

The
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of
THE
EGYPT



STUDY CIRCLE

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

EGYPT.

De La Rue Ipi. ultramarine used on Advice of Receipt form #39, cancelled at Alexandria (June 8, 1886) with 'Tripoli/Syrie/Turquie' confirmation of arrival datestamp below (June 11, 1886). Reverse showing further Alexandria datestamp of distribution to sender (June 17, 1886). Rare.

(نمبر ٣٩ ٨٩)
ADMINISTRATION DES POSTES D'ÉGYPTE
مصلحة البوستة المصرية

AVIS DE RÉCEPTION علم التسليم

L'Expéditeur de l'objet suivant (1) *Lettre recommandée*
موسل لارسالية الاتي بيانها وهي (١)

portant le N^o *24489* et l'adresse de M. *Ch. Saporio*
à Tripoli
بوسم جناب روضو عليها نمرة

désire savoir s'il a été reçu. يوجب الاستعلام عما اذا كانت تسلمت ام كيف

L'Employé des Postes.
مستخدم البوستة
J. Saporio

L'envoi ci-dessus désigné m'a été remis contre reçu le *11 Juin 86*
لارسالية الوصحة اعلاه تسلمت بالاىصال اللازم بتاريخ
1886 سنة ١٨٨٠

Signature,
لاعضا
صبرود
صبرود

(1) Indiquer la nature de l'envoi, si c'est un objet recommandé, une lettre de valeur déclarée, ou un colis postal avec ou sans valeur déclarée.
Cet avis doit être renvoyé, sous recommandation d'office, au bureau d'origine, muni de la signature du destinataire; si ce dernier ne consent pas à le signer son refus et la remise de l'envoi doivent être attestés par l'employé du bureau de destination, lequel utilise à cet effet la formule ci-dessus en la modifiant. Le bureau d'origine se charge, ensuite, de le faire tenir à l'expéditeur, comme objet recommandé.
Au moment de l'expédition on doit attacher cette formule à l'envoi avec une épingle, excepté pour les colis postaux, pour lesquels elle doit être attachée au bulletin d'expédition.

(١) يتوضه نوع الارسالية اذا كانت مسجلة او خطاب ذا قيمة مقررة او طرد بوستة مؤمن او غير مؤمن عليه
يصبر رد هذا العلم مسجلا رسميا للمكتب المرسل الاصلى بعد امضائه من المرسل اليه فان لم يقبل امضاه يتوضه من مستخدم المكتب المرسل اليه عن ذلك وعن تسليم الارسالية على هذا المطبوع بعد اجرا تعديله به ثم على المكتب المرسل الاصلى ان يسلم هذا مسجلا للمرسل منه
يحال تصدير الارسالية يرفق بها هذا المطبوع مشموكا بدبوس انما تستثنى من ذلك طرود البوستة اذ يقتضي ارفاق المطبوع المذكور بحافظة ارسال

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Meetings dates for 2014

We regret that for operational reasons we have had to dispense with the January meeting in 2014. Two meetings will be held at 2pm in the Allenby Room at the **Victory Services Club**, Seymour Street, Marble Arch, London. The February and September meetings are at 2.30pm at **Stampex** (Feb 19-22 and Sept 17-20). The July meeting is from 1-5pm at the **Royal Philatelic Society**, 41 Devonshire Place, London.

| | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| May 10, 2pm | Services Club | AGM, Ten sheets and mini room auction | All members |
| | | | |
| July 19, 1pm | Royal Phil Soc | Egypt First Issue | Greg Todd |
| | | | |
| Sept 20, 2.30pm | Stampex | (1933 Railway Congress | Armen Varjabedian |
| | Stampex Sept 17-20 | (Simon Arzt | Richard Wheatley |
| | | | |
| Nov 1, 2pm | Services Club | Cassette Envelopes | Peter Andrews |

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Website: egyptstudycircle.org.uk

Report of the Meeting, February 22, Live Auction 2014

PRESENT: Peter Andrews (Chairman), John Davis (Deputy Chairman/Librarian), Mike Murphy (Secretary), Brian Sedgley (Treasurer), Edmund Hall (Editor/Webmaster), Sami Sadek (Committee), Jon Aitchison, Mike Bramwell, John Clarke, Cyril Defriez, Adel Eskander (France), Pauline Gittoes, Peter Grech, Paul Green, Alan Jeyes, Costas Kelemenis (Greece), Martin Lovegrove, Sherif Samra (Egypt), Ronny Van Pellecom (Belgium), Armen Varjabedian (Egypt), Vahe Varjabedian (Egypt), David Worrollo.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: John Sears (President), Angela Child, Mostafa El-Dars, Atef Sarian, Tony Schmidt.

The Chairman welcomed an encouragingly large turnout of 22 members to our annual Live Auction meeting at Stampex, including no fewer than six from overseas, most of them old friends but also including a new member, Adel Eskander from France, attending his first meeting. As it was also our first meeting of 2014, the Chairman hoped it was not too late to wish all members and happy and successful New Year!



Mike Murphy and Edmund Hall keeping a sharp lookout for bidders

Given that Stampex gives us only two hours these days, admin was rushed through, but not without welcoming two more new members in Khalid Omaira of the Emirates and Yasser Elshamy of Alexandria: we hope both will enjoy their membership and find it useful. There was also notice of a new and apparently fascinating book, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict: No Service, Returned and Captured Mail* by Daryl Kibble of Australia. Printed to order, this will cost approx £75 from www.vividpublishing.com.au/darylkibble. We hope to have a review in a future issue.

The Secretary looked forward to a good attendance at our next meeting, the AGM on May 10, when we shall have much to discuss in terms of subscription and *QC* publishing in light of recent massive increases in UK postal rates. Jon Aitchison (ESC 661) reminded us that the meeting will include a mini-auction for which members are asked to bring up to five items for sale during the course of the meeting. Further details soon.

Auctioneer Edmund Hall raced through the sale details – helped to a certain degree by members’ apparent reluctance to bid on “stamps” as such; the postal history sold immeasurably better – and we dealt very quickly indeed with the sale of 119 of 205 lots. As ever, they were closely shared between email/postal



Circle members keeping a sharp lookout for bargains

bidders (65 lots sold for £1112.50), and room sales (54 lots, £1156.50). Commissions, together with the sale of material kindly donated for Circle funds by André Navari (ESC 534) and a recently resigned member, Hilary Shaw (ESC 594), meant a total of over £500 for the Circle. The Prices Realised list is on the website.

The Statue of Ferdinand de Lesseps

The author of this article does not wish it to appear in an electronic form

If paper copies of this QC are still available they may be purchased from the librarian.

See <http://www.associationlesseps.org/>

<http://britains-smallwars.com/Yahia2/DeLeSepp.htm>

<http://www.nndb.com/people/720/000028636/>

<http://histclo.com/bio/a/co-frandel.html>



The only postage stamp ever issued in his honour was by Panama, on the 150th anniversary of Ferdinand's birth.

De Lesseps was chosen president of the French company that worked on the Panama Canal from 1881-88.

The decision to build a sea-level canal like the one in Panama proved a disaster. Thousands died and the money eventually gave out.

The project was eventually abandoned for political and financial reasons. A huge scandal resulted. The financial failure was one of the largest in French history. The financial crisis resulted in an investigation of the project. De Lesseps and his son Charles (1849-1923) were tried for misappropriation of funds. They were fined and sentenced to prison, but the sentences were never executed.

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From 17 November 1899 to 23 December 1956, a monumental statue of Ferdinand de Lesseps by Emmanuel Frémiet stood at the entrance of the Suez Canal.

In 1956, as the British and French invasion force withdrew from Egypt, angry citizens of Port Said set explosive charges around the de Lesseps statue and dragged it from its pedestal. The unoccupied plinth, or pedestal still stands.



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The statue was restored by the Paris-based Association des Amis du Canal de Suez, and is now located in a shipyard in Port Fouad.

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Two Previously Unseen Cachets of Mena House Hotel?

John Davis (ESC 213)

“I don’t do eBay” – which is perhaps why I have missed a number of hotel-based items over the last year or so. However, a friend of mine, also called John, collects early hotel mail worldwide, and that now includes an extensive selection of Egyptian hotel post. A few weeks ago he showed me the cover illustrated as Fig. 1, with, to me at least, a never-before-seen cachet of Mena House Hotel.



Fig. 1. Mena House Concierge 20 JAN 1938 cachet in the form of a double oblong with rounded corners struck in cerise

As may be seen from the Illustration, it is a hotel stationery cover franked with the Farouk-Narriman wedding stamp, cancelled PYRAMIDS on 20 JA 38, and addressed to Switzerland. But the cachet MENA HOUSE CONCIERGE with the same date is what drew my attention. Has anyone seen another?

Almost at the same time, I came across another Mena House cachet myself, here illustrated as Fig. 2, and this one is rather earlier, and nothing like as clear.

Fig 2. Mena House Pyramids cachet in double purple triangle



Dating from December 1, 1921, from the manuscript, the cachet is a double triangle without date but reading MENA HOUSE PYRAMIDS, and the cancellation of the two five-millèmes Harrisons depicting the Great Sphinx (or are they late use DLR?) is also unclear. But, once again, has anyone seen another?

New Discoveries of M.P.O. El Daba on Cover

Richard S. Wilson (ESC 230)

M.P.O. El Daba is one of the scarcer of the Named Military Post Office datestamps, but it is now somewhat less so with the recent discovery of the fourth and fifth examples (*Figs. 1 and 2*), of which four are on cover and one is on a piece. The cover postmarked 6 June 1939 and backstamped Alexandria 7 June 1939 appeared on eBay last autumn. I thought that I would have to bid an arm and a leg to obtain it but fortunately I was the only bidder and am pleased to add it to my collection at a very reasonable price. The other newly discovered El Daba cover, postmarked 31 August 1939, showed up in Argyll Etkin's Auction number 33, February 2014, and was immediately snapped up by our Librarian, John Davis (ESC 213). This is the second cover known with that date.

John Firebrace and Charles Minett in the *QC*, Vol. 5, Nos. 7 & 8, whole series 55 & 56 (1960), *Circular Datestamps of the Military Post Offices during the Postal Concession Period*, knew of two examples. One was a pair of the ten millièmes large Army Post on piece dated 5 August 1939 owned by Firebrace and the other a cover postmarked 31 August 1939 owned by the late John Revell. The latter was displayed at the London International Stamp Exhibition in 2010. I have heard of another cover postmarked 2 April 1939 but have not seen it. The M.P.O. El Daba datestamp has a diameter of 26 mm with the date bars 9 mm apart and the M.P.O. 15 mm wide. Shortly after the war started M.P.O. Daba was replaced with F.P.O. E.606.

El Daba, a small village on the Mediterranean some 180 kilometers west of Alexandria, was home to one of the Royal Air Force's Desert Landing Grounds set up after the 1938 Munich Crisis. On the airbase were an ammunition depot, a bomb dump, and a petroleum storage facility. A railroad running from Alexandria to Sidi Barrani passed near by. RAF and military exercises were held in the area in March 1939 and at the beginning of August the base became operational. During the North Africa Campaign the United States Army Air Corps and the German Luftwaffe also used the base. Later in the war a camp for German prisoners of war was located there.



Fig. 1.



Fig. 2

Membership changes

New Members:

- ESC 681** Amr Salah Laithy, PO Box 94, Zamalek 11211, Cairo, Egypt
(Egypt stamps)
- ESC 682** Darrel Flint, 211/9 Morton Avenue, Carnegie, Victoria 3163, Australia
(Egypt postal history and postmarks, Australian postal history)
- ESC 683** Adel Eskander, 11 Allée de la Limite, 93340 Le Raincy, France
(Egypt stamps, essays, postmarks, Gaza, Suez Canal, British Forces)
- ESC 684** Khalid Omaira, PO Box 28622, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
(Aiming to build a philatelic library of Egypt stamps; postal history, etc)
- ESC 685** Yasser Elshamy, 27 Riad Pacha Street, Appt 7, Bacos, Alexandria, Egypt
(Egypt aero-philately, postal history pre-1900, blocks of four stamps)

Change of Address:

- ESC 272** Stephen Bunce, Grenville House, Main Road, Farthinghoe, Northants NN13 5PA
- ESC 654** Gerald Barron, PO Box 1285, Londonderry, NH 03053-1285, United States

Change of Email Address:

Please note that our member Alaa Massoud (ESC 561), President of the Philatelic Society of Alexandria, has two new alternative email addresses: alaaymi@yahoo.com; and amassoud07@gmail.com

Resigned:

- ESC 475** Jim Bourne **ESC 594** Hilary Shaw

Congratulations to: ESC 264 Lucien Toutounji for his gold medal for a single frame on the UPU Tenth Congress Cairo 1934 stamps exhibited at a Northern Virginia regional stamp show.

Egypt: The 1879 Provisional Surcharge with Guide Marks

Richard Wheatley (ESC 168)

Following on from Peter Smith's article in the December 2013 issue of the *QC* (No 247), it would seem that I am one of the fortunate few who have one of the rare 5 PARA surcharge on 2½ piastre stamp with guide marks in all four corners (*Fig. 1*). This example has 12½ perforation and, just like Peter's example, the guide marks do not line up.

I am a little more fortunate with the 10 PARA surcharge, for according to Peter's book there are 12 stamps in each sheet with guide marks, so far more to go round. I have one used block of four which has a guide mark in the lower left corner. The faint postmark is a Type III of Magaga but sadly the date is obscured by the heavy "10" surcharge.

Then I have a mint corner block of four with an ornate border in the margin. There is a guide mark in the top left corner, stamp position 1, but best of all it has the major variety "cleft in pyramid" on the same stamp (*Fig. 2*).

Finally I have a mint marginal block of six with the ornate border and an extra vertical line of perforations. There is just one guide mark, in the lower left corner, stamp position 191 (*Fig. 3*).



Fig.1

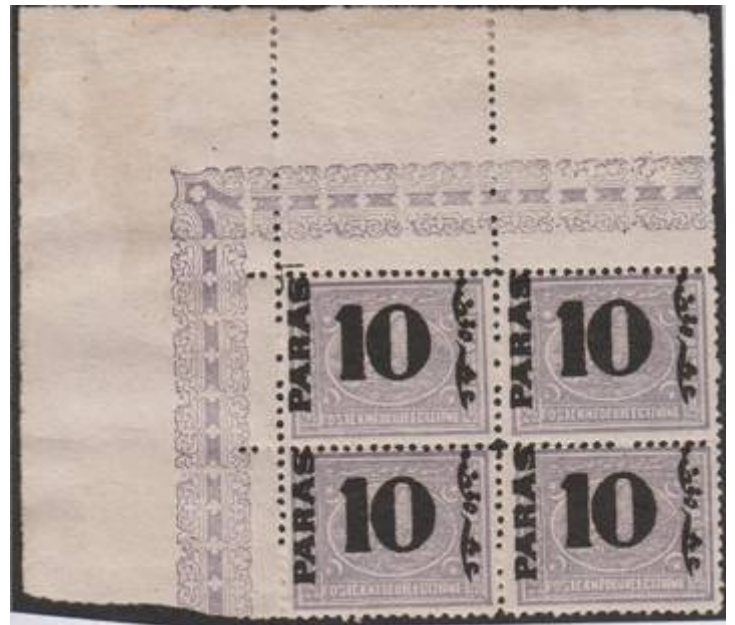


Fig.2



Fig.3

Marlag and Milag Nord

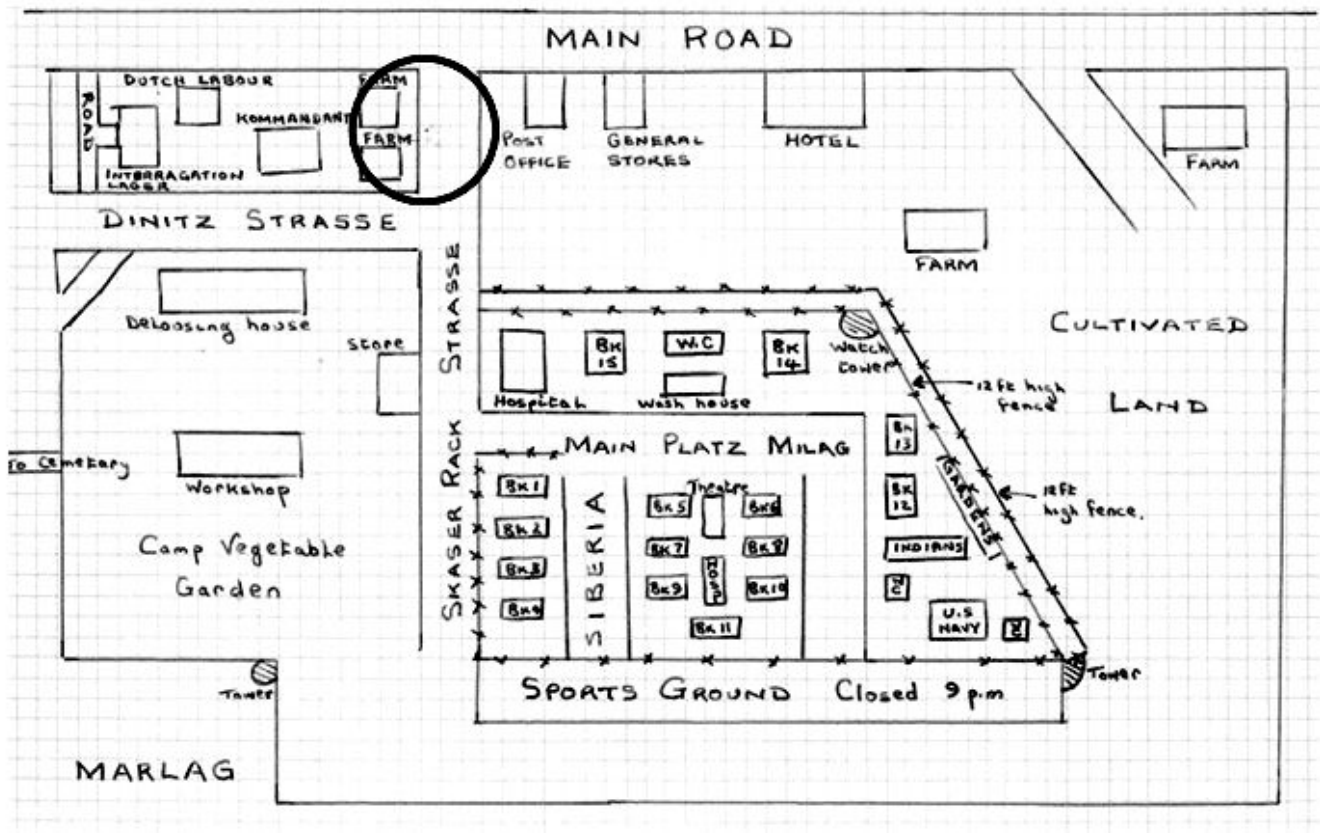
Scott Van Horn (ESC 619)

The PoW camps of Marlag and Milag North were established in October 1941 on the location of a small Air Force training facility just south and southwest of the town of Westertimke (near Bremen), which was in the 10th military district headquartered at Hamburg. Marlag (*Marinekriegsgefangenenlager*) was the camp for Navy PoWs, and Milag (*Marineinterniertenlager*) was the camp for the Merchant Navy PoWs, and was to the east of Marlag.

According to the Hague Conventions, merchant seamen were considered non-combatants, and as such "...are not made prisoners of war, on condition that they make a formal promise in writing, not to undertake, while hostilities last, any service connected with the operations of the war." Regardless, both the Germans and British considered Merchant Navy seamen as PoWs. During the war, Milag North held between 2,700 and 4,200 civilians from 29 nations, with a large portion from the United Kingdom.

As always in the case of war, the delivery of mail was very erratic. The average number of letters received per man per month was seven, and required as many as 61 days for transit. Parcel post packages required about 43 days in transit. PoWs received two letter and four card forms each month, while the medical staff received a double ration of the forms. The Germans were quite regular in issuing these forms and at times additional ones could be obtained from PoWs who did not desire to use theirs. There were no restriction on the number of incoming letters a PoW could receive and the letters could be kept indefinitely. German civilian girls censored all incoming as well as outgoing mail.

Both camps were liberated on 27 April 1945 by the British infantry.



MILAG. (Courtesy of moosburg.org)



The above postal card (NP SPC38a), was posted on 8 Jan 43 from MÎT-GHAMR, and addressed to:

Mr. M. Fouda
 Gefangenennummer: 101419 [Prisoner Number]
 Lager-Bezeichnung: Marlag und Milag Nord [Camp Name]
 Deutschland (Allemagne)

The card is handstamped “Marlag u. Milag Nord / 7 / geprüft” (inspected by #7) on both front and back, and with “INTERNEES MAIL” on the front. In addition, there is also a pointed message written at the top of the card, presumably by the censor(?), stating to “Inform dispatcher to write with ink!” It is also presumed that Mr Fouda was an Egyptian citizen employed in some capacity in the merchant navy [of what country?].

The card was written by Mr Fouda’s brother, and reads as follows:

We have received your letter in which you say that the Malokhia and Bamia remembered you by the name. We send to you another few amounts of these kinds of food, but we wish to send to us what you require, we are ready to send money, cloth, and all kinds of food. All the family are well, happy and in good health specially your dear mother who is always remembering you. She was very glad when she saw your photo in the “Mosawar” with your friends. All your friends and all the people in Khafre-Behida are very anxious to see you soon, they always become very glad when they know that you are in good health. Your Brother, Mohamed 8-1-1943

Perhaps a couple of points in this fascinating message require a little explanation (Mike Murphy adds). **Molokhia** and **bamia** (okra, ladies’ fingers) are favourite Egyptian vegetable foodstuffs, both of them somewhat slippery and the former most often made into a tasty soup with chicken, garlic and coriander. **Al Mussawar** was a famous Egyptian Arabic picture magazine that flourished until the 1950s and is still published today, but is somewhat in decline. **Kafr Bihida** is a small town immediately north of Mit Ghamr in the central Delta on the Umm Saimur Canal; as far as I can discover, it had a Rural mail station served out of Sanafa, a little farther to the northeast.

The card appears to come from an Italian Internee. If this was so it is correspondence from a prisoner held by one side to a prisoner held by the other side! Perhaps the brother in Egypt worked at one of the internment camps and posting it as an “enemy alien” hoping this would ease its transmission in Axis held Europe. The nearest camp to Mit Ghamr was Tanta although the boxed marking is associated with Cairo. A lovely bit of social history.

Editor

Bottle Post

Edmund Hall (ESC 238)

In the live auction of February 2014 there was an interesting and unusual cover with a cachet Posted by Bottle / In Straits of Messina / SS El Malek Fouad./ Khedivial Mail Line S.A.E (Fig. 1). Now I knew of these “posted by bottle” covers: the late Dennis Clarke had a couple, which I assume were sold in the auction of his material.



Fig.1

At the September 2010 meeting a member raised the issue, having seen such a cover on an internet auction site with the description "never seen before, never to be seen again...". As our meeting report goes on to say, "Needless to say, it did not sell at a starting price of \$350". The report does however add a picture of a second bottle post cover, supplied by our member Cyril Defriez (ESC 172) with a different marking of the SS El Malek Fuad, together with an SS Nefertiti handstamp.

Also on our website, under Queries, Q18 of June 19, 2006 (from a non-member), is a cover with a cachet "Straits of Messina Bottle Post SS El Malek Fuad" dated 1951. The cachet is similar to the one on Cyril's example. The non-member asked for any information about his cover, saying he had found nothing in British or US philatelic journals, including the *Seaposter* (magazine of the TPO & Seapost Society) and the Italy and Colonies Study Circle. He hoped an ESC member may be able to help: it seems he has had no reply.



Fig.2

Fig.3.

I can find little in my library of philatelic cuttings garnered over the last 35 years, or on the internet, for which the main references are our own website!

From my clippings I have one article, from the *Philatelic Magazine* of October 1955, by Tom Morgan in a potpourri of philatelic tidbits in which he gives a few paragraphs about the bottle post. In full it reads:

I've had a letter by bottle post; by the "El Malek Fouad" Bottle Post, to be exact. Never heard of it? Neither had I until this unusual item came along the other day from Mr Basil Benwell Rees (Alexandria).

Mr. Rees was on his way out to Egypt on the *s.s. El Malek Fouad* and took part in an interesting mail posting ceremony.

When the ship was sighted approaching the Straits of Messina several small boats put off from the mainland. Meanwhile, on board the ship, letters were written and placed in a bottle along with some cigarettes and a few lira.

The ship slowed down and the bottles thrown overboard, whereupon they were picked up by the small boats which took the letters ashore and posted them while the boatmen presumably took themselves off to the nearest café to smoke the cigarettes and spend the cash.

The postmark on the envelope is Catona in Italy and the cachet was apparently applied on board the ship. Outer inscription on the cachet is: *s.s. El Malek Fouad, Khedive Mail S.A.E. Line*, and the inner words around the outline of the bottle are: *Posted in Bottle in Straits of Messina*.

Now the cover in our auction is addressed to Mr Rees, so is the cover in the auction the cover from the article, received by Mr Rees and passed on to Tom Morgan? Or did Mr Rees send another as well?

The illustration from the article (*Fig. 4*) has a small blob near the bottom left corner not seen on the auction cover. However this may merely have been added during the printing of the article.



Fig. 4. Postcard of the SS El Malek Fouad circa 1950.



A blog on the internet tells of how the writer and his wife sailed through the Straits of Messina by freighter and quotes their daily journal for April 30, 2001:

Curt & Margie [I assume travelling companions] told us of a longstanding tradition with the fishermen of the Straits of Messina, that any bottle message recovered in their nets would be returned to the sender, if the bottle contained a few cigarettes and Lira to cover the cost of postage for the message to be returned.

Curt with 6 others had done this previously (25 years previously), and 6 out of 7 messages had been returned. Curt & Margie were the unlucky ones, and were determined to try again on this voyage. Curt, Bridget & ourselves, prepared our bottles. We passed through the Straits of Messina at around midnight on the 30th. April 2001 and Curt & I launched the bottles from Deck 11 of the *Grande Europa*.

On our return to England, our message, bearing a 5th. May 2004 Messina postmark, was waiting for us! Bridget got hers back too! At the time of writing, Curt & Margie are still waiting.

An interesting website is devoted to *A place for "out of ordinary" stamps and covers!!*. It has a cover, clearly philatelic in nature with Danish stamps, but poorly illustrated so not used here, of "Bottle Mail at Strait of Messina": the bottle with this cover was dropped from by the *MS Christian Maersk*, of the Danish Maersk Line and dated 1967.



The website also shows two more bottle mail covers, one from the Hapag Lloyd line dropped off the Azores, Portugal, in 1976 and another a "postbuoy" cover with a cachet and postmark of a postbuoy that was placed in the Kiel Bight in June 1984 on the occasion of the 19th World Postal Congress in Hamburg.

Query 118 from John Davis (ESC 213) - CAIRE / T. IMPRIMES / (2)

While mounting two REFUSÉ covers from mid-1958 I noticed that on the reverse of one cover the 20 millièmes postage due stamp issued that year was cancelled with a date-stamp I have not come across before. The top of the circle is in Arabic - presumably it reads much the same as the French in the bottom sector, that is, CAIRE / T. IMPRIMES / (2).

The back of the cover includes in blue a Cairo roller cancel advertising a fair in Damascus reading "Visit Damascus International Fair 1-30 September 1958". My thanks to Ted Fraser-Smith (ESC 238) for the translation. A blurred boxed REFUSED - ARABIC - REFUSE completes the markings.

I have attempted to draw the date-stamp and have one or two questions:

1. Has anyone seen this before?
2. Is there a number (1)?
3. What does it actually mean?
4. Does the T. refer to tax, as in postage due?



As to the meaning, I have referred to my French dictionary for "Imprimés", where it suggests "Book post" when in the plural. As a singular, as often seen written on postcards, it seems to refer to printed paper for which a special rate was available in the early part of the twentieth century.

Editor's reply:

I was under the impression that this is a "fairly common" date stamp. However, as I collect anything to do with the Egyptian military, I have noticed that it is often found on the back of mail sent by military personnel endorsed *barid el harby* (military post). The sender seems to have hoped that this endorsement would grant free postage to family or friends; for this concession, however, *barid el harby* mail had to be posted in a military mailbox rather than a civilian one. The 10 millièmes postage due, double the normal letter rate for the time, is always stuck to the reverse. As far as I know, only numbers (1) (*see my illustration*) and (2) have been recorded.



The Arabic reads *safra el qahira* (traffic post of Cairo); then *matbu aat* مطبوعات (printed matter). The T stands for traffic rather than tax and a part strike of this date stamp is recorded in the Blomfield sheets under the heading Traffic. These are therefore transit date stamps. My suspicion is that they record the point where the civilian post took over from the military post.

Now what is really intriguing is the use of the word "imprimés" which also means printed matter and is often found on Egyptian mail either hand endorsed or by a hand stamp. To my knowledge this is the only date stamp specifically designated for this purpose.

Study of Re-sealing Labels (Strips) Used on Censorship of Civil Mail in Egypt 1939-45

Ted Fraser-Smith (ESC 238)



Part One: Earliest printing, 1939-41

Introduction: At the Study Circle meeting at York in 2009 I displayed an attempt at plating “Opened by Censor” labels, using some 120 examples. Only 30 of those examples came from a printing using the formula 3:1 S:L (short: long). Our Secretary described the meaning of this formula in his report of the meeting (*QC* Sept 2009, page 148).

Long fascinated by the civil censorship of mail passing through Egypt during the Second World War, I had realised that these labels, printed in blue on white or blue on brown with two lines each of English and Arabic and used to reseal an envelope after the censor had sifted the contents, were worthy of more consideration.

As a keen user of Arabic, I first noticed that *al-maraaqabah al-masriyah*, the Arabic equivalent of “Egyptian Censorship”, was written – totally unexpectedly and inexplicably – in two different forms of Arabic calligraphy, one in which the letters *lam* and *mim* are quite clearly separately formed (*see solid rectangle in the illustration above*), making a “long” (L) form; and the other where the “l” and “m” are combined, with the *mim* appearing only as a short stroke to the right (*see chequered rectangle above*), against the flow of the right-to-left sentence and making a “short” (S) form..

I decided to examine all the examples I had on cover – and carefully traced and copied all 100 examples, happily eventually with the aid of a photocopier for ease of use. When I then compared the multiplicity of labels, I was surprised to find that the two types of script appear to have been placed in order quite deliberately, in the ratio of 3:1 S:L. Why? Looking even more closely, I realised that there was selvedge at the right end of some labels, and the left end of others; and also occasionally at top and bottom too.

So I was able to “plate” the labels, discovering that each had a distinctive place in the printed sheet; and could then reproduce the sheet from the examples to hand. But then it became even more intriguing ... a sizeable proportion of the labels did not fit the pattern, but were typeset with a 2:1 S:L proportion. And there were differences also in the sizes of the gaps between the English phrases “Opened by Censor” and “Egyptian Censorship” and between the Arabic *al-raqiib* (الرقيب) and *fath* (فتح). So I set out again; and was able to plate a larger sheet with the new proportions.

Close attention to the covers on which the two types were used allowed me to ascertain that the 3:1 sheet, the First Printing, was in use from 1939 to 1940-41, and subsequent printings (2:1) from 1940-41 to the end of censorship in 1945. Not only that, but that the sheets were of different sizes, the first a strip two labels deep and one metre long, the second some 540mm wide and with the depth yet to be ascertained.

To confuse matters further, from about 1941-42, when paper was in short supply, the Censor Department began to use scrap paper for printing the labels, which are often found with text on the other side – and now the text just appears to run off the edge of the printing sheet.

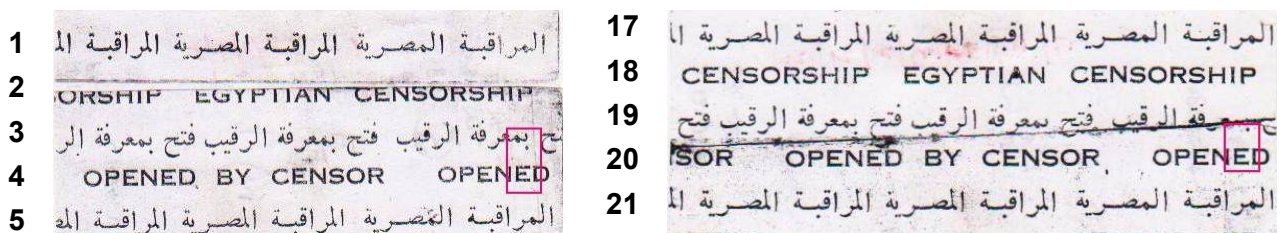
Since that meeting, members and my own acquisitions have increased my examples of the 3:1 printing to 110 examples.

I have now been able to produce a full sheet of 26 rows of script. The key elements for this “build-up” was the spacing of the long (L) form of Arabic calligraphy for words *al-maraaqabah al-masriyah*, EGYPTIAN CENSORSHIP. The long form appears at 125mm, 250mm and 375mm from the starting point of the left-hand script. Selvedge for this early printing was very helpful.

A full sheet would be cut into five longitudinal strips. Each strip was then cut into five pieces measuring approx 100x38mm each, producing 25 labels per sheet.

But identification of the 3:1 and 2:1 ratios for the short-long Arabic lettering, while the crucial first clue, did not resolve all the problems. To discover which labels followed which pattern it has been necessary to examine in minute detail the placing of both Arabic and English lettering, comparing positioning both within and between the rows of text. It has been a fascinating – and exhausting – exercise.

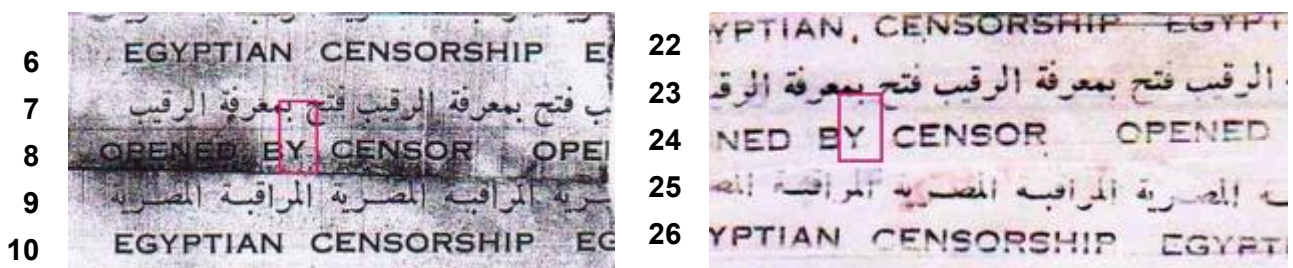
For instance, it can be observed that rows 1-5 and 17-21 contain the same lines of Arabic and English. To separate these two groups I found that rows 1-2 were set 3.5mm apart whereas rows 17-18 are set 3mm apart. Top selvedge helped. The joint formed when folding over the label to re-seal the cover after censorship hindered. Sometimes row 22 was partly visible. However, I observed a constant displacement difference of 0.5mm, illustrated best by the positions of the top of the E and the lower dot of the Arabic above it, shown at the 375mm mark in rows 3-4 at left and 19-20 at right in the two labels below.



The difference in spacing is shown by the two rectangular boxes: at left, example PA 39 of 7.8.41, and at right an example dated 2.12.39

The exercise can be repeated for rows 6-10 and 22-26, they likewise having the same lines of Arabic and English. To separate these two groups, bottom selvedge is a great help.

A study of two labels, one from each group, shows a displacement relationship of 1mm in rows 7-8 and 23-24, position 23mm. The disparity is best seen by comparing the placing of the capital Y and the dot on the Arabic letter above it.



The difference in spacing is shown by the two rectangular boxes: at left, example RB 33 of 10.10.41, and at right example KM 11 of 4.4.40

Earliest Printing – 1939... (1941) – Distribution Chart of Identified Examples

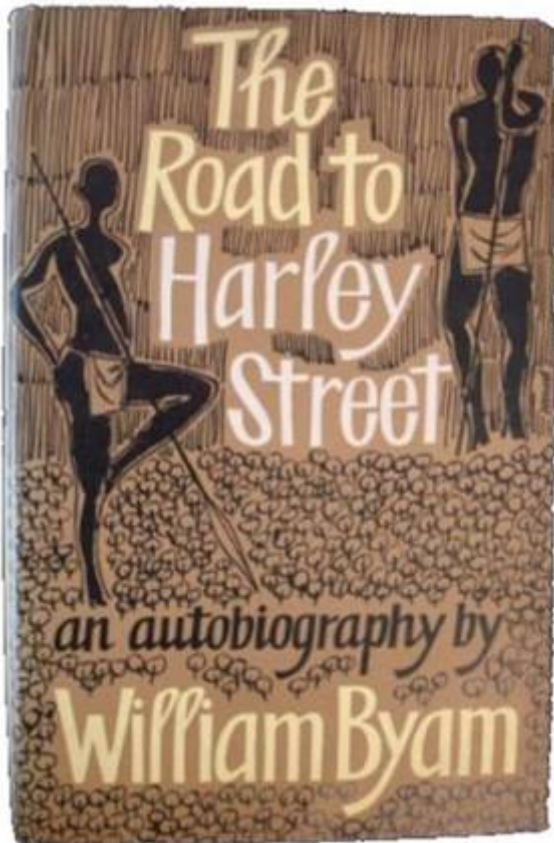
| 22-26 | 17-21 | 11-16 | 5-10 | 1-5 | Rows |
|--|---|--|--|---|------------------|
| <p><u>2.8.41</u> <u>MM 6 (15.12.40)</u> RB 67 (31.1.40) KM 11 (4.4.40)</p> | <p>RB 65 (15.2.41) <u>PA 11 (23.12.40)</u> PA 53 (23.10.39) 15.10.41 20.9.41</p> | <p>RB 34 (10.10.41) RB 79 (?) RB 58 (12.10.39) RB 30 (23.3.40) KM 37 (18.9.41)</p> | <p>RB 33 (10.10.41) RS 2 918.11.39)</p> | <p>PA 22 (15.12.40) MM 9 (18.10.39) 21.9.39 17.5.41 PA 39 (22.3.41) MM retta</p> | 0-128mm |
| <p>PA 55 (18.9.40) PA 68 (4.9.39) PA 65 (6.2.40) RB 27 (22.8.41)</p> | <p>PA 64 (9.6.40) 17.6.40</p> | <p>PA 59 (rt top 14 11 39) <u>PA 59 (piece)</u> Internet 28.9.41 Scott 28.1.41 RB 64 12.8.41</p> | <p>30.12.39 <u>RB 63 (23.12.40)</u> 13.8.41</p> | <p>KM 38 (19.2.41) PA 18 (2.2.41) PA 30 (13.3.41) 23.12.40</p> | 68-182mm |
| <p>RB 51 (24.6.40) RB 61 (28.6.40) PA 43 (17.9.41) PA 50 (3.9.39) 27.12.39 19.8.41</p> | <p>KM 31 (16.8.41) RB 71 (1.8.40) MM 1 (25.6.40) KM 44 (20.9.41) 20.7.40 7.12.40</p> | <p>KM 62 (27.11.40) PA 35 (23.10.41) 23.10.41</p> | <p>PA 58 (16.11.39) <u>PA 7 (21.4.40)</u> TB 59 (2.2.41)</p> | <p>RB 43 (24.9.41) <u>PA 15 (7.1.41)</u> KM 23 (12.4.41) 14.12.39 MS (50)</p> | 155-300mm |
| <p><u>9.9.41</u> 6.12.40 RB 26 (12.12.40) RB 50 (26.11.40) RB 74 (15.10.39) PA 33 (8.6.40)</p> | <p><u>2.12.39</u> 12.9.41 RB 47 (28.8.41) PA 45 (10.2.41) PA 14 (8.2.40)</p> | <p>MM 8 (18.9.39) MM 7 <u>PA 3 (18.10.39)</u> PA 5 (27.1.41) MS (19)</p> | <p>MS 10 PA56 (9.11.39)</p> | <p>15.10.41 PA 39 (7.8.41) PA 44 (11.1.41) 29.6.40 28.9.39</p> | 260-380mm |
| <p>KM 56 (24.9.41) 19.2.40 PA 67 (4.9.39) PA 57 (16.9.39) Scott 25.9.39 PA 1 (26.9.39) PA 66 (18.1.41)</p> | <p>EHF's retta Anton 23.8.41 RB 53 (7.2.40) PA 54 (13.10.39) 19.7.41</p> | <p>PA 60 (22.2.40) RB 14 (7.6.40) 29.6.40 KM 64 (12.2.41)</p> | <p>RB 81 (21.2.40) <u>KM 35 (27.2.40)</u> 23.9.41</p> | <p>PA 36 (12.1.41) <u>PA 51 (5.10.39)</u> PA 61(?) 11.1.40 15.2.40</p> | 350-467mm |

Underlined examples were used in the build-up of the printing plate

Book Review

Dr. Byam in Harley Street and The Road to Harley Street by William Byam

A recent telephone call requesting the loan of these two books prompted me to read them myself - the ESC Library has two copies of each - and, although one copy has been in the Library since I became Hon. Librarian almost forty years ago, I had never read them!



Little did I know what I had been missing; they constitute an autobiography by our founding father and, having met his last surviving daughter before she died a couple of years ago, I am now very much more acquainted with his life. And what a life it was!

Born in 1882 the son of Major-General William Byam, C.B., the young William was always bent on the life of a medical man despite his father's wish that he should follow the family tradition in the military.

Having trained and qualified as a doctor specialising in tropical diseases, William did join the Army and was sent off to Egypt. After many interesting adventures in Egypt, Sudan, Eritrea and Abyssinia discussed in *The Road to Harley Street*, which was written largely after he had retired from his medical practice and was living on Guernsey, William returned from Egypt with several impressive animal head trophies that would adorn the entrance hall to his practice at 92 Harley Street.

Having made a name for himself by organising the writing and publication of *The Practice of Medicine in the Tropics* during the 1920s, a book regarded as the "classic work" even today, William then set about creating his own medical practice in Harley Street itself. For the lovers of gory details there is plenty to satisfy, but it is the patients who provide interest to the non-medically minded. These latter include no fewer than three kings, George V, Edward VIII and George VI, as well as numerous well known personalities including Earl Haig of World War I fame.

Among those with whom Byam came into contact are T.E. Lawrence (of Arabia), the aviator Marc Pourpe, the pathologist Sir Bernard Spilsbury, the prisoner of the Mahdi, Major-General Baron Rudolph von Slatin, and many others.

This is a fascinating read. And he even mentions his stamps!
John Davis (ESC 213)

