do guard duties. They were under the impression that the Egyptians would break in to garrisons and kill them if they did so. In November 1946 there were stoppages in Tel el-Kebir followed by Port Said, Suez, Abbassia and Cairo. The strike continued for some time and was finally ended by Garrison HQ in Kasr-el-Nil assuring all the troops that release dates would be restored.

While the strike was on and amid growing concern at further agitation among their own troops the authorities fell back on greater use of the PoWs in labour companies, partly because Egyptian labour was suspect because of the impetus towards independence. In September/October 1946 there were 26 German Independent Working Companies, often controlled by the Pioneer Corps, of 48,000 men with an additional 4,000 men in ten German POW Artisan Working Companies. They worked mainly for the British Army (construction of quarters in the Canal Zone, motor vehicle workshops, drivers, orderlies etc.), including the defusing, blowing-up and shipment of ammunition. For expert work a prisoner was paid 10 piastres daily.

They longed for repatriation even more than the British soldiers, but hardly felt in a position to go on strike, and had no orders as to what to do if nobody turned up to guard them. So their own NCOs took command and they carried on their duties, even driving trucks through the town in a disciplined manner that won the admiration of the British officer class. In effect, while the British troops refused duties the Germans kept things running for the colonial power. Camps were run and guarded by the inmates, armed with nothing more than pickaxe handles, with the officers and senior NCOs taking charge. Initially some of the ardent Nazis tried to take command, but they were rapidly pushed aside by the majority of the PoWs who wanted nothing to do with them.

As a result, the British authorities determined more than ever not to part with them a moment too soon. About one-third of the Germans were from the Afrika Korps but among the prisoners were individuals claiming various other nationalities, including Brazilian, Bulgarian, Czech, Polish, Danish, Dutch, Argentine, Swiss, Spanish and Armenian. The last Italian prisoners had left, to the relief of the military authorities, for in spite of the valuable contribution of the Italian co-operators their mercurial temperament made them much more difficult to handle than the stolid Germans.

Until the defeat of Germany the prisoners had lived in guarded camps and did no work. Then a financial problem arose. The prisoners had been receiving pay from Germany through Sweden and had been able to buy trifling but much prized additions to their rations. When Germany collapsed pay ceased, and the effect on the men, especially in isolated desert camps, was severe. The inability to buy cigarettes was a special hardship, and the men were ready to do anything to obtain them. Simultaneously with the realisation that they had lost the war, the attitude of the prisoners changed. Disillusioned and completely at sea, they lost the arrogant confidence in victory that had sustained them during captivity.

They became tractable. The military authorities were able to kill two birds with one stone: they could relieve the manpower shortage and enable the Germans to fight the depressing effects of enforced idleness unmitigated by opportunity to obtain tobacco and sweets. Their work was so successful that, as described above, the authorities became largely dependent upon them. The intention was that prisoners in the Middle East should be repatriated at the same speed as those held elsewhere. But meanwhile a start was made with small working parties under guard. Basic working pay at a few shillings a week, with a little more for supervisors, was issued. The effect of being employed and able to buy simple luxuries was extraordinary.

During the war the prisoners had been graded in three categories on a political basis: white, or anti-Nazis; grey, Nazis of no deep conviction; black, staunch Nazis. There were also a few ultra-blacks, fanatical and dangerous men who had tried to maintain the Gestapo system within the prison camps. It was soon found that the whites could be trusted to work unguarded. The greys were next tried and proved as amenable as the whites. Finally the blacks, resigned to defeat and the hopelessness of their situation, gave little or no trouble and worked unguarded. Later they were given two grades: Grade I comprised all proven workers of good conduct. Grade II consisted of about a thousand ultra-blacks and bad and unreliable workers.

Grade I men were variously employed providing staff for military messes and for RAF Transport Command airfield buffets. Many drove Service vehicles, became watchmen in British depots, acted as wireless mechanics and meteorologists, worked on building and constructional work and about 100 technicians worked for the Royal Navy. Firetenders that saved several lives when a Dakota burst into flames on landing in Cyrenaica had mixed RAF and German crews. Germans staffed their own camps and pay and record offices. Some even guarded the Grade II prisoners. Pioneer and labour companies provided general labour and tradesmen for all Army and RAF needs; they were distributed in Cyrenaica, Iraq, Sudan, Greece and the Dodecanese, although the majority were in Egypt.

The prisoners lived in tented camps, in which amenities were developed partly by the prisoners themselves, partly with the valuable help of the YMCA. The prisoners were keen on games, especially football, and in one camp they built a fine mud-brick stadium with football pitch, running tracks and places for field events. They indulged in all kinds of hobbies and organised a "university" in which languages were the chief study. They formed several excellent orchestras, with instruments supplied by the YMCA, and performed in British leave camps, club messes and at Service functions. In another camp they specialised in village and farm planning and built models with true German attention to detail.

Prisoners were allowed to send two letters and four postcards a month, and there was no restriction on the amount of mail they could receive. Some English newspapers were provided and a German-language newspaper printed in England was supplemented by camp newspapers produced by the prisoners themselves. The only signs of discontent had been in two camps where crude posters demanded that the British should "release their slaves".

Considering the almost complete freedom in which these prisoners lived and worked, escapes were remarkably few and more often than not should be described as "absence without leave". Stories of romantic exploits by escaped Germans in Egypt were rumoured but possibly with little substance. Those who did go Awol soon returned or were returned to their camps within a few days. Some made for the ports, but language and lack of money quickly gave them away. A few hid with Egyptians, working as mechanics, field labourers, and sometimes armourers for the gangs that raided the great dumps. When later on great numbers of Egyptian peasants were engaged in British depots at high wages, men willing to work as Egyptian field-hands were invaluable.

The first repatriation came in late 1946, with 6,000 men. The first men sent home were the "A-men" (anti-Nazis) and repatriation continued slowly thereafter. Morale began to suffer and the rate of suicides increased and on October 11, 1947, the Declaration of a Captured Lutheran Pastor in Egypt was issued by Norbert Rückert, himself one of the incarcerated.

The declaration began:

The captured Lutheran pastors in Egypt, moved by the emotional situation of their fellow prisoners in the M[iddle] E[ast], which has become extraordinarily critical, and in obedience to their sworn duties of office, would like to make the following declaration before the British authorities, before the German public, before their fellow prisoners, and also before the Christians of the world....

It made mention that some 60,000 PoWs were still in Egypt, *having been put to work in a climate which for half the year is positively unbearable for a European*; that morale had declined and that five suicides had occurred in the Cairo district in the last month. In one work company, of 5,000 men, six had been admitted to the military hospital with mental illness.

It then listed the reasons for the despair, among them the failure of the British Government to implement the Repatriation Plan intended to be binding for 1947, causing complete distrust in any British promises, and stated that the closing date for repatriation, the end of 1948, would most probably not be achieved. Another point of contention was that the returned PoW would not be allowed to take out of Egypt more than ten pounds' worth of goods when many had saved their tiny wages for months and years to take foodstuffs back home to their families.

Alas the response was to fall back on the excuse:

The British War Department declares that the lack of shipping space in the Middle East at the moment does not make it possible to keep constant the considerably increased number of monthly dismissals like these summer months. The lack of shipping room has already led to the limited vacation of the British troops for some time. However, the final date of the repatriation scheme, which provides completion of the dismissals until December 31st, 1948, shall not suffer from this. As of the beginning of the next year, the rates of the repatriations in the Middle East will be increasing considerably in keeping with the deadline.

As to when the last PoW was sent home, I cannot find a precise date, but it certainly was not earlier than the end of 1948 and possibly into early 1949.

I'm not quite sure what, some four or five years ago, started me on the quest to find about these working companies since I have had some covers from them for some 20 years or more among my PoW collection, but something sparked my interest to find what philatelic evidence I could. Some have company cachets, but most of the company numbers I have recorded come from the return address or from the incoming mail address. I also imagined that this was/is(?) a neglected or even totally overlooked facet of Egyptian philately, but on going through some back issues of the *QC* - of course for some other reason altogether - I chanced

upon a meeting report in *QC 59/60* of 1962 on German Prisoner of War Mail mentioning eight sheets of the recently deceased Gordon Ward of the wartime correspondence of Kurt Hahn, a PoW in Egypt.

It seems that Gordon Ward corresponded with Kurt Hahn, who had been captured in Italy and sent to Egypt as a PoW, becoming the chief postal clerk at each of the PoW camps to which he was sent. Although the report mentions that he gave Dr Ward much information, I have not found anything published. Among the covers described two had reference to the working companies, one by its return address, the other by its incoming address. So perhaps I cannot claim a completely new line of research.

As might be expected, finding such material has not been particularly easy and on inquiry dealers would only look blank and suggest that I look through a box of covers that may contain something. I picked up one cover in Washington and a couple from a German dealer who frequents Stampex, who seemed quite pleased about my interest and took up the story. Gradually I made up a small collection and recently gave a display to the Forces Postal History Society of nine sheets of eighteen covers and cards.

Adding to this, a trawl through old auction catalogues and various internet sites has allowed me to start to form a picture of the companies and their postal markings. I have tabulated my provisional findings by company number and the location taken either from the return address, cachet or by the incoming address.

The place and country is supplied by various means; by the camp number if given, and then from a list of the camps and locations, the place mostly from camp location or from notes given by the seller, assumed correct or even given by the writer in the letter. The dates are normally taken from the writer or the occasional cachet or receiving postmark in Germany, ignoring any transit time.

2768 INDEPENDANT
GERMAN P.W.

1 MAR. 1946

WORKING COY:

3106 Indep. German P.W.
Wkg. Coy.

Date.....

ORDERLY ROOM
10 JUN 1946
2773 IND. G.P.W. WKG. COY.

3106 Indep. German P.W. Wkg. Coy.
Post Office

2752 Indep. German P.W. Working Coy

3113 Ind. Ger. P.W. Wkg. Coy.
c/o Central P.O.W. Postal
Section
M. E. L. F.

Figs. 1-6. Some cachets seen. Most are in mauve.

Location of the camps

The larger camps were mainly in the Bitter Lakes area; from Suez to Ismailia and a little further west into the desert as well. Other camps were closer to Alexandria and Cairo. The labour camps were located in the neighbourhood of the main camps near the Suez Canal, which was the emphasis of the labour service companies.

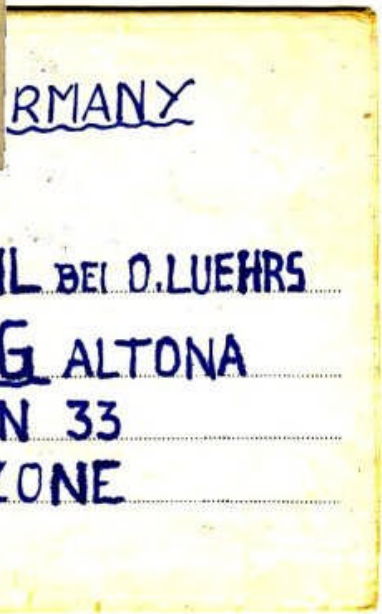
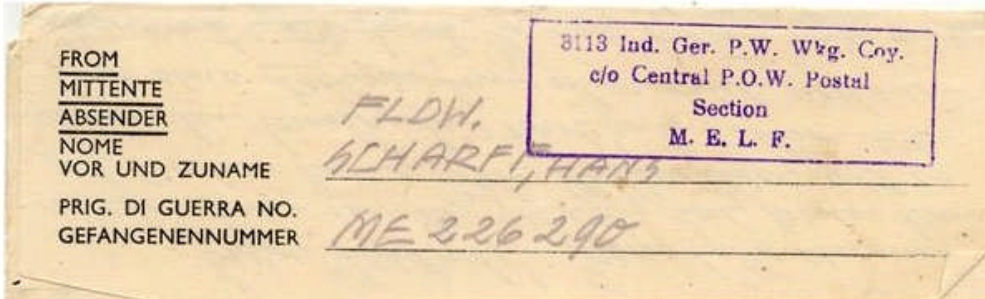
304 Helwan	305 Tell El Kebir	306 Fayid/Bitter Lake
307 Fanara/Bitter Lake	308 Fayid/Bitter Lake (former Helwan)	309 Fayid (?)/Bitter Lake
310 Gineifa/Bitter Lake	368 Fayid/Bitter Lake	379 Qassassin
380 Fanara/Bitter Lake	381 El Dabaa	382 El Dabaa
383 El Dabaa		

Table of Covers with Working Party Cachets or numbers

Number	Letters	Location	Place	Country	Cachet	Earliest	Latest
1274						3.3.47	
1279	A.W.		Fayid	Egypt		26.9.47	
1280	A.W.					14.4.46	
1283					Single line	10.2.47	22.12.47
1782							
2148		MELF.6					
2718						27.1.47	
2719				Egypt		17.7.45	7.6.47
2722		M.E.L.F.		Egypt		20.3.47	31.5.47
2723		M.E.Egypt	Benghazi	Libya		15.12.46	
2744		Egypt					
2748		M.E.F.	Benghazi	Libya		8.12.46	5.1.47
2750		390 M.E.F.		Egypt		7.4.46	28.2.48
2750	A	366/380	Fayid/Fanara	Egypt		07.4.46	
2750	B	380	Fayid	Egypt		22.2.47	
2750	C	366/380	Fayid/Fanara	Egypt		26.7.46	29.3.48
2751				Egypt		23.1.47	
2752		MELF	Suez	Egypt	Single line	15.8.46	17.10.48
2758		MELF					
2764							
2765		MEF		Egypt	Four lines	11.3.46	4.12.46
2769				Egypt		28.6.46	
2772				Egypt		12.1.47	
2773			El Firdan	Egypt	Oval	24.6.46	30.5.47
2775				Egypt		31.10.46	
2776				Egypt			
2778			Benghazi	Libya			
2779						1.3.47	14.3.47
2780					Four lines	23.9.46	
2781		807				12.6.48	
2782							
2785					Four lines	19.8.47	
3101					Single line	4.3.47	
3104				Egypt		26.12.46	14.4.47
3105				Egypt		4.6.48	
3106		380	Fayid	Egypt	2/3 lines	23.8.46	7.2.48
3107			Almaza	Egypt		27.10.46	25.12.46
3108				Egypt		26.1.46	
3110		MELF					
3113				Egypt	Box 4 lines	27.9.46	8.6.47

Anyone for Cairo?

Members who have visited our colleagues at the Philatelic Society of Egypt in Cairo in the past have returned full of admiration and tales of overwhelming hospitality. Soon there is another chance to enjoy the delights because Dr Sherif Samra, President of the PSE, announces that an exhibition – open to all to display, even as little as a single frame – will be held over the weekend of November 5-7 at the Opera House in the Exhibition Grounds on Gezira. Those with memories of Cairo 1991 will recall that this is just across the road from the Sheraton Towers Hotel where we have spent many happy visits. As an initial approach, please contact our President, John Sears.



Figs. 7-10. Four covers with cachets.



Fig.11. Incoming cover.

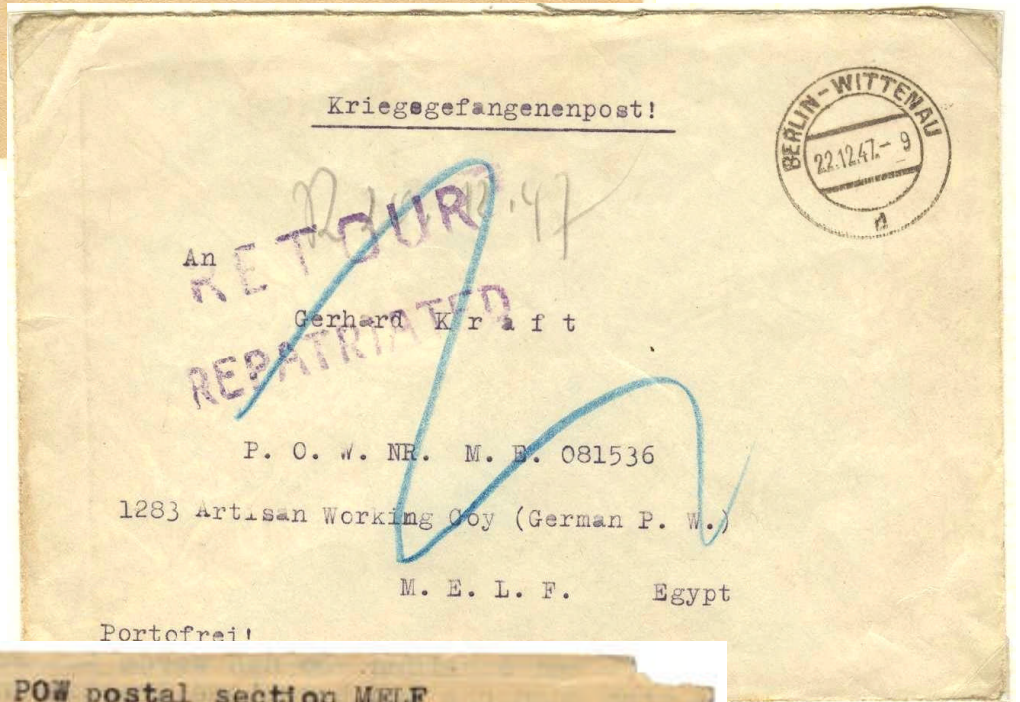


Fig.12. Incoming cover. One of the few references I have seen to the Artisan Working Companies.

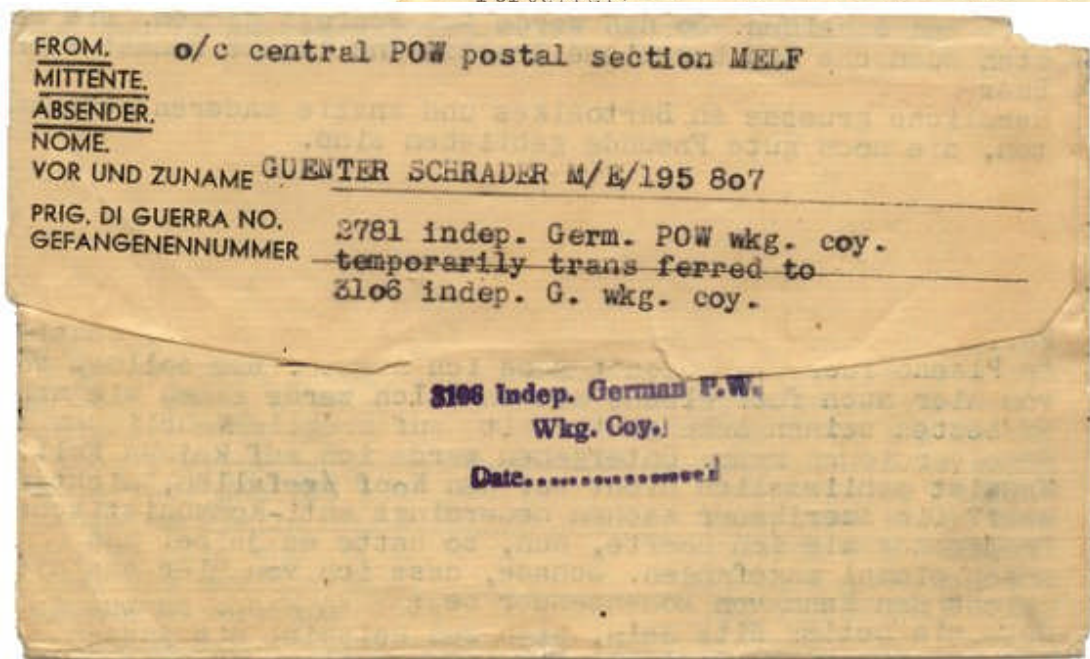


Fig.13. The majority of the covers do not have cachets. The number of the working company being given only in the return address. This cover having both the return address and a cachet of the temporary posting.

Queries

Q71 reply Peter Andrews (ESC 122): The label in question is not a censor label but reads "Member Cotton Exporters Union in Alexandria" and is essentially an advertising label. **Editor:** Since the report I have seen two other covers with the same label, both on printed envelopes of cotton export companies.

Q72 reply André Navari (ESC 534): I have no exact reply to the questions. But for:

- 1) If the cancellation is on the back it is reasonable to think it was on arrival and so in Egypt.
- 2) I think we don't have to read "FRATOLLI MOHALLA" but "FRATELLI MOHALLA" that signifies "MOHALLA BROTHERS" in Italian.
- 3) The digit for the tax seems to be a 9 according the rules of French posts in "Instruction générale of 1832". (extracted from Michèle Chauvet *Introduction à l'histoire postale*, Brun & fils, 2000). The 9 signifies "9 décimes". 10 décimes = 100 centimes = 1 Franc. For the moment I cannot tell more about the postal rate. If the reverse has a French Office ALEXANDRIE (EGYPTE) / 11 JANV 52 cds, may be that can help.

Reply Ibrahim Shoukry (ESC 423): The cover is addressed in Italian and Arabic to Mohalla Brothers (Frères) in Alessandria (Alexandria), Egypt. The letter inside is written in Gulf Arabic rather than Egyptian, which may not mean much - it could have either come from the Gulf, or from a Gulf merchant inside Egypt. Unfortunately, the letter doesn't say much, merely an astonishingly embellished series of grandiose greetings, to the "honoured and saintly Mohalla Brothers, merchants of Alexandria", and then saying merely (this is a very loose translation): "My last letter to you was No 21, and I hope that your excellencies will be able to take action as suggested in that letter." But what the action was is not even hinted at; and I have not been able to read the signature. But the front is clear, to Seigneurs Mohalla Brothers (Fratelli), Alexandria, Via Postal Steamboat (Col Vapore Postale).

Reply John Lucaci (husband of **Dawn Lucaci, ESC 610**): The address is "Brothers" Mohalla; Fratelli is brothers in Italian. I do not recall or know of any Mohalla street or suburb in Alexandria, and it was certainly sent to Egypt, otherwise why the French Alexandrie Egypte arrival postmark? I dare say that the correspondence was carried by one of the Messageries Maritimes steamships on the Mediterranean; and the marking on the front is the French rate 9 used during the 18th & 19th centuries.

What puzzles me is the lack of any other postal markings (some examples of the marking I refer to can be seen on page 211 of the *QC*), nor is there a proper local address for the delivery of the mail (unless the Mohalla Brothers were Messageries Maritimes agents, or known to the local MM agents?) I do not recall a Mohalla Brothers establishment in Alexandria in my days there in the 1940s and 1950s.

New Queries

Query 74

Bill Johns (ESC 286)

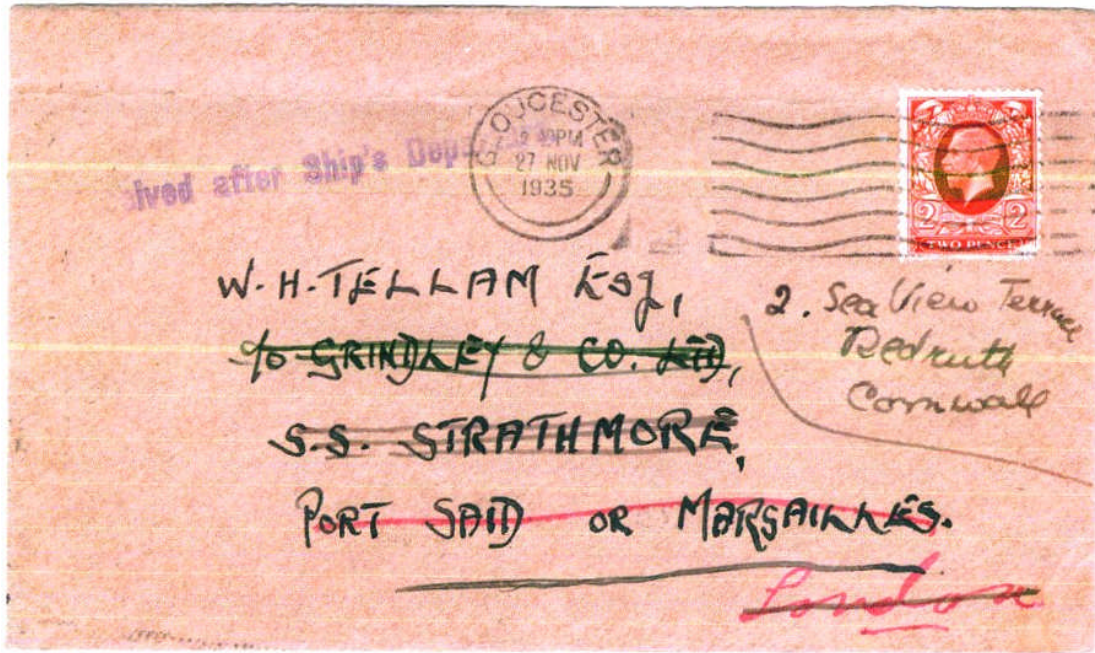
For the Fuad 3 mills green Army Post stamp Gibbons gives the date of issue as 9.11.36 while Hobbs lists the date of issue as 1.12.36.

My cover is dated 12.11.36. Any ideas appreciated.

Editor's note: It's another 31 Poynders Rd cover see *QC* 226



Query 75 Paul Green (ESC 128)



This cover has the cachet “Received after Ship’s Departure”. Is this a post office cachet or one applied by the shipping line?

Query 76 Anton Jansen (ESC 383)

Discussing postal stationery in his treatise, Peter Smith remarks (page 667) that in 1938 “on the occasion of the birth of the Royal child (...) a non-dominated formula envelope was prepared featuring the same design as the adhesive commemorative stamp for the Royal Wedding, but without denomination, in dark carmine”. This envelope is shown as Fig 26 on his next page. I have found a similar, but larger envelope of the same sort; it measures 17.5 x 13.5 cm against 15.3 x 12.3 cm for the one described by Professor Smith. My envelope has been used by THE GOVERNMENT PRESS, the printers of these envelopes. It is franked with

54 mills in Official stamps and sent on 1 DE 38 to London. The tariff of 54 mills corresponds with a letter of the fourth weight class (80 to 100 grams).



Apparently the Government Press (Smith speaks of “State Printing Works”) was using up (part of) its stock of unusable envelopes as the Arabic “inscription included the phrase ‘royal child’ in the masculine, whereas a girl was born” (Smith, p. 667). Has anyone seen this envelope (or the smaller one) postally used?

Query 77 André Navari (ESC 534)



Continental Hôtel Cairo.



I found this picture postcard on an auction website. It is in a relatively bad condition. It was sent with registration, apparently from SAIYIDA ZENAB. The registration postmark is not readable, but mentions CAIRE.

The date is August 26 1909 (26.VIII.09), and the destination is the city of Melun in France.

This card was not franked, neither for normal shipping, nor for the registered service. I cannot see any sign(s) of stamp(s) having been removed. In the top centre part of back of the card, there is the handwritten mention "Vaillant Bey / Expéditeur" (Vaillant Bey / sender). Who can this "Vaillant Bey" be who can use an official (?) exemption of shipping charges? Incidentally, where is Saiyida Zenab? Is there any alternative spelling of this place name?

Query 78 André Navari (ESC 534)



This is another picture postcard found on an auction website. It was sent from CAIRE on December 26 1899 (26 XII 99 VI), even though the franking of a total of 4 millièmes was with Sudanese stamps. The addressee is the Baroness Léon Lambert at Marnix Avenue in Bruxelles, Belgium.

On the view face there is the handwritten mention in French: “With special and exceptional permission of General Director of Posts, this card received the cancellation of post-office of Cairo on Sudanese stamps - With my wishes for the happy New Year – Leon Maskens – Le Caire 31 December 1899”. Can any member report having seen any other item like this?

I have been able to research nothing about this baroness, but the Baron Léon Lambert has a street with his name in Bruxelles (Belgium). He is known as a great banker and a patron of the arts. Léon Maskens seems to have been a water colourist see:

<http://www.vanderkindere.com/photo.asp?lg=1&index=540990&c1=on&dayid=324&bk=2&rt=7&p=1&i=1&photoname=&path=off>. He was also consul in Egypt.

Query 79 Mike Murphy (ESC 240):

I was very surprised to see that Lot 639 did not sell in the recent Auction 49. It is an unrecorded horizontal strip of three of the 1999 £E1 Hosni Mubarak 4th Term (SG 2123, NP1458) air mail, used on a small parcel card with illegible markings. The left-hand stamp, alone remarkably, shows a prominent 1mm leftward slip in the pale blue colour. Is there a printing expert who could tell me how this could possibly have happened?

**Query 80 Peter Heim (ESC 384):**

I illustrate a postmark Armant-Dabiya which is rather like Peter Smith's TPO Type 8, but wonder if it really is a TPO? Dabiya lies only 5.5km from Armant, but on my 1:100,000-scale map I can't see any railway connection. In my postal guide Armant is a post office of category 1 and Dabiya of 2. Might this postmark mean that Dabiya is a suburb of Armant?

**Query 81 Peter Heim (ESC 384):**

This postmark from Asyut in July 1956 has me completely out of ideas. Above is "Asyut";

below is "Qissaria". What does this word mean?

Query 82 Peter Heim (ESC 384): I have attached a scan with two postmarks. I cannot read the Arabic names. The first is a cash-postmark: I can see only the letter "f" at the end.

Query 83 Peter Heim (ESC 384): The second is puzzling me more. It is a TPO of 1907, but what are the names? The second name could be Dabaa, but there is only one postmark known with Alexandria. First I thought it is a military TPO, but Peter Smith says that these postmarks are beginning later (1918-20)

**"Invitation" to Japan**

We are delighted to announce that Mahmoud Ramadan (ESC 358), Egyptian Commissioner to Philanippon, the Japan World Exhibition being held in Yokohama from July 28 to August 2 next year, is well on the road to recovery after extensive open-heart surgery in Oxford and Cairo, and wish him well. Mahmoud is keen to see lots of Egypt in Japan, and reminds ESC members who are also members of the Philatelic Society of Egypt that they may exhibit under his guardianship. He will be happy to hear from all interested at m.ramadan@medmarkcom.com.eg. Entries close on October 1; for those less inclined to roam the UK Commissioner is Frank Walton.

Income and Expenditure Account (General Account)**For The Year Ended 31 December 2009**

	2008	2009
INCOME		
Discs	168.00	63.00
Subscriptions	3,863.21	3,898.08
Auction account	1,500.00	1,500.00
Bank deposit interest received (net)	42.48	1.44
Library	-	7.12
Donations	512.39	50.85
Advertisements	<u>50.00</u>	<u>100.00</u>
	6,136.08	5,620.49
EXPENDITURE		
Meeting room hire	564.50	851.00
Cost of Quarterly Circulars	2,978.65	3,106.79
Affiliation fee B.P.S.	64.00	40.00
Insurance	36.60	36.60
Website costs	132.94	113.72
Officers' stationery and telephone	382.32	82.85
President/Chairman's postage etc	<u>15.89</u>	<u>15.17</u>
	<u>4,174.90</u>	<u>4,246.13</u>
Surplus for the year	1,961.18	1,374.36
Surplus at 1 January 2009	<u>10,589.08</u>	<u>12,550.26</u>
Surplus at 31 December 2009	<u>£12,550.26</u>	<u>£13,924.62</u>

EGYPT STUDY CIRCLE - ACCOUNTS FOR AUCTIONS 47 & 48

Profit & Loss Accounts	Auction 47	Auction 48
	£	£
Net Sales	8,722.60	6,307.90
Income		
10% Commission on Sales (Purchasers)	872.26	630.79
5% Commission on Sales (Sellers)	436.13	315.40
Invoiced Postages	16.81	34.04
	<u>1,325.20</u>	<u>980.23</u>
Expenditure		
Catalogues, typing, printing, posting	385.12	392.46
Postage of Lots	67.09	109.57
Sundry Expenses	48.14	42.73
Insurance	105.00	
Profit	<u>824.85</u>	<u>330.47</u>
	<u>1,325.20</u>	<u>980.23</u>
Balance Sheet As At 31 St January 2010.		
Net assets		
Balance at Bank	3,116.68	
Less Amounts due to Members	512.05	
	<u>2,604.63</u>	
Auction fund		
Bought forward from Auction 46	2,949.31	
Net Profit Auction 47	824.85	
Net Profit Auction 48	<u>330.47</u>	
	<u>4,104.63</u>	
Less Transfers to General Account	<u>1,500.00</u>	
	<u>2,604.63</u>	

Both Auctions have produced reasonably successful results, but we, who do most of the work, feel that members' enthusiasm is waning, perhaps because some think the "reserves" quoted are somewhat on the high side. However, hopefully Auction 49, which coincided with the Circle's 75th Anniversary was a good one. It will be the only one held in 2010.

John Sears Mike Murphy.

Members' (and others') Announcements

This page is intended a service to members. The idea is to offer colleagues the opportunity to seek help with their research as well as to make general ESC announcements. It has not been easy to fill out the page in each issue, and we hope members will take advantage of the service rather than ignoring it so that it ceases to exist! Please contact the Editor or Secretary with announcements (we will not normally publish a telephone number unless there is a very good reason to do so).

QCs on offer: A complete run of *QCs* to Number 223, the end of Volume 19 (December 2007), has become available, and the seller will donate the proceeds towards Circle funds. The first six volumes (to No 72) are all photocopies of the originals, ring-bound; the remainder are all originals which are in "ring" file covers. This is, therefore, a heavy lot, and a case of "buyer collect". A price of £175 is suggested. Please contact our President, John Sears (0208-428 3149 or j-sears@tiscali.co.uk).

TPOs update, anyone? Peter Smith's TPOs book was published in 1983, since when a vast amount of information has come to light – but remains unpublished. First Anatole Ott and now Peter Heim have hoped to produce an updated version, but time catches up with all of us. Peter (ESC 384), who lives in Nürnberg, Germany, is willing to co-operate in the research by offering all his dates information and new datestamp discoveries from more than 300 covers and 3,000 items in recent years. Edmund Hall, editor/webmaster, is keen that the updates take their place alongside the book's details on our website. Any member willing to volunteer in this important role should contact the Secretary.

Postage Prepaid: A member in UK is interested in researching the various "Postage Prepaid" handstamps and machine markings used in Egypt over the years. He has a mini-collection of some dozen or so different examples, all so far emanating from Cairo or Alexandria, and all apparently intended to be used on Printed Matter mail. If members have examples they are willing to share, photocopies or scans to the Secretary will be passed on with gratitude.

PhilaPedia makes its debut: A novel research tool open to all was launched at the London 2010 exhibition in the form of PhilaPedia, a multilingual, web-based, free-content encyclopaedia project for postal history collectors. The website provides historical, philatelic, price valuation and other philatelic information on items from all over the world, gathering together illustrations and details that can be seen – and discussed on the site – by all. The idea is to provide a central source of postal history information to attract new collectors. The site, at www.philapedia.com, will be managed by Moti Kremener (ESC 291).

Dutch India request: A member in Germany has set himself the task of researching early and late dates for all postmarks in the former Dutch India. Because there are 20 different types of postmark and more than 2,000 post offices, you can imagine the amount of work involved. So he asks, if anyone has knowledge of this topic, or material for sale, including the cheapest items and even in great quantities, please let the Secretary know so that details can be passed on.

Catalogue collector: At London 2010 we were interested to meet a non-member who collects auction catalogues! Perhaps not as odd as it might sound, because they contain an absolute wealth of information and (usually) coloured illustrations that can prove invaluable. Any member who has catalogues that are no longer needed should contact Michael Mackin, of West Wickham, Kent. Telephone 0208 402 4637; email mackinsden@hotmail.com

Booklets book?: Another non-member who approached us at the exhibition was Eric Abraham, who is very keen indeed to get hold of a copy of the late John Revell's self-produced book on the Egyptian booklets. Any member with a spare copy should contact the Secretary or eric@ematextiles.co.uk

Writing implements: The tools used by the god Thoth on Egypt's first commemorative stamp have long fascinated another visitor, Erene Grieve (erenegrieve@f25.com), who is interested in any depiction of writing implements on stamps, and of course Egypt is the country that started it all. Interested members should please contact her direct.