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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.

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Novelties on the Meetings list

The new programme for 2011 will include some novelties we hope will prove attractive, including a live auction at the AGM and two study meetings to which members will be invited to bring material on a topic to display and compare. The first of these is our first meeting of the year, on January 8 – “bring and show” your TPO pages.

January 8	Services Club	TPOs “bring and show”	All Members
February 26	Stampex	AGM and Live Auction	All Members
May 7	Services Club	“Named” PO markings	Mike Murphy
July 9	Services Club	Hotel Post Offices	John Davies
September 17	Stampex	Post Monarchy “bring and show”	All Members
November 5	Philatex	Acquisitions and Queries	<u>NB. 10.30am!!</u>

For meetings 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.

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Report of the Meeting, September 18 2010

PRESENT: Peter Andrews (Chairman), Mike Murphy (Secretary), Edmund Hall (Editor/Webmaster), John Davis (Librarian), Mike Bramwell, Angela Child, Sue Claridge (New Zealand), John Clarke, Cyril Defriez, Peter Grech, Paul Green, Alan Jeyes, Tony Schmidt, Greg Todd, Ronny Van Pellecom (Belgium). Visitor: David Worrollo.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were received from: John Sears (President), Stanley Horesh (Deputy Chairman), Brian Sedgley (Treasurer), David Sedgwick (Publicity).

The Chairman welcomed those present, including especially our foreign visitors, Sue Claridge (ESC 356), who recently survived unscathed a magnitude-7 earthquake in Christchurch, and Ronny Van Pellecom (ESC 618), our indefatigable Belgian researcher. There was also a sincere welcome for Tony Schmidt (ESC 198), returning to a meeting after a long illness.

It was our sad duty to say farewell to two excellent colleagues – Dennis Clarke (ESC 165) – “I feel that the Circle and I personally have lost a very great friend”, said the Chairman – and Allan Berry (ESC 535) of New Zealand see obituary page 288. Members stood in a minute’s silence in their memory. They then offered sincere condolence to David and Ann Sedgwick on the recent loss of their daughter Kathryn.

The Chairman opened with a personal note of sadness and disappointment at the lack of response to our Cairo colleagues’ invitation to members to attend and/or to exhibit at the local exhibition in November. He hoped that photographs and a report to be submitted by the President of the Egyptian society, Dr Sherif Samra, might encourage members to visit next year.

The Secretary then announced the meetings list for next year, see page 277, and described some changes intended by the Committee to attract members to the meetings. One novelty will be a “live auction” run by Edmund Hall to coincide with the Annual Meeting at Stampex on February 26 (REMINDER: Subscriptions for 2011 must be paid by that date; see attached green sheet).

In an attempt to return to something like the “study meetings” of years gone by, two meetings will involve members bringing material to show on a topic for discussion. Those chosen for next year are TPOs (January 8) and a much-neglected area, post-monarchy material (September 17 at Stampex). Three meetings will be at the Victory Services Club as usual, though the hire of the room is growing perhaps too quickly; and in another novelty our final meeting of the year will be at Philatex, where the only available time-slot was 10.30am. We shall see how that one works out....

He then detailed auction dates for some outstanding material from our former members Anatole Ott (November 20), Adel Farid (Nov 30-Dec 4), Luca Biolato (late October and Nov 30-Dec 4) and Dennis Clarke (December 9).

Membership applications were accepted from the following: Paul Quinn (West Yorkshire), Elaine Evans (Knoxville, Tennessee) and Amro Kandeel (Maadi, Egypt). Welcome to all of them!

The Librarian then considered an offer from Peter Smith (ESC 74) to hand over for the Record old correspondence from some of the Circle’s founding members, including Dr Byam, John Gilbert and so on; and the Editor/Webmaster again urged members to visit the website, which is packed with good material but undeservedly receives precious little attention. Every effort will be made in the pages of the *QC* to advise members of new postings on the website in an effort to boost member visits.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

There is a vacancy for a Committee member, and both senior partners running the Circle Auction feel that it may be time to hand over to a younger member. Volunteers are sought for all three posts: the only requirements are energy, enthusiasm and an email account! There may be a positive advantage in one or more of these positions going to an overseas member. Please contact the Secretary if you need more information or wish to volunteer.



The cover offered on sale on the internet (above), dated 4 August 1952; and Cyril Defriez's version dated 17 September 1956, with a different El Malek Fuad marking and a circular handstamp of SS Nefertiti. Both are addressed to Alexandria, but while the lower one is posted in Messina the other has a Naples airmail CDS.



John Davis (ESC 213) then opened the display section of the meeting by showing the second part of his Postage Dues, held over from York because of shortage of time. Dealing with "Indications of Postage Due", he showed two covers with a boxed "O" indicating invalid or valueless stamps: one with three Russian Levant stamps of January 1892 (1pi Due attached and cancelled in Cairo); and one with GB Jubilee 2½d with boxed "O" cancelled in crayon (Oct 1893) and the stamp cancelled on arrival in London.

He detailed the nine boxed-“T” markings indicating “tax due” as recorded by the Circle, and showed three more as yet unrecorded. Moving on to foreign Dues placed on mail from Egypt, he showed a remarkable array of covers and cards sent unpaid or under-franked, and bearing the Dues of Austro-Hungary, Austria, GB (both before and after the introduction of postage due stamps), France, Greece, Italy, Switzerland, Transvaal, United States and Yugoslavia.

One remarkable cover posted unfranked in Port Said in March 1934 and addressed to a ship’s passenger received three sets of Postage Dues. First, a 10m Egyptian Due (cancelled with a boxed T), then the cover followed the addressee to Singapore (12c Due applied, returned to Port Said), and was finally readdressed to Southampton where on arrival 2½d in GB Dues were added.

The second part of the meeting, Acquisitions and Queries, was opened by Alan Jeyes (ESC 293), who showed a very recent acquisition in a very early Massawa cover franked at the unusual rate of 4 ½ piastres, comprising 2x2pi plus 5pa. Ronny Van Pellecom showed a wonderful money order receipt from 1889 with a beautiful strike of Cairo / M.P.I. (Mandats Postaux International), and Mike Bramwell (ESC 448) showed an Express Air Mail cover from Accra to Egypt signed Kingsford-Smith and two covers to the USA bearing paper stickers, one with the printed label “Dutiable”, the other “Philatelic Mail / Duty Free”.

The Secretary showed material from members and others, including especially a series of new discoveries by Hany Salam (ESC 580) of Cairo relating to the period of the Egyptian government takeover of the Posta Europea and how mails were carried and paid for before the advent of postage stamps in 1866. Included is a series of hafzels and personal manuscript markings, together with a wide range of additional intaglio seals on document, including some previously unrecorded. He would be interested to correspond with any member who has material of this period: the jigsaw is gradually being completed, but the more pieces he has to research the better!

Also on display was a query about the mail route from China to Alexandria; a 1938 heavyweight cover from Salford, Lancashire, with 3s 6d in GB 1 1/2d stamps – and 554 millièmes in Egyptian Dues; and a Messina Bottle Post cover offered on an internet auction site as “never seen before, never to be seen again...” Needless to say, it did not sell at a starting price of \$350, but Cyril Defriez (ESC 172) has kindly provided another example, a Khedivial Mail Line envelope with a different marking of the *SS El Malek Fuad* together with a *SS Nefertiti* handstamp.

The Secretary also showed a series of sketches of the routes taken by Rural postmen (why were they drawn? By a postman training an assistant/newcomer? Or by the postman to prove to his postmaster that he knew his route?): they will prove invaluable to the Rural researcher. And he also showed a 1901 letter-envelope with the second Luxor Hotel CDS with a message from the hotel hall porter to the *New York Herald* newspaper saying that he regretted that he could no longer continue selling the paper on their behalf – it was diverting him too much from his normal duties.

The Editorial

Now I don’t consider it to be a necessary or in any way a vital part of the *QC*. I have doubts as to whether anybody actually reads it. So why bother at all? Well, my co-editor and I just don’t like “white space” - we have a wish bordering on the paranoid - to see as much of the paper covered in the ink of words and pictures. Invariably little chunks of white space occur, like this one after the Meeting report: maybe a question, or a snippet of news, may fill it. It’s too small to be the start of an article unless it’s one that it is just over one page.

Now I appreciate that some of our contributors make great efforts to send articles “copy ready”. However, for a variety of technical reasons I still have to tinker with them to make them fit with the other articles, and the *QC* goes to the printers in electronic form — not as a Word document. So if you really want to help as much as possible don’t worry too much about the formatting, although I do try and keep as close as possible to the original. But please do put your name on it, if pictures are referred to use a “*Fig.*” number and send me the article only when it is finished. I don’t look at articles, whether received electronically or on disc, the two preferred **ways**, until I need to. They get filed in the rack above my computer if on paper, or filed to disk if email. I don’t look at them until I find time “to do a *QC*”; that’s why I never know what articles I have in store. One plea I do have is, if for some reason you do send an amended article please please date it or give it a version number: when I pull it out of the file I have no idea which came first. And please, if you can, do send the articles in digital format in preference to those nicely printed ones that have clearly been done on a computer. Thanks.

Report of the Meeting, November 6 2010

PRESENT: John Sears (President), Peter Andrews (Chairman), Stanley Horesh (Deputy Chairman), Mike Murphy (Secretary), Brian Sedgley (Treasurer), Edmund Hall (Editor/Webmaster), John Davis (Librarian), Mike Bramwell, Angela Child, John Clarke, Peter Grech, Richard Wheatley. Visitor: David Worrollo.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were received from: David Sedgwick (Publicity), Cyril Defriez, Paul Green and Alan Jeyes.

In view of the late arrival of the Chairman, who later revealed that he had been “train-napped”, the Deputy Chairman welcomed those present, and wished us all an early but nonetheless welcome greeting for the forthcoming holiday period and for a prosperous and peaceful New Year.

He opened the meeting by detailing the five immediately imminent auctions of late members’ material coming up in Europe and, while regretting the loss of such senior members as Anatole Ott, Mohamed Adel Farid, Luca Biolato and Dennis Clarke, wished members well with their bidding.

The meeting then heard of a newly published full-colour Egypt stamp and postal stationery catalogue, in two volumes, produced after 20 years work by Magdi Moukhtar Abdel-hadi, a leading member of the Philatelic Society of Egypt and also one of our own members (ESC 445). The book, *Egypt Stamps Handbook*, aims to follow on from Zeheri by illustrating every flaw and variety in colour, and won a Large Vermeil in Portugal. It is reviewed on page 289.

The Deputy Chairman took this opportunity to congratulate Mike Murphy and Ibrahim Shoukry on their similar award of a Large Vermeil (87 points) for their book *Egypt: The Rural Post*, which was made at the Johannesburg International Exhibition last month.

The Secretary then reminded members about meetings for 2011, mentioning again the change of some arrangements in an attempt to attract more members to the meetings. The first of these changed

patterns comes up quite quickly – the first meeting of the year is January 8, when the topic will be “TPOs Bring and Show”, the idea being that members who have material to show, even in comparatively small amounts, should be encouraged to bring it along for a series of displays and discussions of the material and its treatment. Bearing in mind that Peter Smith’s seminal TPOs book was published in 1983, there is a lot of catching up to do, and it is surely time for a second bite at the publishing cherry.

A similar meeting will be held at Stampex on September 17, with the theme “Post-Monarchy”, that is, anything subsequent to the fall of Farouk.

Membership applications were then received and accepted from David Worrollo, who was present as a visitor, and from Dr Robert Pinent of Ottawa. A third application was held over to the January meeting for further consideration.

The Treasurer reminded members that annual subscription for 2011 was due on January 1, and said how much early payment was appreciated, coupled with a warning that payments not made by the date of the Annual Meeting (February 26) might result in membership being terminated.

The President, on behalf of the Auction committee, announced that volunteers were still being sought to carry out some of the work, and that as a result the first Auction for the year would be delayed from its normal April/May date to perhaps May/June.

Volunteers STILL Wanted!!!

There has been a totally deafening silence in response to the appeal in the last QC for volunteers to fill the vacancy for a Committee member, and for help to run the Auctions that have contributed enormously to the Circle’s economic survival in recent years. To misquote a recent US President and Khalil Gibran: “Ask not what your Circle can do you; ask what you can do for your Circle”. If we didn’t need your help, we would not be asking for it!

We then moved on to the meeting display, "Military in Egypt, 1882-1982" by Edmund Hall (ESC 239). He started by acknowledging the help Dennis Clarke had given him, many years ago, as a philatelic novice and said how much he would have liked Dennis to see the display. With over 200 sheets it was taken at a bit of a gallop over five sessions. Starting with the British occupation of 1882, Edmund showed various covers with the British Army postmarks. Covers from the Egyptian Army in the Sudan were shown, including the bisected postage due and 3 millièmes surcharge on the 2pi postage due. Next, covers from the Army of Occupation using the civil post office. Two covers were shown of other countries' forces passing through the Canal, one being from Teddy Roosevelt's Great White Fleet.

The First World War was represented by covers from the troops of Australia, New Zealand, India, France and Italy as well as from Turkish, German and Austrian forces in the Sinai. One cover was from the expedition to pacify Darfur in 1916. Examples of PoW mail from Turks and Germans held in Egypt included one from a civilian internee. Immediately postwar there were two covers of the EFF emergency air mail and a postcard from a member of the Czech legion when they were transported from Vladivostok back to Europe via Egypt after the collapse of the White armies.

The interwar years covered the concession period, including the "small Farouk green" on cover. Edmund joked that while these covers are well sought-after with a price to match, he referred to them as quite common compared to many of the other items shown.

The Second World War started with a quick review of the change of postmark, the E-series, EPP and FPOs of the British. While the forces of the Anzacs, with their changes in postmarks, South Africans, Indians etc were shown, emphasis was given to the other forces involved. Among these were the Free French and Belgian forces (both displayed with covers with their own registration labels), Sudanese, the Palestine regiment, the British-formed Libyan army, Poles and Czechs, even pioneers from Mauritius. Covers were also shown of the Italian Army and the German Army on Egyptian soil.

Immediately postwar there were examples of the PoW working parties (see *QC* 233), followed by pioneer companies from Africa that replaced the Germans PoWs, and then FPOs of the British up to the evacuation. Edmund showed the two Krag machine cancels and pointed out two distinct Krag 1 strikes which he was unaware had been reported.

The 1948 war was illustrated by Egyptian and Israeli covers with military markings, and the 1967 and 1973 wars were similarly represented. Two covers, one each from 1948 and 1967, were from Israeli PoWs held by the Egyptians which, by their very nature, are seldom seen. The Egyptian Army was represented by the change of FPOs with the diamond type of the Forties and the large eight-sided type found on covers of the 1948 war. The transformation of the large FPO gradually being reduced in size until it ended as the octagon type of the Fifties. Covers from the Yemen were shown with this type of marking.

The UNEF were represented, including the interesting Swedish forces cover with a built-in stamp that the recipient soldier could cut out to send a letter back. Edmund ended with some covers of the MFO, including one from British Forces celebrating the centenary 1882-1982. He pointed out that such a cover from Egypt was surprising, imagining that it celebrated the 100 years since the British conquest and how that could cause some embarrassment with Egyptian authorities. It was some time before he realised that the centenary in question was in fact that of the British Army Post Office, which was first raised for the 1882 campaign.

A tailpiece concerned the biannual joint military exercises under the name Bright Star that have been held in Egypt jointly between Egyptian, American and European forces in the Western Desert. Edmund said that he had seen no philatelic evidence in 20 years of searching. But he only that week obtained a postmark of the French on the 2001 Bright Star event: there must be more to find!

The Chairman thanked Edmund for a "quite fantastic" display of staggering breadth and content, admitting that he was not in any way a "military" collector but that the material on show had been put together in such a brilliant way that even he understood and appreciated it! The meeting ended in Christmas and New Year greetings all round.

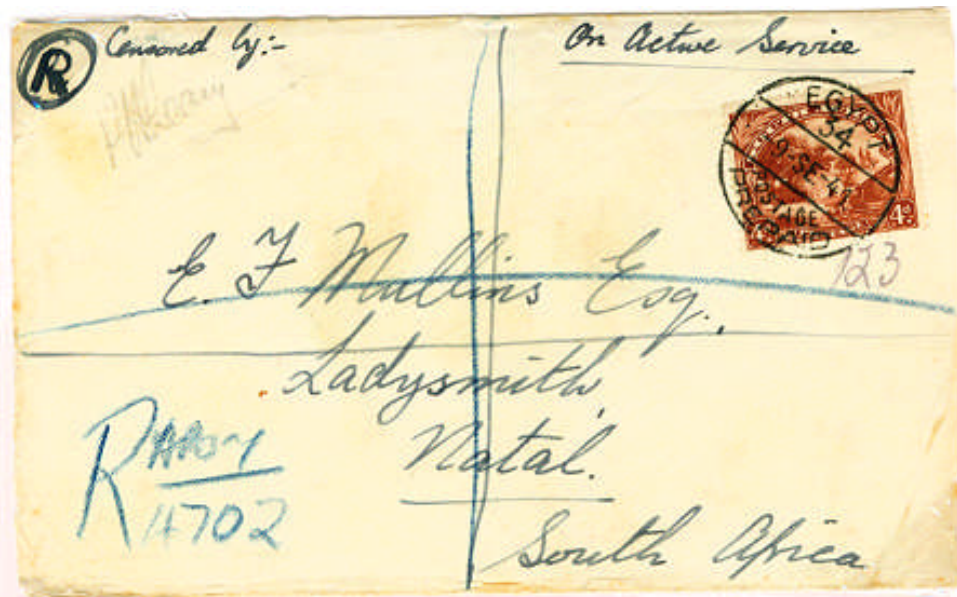


FPO M.D.I. used by the Anzac Mounted Division Headquarters.

Also a registration label of the A.I.F.



M.P.O. CAIRO datestamp on cover with cachet of No. 3 COMPANY EGYPT SIGNALS



EPP 34 with 4d stamp to pay registration with APO7 in manuscript

Official Mail service from 1866 to 1883

Hany Salam (ESC 580)

In the postal history of Egypt, one of the least explored topics deals with the development of the official mail service during its early period. A number of scholars such as Peter Smith, McNeille and Byam attempted to fill in the gaps in this area.

Before the purchase of the *Posta Europea* by the Egyptian Government in 1866, Egyptian official mail bore no postal markings. With the establishment of the Egyptian Mail Service, intaglio seals were introduced for use on official mail and datestamps came into use for regular mail carried through the Egyptian postal network. In some consular offices intaglio seals were used provisionally for non-official mail while awaiting the arrival of datestamps¹.



Though the research conducted by the scholars mentioned above reflects correctly the pre-marking period, their descriptions, theories and ideas about the development of the official postal service that followed are based mostly on assumptions. This statement should not be a surprise if we take into consideration the lack and scarcity of material to study.

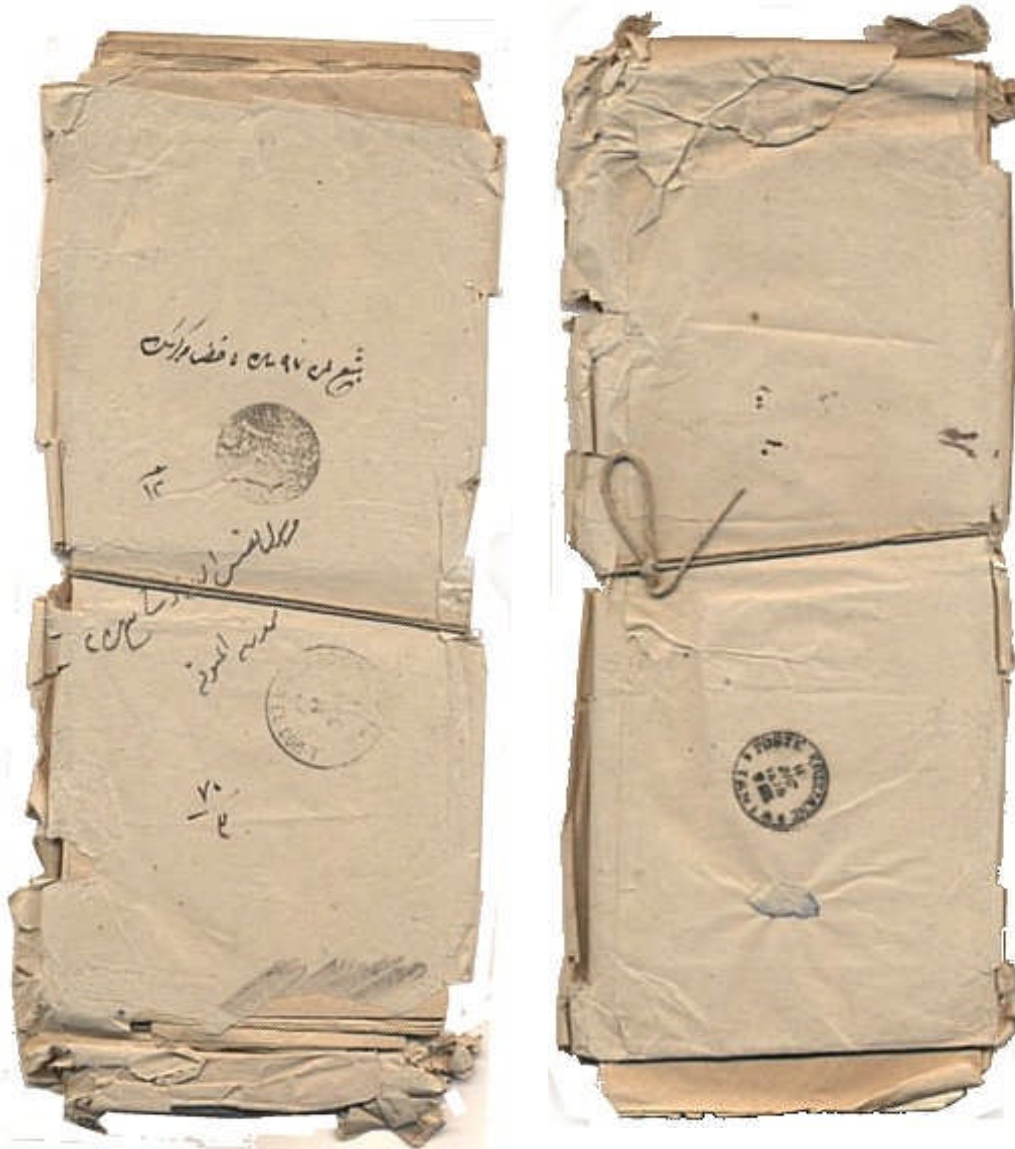


Fig 1: front and back of wrapped envelope

Recently I have come into possession of a number of previously unknown and unrecorded official letters and documents that gave me a chance to analyze and study the work of the government courier service in its early period. It allowed me to clarify some misconceptions about this topic and to draw conclusions based on factual information. I should like to share my findings in this article that describes the standard procedures for handling official mail.

Envelopes sent from governmental offices used to bear the following markings: the number of documents inside an envelope, the name of the sending department, the addressee, and the subject of the documents, together

with its archival index. Envelopes were not as we know them now, but usually comprised a sheet of paper wrapped around a stack of rolled documents and sealed by string or sealing wax (Fig. 1).

Envelopes and documents were carried from governmental offices by a *moawen* (an official administrator) to the local post office, where they were handed in at the *miri* section (the section for handling official mail in larger post offices). The correspondence was accompanied by a *hafzeh*, or a detailed list in duplicate (Fig. 2). This was considered to be both an invoice and a payment receipt and it contained handwritten information about documents inside envelopes, stating the name of each document, its weight in grams, and the postage fee.

Envelopes of the official mail were subject to the postage fee used for regular letters while the postage fee for the documents inside was the same as for non-periodical printed matter.

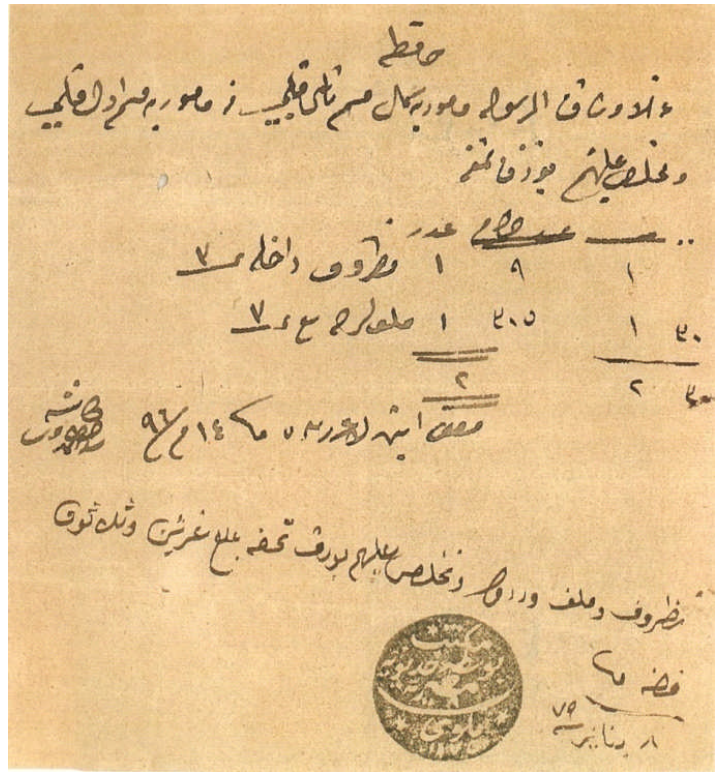


Fig. 2

After verifying the information on a *hafzeh*, the postal clerk would impress the official stamp (intaglio seal postmark reading *post office / Khedivial Egyptian official / office name = city name*²) on both lists and hand one to the *moawen*, who would pay the total postage fee either in cash or with mint postage stamps. The *moawen* would take his copy of the *hafzeh* back to the office. If there was a need to send more letters the next day or later, the *moawen* could use the same *hafzeh* to invoice more correspondence (Fig 3).

The *moawen* would take his copy of the *hafzeh* back to the office. If there was a need to send more letters the next day or later, the *moawen* could use the same *hafzeh* to invoice more correspondence (Fig 3).

In cases when official mail originated from a small town (Fig. 4), the *hafzeh* would be carried through all towns of the postal route, from one post office to another until it reaches the central post office of that route. On the way, official letters from small towns would be added to the same *hafzeh* with the postmark of each town.

The *miri* handstamp was then impressed on the front of each envelope before it was passed to the regular mail section of the post office to be struck by the postal datestamp of that post office (on the front as well). After that, the correspondence

was sent to designated destinations where it received the arrival CDS on the back of each envelope and the hour of arrival at the post office that was usually inscribed on the front.

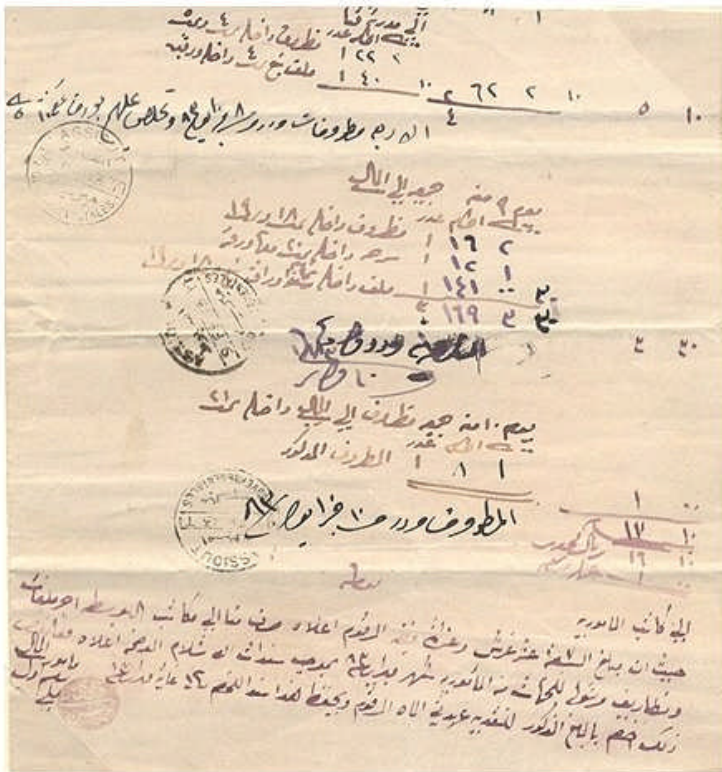


Fig. 3. This *hafzeh* shows lists of documents sent on different occasions, indicating the weight in grams of each document and the postal fee for its delivery. Each payment is confirmed by an impression of the postal datestamp.

It was common practice at that time for governmental departments to receive an *ohda*, or some amount of money on account for correspondence expenses. When an *ohda* was about to finish, the Treasury office of the department would collect all the *hafzehs* and telegram receipts and attach them together, using a metal clip (Fig. 5). The Treasurer's trustee would write on the front page a request addressed to the accounts department to approve the deduction of the amount of money detailed in the list from the *ohda*.

All official mail was registered, but exempt from the registration fee.

In cases when a post office did not have a *miri* section, the governmental authorities dealt directly with the post office, which stamped both the *hafzeh* and the envelopes with its CDS.

From 1879, official mail envelopes bore the official administration seals of the governorates from which they were sent. This fact makes us conclude that new regulations on official mail were introduced at that time. Later in 1880, intaglio seals were replaced by official datestamps.

The same procedures and regulations applied to official mail to foreign destinations, as official correspondence was carried abroad by the Egyptian steamship company (Azizieh at that time) to Egyptian consular or territorial post offices. In cases where the country of destination was outside the Egyptian postal network, the official mail would be franked.

In his study on Egyptian Official Postal Matter, Douglas McNeill refers to an undated document entitled "Free Postage of Government Correspondence" that constitutes free delivery of official mail. He wrongly assumes that the date of publication was between June 1877 and March 1884 and that the regulations described in this document were in use even as early as 1865.

The analysis and study of the newly discovered items described in this article leads us to a conclusion that official correspondence did not pass free by post until 1884, when it is clear that the document "Free Postage and Government Correspondence" with its new regulations for official mail must have been published.

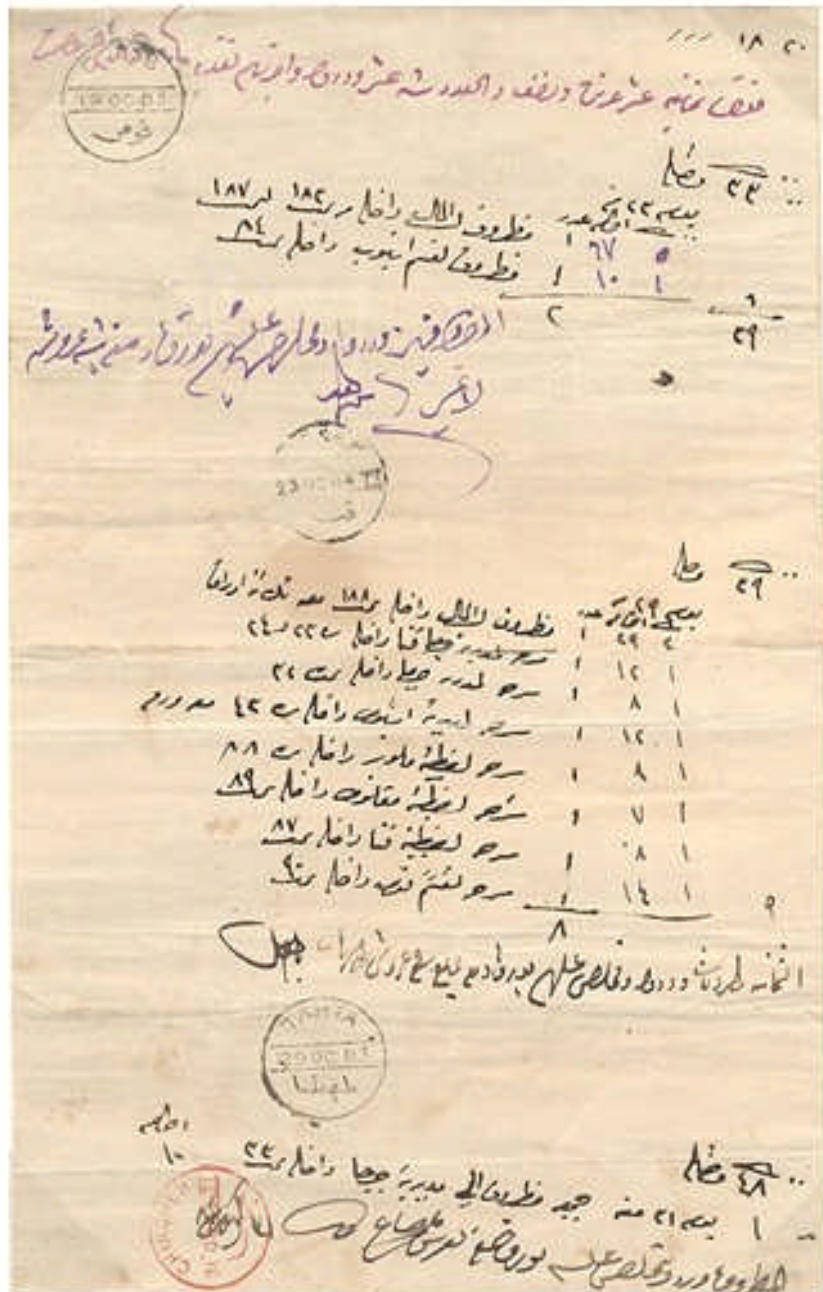


Fig. 4: This hafzeh originated from a small town and shows the postal route it took (Qus-Qena-Tahta-Girgeh). It contains handwritten lists of envelopes and postal handstamps of each town it passed through.

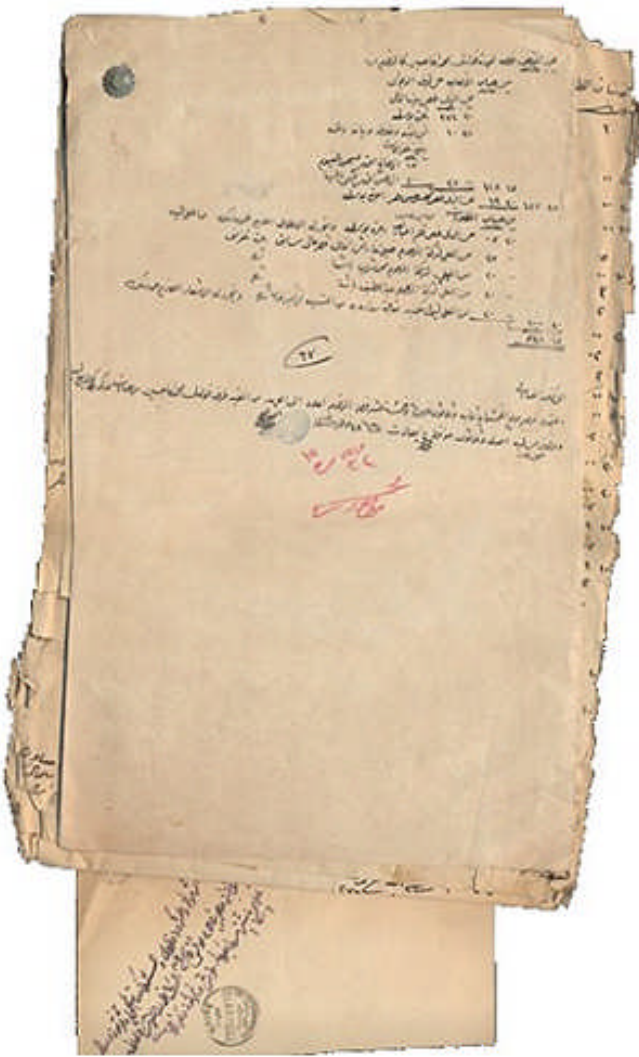


Fig. 5: Accumulated hafzehs pinned together, with a written request for the money expended to be set against the ohda amount

Fig. 6: In 1880, intaglio seals were replaced by official circular datestamps. This envelope shows both in use

The list of newly discovered official postmarks (see next page):

1 Intaglio Seals, Type A

- **Cairo oval:** *misr / maktab aarabi posta khedeveieh masreya* – two found, both on *hafzehs*; both are clearly legible but the inking is slightly faint
- **Assiout:** *maktab posta khedeveieh masreya / Assyut* – one found, on envelope; excellent condition.
- **Minya:** *maktab posta khedeveieh masriya / El Menie* - three found, all on *hafzehs*, two of them are clear and one partially unclear
- **Shibin el Kom:** *maktab posta khedeveieh masriya / Shebin El Kom* - eight found, all on envelopes; two are clear but the inking is faint; one is partially unclear; five are unclear with faint inking.
- **Suez oval:** *El Suez / maktab posta masreya miriya* – two found, both on envelopes; one envelope was sent from the governorate of Massawa, transiting Suez, struck on the front by the Suez official postmark and PO CDS on arrival in Suez, and then struck on the reverse by the same postmarks on departure to Cairo one day later; both postmarks are partially unclear. The other envelope is sent from Suez to Cairo; the postmark is very unclear.
- **Mallawi:** *maktab posta khedeveie masriya / Malawi* - one found, on *hafzeh*, excellent condition.
- **Benha:** *maktab posta khedeveie masreya/Benha* - 1 found, on envelop; extremely unclear.
- **Tanta oval:** *Tanta / Maktab.....* - one found, on envelope; only Tanta clear.

2 Type GS datestamps (the earliest found is Assiout / Gouvernementales, dated July 30, 1880)

- **Khartum** Gouvernementales datestamp - one found, on *hafzeh*



Mallawi



Suez oval



Assiout



Cairo oval



Minya



Shibin El Kom



Tanta.

Footnotes:

1. In Antonini's collection there was a cover sent from Chios in 1867, three years before the opening of the Egyptian Post Office. It is franked with a 1 pi Penasson and tied by official negative seal. This fact allows us to assume that the official mail service preceded the regular mail service and also handled private and commercial mail before post offices became functional.

2. The word "miri" was in use on intaglio seals produced before 1869. Intaglio seals produced in later years no longer read "miri" on them.

Obituary: Allan Philip Berry (ESC 535), 1937-2010

Allan Berry (ESC 535), who died on September 3 at the age of 72, was a life-long leading philatelist at international level. He joined the Guildford Philatelic Society in 1965 and was President for three terms before emigrating to New Zealand. He had been a member of the New Zealand Society of GB and editor of its journal from 1975 to 1996.

He edited a number of philatelic books including *New Zealand: A Philatelic Miscellany* (1990), *National Parks of New Zealand as Seen Through the Eyes of a Stamp Collector* (1991) and *Mails by Rail in New Zealand: The Story of Railway Travelling Post Offices of New Zealand* (2001). He was the joint compiler of *New Zealand and Dependencies: A Philatelic Bibliography* (2004), of which he was most proud.

A vet by profession, Allan was one of the few to be both a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society London and of the Royal Philatelic Society of New Zealand.

He was awarded the New Zealand Collins Award in 1985 and its Centennial Medal in 1988 and received the New Zealand Philatelic Federation's Award of Honour in 1990. He was chairman of the Philatelic Writers Society.

He made a top-class contribution to academic philately in both the United Kingdom and NZ, and formed an important collection of New Zealand, specialising in Government Life Insurance stamps. He joined the ESC shortly after attending the NZ Chapter meeting in Matarangi in 2000, and involved himself in all aspects of the hobby – judging, talks and displays - and formed an extensive philatelic library.

* NB. We are grateful to Peter Goodwin (ESC 292) for most of this information.



Book Review: Egypt Stamps Handbook Vol 1 and II, by Magdi Moukhtar Abdel-hadi

When I became the editor of the *QC*, in June 1998, in the first issue under my tutelage I had the pleasure to include a small note about the appearance of Leon Balian's *Stamps of Egypt* and extolled members to add it to their bookshelf. In the next *QC* Peter Smith wrote a review in praise: the "*writing of this catalogue was a monumental task*". Since then we have also had *The Nile Post*, another magnificent and much acclaimed work that also resides in my philatelic library. Neither of these books has been a mere ornament but frequently referred to. My Balian cover is undoubtedly, like myself, much frayed around the edges.

Do we need another stamp catalogue to replace the much loved Zeheri? I had just returned from a week enjoying the sun in the Middle East when I saw the new *Handbook* being offered on eBay. I had known for some time of the work in preparation - but then I know of many philatelic works in progress, of which few will see the light of day. Having steeled myself to resist "another", I was quickly intrigued by some of the web images and then, finding that Vera Trinder had the book in stock and being in town the next day, I could not resist the temptation to view. The two-volume work is now a new resident in my philatelic library.

Does the *Egypt Stamps Handbook* bring anything new that warrants its purchase? The answer is definitely yes. As the flyleaf states, our member Magdi Moukhtar started on the project in 1985 and found that "*since the 1972 Zeheri much new information and data has come to light*" and "*an enormous number of references and articles had to be checked and revised*". It soon becomes apparent that he draws on sources of information and material that have not been reported. He acknowledges no fewer than 12 philatelists "*for the time and loan of their rare material of many of their unpublished studies*". Many of the names are familiar and collections of Second Issue, French Post Office, essays, express mail, De La Rue etc are mentioned among others.

The *Handbook* is offered in two volumes in a conventional 24.5x17x2.5cm format which is weighty enough at 6kg with a total of 1350 pages. I don't think the division between Vol.I and II should be given any significance. The sections are quite logical: postage stamps (definitives and postage due), commemorative stamps, postal stationery, unissued stamps, essays etc. There are chapters dedicated to control numbers and Royal printings, both giving clarity to these specialised forms of collecting.

The book is profusely illustrated, completely in colour, which brings an extra and welcome dimension to the work, and it would appear that every small variety is illustrated alongside the original stamp. For those collectors who revel in varieties this *Handbook* must be the main point of reference; the rest of us are now challenged to find new varieties not illustrated by our resourceful colleague.

One could pick on many chapters that are a delight to read, but each must find his or her own particular delight. That on the Third Issue gives beautifully illustrated pages on distinguishing the 1872 and 1874-1875 printings, for instance. I particularly relished the treatment of the post-monarchy issues and in next year's meeting on the subject I was going to pose some questions. But most of the answers I have found here.

I have spotted the odd typo and small errors, but far fewer than in the average *QC*, so I should stop throwing stones on that account. In the colour department, like the *QC*, the new laser colour (type) printing can at times be notably different from the original. Dark hues and blacks can be a problem: see, under commemoratives, the 2009 PUPU and FIFA issues. But this detracts little from this magnificent work.

If I have any issues they are personal ones, one of them being the treatment of airmails, a subject I keep meaning to write about in the *QC*, and especially the separation of the miniature sheets from the set of stamps with which they are issued. On the other hand, showing pane arrangements is brilliant.

As expected from a stamp catalogue, prices are given in US dollars, which is a sensible currency to use, based "*on actual retail prices for all items*". I personally, however, treat all such pricing with a certain degree of latitude. I have not yet studied these in full, having had the book only a week, but have made a quick comparison with Balian and *The Nile Post* not by actual prices but by ratio, taking the 5pa of the First Issue as a unit price, and calculating the factor of another price for each stamps. For the 5pi First Issue Balian gives a factor of 6.9, *NP* 10 and the new *Handbook* 12. For the overprint error Balian 27.7, *NP* 32 and *HB* 40. For the Boy Scouts sheets, Balian 16.7, *NP* 24 and *HB* 48. Make of it what you will. No doubt a more detailed study of the *Handbook* pricing may throw up some surprises. One of interest to me (see *QC* September 2008) is the

2004 150th Anniversary of Telecom Egypt, for which no premium is given over other commemorative stamps of the time.

All in all, however, a fantastic work that should grace the philatelic library of any serious Egyptian collector especially as Magdi has kindly offered ESC members a discount as well as generously giving a copy to our library. Below a few snippets from the book that sadly do not do justice the great depth of detail found. **Editor**

King Fouad second portrait issue (French), 1927 - 1937



Small format type I (frame size 18 x 22.5 mm.).⁽¹⁾

106	1 m. Pale Orange.	A/26	☐	20.00
107	2 m. Pale Black.	A/26	☐	60.00
108	3 m. Bistre-Brown.	A/26	☐	20.00
109	4 m. Pale Yellow-Green.	A/26	☐	450.00
110	5 m. Deep Red-Brown (frame size 18 x 22.75 mm.).	A/25	☐	40.00

From the chapter on control numbers.

1872 printing

Figure "5" placed correctly in the four corners in the four corners.



5 Paras

1874-1875 printing

Figure "5" inverted in the four corners.



Colour Reddish Violet or dull Lilac.



10 Paras

Colour Pale or deep Slate



Colour Prussian Blue, pale Blue or Indigo.



20 Paras

Colour Slate-Blue to Grey-Blue, Azure.



Third issue printings.



500 m. Border Photogravure



500 m. Border Lithograph

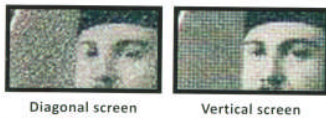


1 L.E. Border Photogravure



1 L.E. Border Lithograph

King Fouad second portrait issue

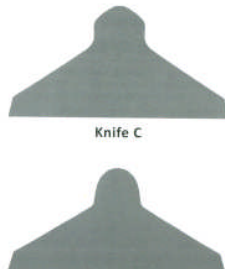


Diagonal screen

Vertical screen



Inside filigree (F1) actual size



Knife C

Knife D



760 Pane arrangement



759



Postal stationery



Pane layout.

The long awaited

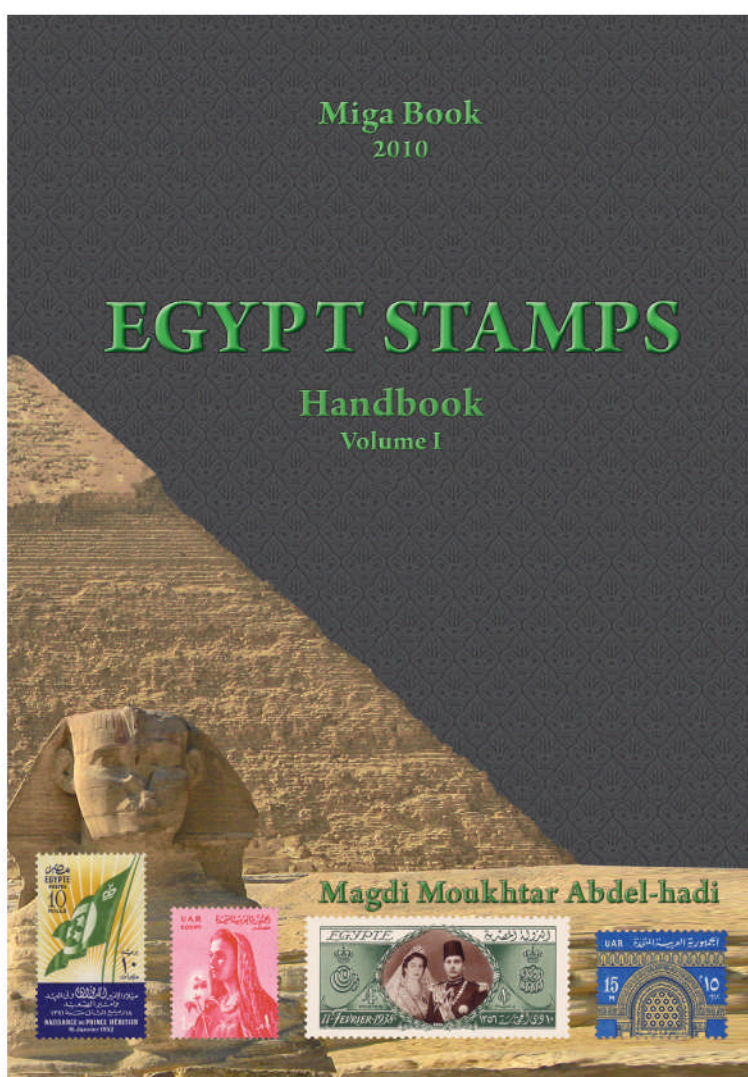
EGYPT STAMPS Handbook

By Magdi M. Abdel-hadi

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RAMLEH, ALEXANDRIE - First Update to the Book.**Ronny van Pellecom (ESC 618) and Peter Grech (ESC 266)**

Since the publication in May 2010 of the book on Ramleh's development and postal history (1863-1929), some new information has come to light and it was considered that the *QC* would be the best means of making this information available to ESC members.

In particular, we are grateful to the ESC's former President, Professor Peter Smith, who provided some wonderful illustrations from his collection (reproduced here), regarding the early period of Ramleh.

Postmark numbers relate to the numbering in the book, and some new postmark additions have been given an "a" suffix so as not to disrupt this. Our thanks are also due to Cyril Defriez and the late Anatole Ott for providing some of the new extreme dates from their collections. A copy of the book is available in the ESC library.


New Earliest dates:

Bacos (Page 110): RB14 : 8 VI 15. T.- AM Schutz (Page 119): SC3: 09 FE 85 San Stefano (Page 125): SS4 : 25 VIII 05	TPO Cancellations: ALEXANDRIE-RAMLE (Page 25): New earliest date: 21 II 87 TPO ALEXANDRIA & V.V.RAMLEH (Page 29): New earliest date: 22 II 08
--	--

New Latest dates:

Sidi Gaber (Page 76): SG3 : 17 AO 07 SG6 : 3 VIII 16 (C. Defriez)	Bulkeley (Page 92): BU4 : 13 MR 99 (C. Defriez). BU5 : 29 III 06 BU 10 : 23 VI 17 BU/RP1 : 24 VIII 20
Bacos (Page 110): RB12 : 25 VIII 12 (C. Defriez) RB15 : 27 IV 17	Schutz (Page 119): SC3: 29 MA 01 SC4 : V 05
San Stefano (Page 125): SS1 : 24 OC 03 SS2 : 29 V 05 SS4 : 21 X 08 SS7 : 6 APR 15	SAN STEFANO HOTEL CANCELLATIONS (Page 137): HSS2 : 31 VII 99
TPO Cancellations: ALEXANDRIE-RAMLE (Page 25): New latest date: 16 I 08 TII (A. Ott) – Postcard to China, arriving Tien-Tsin 3 rd April 1908.	

BACOS - RB3 (Page 108) - Addition of the illustration not previously available (Coll. P.A.S.Smith).


	POSTE KHEDEVIE EGIZIANE 10 DIC 77 T II ST. BACOS	Single Ring	
		1 st date	?? 77
		Last date	7 OTT 81

Errata : On Page 116 of the book, the Egyptian tax on the postcard is twice stated to be 3 mills. It is actually 12 mills. The blue 1 piastre stamp was mistaken for 1 mill.

Appeal for information: If you have new extreme dates for Ramleh postmarks in your collection, kindly notify the QC editor or send to ronny.van.pellecom@telenet.be with scans/photocopies please. Thank you.


New Postmarks (to be added into the book)**Ibrahimia** (Page 67):

IBR3

	IBRAHIMIA- RAMLEH R.P.	Single Ring 28mm Date band 8mm	
	22 I.29 10.10.A.M.	1 st Date	22 I 29
	EL IBRAHIMEA (EL RAML) TASKIL WA TROED*	Last date	

Sidi Gaber (Page 77):

SG7a


	SIDI GABER	Single ring 26mm Date band 7mm	
	27. IV. 17. 3.15P.M.	1 st date	27 IV 17
	SIDI GABIR	Last date	

SG11

		Single ring 30 Date band 8m	
	26 AU 28 9....	1 st date	26 AU 28
	SIDI GABER T	Last date	


Bulkeley (Page 94):

BU12

	BOLKLI	Single Ring 27mm Date band 8mm	
	-6. JL. 25. 7-8P.	1 st date	6 JL 25
	BULKELEY	Last date	

San Stefano (Page 126):

SS9a

	SAN STEFANO	Single Ring 29mm Date band 8mm	
	10. JU. 25 6-7 P.	1 st date	10 JU 25
	SAN STEFANO	Last date	

Stazione Alessandria (Page 51). Revised page below, as Prof. Smith kindly supplied copy of the only currently known cover with ST. ALESSANDRIA postmark and an illustration of AL1 for 19 OTT 1871.

ST. ALESSANDRIA CANCELLATIONS

AL1.

	POSTE KHEDEVIE EGIZIANE 19 OTT 1871 T III	Single ring 24mm	
		1 st Date	7 OTT 1871
		Last date	19 OTT 1871

AL2

	POSTE KHEDEVIE EGIZIANE 19 OTT 77 T III	Single ring	
		1 st Date	16 MAY 77
		Last date	.



AL1




Coll. PAS Smith




Addition of the Illustrations of Cancellations, not previously available.

MUSTAFA - MS1 (Page 82)

	POSTE KHEDEVIE EGIZIANE 19 OTT 1872 T III ST. MUSTAFA	Single Ring	
		1 st date	15 AUG 1872
		Last date	18 JUL 1874

Collection P.A.S. Smith. Only copy currently known.

FLEMING - FL1 (Page 103)

	POSTE KHEDEVIE EGIZIANE 10 DIC 77 T II ST. FLEMING	Single Ring	
		1 st date	'75
		Last date	10 DEC 77

Collection P.A.S. Smith

Collection P.A.S. Smith



A rare cover for two reasons: first the use of the 20 para rate, then the rarity of the ST. BACOS postmark on cover. This item may never have travelled, but was posted at Bacos to be picked-up there probably by a servant sent from Seffer to collect the daily mail for Count Zizinia (founder of the eponymous theatre in Alexandria). The cover is back-stamped with the identical St. Bacos postmark, dated 7 October 81.

Mosaic Essay: Rainbow Production Discovery

Mike Murphy (EC 240)

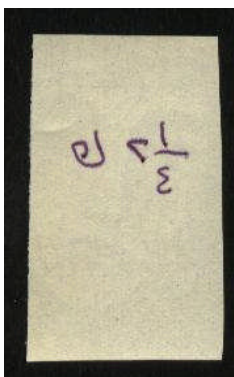
On page 71 of *The Nile Post*, a somewhat mournful essay in the shape of a Greco-Roman mosaic of the face of a young man, said to have been produced by the Postal Authority Press some time in the 1970s, is listed as E548 with the following description: “mosaic showing a face in blue with Arabic writing reversed, ‘experiment without value’.” It is further detailed as “printed by photogravure on gummed, unwatermarked paper and perforated 11 x 11 ½.” This essay has long been known to me, but, as described, only in two shades of blue, and always perforated.



Now, however, we have more, in such profusion that they must cast doubt on *The Nile Post* valuation of \$50 per stamp! Vahe Varjabedian (ESC 390) has recently placed for auction on eBay an astonishing series of no fewer than 13 different shades. Ranging from pale yellow through orange, reds, blues and greens to indigo, they are all imperforate, on gummed paper and unwatermarked, and clearly fairly crudely cut from their experiment sheets.



Vahe tells me that there are only three sets known, but clearly they must have come from much larger sheets, probably of 50 stamps (10x5).



What is even more intriguing is that each essay has a handwritten code in Arabic on the reverse, most often taking the form of one number above another, but also accompanied by single letters and sometimes a little more. Their meaning is not clear, but here are the codes as related to the position of the essays above: top (the long-known blue, *illustrated, left*) 2 ¼ K; top row, left to right, 1025 ½ K, 2 ¼ K, 1 ½ K, 0.5 K 5.5 Th D, 1 ¾ K, 1 K; bottom row, left to right, ¾ K, 2 ¼ K, 2K 11.5 D, 2K 4.5 D, ¾ K 6.5 D, ½ K. If any member can clarify what these might mean, or if other stamps are known, he or she will have the eternal gratitude of the Circle!

The remaining reverses, in the order shown above, are on the next page:



Stamps and Rates: A puzzle.

Edmund Hall (239)

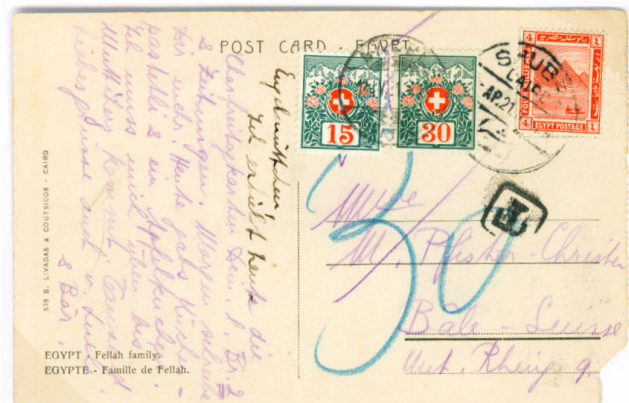
When I gave the talk at the January 2008 meeting on Twentieth Century Postal Rates, I showed three postcards that posed a problem for me. Having spent some time juggling with this *QC* to make up the usual number of pages - it came out either two pages over or two pages under - I thought I had cracked it, only to discover that I was still 2/3 of a page short.

Desperate to finish, I thought that this puzzle would fill the slot. What I have is three postcards sent to the same address in Switzerland within March-April 1921 with different rates and different postage dues. In my simplistic thinking I thought here is a case of simultaneous equations. Three equations with two unknowns, in this case *R* the correct postage rate and *C* the exchange rate of francs to millièmes. You need only two equations, but can use the third to verify the results; or take any two from the three and one should derive the same results.



But I had found that this was not the case, and in my display I ventured the reason why. As far as I recollect, there were no comments forthcoming from the meeting.

The equation I came up with are $R - 4 = 45C$, $R - 5 = 30C$, $R - 6 = 25C$. Dates: ?.AP.21, 12.MA.21 and 13.MA.21



Solving for 2 & 3 gives 1mil. = 5 (centimes or francs), 2.5c = 1 millième (assuming double the due charge). Solving for 1 & 2 gives 15 francs = 1 mil. So what is going on? I can't help thinking that I'm missing some fundamental point, whether mathematical or philatelic. Please put me right.

Index of Towns: Plans for a Database

André Navari (ESC 534)

[The following is a brief explanation of the reasoning behind André's recent work on building a database to help postal history researchers to identify Egyptian place-names and to aid their work on tracking the routes the mails followed. It is hoped to be able to make the database available to all members on the website in the near future. – Editor]

I have been collecting and trying to research the postal history of Egypt ever since the year 2000, when I discovered the book *Egypt: Stamps and Postal History* by Peter A.S. Smith. I joined the Circle the same year and decided to specialise my collection in the areas of the postal history of 1888-1914, the third and fourth periods of the Fourth Issue.

Even with Peter Smith's book and almost all issues of the *QC* since 1987 to hand, I quickly found a certain number of difficulties in identifying and placing a great many of the smaller Egyptian post offices. I am not familiar with Egyptian geography or with the Arabic language and the different way in which these town names might be written in European text. Moreover, I know that, depending on the school of translation (British, German, French, and so on) and the period in question, the same Arabic name can have different occidental transcriptions. And so when, in an ESC auction in 2004, I obtained a photocopy of a bilingual book entitled *List of Names of Mudirias, Principal Towns and Villages Forming a Fiscal Unit* (hereafter referred to as *List of Names*), published in 1920 by the Ministry of Finance, I thought that a large part of my searches would be instantly resolved with this most useful tool. For the first time I had immediately to hand a list of the names of the country's towns and villages, from a source of authority.

But it was not enough. Searching for a town name in the *List of Names*, where they are placed first in geographic area, and then listed alphabetically, is not easy. And so I reached the conclusion that what was required was a computer tool to facilitate usage of the book. In 2005, over many weeks, I scanned all pages of the book and fed them through the computer's Optical Characters Recognition software to change the scanned pages into text that could be manipulated. The next step was to put all the data into an Excel spread sheet, for more easy usage.

Organisation of the database

I wished to make the organisation of this database the easiest and most user-friendly possible. This is why my first choice was Excel: in this form it can easily be read (and modified) with the freeware Open Office Writer. The data is organised in six columns as follows:

Column A:	The name of the town or village
Column B:	The page on which one can find the name of town or village
Column C:	The number of the town in its <i>Markaz</i> or <i>Mamuriyet</i> (local administrative sub-unit, or county)
Column D:	The name of the <i>Markaz</i> or the <i>Mamuriyet</i> , preceded by a sequential number
Column E:	The name of the <i>Mudiriyet</i> (province) where the <i>Markaz</i> or <i>Mamuriyet</i> is situated, preceded by a sequential number
Column F:	The name of what I have called a "region", Upper Egypt or Lower Egypt.

In total this database contains details of 3,432 towns and villages, shared among 86 *Markaz* or *Mamuriyet*, 14 *Mudiriyet* and two regions.

I have provided alongside the database a copy of the book's original text in files in pdf format (in effect, illustrations of the original pages, to be viewed in Acrobat Reader or equivalent). And so any one provided with the data following the name of a town can find the page of original text (here the name is also shown in Arabic) in one of 14 files (one for each *Mudiriyet*). The 15th file contains "Introductory Notes – Pages I-XXII", where, among other useful information, there are notes about the translation into English.

Drawbacks

During the course of building this database I have encountered some difficulties and problems, and was forced to make hard decisions in order to resolve them.

1. After the OCR step I quickly realised that optical recognition of original material of differing quality (for instance, a scan of a photocopy of an old document) occasionally gives random results.

- Full stops, and spaces between letters or words, were not always recognised in the same way in the text produced. I have had to correct them all (I hope) manually.
- Some letters were incorrectly translated, for example “m” can give appear as “rn” or vice-versa, and capital “B” may appear as “13”. Again I have corrected (I hope) all bad spelling.
- As far as accents were concerned, there was no solution but to cancel all of them. In various forms of software (Word, Excel, etc) there are several ways to represent even a simple ' depending on the language used. I am not competent to choose the most suitable; better to do without. So when making a search in database please remember to omit the accents: For example *'Alquâm* is written Alqum.
- If any errors persist I shall be happy to hear about them.

2. **An important point.** In my example of the book A PAGE IS MISSING!! This is page 99, which contains the listing for the final village of 43 – Markaz Benha (N° 37), and what follows until the beginning of 44 – Markaz Tuxh (Nos 1-23). Even though assistance was sought through a query published in the *QC* in 2006 and on the website (Query 20) no-one has replied with the gift of this page. So I have no alternative but to publish the listing without these entries. If somebody can find it and send it to me via the Secretary or the Editor, I shall be very happy to update the database.

3. In the Introductory Notes on Pages I-XXII, it is reported that:

Cairo; Alexandria; Port Said and Ismailia (both included in the Suez Canal Governorate); Suez; and Damietta are Governorates. And that Zagazig and Damanhur are towns “not constituting Fiscal Units for purposes of land tax”. As a result, these towns/cities cannot be included in the database.

But in fact the book deals with the cities rather differently:

- Cairo, Port Said, Ismailia, Suez, Damietta and Zagazig (even under 39 – Markaz Zagazig (El Zaqaziq) are not reported.
- Alexandria is reported in Page 009 as No 4 for 07 – Mamuriyet Ushur Alexandria (Iskindiriya), under 01 – Mudiriyet El Beheira situated in A – Lower Egypt.
- Damanhur is more doubtful. It is not where it might be expected, under 02 – Mamuriyet Bandar Damanhur. Nor is it under 03 – Markaz Damanhur. But there is a Damanhur under 71 - MARKAZ Manfalut in 11 – Mudiriyet Asyut (page 151). I suspect that there may have been several places named Damanhur.
- Port Tauficq (Tewfik) and Heliopolis are not listed. There are probably other towns/cities not reported. If they had a post-office between 1888 and 1914, I should be happy to have their names.

4. In many pages of my example there are handwritten additions correcting the original text or adding some place-names. I have ignored them. I cannot judge how pertinent the additions might be, and have no means of verifying them. And sometime it is difficult for me to decipher the writing.

Apart from these four points above, I think this is an extremely useful and practical tool.

And for the future?

For the future I think there are some improvements that can be made.

- For example, the different spellings of a city name should be clarified for all to understand. If Alexandria / Alessandria / Alexandrien for Alexandria are well known to collectors, I am not so sure it is the case for all place-names. Who can tell that “Koubri el Koubba”, for example, is more usually known as “Qubba Bridge”? Or that Vieux Caire, Old Cairo and Masr el Qadima are all the same place?
- In the *List of Names* some villages are associated in the same entry. For example “Marsafa and Kafr Ahmad Hashish” is described as a single entity, and so is “El Nigili and Aulad el Sheikh”. If I assume that

they are two different villages merged into the same fiscal unit, it might be interesting to have two different entries.

- I think it would also be interesting to add other post-office names, even if they are not fiscal units. Of course that would change the object of this database. For example "Saida Zeinab" or "Saiyida Zenab" (I assume it is the same place with two different spellings) is not in this list.

- I have bought from the Circle the CD-Roms containing information published at end of the 19th century and beginning of 20th in the official Postal Bulletins. For each post office I think it would be both interesting and useful to be able to indicate the date of opening and eventual closing.

- I think also that with the help of the indexes of each bulletin it might be possible to make a link to the references in these bulletins.

- Finally, and it's not for tomorrow ... I think it would be wonderful to be able to extend this Excel sheet to an accessible database that can contain pictures.

Large Gold for Lucien!

Very many congratulations to our Egyptian colleagues, and especially to **Lucien Toutounji** (ESC 264), who, after winning Gold with his exhibit at London 2010, went one better at the Portugal 2010 exhibition with his very first Large Gold for *Egypt – Early Air Mails 1910-1936*. Scoring 95 points in the competition held in Lisbon from October 1-10, he was a single point away from best in class.

There was Gold for **Mahmoud Ramadan** (ESC 358), who scored an excellent 90 with his *Egypt: Celebrating the Kingdom 1922* (ie, Crown overprints), and 13 proved lucky for **Hisham Bassyouny** (ESC 391), who won his first Large Vermeil (86 points) with his *British Forces in Egypt Issues 1932-1939* – at his thirteenth attempt!

Samir Nabih Attiah (ESC 505) won Vermeil (83 points) when he moved up from five frames to eight with his *Postal Markings of Egyptian Stations 1875-1925* (that is, TPOs). And perhaps most significant of all, there was a Large Vermeil (87 points) for **Magdi Moukhtar Abdel-Hadi** (ESC 445), author and publisher of the stunning all-colour new catalogue, the two-volume *Egypt Stamps Handbook*.

Mike Murphy (ESC 240) and **Ibrahim Shoukry** (ESC 423) won Large Vermeil (87 points) for their book *Egypt: The Rural Post*, which was made at the Johannesburg International Exhibition last month.

The Circle congratulates them all, for bringing glory not only on Egypt but on Egypt collecting too!

Membership changes

New Members:

ESC 655 Paul A Quinn, 4 Gilthwaites Crescent, Denby Dale, Huddersfield, HD8 8SW
(Stamps of Egypt, Ancient Egypt thematics)

ESC 656 Elaine Evans, 1400 Kenesaw Avenue, 22G, Knoxville, Tennessee 37919, USA
(1867-1930, cancels, Ancient Egypt art, political/literary figures, history of Egyptian post)

ESC 657 Amro E Kandeel, 9 Street 277, New Maadi, Cairo 11435, Egypt
(Mint stamps 1879-1965, royal imperfs, misperfs, X-back, commem covers)

ESC 658 Dr Robert Pinet, 400 Slater, #1011, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1R 7S7
(Egypt Hotels, Canada postal history, Refugee Camp mail, Botswana)

ESC 659 David Worrollo, 23 Darlington House, Lovelace Gardens, Surbiton, Surrey
(Pre-1900 stamps: Egypt, France and Colonies, Germany, Italy, Scandinavia)

Resigned: ESC 298 Axel Zuehlke

ESC 644 Patrick Moore

Our Website

It is now over five years since we launched our website and five years of deafening silence have followed. True, it has had some success in that it has played well the part of the recruiting sergeant and has enjoyed the peak number of visitors at auction time.

Beyond that, does it serve any purpose? There are news updates which I know one or two members dip into regularly. The queries section is a history of those in the *QC* - and we have had answers from non-members. Personally I think it worthwhile to review it now and again: one may have come across an answer.



My main concern here, though, is the members' section. On several occasions members have been asked: have you visited ... once more the deafening silence. As for our overseas members, I can count the number of comments on the fingers of one hand, both positive and negative. Recently a new member sent me some illustrations better than those I had used on the site: thank you, (one) new member.

In the members' section I have tried to bring together all information on a topic, that is, articles from *QC*, *L'OP*, *Egyptian Topics*, and many others unavailable to members, with the relevant chapters or pages of Peter Smith's book, plus updates. For instance, under the concession period the initial page has the following:

<p>Seals and Stamps: Postal Seal, Letter Seal (Series 1 and 2) Letter Stamp (Series 3, 4, 5 and 7) Silver Jubilee (Series 6) Christmas Seals Christmas Provisional Army Post Stamps 1936-1941</p>	<p>Articles: <i>Stamp Collecting</i> August 1935 <i>Stamp Collecting</i> February 1936 <i>The Record of Philately</i> 1935 <i>Philatelic Magazine</i> May 1936 <i>Stamp Collecting</i> December 1940 <i>Philatelist</i> Oct./Dec. 1943 - Byam's reply <i>QC</i> 195 December 2000 <i>QC</i> 200 March 2001</p>
<p>Egypt: Stamps & Postal History: XXXVI p709/720</p>	<p>Collections: The John Davies collection 1, Seals The John Davies collection 2, Army Stamps The Edmund Hall collection, Use and Abuse</p>

One area not originally considered was inclusion of members' collections. I feel that this makes the section. But so far only four members have offered us the joy of seeing their material. In the last year four major collectors have died and three of their collections are just now being dispersed at auction. Lost to us for ever.

It may have gone unnoticed that the members' section has recently been dormant as I have far too many things to absorb my time. So the question is: does this section have any purpose, is it time to pull the plug on it? I appreciate that the current sections may not be those of direct interest to you, but the intention is (was) to cover the whole gamut of Egyptian philately. To continue will demand a great deal of my time over the next few years, as will editing the *QC*. So if it's not of interest I can rule it out of my future plans when by next summer current projects will have finished.

I cannot see how a central depository of accumulated knowledge can fail to be of interest to members. Especially to new members who may be seeking that initial spark to send them down that fateful path of discovery of some special interest.

With your subscriptions and Macarthur Award voting form this year, please take the trouble to add your comment on this matter; better still, how can you help? Let me make clear that you **do not**, I repeat **do not**, need to know anything about how pages appear on the web: I do that. Nor really do you need to know about computers: it helps, but not necessarily. Let's have your collections, preferably scanned, or simply go down to the photocopy shop and send me good colour photocopies in an envelope. That's all that is needed to support the Circle and give fellow members a glimpse into your collecting interests.

If your collection is on the site you will still have the pleasure of it after it is sent to auction; and perhaps when it goes to auction members who have seen some of your delicious pieces will be even keener to bid. **Editor**

The Story Behind the Stamp: Balian 1521, July 23, 1999



Samira Moussa was a most remarkable woman on many counts. She was born on March 3, 1917, in the village of Sinbu al-Kubra in the governorate of Al-Gharbiya. Samira grew up with local villagers meeting at her family home to discuss the political situation, and repeatedly heard them calling out pro-independence slogans.

Egypt witnessed a movement that called for freedom of education for women, on all levels. Activists like Safiyah Zaghloul, Hoda Shaarawi and Nabawiyah Moussa were the vanguards of this movement, which indirectly supported Samira in her pursuit of a higher education. Encouraged by family and friends, her father brushed aside prevailing traditions that did not favour women's education, and supported his daughter throughout her scholarly journey.

Throughout her school years, Samira excelled and was awarded accolades of excellence. The year 1933 witnessed one of her outstanding accomplishments: in grade 10 she rewrote the algebra curriculum textbook, had it printed at her father's expense and distributed it free of charge among her classmates.

Samira fulfilled her lifetime dream when she enrolled at the Faculty of Science at Cairo University, obtaining a masters degree and coming first in her class. She was later appointed a lecturer in the Faculty. Samira, who wrote her thesis on gas thermal convection, was sent by the faculty to Britain to further her studies in nuclear radiation; and later obtained her PhD in radiology and the effect of X-ray radiation on various materials. Having completed her thesis within two years, she spent a third doing extensive research.

Samira worked towards the establishment of the Atomic Energy Commission in Egypt. She also organised the Atomic Energy for Peace conference, which was hosted by the Faculty of Science and attended by a large number of international scientists. She hoped that atomic energy would be harnessed for the good of man, especially in the field of medical treatment, and said: "My wish is that through the use of atomic energy, cancer treatment would be within the reach of the masses just as aspirin is." She volunteered to help treat cancer patients at various Qasr Al-Aini hospitals and earned the soubriquet "the Marie Curie of the East".

Samira was a member of a variety of specialised science committees such as the Committee for Energy and Guarding Against the Threats of Atomic Bombs, which was founded by the Ministry of Health in Egypt.

She had an ear for music; she played the lute and was good at reading music. She was also good at photography, a skill she honed by earmarking a section of her house for developing films and printing photos. Samira was fond of knitting, especially tricot, and designed and made her own clothes.

She was also a member of the Student Society for Public Education, which aimed at eradicating illiteracy in rural Egypt, and joined the Social Renaissance Society, which raised funds for assisting poor families and homeless children.

Samira was influenced by the contribution of early Muslim scholars; she wrote an article about Muhammad Al-Khawarizmi and his major role in laying the foundation for algebra. She wrote several other articles including a simplified article on nuclear energy, which addressed the structure of the atom, nuclear fission and its destructive power, and radiation and its biological effects.

In an article entitled *Our Responsibility Towards Science*, Samira urged governments to give science first priority, improve various industries, increase production, and facilitate the means of communication. She also called for wider co-operation in the field of science and technology.

Samira travelled to Great Britain and then to the United States, where she tragically died in a road accident on August 15, 1952.

