

The
Quarterly Circular

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
صبر
صبر

(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 بوسته 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 يقتضى ارفاق المطبوع المذكور بحافظة ارسال

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Meetings dates for 2016

The September meeting will be held at 2.30pm at **Stampex**, at the Design Centre in Islington (where members normally congregate a little earlier in the hope of a quick start to a two-hour meeting); and in July and November we meet at 2pm in the **Victory Services Club**, Marble Arch, London (where members usually meet in the ground-floor bar from 1pm).

July 16, 2pm	Services Club	New Issues collection Cancelled-Backs Ten Sheets	Cyril Defriez John Clarke All members
Sept 17, 2.30pm	Stampex Stampex Sept 14-17		
Nov 5, 2pm	Services Club	Revenues Interpostals	Richard Wheatley Jon Aitchison

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Website: egyptstudycircle.org.uk



Facebook

Meeting Report: May 7 2016

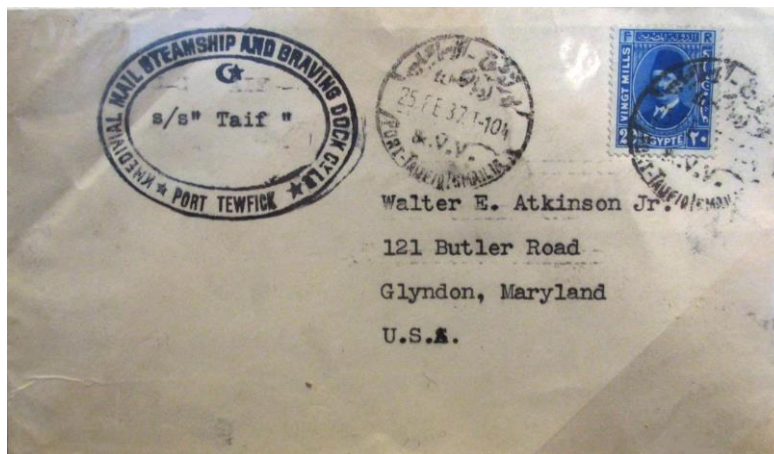
PRESENT: John Sears (President), Peter Andrews (Chairman), John Davis (Deputy Chairman and Librarian), Mike Murphy (Secretary), Edmund Hall (Editor and Webmaster), Jon Aitchison, Mike Bramwell, Tony Cakebread (New Zealand), John Clarke, Peter Grech, Paul Green, Neil Hitchens.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Brian Sedgley (Treasurer), Hani Sharestan (Facebook Co-ordinator), Sami Sadek (Committee), Angela Child, Cyril Defriez, Pauline Gittoes, Rob Hothersall, Roman Rimonis, Greg Todd, Richard Wheatley.

The Chairman opened the meeting – in the Allenby Room, which we had been told only on Thursday was flooded - by welcoming especially Edmund Hall, despite his continuing illness, and Tony Cakebread (ESC 536), of New Zealand, on his first meeting appearance after 16 years' membership.

Both were immediately in action, Edmund attempting to boost members' use of the Circle website at egyptstudycircle.org.uk with a direct live online glimpse into some of its wonders and showing how recent advances could perhaps help to resolve the problem of shortage of *QC* articles. He has been busy preparing for the site all back copies of the *QC*, *L'OP* and *Egyptian Topics*, as well as Peter Smith's *Egypt* masterpiece. And in the very near future all of these will be searchable online, allowing any member to discover what has been published on his/her topic and giving an instant insight into what is recorded, and what might be new ... a boon to an article writer.

Another advance mentioned later was the idea of developing articles written potentially by the whole membership, starting with a brief "stub" report (a la Wikipedia), which could be advanced by anyone interested adding his own information or elements of his own collection until the piece developed into a full digest of the topic. A possible case might be the study report on TPOs on the website, updating Peter Smith's book with no fewer than 70 pages of detailed postmark research provided by members. It is there for all to see. Further updates of dates or types will be welcomed.



25 FE 37, Khedivial Mail Line cover with ship's name Taif typed into the handstamp, probably held in Port Taufiq

Tony Cakebread gave members further details of the wish of our late Antipodean Agent, Tony Chisholm, to bequeath to the Circle his enormous archive of 20,000 illustrations of Egyptian postcards, saved over a lifetime. He explained that the archive is housed on the hard drive of an outdated Apple Mac machine, and there was much discussion of how it might be released from Apple's clutches. The discussion will continue, but the Circle is grateful indeed both to Tony Chisholm and to Tony Cakebread for their efforts in bringing this fantastic resource to the Circle.

The Secretary then reminded members of the forthcoming New York World Stamp Show (May 28-June 5), at which at least 11 ESC members will be exhibiting, with nine displays of Egypt material. There was also an advance notice of Spring Stampex 2017 (Feb 15-18), which will be themed on the old Ottoman Empire – Egypt exhibits will be very much welcomed; details as they come to hand. The meeting voted to accept two new regular members in Samer El-Zalabany of Egypt and Kevin J Everett of Japan – and also, in a new development promoted via our new Facebook page (see page iv), welcomed seven temporary members offered restricted access to the website, the online *QC* and the auctions. The free membership (limited to

“open” pages on the site) will last to the end of the year, after which we hope the newcomers will be so pleased with what they have seen that they will wish to take up full membership. This new venture, we hope, will both boost falling member numbers and attract younger members to carry us into a successful new future.

The Editor welcomed a pleasing increase in the number of *QC* articles received, but regretted that the vast majority of the writes were the “tried and true” and hoped for contributions from some unfamiliar pens. See above for some suggestions about how articles might be developed.

Admin out of the way, we welcomed our President, John Sears, to display some of his Khedivial Mail collection. He took us through an extraordinary voyage of discovery throughout the Mediterranean, detailing development of routes and wartime problems, and was able to display an outstanding collection of illustrations of the line’s ships and the vessels’ handstamps on mail to and from Egypt.

An interesting aspect was the change of name of the line, which started life as the Egyptian Mail Steamship Co, became the Khedivial Mail Line, was taken over by P&O in 1919, renamed again in 1936 as the Pharaonic Mail Line – and always seemed to be in financial trouble, rarely making a profit despite the great service it provided in carrying the mails. He detailed especially the *El Malek Fouad*, later renamed the *Nefertiti*, and was able to show “bottle mail” thrown overboard in the Straits of Messina with both handstamps.



21.12.68, cover from the Agalampus to UK with triangular GBLA stamp and cachet quoting the UPU ruling

The Khedivial Mail Line was followed by another maritime theme – Jon Aitchison on the Great Bitter Lakes Association, that is, mail to and from the 14 international ships detained in the Suez Canal after June 5 1967 when hostilities broke out. During the eight years the vessels were confined their crews created a quite remarkable series of home-made stamps – 893 of them at least, the first issued on October 21 – partly to offset boredom, partly to pay for postage of outgoing mail.

There was no regular outgoing service, but the Egyptian authorities accepted the hand-printed “stamps”, and the UPU ruled that any authority that could legitimately handle the post in an area of disruption was entitled to carry the mails. As a result, not a single postage due stamp is known on the sought-after covers from the GBLA.

The display followed stamp production through from crude initial attempts (clearly the designers were not stamp collectors) to very sophisticated designs, some of them perforated, including even potential forgeries made after the event. Multiple bags of incoming mail found aboard after the siege was over were sent to West Ham sorting office for processing – and were finally delivered eight years late.

The Chairman welcomed “two most enlightening and most erudite” displays; and members showed their appreciation in the usual manner.

Cover franked with 1949 Commemorative Stamp

Richard Wheatley (ESC 168)

Some years ago I concocted the idea of collecting the gorgeous Egyptian commemorative stamps - used correctly on commercial cover. I had a distinct lack of success with this venture, for it seems others had the same idea ages ago. However, every now and then a gem would come my way, and this is one of them.

This particular 10 mills stamp comes from the 1949 set of five stamps issued on March 1 1949 to commemorate the 16th Agricultural & Industry Exhibition, which opened in Cairo on that day. The stamps were valid for postage for four months, until June 30 1949. There were two designs; one featuring a reclining bearded figure representing the Nile in horizontal format for the 1, 10, 17 and 22 mills denominations, the other in a vertical format for the top denomination of 30 mills featuring a Soldier appropriately standing over and protecting symbols of Industry and Agriculture.

These stamps underwent the then current treatment by the Survey Department, which obliged by providing "specials" for the Royal collection. So we find: colour trials, miniature sheets, oblique perforations and the word CANCELLED in Arabic printed on the reverse of the stamps.

From 1943 until 1967 the basic inland letter rate had remained at 10 mills per 30 gram.



This item was posted at Cairo on May 17 1949 and arrived the following day in Port Said. It was on British Government business, for it has the cachet in purple of the British Embassy in Cairo and on the flap the British coat of arms. However, there were three things wrong with the stamp! First, for the 10 mills stamp it is the wrong design, it is also imperforate and the incorrect colour! What was going on?

For answers I consulted the catalogues looking to find this particular stamp. The following results were the nearest that I found:

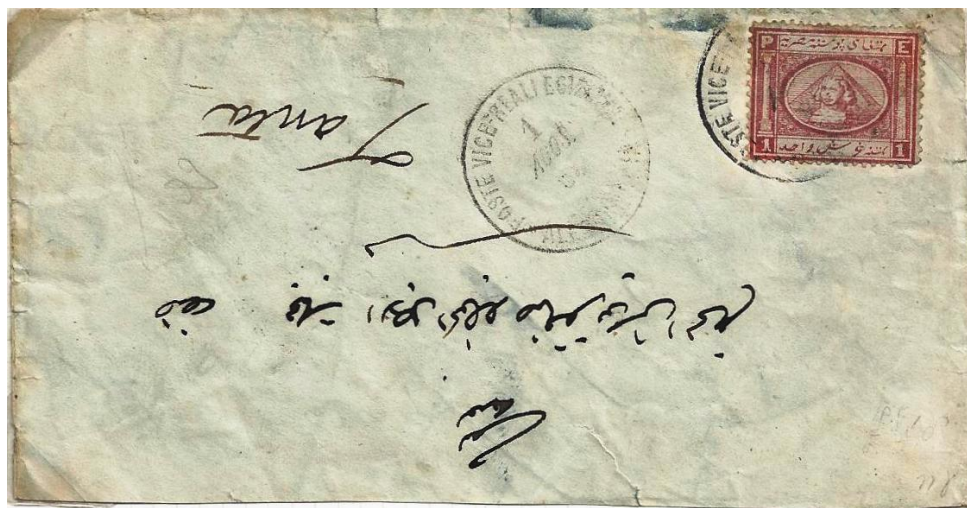
- Zeheri: Royal printing in small sheets of 4 or 9 stamps, watermarked but imperforate, 1 or 2 sheets. No mention of design, denomination or colour.
- Gibbons: Imperforate miniature sheet 108 x 123 mm, 10 mills and 30 mills both same vertical design. No mention of the actual design and colours.
- Balian: Miniature sheets 110 x 123mm imperforate two value designs in new colours, block of 8 uncut sheets. No mention of denomination or colour.
- Chalhoub: On page 504 there is an illustration of his numbered MS4 miniature sheet, which comprises two Soldier stamps, 30 mills vermillion and 10 mills violet-brown, imperforate, 110 x 123mm, 70,653 printed.

Thus the stamp on my cover, which is violet-brown in colour, has been cut from one of the 70,653 miniature sheets. So the largest, and by far the heaviest, of Egyptian catalogues, provided all the answers to my conundrum.

Classical Rarities on Cover

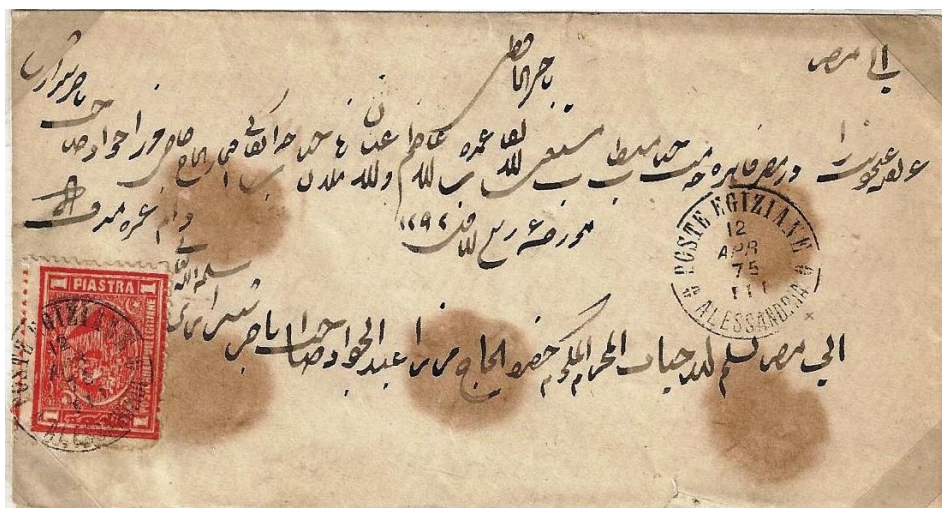
John Clarke (ESC 497)

I am happy to share a couple of covers with classical-era stamps from my collection in the hope that they might interest members, and perhaps answer a query or two. I apologise in advance that one is illustrated upside down, but it makes the postmarks easier to read.



1 - An 1868 internal cover franked with a Second Issue 1 piastre brown-lake, Type 1, with watermark impressed on the face. It was cancelled in Alexandria 1 AGOS 68 and the reverse carries a part-strike of a Tanta arrival CDS of the same day, with the duty marking 1 T.

I have a single copy of this stamp as well, but have never before seen one on cover, even in auctions. Has anyone else?



2 - An 1875 internal cover franked with an 1874 one-piastre, perf 13 1/4 x 12 1/2, dated Alexandria 12 APR 1875 III; the reverse carries a CDS of Cairo of the same day and duty, together with an indistinct seal stamped to "seal" the flap.

Is this the earliest known cover? According to Peter Smith the earliest known date for this stamp is 11th April 11, 1875, on a single stamp in his collection. If any members have any information or comments I would be very interested to hear.

Poste Restante, Port-Saïd

Pierre Louis Grech (ESC 266)

In France, from 1 May 1920 a tax for Poste Restante was introduced. This fixed surcharge of 20c was applicable to all items originating from the internal or colonial service. It could be paid by the sender (adding 20c to the value of postage stamps), or by the recipient (20c tax perceived by the arrival post office).

The 1920 UPU Congress of Madrid authorised the collection of a Poste Restante fee within the Union, at the rate applicable to the internal mail of the country of destination. Therefore the French 20c internal tax would apply to items arriving to Poste Restante from the French P.O.s in Egypt or for that matter the Egyptian Post.

A perfect example of this is shown below. A postcard from the French P.O. at Port-Saïd, sent on 6 May 1923 and correctly franked at the UPU postcard rate, with a 1921 25c Mouchon, with 10 Millièmes Paris surcharge, addressed to Mlle. Blanche Baudon, Poste Restante Bureau No.3, Paris.



On the back of the card are the replicated Port-Saïd departure CDS 6-5-23, and a clear strike of the arrival CDS at the office "9 Paris 3 - Boulevard Malesherbes", on 14 May 1923 at 9 am. Next to these is a 20c green Duval French Postage Due stamp, covering the 20c charge for Poste Restante, cancelled with the same date-stamp on 15-5-23 at 14-45. This was the amount which was paid when the item was collected at the counter. The message from an East-bound traveller reads: " My darling little Nicette, A thousand kisses from Port-Saïd. Arrived at noon, departing at 5 o'clock. An affectionate kiss from your, Marcel" (that's 1001 kisses !)

The regulation stated that if the stamps on a correspondence sent to Poste Restante did not represent the full amount of the postage plus the tax of Poste Restante, the value of the figurines on the correspondence would first be taken to represent the postage for the item, any eventual surplus being assigned to the Poste Restante surtax. Note that the tax was 20c, whether paid or unpaid, and any shortfall did not incur any penalty.

Now in the 1920s there was no Egyptian Poste Restante fee. In his *Egypt- Stamps and Postal History*, p. 441, the late Professor Peter A.S. Smith indicates: "A tax of 5 millièmes was in force for an unknown period (1930s to ?) on letters addressed in Poste Restante... The tax was collected by means of fiscal stamps and therefore does not fall in the postage due category". In France and the French P.O.s however, Poste Restante was usually paid with postage-due stamps, as shown here, and also occasionally with regular stamps.



A Poste Restante tax has been used sometimes to try and explain the puzzling postage dues on certain items addressed to the French P.O.s at Alexandria and Port-Saïd. . But from the study of available material, it is evident that a Poste Restante fee was never actually in force at the French P.O.s in Egypt. To begin with, since Egypt had no tax for that service prior to 1931, such a fee could not be applied according to the UPU.

French local postal rates, which had been occasionally used in the past within Alexandria and Port-Saïd for mail addressed in town, disappeared after the 1921 changeover to millièmes, all mail having to conform to Egypt's 15 millièmes international UPU letter rate. Which is why unpaid letters from Alexandria to Alexandria, or within Port-Saïd, are taxed 30 millièmes, double the shortfall, even when in Poste Restante.



This is illustrated by the cover above, franked 2 Mills, sent 21 November 1921 from the Port-Saïd French P.O., addressed to the French P.O.'s Poste Restante. On 27 December, when collected, it was taxed 26 Mills with stamps from the locally overprinted November 1921 Joffre Postage Dues. It should have been franked 15 Mills UPU rate when it was mailed, but was 13 Mills short; $13 \times 2 = 26$ Mills tax (no Poste Restante fee).

Unusual taxation often results from an item being overweight, necessitating an extra 10 millièmes for the next weight step, and of course there are also numerous philatelic covers, produced in the last decade of the French P.O.s with all sorts of stamp combinations, bearing no relationship to reality.

From 1 May 1926 the Poste Restante tax in France was raised to **30c**, and remained so until 1937.

Reference: *The French Post Offices in Egypt*, P.L. Grech. Volume 2, p.307.

Benians' Four Hand-stamps – Is This a Fifth?

John Davis (ESC 213)

Chapter 17 in Part II of my book concerns the Egypt Postage Prepaid (EPP) hand-stamps described in Jim Benians' book. For those who do not have a copy they are reproduced in *Fig. 1* below.

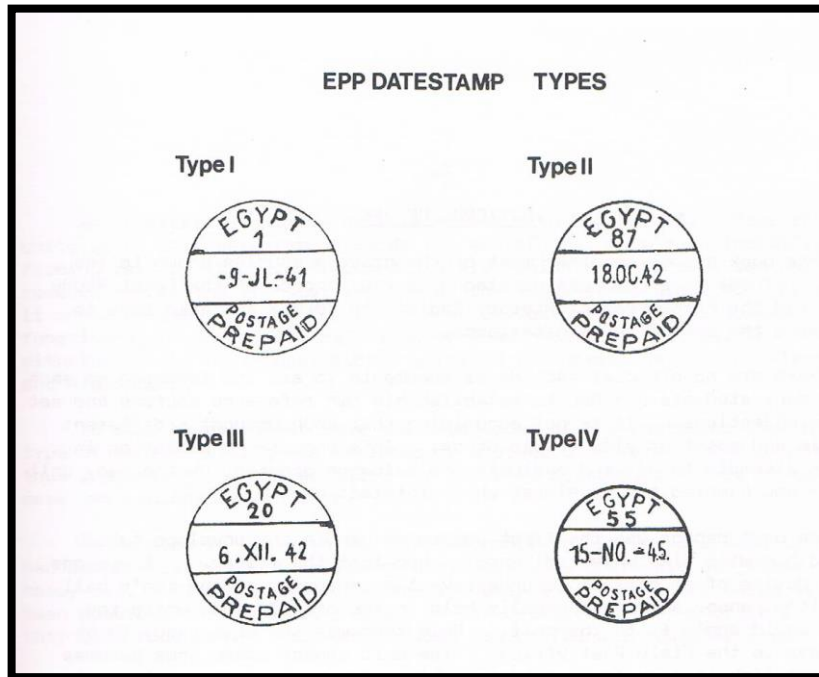


Fig. 1. The four date-stamp types: types I and IV have dashes between the date-slugs, type IV has a smaller circle than type I. Not to scale.

Recently I was sent a scan of a cover with the question: “Is this partial date-bridge down to wear of the actual hand-stamp, or is this a new type?” You will notice (*see Fig. 2*) that the date-bridge boundary lines do not cross the circle but rather reach only part way. Not only that, but they appear to end at much the same distance from all four directions, so is it due to wear or do we have an additional type? The letter itself is dated February 1947, so it is a very late date – the latest reported by Benians is EPP 32 on November 5 1947. Thus, with six and a half years of heavy use during wartime, it could be all but worn out, but the impression itself is reasonably clear. The EPP number is 2, so I was able to advise that the date-stamp, type I, had originally been allocated to the Indian Forces and would have been in use shortly after May 1 1941.



Fig. 2. Bill Johns' cover with date-bridge seemingly incomplete

The item in question came from Bill Johns and, as my reply to him was somewhat equivocal, I offered to ask the question in the next *QC* and he agreed. It then occurred to me to look again at the late John Revell's collection of this material, only to find that his numbers started at EPP 4.

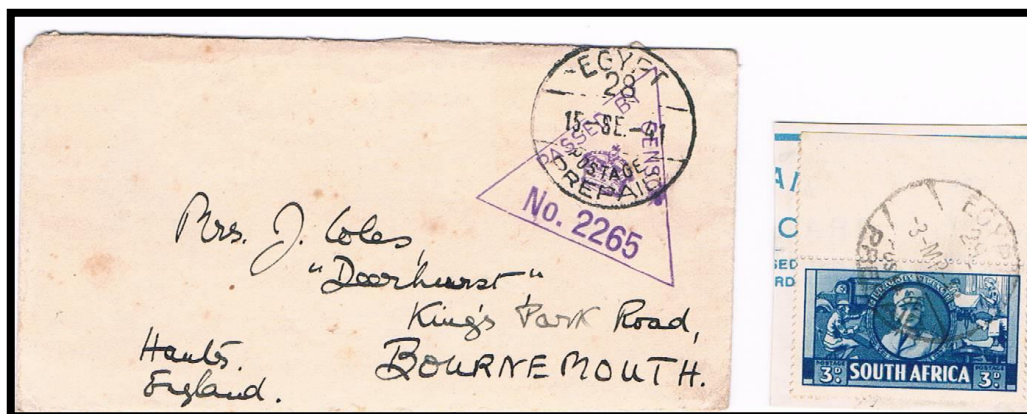


Fig. 3. Type I EPPs 28 and 29 with apparent wear in the hand-stamp in 1941 and 1942.

However, in dealing with another query on EPP material and again looking up John Revell's collection, I realised that despite its low number Bill's might be type IV rather than type I, having been replaced when the original date-stamp was returned to Cairo for repair. Type IV is common to all the numbers above EPP 105 and seems to confirm that not all the date-stamps were made and issued at the same time, a theory held by Jim himself. But the circle in type IV is smaller, as we have seen in *Fig. 1*. Jim gives the dimensions of the diameters of the circles of Types I and IV as 28mm and 25mm respectively, so we need not concern ourselves with Type IV in this regard.

In checking those EPP numbers where Jim lists only type I, I came across EPP 28 with an early date of SE 41, and EPP 29 dated MR 43; both have what appear to be curtailed lines above and below the date. So I am beginning to wonder if indeed Bill has found a new type.

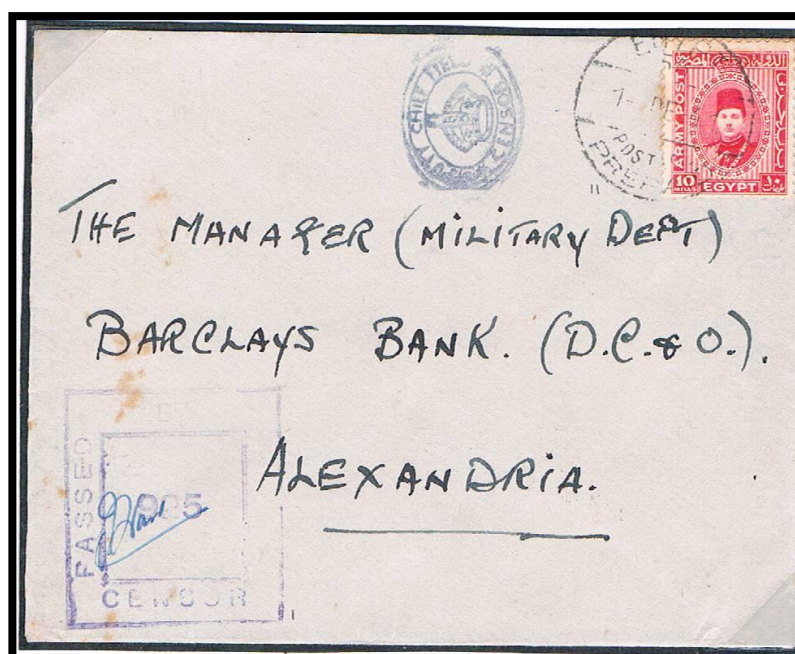


Fig. 4. EPP 56 with a relatively early date of DE 41 yet seemingly wearing already.

An illustration of type I on EPP 56 shows in *Fig. 4* what would appear to be wear, with the date-bridge lines broken, and this is only December 1941, so I am now torn between the two possibilities. May I ask members to check their EPP marks, on type I in particular, and advise through the *QC*? Thank you in anticipation.

Varieties on a Miniature Sheet

Ted Fraser-Smith (ESC 238)

Checking duplicates of some miniature sheets recently, I came across varieties on SG MS1027 (1969, marking the Cairo Millenary), which shows four multi-coloured vertical stamp designs side by side. Whereas Abdel-Hadi (MS 26) lists the sheet at \$10, and *Nile Post* (MS 26) at \$5.00, Gibbons' listing values it at £24. Remarkable. The varieties I have spotted:

1. Red mark at the right of the key in the right margin plus distorted final "o" in Cairo appearing as CAIRD on the third stamp (Mameluke copper vase).
2. No red mark at right, but final "o" broken to appear as CAIRC on the vase stamp.
3. A used copy with CAIRD on the vase stamp but no red mark.

The varieties lead me to wonder what sheet format size such miniature sheets were printed and cut from. There seems to have been no research in this area, and the matter is not mentioned in Zeheri, *Nile Post*, Abdel-Hadi or, as far as I can judge, even the *QC*!



The 4m Moss Meter Mark on Cover at Last

Mike Murphy (ESC 240)

At its Madrid Congress in 1920 the Universal Postal Union authorised the use (from January 1, 1922) of franking machines for cancellation of both internal and international mail. Egypt was quick to take up the challenge, and on February 27 one of three New Zealand Moss D (5VF) machines made by the Universal Automatic Postal Franking Machine Co Ltd came into operation, hired by the National Bank of Egypt for experimental use in conjunction with the Egyptian Post Office. The others went to the UK and India.



The only recorded example of the 4m Moss meter franking on cover. Sent to Germany from Cairo March 20 1922 and returned

It turned out to be an ill-fated experiment. Though the machines had been in successful operation in New Zealand, where they were invented by Ernest Moss of Christchurch, since as far back as 1908, the machine was found wanting in Cairo and ceased operation on March 31 – only just more than a month later. According to the late Dennis Clarke, frankings were being applied, but not being recorded: the *Postal Bulletin* was less forthcoming, noting merely (*see below*) that the machine was “defective”. During that month it produced franking to the value of £E162.289. The machine was withdrawn and not replaced, by another manufacturer, until April 1933.

Covers with these Moss meter cancels are much sought-after, and not easy to find. The Moss machine produced five fixed values – 2,4,5,10 and 50 millièmes - and especially difficult to seek out are the top value, the 50 millièmes, as might be expected, and the 4 millièmes, of which the conventional wisdom has been that no examples are known.



Full-size proofs of the five values in magenta on Post Office watermarked paper.

Examples in red were made after the machine was withdrawn from use

But not any longer. At Argyll Etkin¹ on March 4 the cover illustrated above came up for auction – the 4 millièmes franking, dated March 20 1922, and so well within the date of official usage. But the cover, addressed to Mrs M ? Jensen-Gould at (the hotel) Weissen Ross in Wiesbaden, was refused. It was given an oval “Porto” (postage due) handstamp on arrival, charged 800 (what?) in blue crayon – and on April 7 was marked for return. A backstamp confirms that it arrived back in Cairo on April 18.

I was not aware of the sale – but a few days later heard about it and hastened to look at the Argyll Etkin website to check the price realised. It had not sold! I contacted the auction house instantly – only to discover that the cover had been disposed of privately immediately after the sale at the lower end of the estimated price - £150. What a bargain gone. I only hope an ESC member was able to acquire such a treasure.

But some mystery remains. It is taken for granted that banks don't ever make mistakes in their franking. So what happened here? I have often wondered about the 4m value on such a machine: at the time it could have had only a single purpose – to pay for printed matter overseas (the internal printed rate was 2m). So did the National Bank request a 4m value? Did it really send large amounts of printed matter internationally? Or did the suppliers of the machine suggest the values: that seems just as unlikely on an experimental machine.

The test for printed matter was that the item should be unsealed. Unfortunately I have not been able to examine the cover in question, so it seems that the 4m value might have been used in error on a sealed envelope, leading to its return – a surprising mistake by a bank postal official. Or it may simply be that Mrs Jenssen-Gould was no longer at the hotel.

The telltale pencilled “T” at lower right indicates that an Egyptian postal clerk had spotted the incorrect rate before it left the country, but whatever the reason the returned cover now represents one of the true rarities of meter mark collecting. According to the *International Postage Meter Stamp Catalogue*² a proof of the 4 mills franking indicator has a value of \$150, but it does not nominate a value for such an item on cover. Used examples are, it says, unknown. As expected, perhaps, if used only for international printed matter with a strong likelihood that the envelopes would not be retained by the receiver.

The sight of this cover led me to a fanciful alternative, however, which the Editor has quickly – and probably correctly – knocked on the head. That is, that the cover was refused because it was “franked” in purple ink instead of red.

The Madrid Congress specified, according to such authorities as Jean Boulad in *L'OP* 22³, Dennis Clarke⁴ and even Alar Pastarus in *The Estonian Philatelist* magazine⁵, that red ink was required for mail sent outside the country. The notice from the *Postal Bulletin* of February 22 announcing the arrival of the machine (*see above*) stated that “it stamps five different values ... in purple which will, however, shortly be changed to red”. New Zealand had used purple (or what might be termed violet or magenta; certainly not red); and the National Bank's usage, technically contra to UPU instructions, was merely experimental, with a probable switch to red ink envisaged for some later date.

Writing in 1934, shortly after the Neopost successor to the Moss machine had been launched, Boulad notes³ in fact that at the time there existed “no law, no decree, no announcement governing the use of franking machines,” and that was “because all units operating until April 1934 did so on a trial basis and their frankings were valid only for the internal service and Sudan”.

1.—Automatic Postal Stamping Franking Machine.

A stamping machine, as authorized by the Congress of Madrid, has been issued as an experiment to the National Bank of Egypt at Cairo.

It stamps five different values as follows in purple which will, however, shortly be changed to red :—



Offices will accept these in the same manner as the ordinary adhesive postage stamps.

In the actual impressions produced by the machine (from which the above reproductions are made) the Arabic writing is not entirely satisfactory, but should these machines come into general use this will of course be rectified in future construction.

The Postal Bulletin notices announcing the launch of the machine (above, February 22), and its demise (June 18)

1.—Automatic Postal Franking Machine.

With reference to Article 1 of Postal Circular No. 6 of 1922, Offices are informed that owing to a defect in the machine, the franking of correspondence by it is suspended until further notice.

In my collection, however, is another Bank cover, addressed to Addis Ababa (*right, with reverse cropped*), franked with two purple/magenta strikes of the machine franker, for 5m and 10m, the overseas letter rate. Again it was refused – because it was not valid for overseas? Because it was not in red? There is no “T”, no formal marking indicating postage due or “return to sender” – just the address crossed through and a pencil arrow indicating the Bank as the source for return.

The Cairo canceller is unfortunately illegible beyond “MAR”; but the backstamps are clear: Port Said / D -8 MAR 22 12.30P; followed (on the return journey) by Port Taufiq / B 4 IV 22 7.30AM and Cairo / A 4 AP 22 (time?). Given, however, that the addressee’s name and the return instruction are in the same pencil, the reason for non-delivery seems clearly to be “addressee unknown” rather than contravention of regulation.

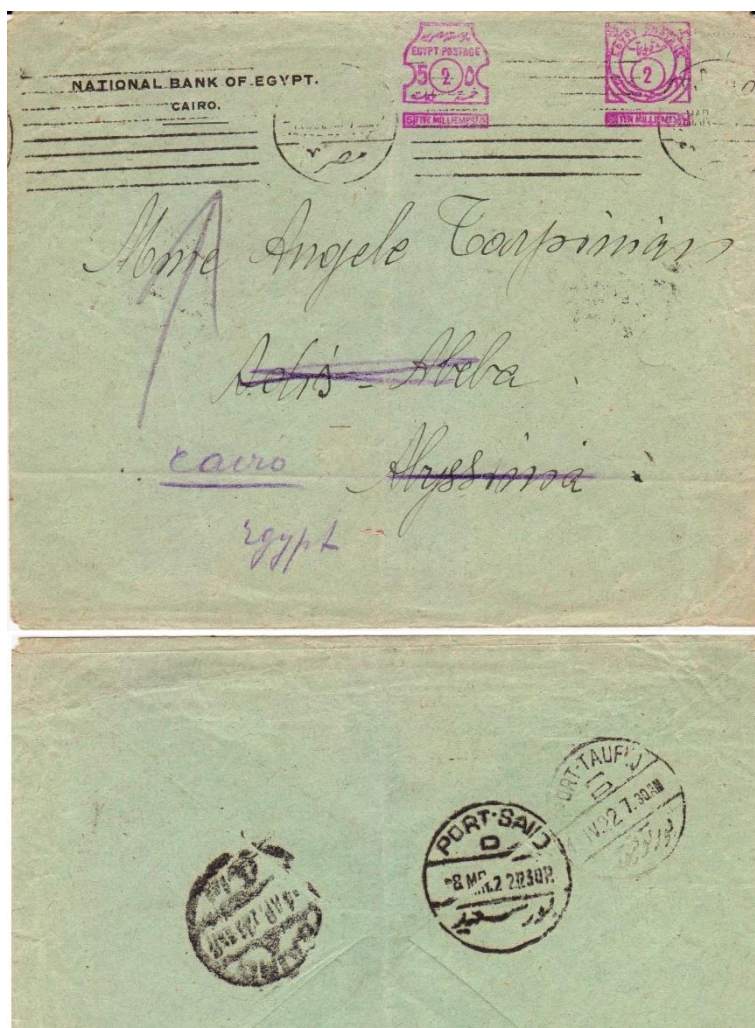
Among his four splendid covers shown on our website Stephen Kaplan⁶ (ESC 352) displays a Bank example with a purple/magenta 2m printed matter rate for Khartoum (March 17), and Dennis Clarke had one to Suakin⁴. But of course both of those were accepted as “internal”. Much more striking in Kaplan’s display is the large registered Bank cover franked with one of only three examples known of the 50 millièmes value, also in purple/magenta (March 9), and addressed to Alexandria, the rate representing a weight step of 240-269 grams as well as the fee for registration.

That cover is the only one recorded with the 50m meter franking. Dennis Clarke, whose astonishingly deeply researched article on Egyptian meter marks is also highlighted on our website⁴, had a 50m franking on piece (March 4); and there is said to be one more cover, whereabouts unknown. But until Stephen revealed his cover it was thought that the number extant was very close to zero. Taking the 50m as an example, now that the 4m barrier has finally been broken after almost precisely 94 years, may there be more out there?

But because use of the machine was experimental, because 4m covered only international printed matter, because magenta ink was specifically barred from international use, I’m betting not many more will appear.

References:

1. Argyll Etkin Ltd, *Worldwide Stamps and Postal History*, March 4 2016, Lot 391
2. *Int Postage Meter Stamp Catalog*, en.wikibooks.org/wiki/International_Postage_Meter_Stamp_Catalog/Egypt
3. Boulad, Jean, “Les affranchissements Mécaniques d’Egypte”, *L’Orient Philatélique* 22, Oct 1934, pp. 8-9
4. Clarke, Dennis H, “Meter Marks and Franking Machines, *QC* 133,134-5, March-Sept 1985, combined as egyptstudycircle.org.uk/Members/meter_marks/QC133_pX.html
5. Pastarus, Alar, “Franking Meter Marks 1929-41”, *Estonian Philatelist*, no date, filateelia.ee/efur/articles/meter.html
6. Kaplan, Stephen, *Meter Stamps of Egypt, 1922-1971*, egyptstudycircle.org.uk/Members/meter_marks/S_Kaplan.html



Suhag Station Postmarks

Roland Dauwe (ESC 498)

In 1999 Edmund Hall published in *QC* 191p. 86-95) all the station postmarks known to him, with the help of several members of the ESC. Since then several new types have been recorded for many of the stations. In this article we shall give a description of all the postmarks of Suhag station we have recorded. Where possible details of the postmarks (diameter, height of the date block [db], type of the month and the time indicator), and the period on which they were used. The postmarks are listed in chronological order:

<p>Type 1</p>  <p>Hall's Suhag 1. Month in roman cyphers. Recorded: 22 V 07</p>	<p>Type 2</p>  <p>Dm: 28.5mm; db 5mm Month in roman. Recorded: 5 IV 11</p>	<p>Type 3</p>  <p>Hall's Suhag 3. Month in letters, time 10-11P. Recorded: 11 DE 26</p>	<p>Type 4</p>  <p>Dm: 29mm; db 8mm Month in letters, time 7-8P Recorded: 7 JA 32</p>
<p>Type 5</p>  <p>Dm: 29.5 mm; db 9mm Month in letters, time 11-12 A. Recorded: 5 MR 37</p>	<p>Type 6</p>  <p>Hall's Suhag 4. Dm: 31.5 mm; db 10mm Month letters, time 3.25P Recorded: 6 JA 39 – 8 JA 43</p>	<p>Type 7</p>  <p style="text-align: right;">Blue</p> <p>Dm: 27mm; db 8mm Month in letters, time 6.30P. Recorded: 17 NO 48</p>	<p>Type 8</p>  <p>Dm: 30mm; db 8.5mm. Month in letters, time 8.30P. Recorded: 31 AU 49 – 21 OC 49</p>
<p>Type 9</p>  <p>Dm: 30mm; db 10mm Month in letters, time 8.55A. Recorded: 7 OC 61</p>	<p>Type 10</p>  <p>Hall's Suhag 2. Month in letters, time 2-3 P. Recorded: 7 AP 66</p>	<p>Type 11</p>  <p>Dm: 30 mm; db 10mm Month in letters, time 6 – A. Recorded: 11 FE 82</p>	

It is clear that we need better examples of some postmarks, and for all of them more data concerning their period of use. And we are aware that the list is far from complete!

In his article Edmund Hall mentioned two different ways of writing the city's name in Arabic: سوهاج and سوحاج, but there is no doubt that only the first one is correct and is used for all the postmarks. That mistake is without any doubt caused by a wrong drawing from the original.

The station postmarks of Suhag are only part of my research into the postal markings used in the Suhag governorate (previously known as Girga governorate), including the TPOs going to or coming from Girga and Suhag, and the rural services. Any help from the members of the ESC is very welcome and needed (photocopies or scans at original size). The more common cities of that governorate are: Tima, Tahta, al-Maragha, Suhag, Akhmim, Girga and al-Balyana, but postmarks of smaller localities should exist as well.

Arab Legion In Egypt

Ronny Van Pellecom (ESC 618)

Years ago I found this letter in Cairo, not knowing the meaning of the rectangular cancel: "ARAB LEGION". The only ARAB LEGION I knew was Glubb's Legion, active between 1920 and 1956 in Palestine. This letter is sent from SIWA 14 DE 39 via Mersa Matruh to CAIRO 16 DE 39.



Some years I found in the Egyptian Gazette of August 25, 1926, perhaps the answer. Two battalions had to be formed to be stationed on the Egyptian border. The chiefs of the tribes had to make sure that a certain number of them had to join the army. Bedouins were also called "Arabs".

The Egyptian Gazette

FORMATION OF TWO BATTALIONS

The Commission formed at the Ministry of War to frame the modifications to be introduced into the recruiting law in Egypt, has not yet completed its work. One of its members who had been asked to study the part of the law dealing with the Arabs submitted his report to the Commission for examination. In that report, states the "Al Siyasa," the member agrees that the idea of the Ministry of War relative to the formation of two battalions of Arabs could be carried out by calling on 'the chiefs of the tribes in Egypt to present two per cent of their members as soldiers, and those desiring to be exempted from the military service should pay L.E.20 as exemption fees. The two battalions referred to will be composed of 1,400 men as the total number of Arabs in Egypt is about 70,000. Egyptian officers will be appointed to command these battalions which, if formed, will be stationed on the Egyptian frontiers.

The next article, *A Real Puzzle*, attempts to offer a possible answer.

A Real Puzzle – Military Matters

Edmund Hall (ESC 239)

Ronny Van Pellecom has found a most intriguing cover (see p.231) for which I can find no definitive answer. One thing is certain: it's nothing to do with the Jordanian Arab legion. The *Egyptian Gazette* is dated 1926 but in the 1937 Egyptian Army List no mention is made of such forces. Currently the Egyptian Army has two paramilitary forces with a Border Guard Forces under the Ministry of Defence. Again, in 1939, the year of the letter, no such force existed. I suspect the 1926 imitative either did not happen or had faded away by 1939.

The Arabic I think should read فرقة العرب the dot above the “f” is missing. This could then be interpreted as legion or troop.

So, alternatives: there is a suggestion on the reverse of a rectangular marking similar to the type used by the Egyptian Army at the time and there was a small contingent at Siwa in 1939 - but this doesn't explain the additional Arab legion cartouche.

As Europe prepared for war, Libyan nationalists at home and in exile perceived that the best chance for liberation from colonial domination lay in Italy's defeat in a larger conflict. Such an opportunity seemed to arise when Italy invaded Ethiopia in 1935, but Mussolini's defiance of the League of Nations and the feeble reaction of Britain and France dashed Libyan hopes for the time being. Planning for liberation resumed, however, with the outbreak of war in Europe in September 1939. Libyan political leaders met in Alexandria on October 20-23, 1939, to resolve past differences in the interest of future unity. Idris was accepted as leader of the nationalist cause by Tripolitarians as well as Cyrenaicans, with the proviso that he designate an advisory committee with representatives from both regions to assist him.

Tripolitarians were reluctantly willing to accept Idris as their political chief, but rejected any religious connection with the Sanusi order. Hence they objected to the use of the term Sanusi throughout the resolution in place of Libya or even Cyrenaica. These two areas of objection - the extent of the commitment to Britain and the role of the Sanusi order in an independent, united Libya - constituted the main elements of internal political dissension during the war and early postwar years.

British officials maintained that major postwar agreements or guarantees could not be undertaken while the war was still in progress. After the August 1940 resolution, five Libyan battalions were organized by the British, recruited largely from Cyrenaica veterans of the Italo-Sanusi wars. The Libyan Arab Force, better known as the Sanusi Army, served with distinction under British command through the campaigns of the desert war that ended in the liberation of Cyrenaica.



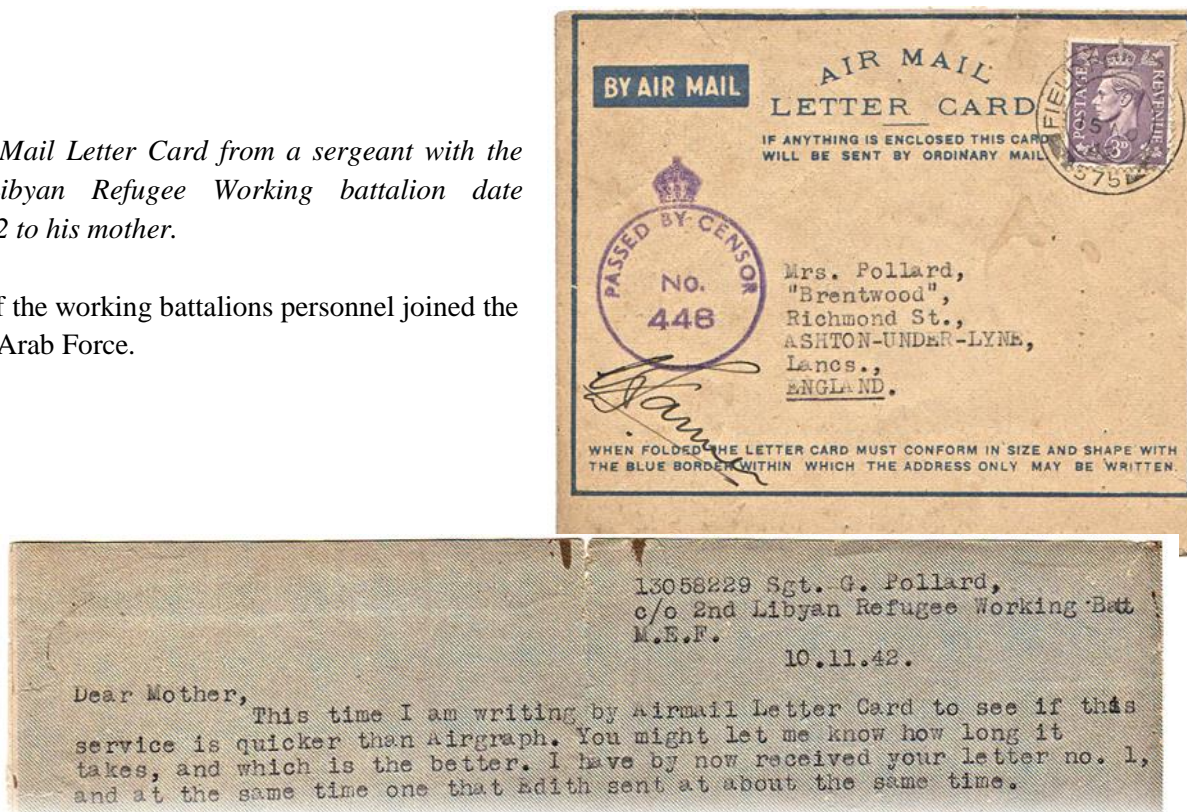
However the letter predates the formation of the Libyan battalions.

Philatelic items for the Libyan forces fighting for the British are scarce: the best I can offer is two covers, and one of those is from a working battalion.

Cover date ??, OC.42. addressed to a lieutenant in the Libyan Arab Force. It's possible the officer was an Australian.

An Air Mail Letter Card from a sergeant with the 2nd. Libyan Refugee Working battalion date 10.11.42 to his mother.

Some of the working battalions personnel joined the Libyan Arab Force.



These offer little in understanding Ronny's cover. So there nothing beyond conjecture: could be that the cover is from a part of the Egyptian Army guarding the borders and some enterprising member has decided they are an Arab Legion, or perhaps some of the Sanusi from Siwa or Libya had jumped the gun and formed a small troop to fight the Italians, possibly after the Alexandria conference of October 20-23, 1939? My bet, tentatively, is that it was from a member of the Egyptian Army, and so allowed through the post free of charge.

A meeting on August 7, 1940, established the basis of subsequent collaboration between Libyans and Britain. It was endorsed by Libyan émigrés in Syria, Sudan and Tunisia, who offered to co-operate with their compatriots in Egypt, and so the Libyan Arab Force, originally Sanusi force, was established. A recruitment bureau was set up under Col Bromilow. Five battalions were organised under his command, designed for guerrilla warfare in al-Jabal al-Akhdar (Green Mountain) as soon as circumstances would permit. Later it was organised as a regular army and took part in the Western Desert Campaign. For their actions in January 1942 they were thanked publicly by the British Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, in the House of Commons.

The Libyans in Tunisia and Sudan were instructed to collaborate with the French authorities, although the scope of their activities was much more limited. Some Libyans, who had been forced to fight on the side of the Italians, surrendered at the battle of Sidi Barrani and joined the British forces. The Special Operations Executive 102 Military Mission used the Libyan Arab Force 1941 during the siege of Tobruk to good effect. The *London Gazette* of April 23, 1942 announced the award of a Military Cross and that of April, 16, 1942 the Military Medal to Libyans with the force. There also acquitted themselves in the Sudan with the Free French.

Several deep penetrations units were set up during the campaign in North Africa as well as the Long Range Desert Group (LRDG), the Special Air Service (SAS) and there was Popski's Private Army (PPA). Vladimir Peniakoff was assigned to garrison duties as an Arabic-speaking junior officer in the Libyan Arab Force but, seeking a more active role, he formed the Libyan Arab Force Commando (L AFC), a small group of British and Libyan soldiers who operated behind the lines, particularly targeting Rommel's fuel supplies.



A picture from the web titled 'Arab Legion North Africa' from the Imperial War Museum archive.

But is this 'Arab Legion' anything to do with Ronny's cover 'Arab Legion' ?

Membership changes

New members:

ESC 699 Samer El-Sayed El-Zalabany, Villa 172, Jasmine 6, Misr 2000 Square, 1st Settlement, New Cairo, 11477, Egypt (Egypt, Middle East, India, Mexico)

ESC 700 Kevin J Everett Jr, Promenade Higashi Fushimi 1-7-62-601, Fuji Machi, Nishi Tokyo-Shi, Tokyo-to, 202-0014, Japan (Classical Egypt 1866-1940, MNH, GB stamps used in Egypt)

New temporary members

ESC tmp1 Gamal Mohammed Elkhazzab, 1 Elserafy St (from Moh Sedky Shafee St), Apt. 11, El Manial, Cairo 11451, Egypt

(Discovering new/unlisted varieties, stamps, stationery, FDCs, revenue papers)

ESC tmp2 Mohamed Adballah Khalil, 1st Floor, Flat 1122, Dar al Nayfa, Al Malaz, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (Stamps issued before 1952)

ESC tmp3 Ahmad Nabil Lotfy Hassan, PO Box 7072 Hawally, Kuwait 32091
(Egypt stamps 1866 to today, special interest in royal items)

ESC tmp4 Adel Qasem Ali Al-Sarraf, PO Box 67496, Bayan, Kuwait 43765
(Egypt pre 1965, inc all royalty, errors, varieties, imperfs etc; all Giza, Egypt small-town cancels on stamps, covers, postal seals)

ESC tmp5 Mostafa Mahsoud Saad el-Deen, 121B, Hadayek el Ahram, El Ahram Giza, Egypt
(Small-town cancels on stamps, covers, postal seals)

ESC tmp6 Ms Nagwa Gomaa, 90 Georgian Drive, Oakville, Ontario L6H 6V1, Canada
(Egypt, all philatelic areas)

ESC tmp7 Hany G Ibrahim, 1268 Liberty Avenue, Hillside, New Jersey 07205, United States
(Egypt stamps, varieties, covers and postal history)

Change of Address:

ESC 668 Andrew Titley, 500 West 30th St., Apt. 20H, New York, NY 10001, United States

Resigned:

ESC 541 Jack Graham

ESC 617 Vic Potter

Lapsed:

ESC 625 Mohab Akhnoukh

ESC 690 Khalid Abu Bakr

My email about the demise of the QC brought forth not the trickle I had expected but a torrent. I now have enough material for about three QCs. Several members sent in more than one article, but was my plea successful? The majority of the articles were from the old hands, although thank you all – a few were from new authors. Making the decision about the order in which they are to be published will be an arbitrary one, more to do with making pages fit and no reflection on the merit or appeal of any article. So please be patient if your article is not here or even in the next QC. Your response does indicate that members do in fact continue to prize our magazine - may it flourish well into the future.

Editor

Reconstructing a Most Interesting Cover

Vincent Centonze (ESC 571)

The purpose of this article is twofold: to examine a cover with an interesting postal history and to do so by way of a computer generated graphic *reconstruction* of the cover. This means that I intend to show the cover as it originally appeared when mailed, and then show it in subsequent stages as additional markings and postage due stamps were applied.

The method I employed to reconstruct my cover is fairly simple and can be performed by anyone with a personal computer with Microsoft Paint[®], which is a graphics painting program that is included with all versions of Microsoft Windows[™]. The method can sometimes be slow and painstaking, but I find that it provides a useful way to “declutter” a cover and establish the chronology of events. It is useful for those who may get intimidated by first sight of a “busy” cover with numerous markings.

Yes, there are many seasoned postal historians out there with an uncanny ability to look at a busy cover and immediately follow it chronologically through its journey... alas; I'm not one of them. Indeed, these individuals will certainly scoff at those of us, like me, who see the need to use computer graphics to reconstruct a cover to follow its postal history; they will no doubt relegate us to the ash heap of philatelists with too much disposable time on their hands. How I wish that was true! Unfortunately, just as my wife rightfully accuses me of being unable to multi-task, neither am I able to look at a busy cover and immediately decipher its myriad markings. So hopefully my method will be useful to those like me who are *cover-clutter challenged*.

I recently came across an interesting cover from Great Britain to Egypt carried by the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, usually known as P&O. The cover was mailed from Brighton, England, to a Lt. Y.T. Hearn, of the Royal Engineers, who was a passenger expected at Port Said from Bombay on a P&O steamer. P&O is a British shipping and logistics company dating from the early 19th century. Maritime postal historians are intimately familiar with it because the company was the primary carrier of overseas mails for over a century.¹

After the letter to Lt. Hearn arrived in Port Said, several P&O steamers were checked. The passenger was apparently never found, and the cover ended up being forwarded to Marseilles, and then back to the sender. Let us now reconstruct the cover:

It left Brighton at 12.15pm on August 11 1899, franked with a one-penny lilac Queen Victoria definitive.



Fig. 1. The cover as it appeared after being postmarked in Brighton, England

Because it was addressed to Port Said, the correct franking should have been four pence. Therefore, when the letter was sorted in London for its destination, it was



noticed to be short-paid and boldly marked as being due “3d” and cancelled with a “T” in hexagon marking with “L” for London beneath.

Fig. 2. The cover as it appeared in London after it was assessed 3-pence postage due.

The probable route was London to Dover, then across the Channel by ferry to Calais. From there it continued by rail to Brindisi, Italy, on the overland route known as the P&O express.² In 1899 there were two express service steamers, the *Isis* and the *Osiris*, which shuttled mail between Brindisi and Port Said.³

The cover has a Port Said arrival date stamp of August 16. In his *British Maritime Postal History, Volume 2*, Reginald Kirk lists only the *Isis* departures and arrivals to and from Brindisi, but not the *Osiris* departures. *Isis* departures are reported for August 7 and 21. Because the two ships alternated, it can be assumed that the intervening departure, occurring about August 14-15, was most likely by the *Osiris*. This makes sense because it would approximately concur with the Port Said arrival on August 16. On that date, 2 millièmes and 1-piastre postage due stamps of the 1889 issue were added and cancelled, to satisfy the equivalent of 3-pence short-paid deficit. The hexagonal “T” marking applied in London was most probably scribbled out in black ink at that time, and “3d” was written in orange crayon next to the postage due stamps.



Fig. 3. The cover as it appeared after having postage due stamps applied and cancelled in Port Said

Then, the arduous task of finding Lt. Hearn began. Manifests of P&O steamers arriving in Port Said were checked for the passenger, and because the letter was forwarded to Marseilles on or about September 5, it remained in Port Said for 20 days. Kirk confirms that during that time the following steamers transited Port Said: *Britannia*, *Caledonia*, *Rome*, *Arabia*, *Peninsular*, *Ballaarat*, and *Carthage*. As expected, some of these arrived from Indian ports; however, some did not. Some were also apparently eastbound, yet their manifests were checked anyway. The cover is replete with

handwritten markings in ink and pencil, mostly apparently entered by different individuals, indicating that Lt Hearn was not on board.

The *Britannia* arrived at Port Said on or about August 15 from Colombo, having passed through Aden. She left next day for Marseilles, Gibraltar, and London⁴. This may have been the first manifest checked, even though the ship neither originated in, nor transited, Bombay. The *Caledonia* passed through Port Said on or about August 16, eastbound for Aden, where she arrived on August 20⁵. Nevertheless, her manifest was checked. Likewise, the *Rome* was eastbound, heading for Sydney, and left Marseilles on August 17, probably calling at Port Said on or about August 19. She left on August 22 for Aden⁶, and her manifest was also checked for the elusive Lt. Hearn. The *Arabia*, a likely candidate to carry him because she originated in Bombay, left Aden on August 17 for Port Said⁷, probably arriving on or about August 22. Another outbound ship, the *Peninsular*, called at Port Said on or about August 30, because she was in Aden on September 4⁸. Even though she was eastward bound for Bombay, she also was checked for Lt. Hearn.

Fig. 4. The cover as it appeared after having been checked against the manifests of several P&O steamers

The *Ballaarat* was a good candidate to have carried Lt. Hearn because she passed through Port Said from India, leaving Bombay on August 26; mail from the vessel was in Aden on September 1; and Brindisi on September 8⁹. Therefore she was probably in Port Said on or about September 6. Unfortunately, as the markings indicate, he was not on the *Ballaarat*. This may have been the last ship checked before the cover was forwarded. One other ship, the *Carthage*, was checked, but I have been unable to confirm when she was in Port Said during the three weeks the cover languished in some P&O mail clerk's dusty office.



After approximately three weeks Lt. Hearn was not identified on any passenger manifest, and the cover was forwarded to Marseilles. Perhaps his name was missed on a manifest and he was subsequently identified as having gone on to Marseilles.

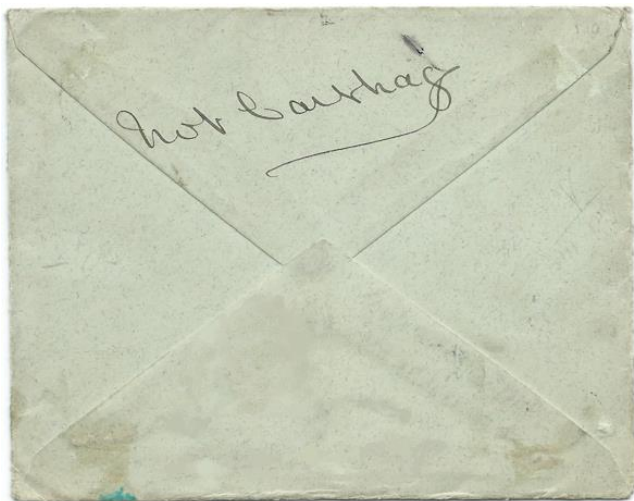


Fig. 5. The back of the cover as it appeared when the manifest of the *Carthage* was checked and Lt. Hearn was not aboard

After approximately three weeks Lt. Hearn was not identified on any passenger manifest, and the cover was forwarded to Marseilles. Perhaps his name was missed on a manifest and he was subsequently identified as having gone on to Marseilles. After all, I found that at least one ship, the *Shannon*, left Bombay on August 19¹⁰, and may have been in Port Said on or about August 30; there were probably others. One would think that if Lt. Hearn were headed back to Britain, then following him only as far as Marseilles would have done no good since the cover would continue to be one step behind. Perhaps it was assumed that there would have been a better chance to catch up with him in Marseilles for some reason. In any case, “Port Said” was crossed out in orange ink and replaced by “Marseilles”.

Fig. 6. The cover as it appeared after ‘Port Said’ was crossed out and ‘Marseilles’ written in



Fig. 7. Cover as it appeared after a 15-centimes French postage due was affixed and cancelled

It then began its journey to Marseilles on or about September 7 or 8. At some point someone scribbled on the back “Inconnu à bord” (not known on board), indicating that the passenger certainly was not aboard the ship that carried the cover to Marseilles. It arrived on September 10, where more postage due was applied, this time in the form of a French 15-centimes green postage due stamp of the 1894 series. A Marseilles arrival postmark was applied to the back of the cover.

References

Kirk, R. *British Maritime Postal History, Volume 1: The P&O Bombay & Australian Lines – 1852-1914* (Dereham, Norfolk: Pheas-Postal History International; Division of Proud-Bailey Ltd, 1981).

Kirk, R. *British Maritime Postal History, Volume 2: The P&O Lines to the Far East* (Heathfield, East Sussex: Proud-Bailey Ltd, 1981).

The P&O Heritage website. <http://www.poheritage.com>



Fig. 8. Back of the cover showing 'Inconnu à bord' and Marseille arrival postmark

I presume that at some point it was decided to return the letter from Marseilles to the sender. It is here that I believe the red "Retour a l'envoyeur" (Return to sender) instructions were written. It is possible that it was written before the letter was even forwarded to Marseilles from Port Said; but the writing implement, the colour of the ink and the handwriting are all different from what was used to write "Marseilles". The two sets of instructions were written at different times by different individuals. Also, if the sender was presumably in England, why would the cover have been "returned" to Marseilles?

Thus I believe that the cover arrived in Marseilles in a further attempt to track down the passenger. Further searching for Lt. Hearn must eventually have been deemed futile, however, and a decision made to return the cover to sender. Unfortunately, there are no markings beyond this point to indicate that it arrived in England or to provide any further history.

Fig. 9. Final appearance of the cover as it was returned to the sender

No one likes a story without an ending, but unfortunately we will probably never know this one. Can more information about Lt. Hearn and his travels be gleaned? Possibly. After all, there are many records tucked away out there. Perhaps somewhere in British military archives there is a record of Lt. Hearn and his travels. In military life, transfers and sudden changes in orders have always been commonplace. For instance, the Boer War began on October 11, 1899, so it's possible that Lt. Hearn received an abrupt change in orders sending him there in the weeks preceding the outbreak of hostilities.



It's fun to speculate; however, while this story, like many postal history tales, has not yet left us a definitive answer, it *has* left us with an attractive and intriguing cover. Some of my assumptions about the chronology of various events and written markings may certainly be incorrect. So if any postal historians with far more knowledge than I would like to chime in with information about where I may have erred, I welcome the comments. Nevertheless, through the use of computer graphics, this cover has been made all the more interesting by seeing how it might have appeared at different stages of its journey while it was still young, vibrant, and in search of an elusive passenger.

Endnotes

1. Beginning in 1837 the Peninsular Steam Navigation Company acquired a contract to deliver mail to the Iberian peninsula. By 1840 it had merged with the Transatlantic Steam Navigation Company, and acquired a contract to deliver mail to Egypt. It was then formally incorporated as the Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Company. From that time until World War II, delivering mail was a mainstay of the P&O company. It is generally accepted that the company started in 1837.

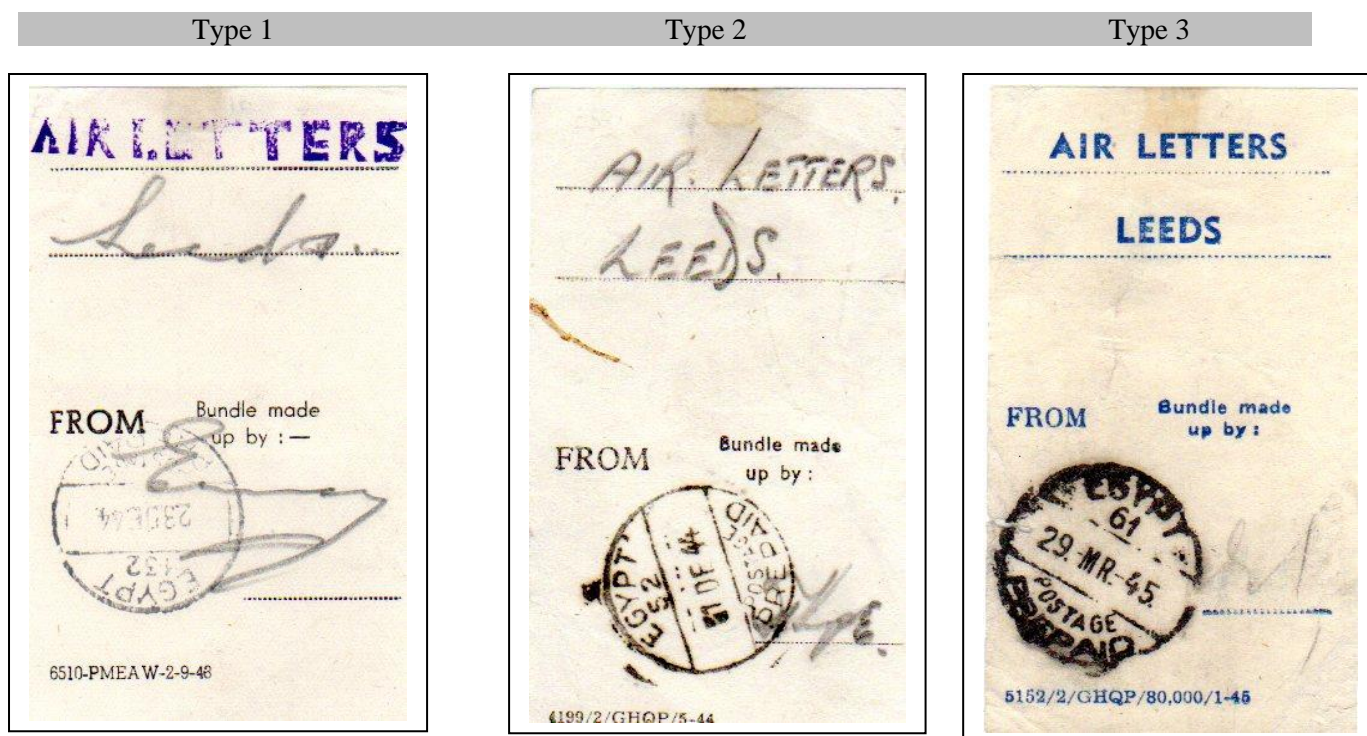
2. Kirk, Vol. 1, p39; 3. Kirk, Vol. 1, p85; 4. Kirk, Vol. 2, p139; 5. Kirk, Vol.1, p86; 6. Kirk, Vol. 2, p138; 7. Kirk, Vol. 1, p86; 8. Kirk, Vol. 1, p86; 9. Kirk, Vol. 1, p86; 10. Kirk, Vol. 1, p86.

W.W.II British Army Letter Sorting Dockets

Richard Wheatley (ESC 168)

New postal arrangements with the Egyptian postal authorities came into force on 1 May 1941; from then on the British army became responsible for their “free” mail going home.

The army postal section was issued with Egyptian made circular datestamps reading: **EGYPT/ number / POSTAGE / PREPAID**, these became known as the EPP datestamps. This “free” mail was censored, post marked and bundled-up and taken to a port or airfield for onward transmission. For sorting/ bundling-up purposes, printed slips of paper were employed - these I call docket. So far I have found three Types of these docket, all headed “Air Letters”.



Type	Size	Printing date	Air Letter	Destination
1	90 x 55mm	2 - 9 - 43	Violet handstamp	LEEDS in manuscript
2	90 x 50mm	5 - 44	Manuscript in pencil	ditto
3	90 x 50mm	1 - 45	Blue printed	LEEDS printed in blue

At the foot of these docket there is the printing data. In Types 2 and 3, the capital letters GHQP could stand for General Head-Quarters Postal, and in Type 3 the 80,000 could be the actual print run.

The EPP datestamps have been well documented by Benians (Ref. 1), the one used on my Type 2 docket is the scarcest, being only 25mm diameter. He wrote that the EPP datestamps were applied at the Army or Field post offices and each of my three docket have one of these marks below where it says “**FROM / bundle made up by:-**”.

EPP number	Date	Nearest recorded location and date
132	23 DE 44	Abu Sueir 11 JA 44
52	7 DE 44	Moascar 29 NO 44
61	29 MR 45	Port Tewfiq 8 AP 45

As a matter of interest, the EPP datestamps have numbers ranging from 1 to 155 and their use petered out at the end of the war.

Looking through an old issue of the TPO Journal (Autumn 1999) I came across this short item:

Up Special TPO – Airmail docket

Several small dockets or labels similar to the one illustrated alongside have been reported in **TPO**. Apparently they were for use with bundles of letters passing through the “UP SPECIAL TPO” and destined for overseas. ‘North Africa’ seems a vague address: would the bundle of letters go to London, or some other UK office dealing with international mail, to be further sorted for addresses in North Africa?

The printing and border is in blue; similar labels have been seen for ‘South America (East)’ and ‘South America (West)’, again postmarked in 1969.

Further information would be welcomed. RM



This item is dated 1969 and whilst it is not directly Egypt related, it does show how the system was still working for airmail destined for that region from England.

Special TPO's began way back on 1 July 1885. This UP SPECIAL TPO datestamp is Wilson's no. 49i (Ref. 2). It was issued between 1968/69 and was held at Carlisle and would have been used on the North Western UP TPO which ran from Aberdeen to London. On 8 August 1963 this UP Special TPO was the TPO that was involved in the Great Train Robbery!

References

1. Benians, FW, *Egypt Postage Prepaid Military Datestamps 1941-47* (1978)
2. Wilson, Harold S, *The Travelling Post Offices of GB & Ireland* (1966)

New Perfin Find

This remarkable perfin discovery was posted on our Facebook page on March 9 by Gamal Elkhazzab, who has since become the very first of our new “temporary” members (*see p. 234 and back page*). We are delighted to see that new discoveries are being made by enthusiasts willing to join the Circle's activities.



EGYPT STUDY CIRCLE ACCOUNTS 2015

Income and Expenditure Account (General Account) for the year ended December 31, 2015

	2014	2015
INCOME		
Subscriptions	3,634.07	3,448.51
Auction account	2,685.38	1,201.42
Bank deposit interest (net)	0.00	0.00
Donations	20.00	20.00
Advertisements	200.00	250.00
	6,539.45	4,919.93
EXPENDITURE		
Meeting room hire	884.00	420.00
Cost of <i>Quarterly Circular</i>	3,680.02	2,794.26
Website costs	141.58	171.58
Officers' stationery, phone etc	131.87	187.50
Insurance	143.92	148.54
Library	100.32	40.00
	5,081.71	3,761.88
Surplus for the year	1,457.74	1,158.05
Surplus at January 1 2015	16,270.21	17,727.95
Surplus at December 31 2015	<u>£17,727.95</u>	<u>£18,866.00</u>

Balance Sheet (General account) as at December 31 2015

	2014	2015
ASSETS		
Stamp collection (catalogue)	5,251.00	5,251.00
Circle library & records		
2015 room hire prepaid	420.00	660.00
Cash at bank		
Current account	13,249.70	14,179.61
Deposit account	0.00	0.00
	18,920.70	20,090.61
LIABILITIES		
Secretary/Treasurer expenses	125.31	187.50
Members' subscriptions 2015	60.00	192.00
Printing of <i>QC</i>	1,027.44	825.11
	1,192.75	1,204.61
	<u>£17,727.95</u>	<u>£18,886.00</u>
Representing		
Accumulated surplus	<u>£17,727.95</u>	<u>£18,886.00</u>

I have prepared the Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet from the records and explanations provided to me and confirm that they are in accordance therewith...

S W Bunce, Chartered Accountant, February 1, 2016

The Study Circle is on Facebook!

Hani Sharestan (ESC 595)

Since its beginnings in 1935 the Egypt Study Circle's goal has always been to promote and educate collectors around the world about Egyptian philately. As with any organisation, the Circle has needed to adapt to collectors' ever-changing habits and needs. With the introduction of the internet and eventually social media, access to a vast amount of information has become readily available to many people throughout the world. To take advantage of this new area was the basic thought behind creating a second arm to the Circle's online presence, the first of course being the group's home web page. Now the second is a group on social media's key player, Facebook.

The page is the culmination of several discussions of the pros and cons, ESC meetings, telephone calls, and eventually a face to face meeting between Mike Murphy, Edmund Hall and Hani Sharestan in London back in October 2015 to finalise the decision to move forward. Shortly thereafter the design phase of the Facebook page started and was eventually agreed by this committee of three.

The main goal of the page was, and continues to be, to further promote the Circle and Egyptian philately. This was seen as an important step 80 years after the group's start, from 1935 to 2015, to attract new members who can contribute to our beloved hobby.



ESC's Facebook page was launched on December 1, 2015, and started with some 20 members, all of whom were added by Hani as a mix of ESC members and others with knowledge and passion for Egyptian philately. An email by Mike Murphy to ESC members announcing the launch brought another dozen or so ESC members with Facebook presence. From that point other enthusiasts – both ESC members and non-members - started joining the Facebook page, mainly through word of mouth.

The page now has an average of one to two posts a day, many of them garnering attention and further discussions from the group's members. The posts have included unrecorded stamp varieties headed by the Circle's newest member, Gamal Elkhazzab, and postal history postings by another new member, Hany Ibrahim. Among the numerous ESC members who contribute to the postings and discussions are Yasser ElShamy, Atef Sarian, Lucien Toutounji and Moheb Rizkalla, to name only a few.

At the time this article was written the Facebook page had 135 members, of whom approximately 40 are full and long-standing Circle members and the rest ... let's call them future members at this point. At least 80 or so of the 135 have contributed to the page with postings, comments, and "Likes".

If you are not yet a member of the ESC Facebook page, please point your browser to the following address: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EgyptStudyCircle/> Lively discussions, new discoveries and new friends await you there.

Hani Sharestan is the Egypt Study Circle Facebook Co-ordinator