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CONTENTS.

Officers 1, Meetings 2, Stampex Awards 4, Members iii

ARTICLES.

'Mamlaka' Find	Anton Jansen	p4
The Slave Trade, from the Nile Sources to Cairo. Part 2	Hany Salam	p5-9
Watch Out: There are Crocodiles About	Roman A Rimonis	p10-16
Canadian Post Offices During UNEF I and II	Scott Van Horn	p16-17
Handwritten Notation on French Disinfected Mail Rediscovered	Guy Dutau	p18-23
Airmail Letter Cards – The Official Paid Version	John Davis	p24-25
Military Matters: Bright Star	Edmund Hall	piv



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PTS
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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.

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مصلحة البوستة المصرية

AVIS DE RÉCEPTION علم التسليم

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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

[Signature]

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
[Signature]

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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.

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Meetings dates for 2017

Three meetings will be held at 2pm in the Allenby Room at the **Victory Services Club**, Seymour Street, Marble Arch, London. the September meeting at **Stampex (Sept 12-15) is at 2.30pm.**

May 6, 2pm	Services Club	Lehnert & Landrock	Roman Rimonis
July 8, 2pm	Services Club	Metered Mail	Paul Green and members
Sept 16, 2.30pm	Stampex	Ten Sheets	All members
Nov 4, 2pm	Services Club	Boy King	John Davis

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Facebook

Report of the Annual General Meeting, February 18

PRESENT: John Sears (President), Peter Andrews (Chairman), John Davis (Librarian/Deputy Chairman), Mike Murphy (Secretary), Brian Sedgley (Treasurer), Edmund Hall (Editor/Webmaster), Sami Sadek (Committee), Jon Aitchison, Adel al-Sarraf (Kuwait), Bart Belonje (Netherlands), Mike Bramwell, John Clarke, Cyril Defriez, Denis Doren (Canada), Adel Eskander (France), Ted Fraser-Smith, Pauline Gittoes, Peter Grech, Paul Green, Neil Hitchens, Laurence Kimpton, Costas Kelemenis (Greece), Mohamed Lotfy (Egypt), Atef Sarian, Greg Todd, Ronny Van Pellecom (Belgium), Vahe Varjabedian (Egypt). **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Stephen Bunce, Tony Cakebread, Mostafa El-Dars, Paul Grigg, Alan Jeyes, Seppo Laaksonen, Hany Makram, Roman Rimonis, Trent Ruebush, Sherif Samra, Tony Schmidt, Hani Sharestan, Ibrahim Shoukry, Richard Wheatley.

Encouraged by the attraction of an Ottoman-Empire-themed Spring Stampex, at which several of our members exhibited parts of their collections (p4), and a Live Auction, we had a crowded meeting room of 27 members, perhaps the best attendance since London 2010. The Minutes of the 2016 AGM were approved; no matters were arising.

Chairman: The Chairman welcomed such a good turnout and was especially pleased to see new members from overseas at their first meeting. There were special welcomes for Mohamed Lotfy (Egypt) and Adel al-Sarraf (Kuwait), the two members who chose to turn last year's Facebook "temporary membership" into full membership. We hope both enjoy their collecting with the Circle. Reviewing the year, the retiring Chairman said he was pleased that it had indicated a good pointer to the health of the Circle, with a very successful visit to Cairo to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Egypt's first stamp issue, the staggering find of a hoard of Muhammad Ali period correspondence in Asyut, and a whole series of splendid displays by our members - all promising a bright future for the Circle.

Secretary: The Secretary reported on the continued success of the Facebook page, with grateful thanks to Hani Sharestan (ESC 595), and said that plans were in train to augment last year's "temporary membership" scheme with perhaps some slight change in arrangements. He reported a net increase in membership of nine over the year, from 173 to 182, including two new members accepted by the meeting - welcome to Rob Parkes of Cheltenham and Alex Ben-Arieh of Jerusalem. It was noted, however, that more than 30 members had yet to subscribe for 2017: they will be receiving reminder messages.

Votes for the MacArthur Award, intended to encourage members to write articles for the *QC*, had again been disappointingly slow to come in - but at least the range of choices, nine articles, indicated the breadth of our interest in all aspects of Egyptian philately. He was delighted to announce the 2016 winner as Greg Todd (ESC 585) for his research into stamped covers from Massawa (*QC* 259 p.252-6).



John Davis, our new Chairman, left, presents the MacArthur Award to Greg Todd after the meeting

Accounts: The accounts were presented by the Treasurer (to be published later), showing a very slight increase from £4,919.93 to £5,007.09 in income for the year, balanced by an increase in expenditure from £3,761.88 to £4,463.33, due largely to one room hire payment being delayed and a good deal more work having been done in digitising back copies of the *QC* and *L'OP* so that all are available to members on the website. This work continues. Overall, the Circle ended 2016 with a surplus of £19,429.76 against £18,886.00 in 2015. Adoption of the accounts was proposed by John Davis (ESC 213) and seconded by Peter Grech (ESC 266); a vote of thanks to Stephen Bunce (ESC 272) for preparing the accounts was proposed by Brian Sedgley (ESC 268) and seconded by Edmund Hall (ESC 239).

Auctions: The Secretary reported that Live Auction 6, in the springtime, realised a total of almost £4,000, with 12 successful room bidders and 19 by mail, and a Circle commission before postage of £565.16. The autumn auction was a great success, with 44 successful buyers and 16 vendors. Nearly 300 lots were sold for a total of £8166.50. After postage costs, the commission due to the Circle totalled £1037.61. He appealed to members to contribute high-quality material for sale, to create more interest and thus increase commission.

Editor/Webmaster: The Editor reported an encouraging amount of progress in the efforts of Neil Hitchens (ESC 651) to eventually take over the role of Webmaster in light of his serious illness, reporting that the Live Auction list was produced entirely by his efforts. Edmund views the Auction commission as vital to our future, and says that we seem to benefit more than other societies. Turning to the *QC*, he said he had been flooded with articles after last year's desperate appeals for material to fill its pages, and thanked members for hurrying to produce fascinating articles. He apologised to those whose material had not yet been published, and warned that the backlog of material would not last for ever. There is still need to produce new articles.

Librarian: the Librarian announced the receipt, thanks to the good offices of Ronny Van Pellecom (ESC 618) and Greg Todd, of a number of copy documents from the archive of the late Peter Smith, comprising largely material produced by the Egyptian Post Office in the 19th century and so a first-hand account of Egypt in transition. All have been protected and are available to borrow (full list to be published later). He also announced receipt of *God Dies by the Nile*, the novel by the leading Egyptian feminist Nawal El Saadawi, and the curious *Wilfrid Blunt's Egyptian Garden: Fox-hunting in Cairo*, an official report of a 1900 court case after British officers hunting with hounds were beaten up by ghaffirs when they entered Blunt's garden.

Election of Officers: Peter Andrews, Chairman, standing down, John Davis, the Committee nomination, was elected by acclaim in his place; and Jon Aitchison (ESC 661), Committee nominee, was elected by acclaim as Deputy Chairman. The Committee nominee for Antipodean Agent, Tony Cakebread (ESC 536), was also elected by acclaim and the meeting thanked him for volunteering and wished all new officers well in their new posts.

The meeting then elected three new Honorary Life Members: Peter Andrews, Cyril Defriez (ESC 272) and Edmund Hall. As sole standing Life Member, the President said he was delighted to be joined by three such distinguished colleagues, and paid tribute to each: Peter Andrews for having filled every post available during his long years of membership since the mid-1960s and particularly for having guided the Circle into safe waters after the sudden death of Robin Bertram in 2005; Cyril Defriez for his 40 years of care and attention in publishing details of all of Egypt's new issues in the *QC* and acting as custodian of the Circle's modern stamps; and Edmund Hall, another who has filled virtually every role in the Circle hierarchy but whose main role in recent years has been to produce a steadily improving *QC* (winner of a Vermeil medal in the exhibition) and to invent and curate the invaluable website from scratch.

Other business: John Davis proposed that we re-create the expertisation committee. After much discussion, with strong arguments both for and against, the motion was withdrawn on the grounds that at the moment the hurdles outweighed the potential benefit. It was agreed that a committee was desirable, and that the matter would be kept under consideration.

Jon Aitchison proposed that the Circle re-affiliate to the Association of British Philatelic Societies, which is being reorganised to become an even more vibrant voice for the future of philately in Britain, arguing that the Circle's voice should also be heard. The meeting was addressed by Dane Garrod, the specialist societies representative. The meeting voted 16-3 to re-affiliate.

Jon Aitchison proposed that closer ties be formed with our Egyptian colleagues. After hearing that we already had an ad hoc but firm arrangement to visit every two years for the PSE's international exhibitions, and that overseas membership of the PSE was not offered at present, it was agreed to take no further action.

The long AGM discussion meant that the Live Auction that followed moved at breakneck pace: grateful thanks from all to Edmund Hall, the auctioneer. It resulted in 109 of the 189 lots being sold (58%), with preliminary results showing 82 lots sold in the room and 27 to email bids, a disappointing figure. Though such bids were down, there should be a commission of about £300 for Circle funds.

Given that the AGM and Auction were awkwardly squeezed into the two hours allowed by Stampex, no decision was taken on the place or date of next year's AGM. It is likely not to be at Stampex.

ESC Awards at Spring Stampex 2017

The Circle is delighted to announce that members from both Egypt and the UK, as well as several other countries, took part in the Ottoman-Empire themed Spring Stampex 2017 between February 15 and 18 and were rewarded with some excellent medals. In particular we should mention the gold medals won by John Davis (Early Ottoman Egypt, five frames), Jon Aitchison (Egyptian Officially Sealed Mail, five frames), Laurence Kimpton (The RAF Cairo-Baghdad Air Mail Service, five frames), and Atef Sarian (The UPU Congress 1934, five frames).

For the first time in all our memories, we entered the *QC* in the Literature class, and congratulate Edmund Hall, the Editor, who was rewarded with 79 points and a Vermeil medal for his much-appreciated hard work. The full list (E&OE) is:

Name	ESC	Title	Frames	Award
Jon Aitchison	661	Egyptian Officially Sealed Mail	5	Gold
John Davis	213	Early Ottoman Egypt	5	Gold
Laurence Kimpton	591	The RAF Cairo-Baghdad Air Mail Service	5	Gold
Atef Sarian	639	The UPU Congress 1934	5	Gold
Jon Aitchison	661	Egyptian Cassette Post	5	Large Vermeil
Khaled Mostafa	638	Egypt's Retta Cancels 1866-1952	1	Large Vermeil
Tarek Mokhtar	692	Shibin el-Kom Postmarks 1870-1922	1	Large Vermeil
Mohamed Lotfy	701	King Fouad Portrait Issue 197-37	5	Vermeil
Jon Aitchison	661	Egyptian Interpostal Seals	1	Vermeil
Edmund Hall	239	Egypt Study Circle <i>Quarterly Circular</i>	1	Vermeil
Mike Murphy	240	Farouk and the Palace Post	1	Vermeil
Amr el-Etreby	688	1915 Provisional: a Centenary Celebration	1	Large Silver
Mike Murphy	240	Egyptian Government Offices	1	Silver
Brian Sedgley	268	Khedivial Mail Line Ports in the Levant	1	Bronze
Alaa Massoud	561	Palestine Postal Service Foreign Offices	1	Bronze
Also:				
Jon Aitchison	661	Telegraph Service of the Channel Islands	8	Gold
Jon Aitchison	661	Ballon Monte to the Channel Islands	1	Gold
Stephen Schumann	679	Ceylon – the KGVI 40c Air Letters	1	Large Vermeil
Brian Callan	694	Marie Curie's Life and Legacy	5	Vermeil
Jon Aitchison	661	Greetings Telegrams of the Channel Islands	1	Vermeil
Join Aitchison	661	Letters, Documents and Mail from Jethou	1	Large Silver

'Mamlaka' Find

Anton Jansen (ESC 383)



As a follow-up to the nice paper of Hisham Bassyouny (“Not one but Two 1941 Farouk 6 Millièmes Letter Sheets”, *QC* 259, pp 274-6), I illustrate an earlier date for his Mamlaka”-inscribed vignette. His earliest dates are 28 ?E 42 (probably SE) and 12 MAY 43 – my date is 29 JU 42. Mike Murphy adds: I find I have two “Mamlaka” – dated 16 AU 42 and 18 OC 46. Is it a surprise that four out of five examples are uprated?

The Slave Trade, from the Nile Sources to Cairo. Part 2

Continued from QC 259 p284

Hany Salam (ESC 580)

The slave markets

Wekalet el-Jellabah, the Black Slave Market

“They are no longer in continual dread of the whip of the slave-merchant, whose cruelty is manifested particularly in the desert, when there is no possibility of their escape and when they suffer most from privations and fatigue. They now enjoy repose and better food. Most of them, until their arrival in Egypt, fancy that the people of that country are cannibals; but now, instead of finding that they are to be eaten by their purchasers, they learn that the slave of the Muslim is better treated than his servant. The Gellabs (or slave-merchants) of Upper Egypt bring their black slaves to Cairo, where many of them are sold to the slave-dealers of the metropolis, who obtain a small profit by the re-sale.”

Edward William Lane, from *The Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*



Starting from the end of the 18th century, it became the custom to give responsibility for supervising the Wekala to the Sheikh who was chosen by his Jellabahs, and then his candidature was officially recognised by the government. One of the Sheikh's duties was to collect a fee per capita sold in the wekala. In return, a trader received a testament (*Fig. 10*) that a sale had taken place, which was necessary to have the sale officially registered. That testament was to accompany the slave through all business transactions, and the slave was to receive that document if freed.



Fig. 10: 1835, a testament of sale for a slave, issued in Egypt, struck by the cachet of the Sheikh of the Jellabahs. It contains the slave's name and race, new owners' name, Jellabah's name and the date of issue. Slave sale contract, issued and stamped by the Sheikh's agent.

Ali Mubarak in his book *El Khatat El Tawfikeyeh* wrote that the Wekala's location was in the street of El Sanadekeyeh built by Sultan El Ghuri. The market had two gates – one leading to El Sanadekeyeh street and the other to the New Road. These streets still exist in Cairo, now occupied by wholesalers of books and stationary. In the mid 19th century the slave trade flourished to the extent that places had to be rented in other markets when caravans of slaves arrived in Cairo. The court of the wekala would be packed with slaves up to the gates.

In 1843 Mohamed Ali ordered the relocation of the Wekala to Kait-Bey, to the northeast of Cairo, outside the city gates. This measure was short-lived as after his death the wekala moved back next to its original location at el-Sanadekeya. Slaves were taught no Arabic except for the name of their place of origin.

To check the condition of his goods, the buyer could ask a slave to walk or run, lift the arms, or was allowed to touch the slave's body. Female slaves remained almost naked apart from a small cloth wrapped round the hips, which is the way they dressed at home. Slaves who had already worked in Egyptian households for some time, however, were usually dressed and did not feel comfortable when buyers examined or touched them.

Jellabahs usually sat next to their slaves, smoking shabbak and paying little attention to what was happening around them until a buyer showed interest in one of their slaves. At that, the Jellabah would start to bargain. The custom was for the Jellabah to inquire how much the buyer was willing to pay. In some cases, the trader or the buyer would use a slave agent (broker).

The laws introduced by Said Pasha to counter the slave trade did nothing but prompt Jellabahs to transfer the slave markets to the interior of their houses.

The slave market of Tanta was the biggest annual event, taking place during Saint El Said El Badawi's anniversary. It gathered all slave traders and buyers; hundreds of slaves were brought from all areas. The market was held at the city's entrance, where tents were set up to accommodate slaves. The slave trade was considered the most important part of the fair, which was why the slave trade continued in Tanta until the end of the 19th century, after the abolition of slavery throughout Egypt.

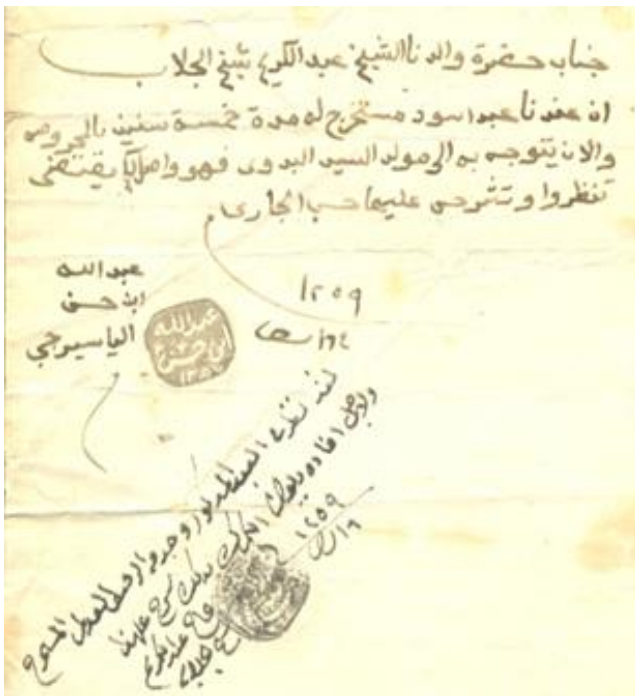


Fig. 11: May 16, 1843, a letter sent by a slave trader to the Sheikh of Jellabahs in Tanta saying that he is sending slaves to El Said El Badawi fair and asking the sheikh to check the documentation and the customs.

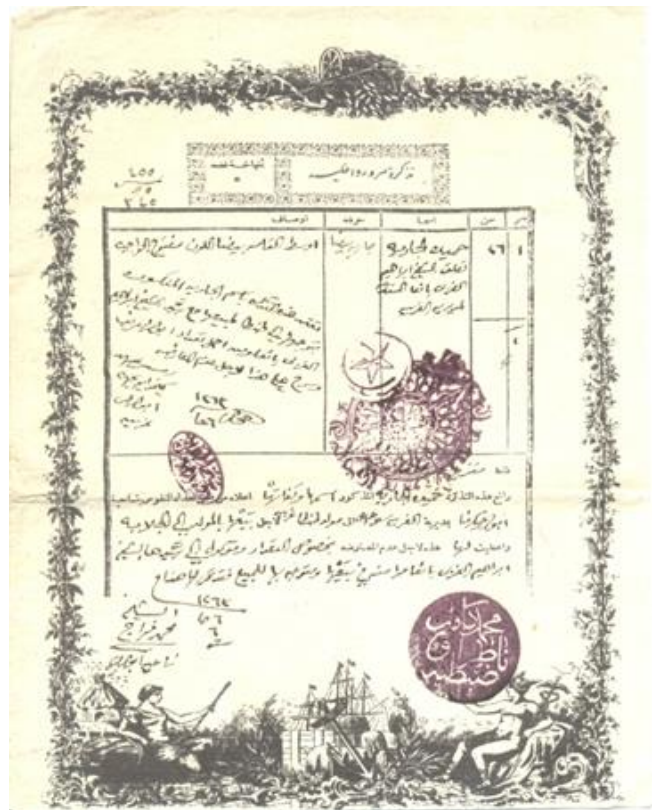


Fig. 12: April 22, 1847, an internal passage ticket for a slave on official stationery with a value of 5 paras, containing the slave's name, age, name of her master, and the destination. It states that she is taken by her master from a village in Gharbeyah province to the annual Tanta market to be sold to a Jellabah. The ticket is stamped by the head of the Gharbeyah police station and the local Sheikh.

The slave traders, the Jellabahs

The slave traders dealing with black slaves were mainly Nubians, originating from the northern part of Sudan and southern Egypt, once the ancient kingdom of Nubia. Most belonged to Sufi sects of Sunni Muslims. They were religious people who also believed in lots of superstitions.

Nubian traders were called Jellabahs, “packmen”, because of the satchels they slung across their animals. Some penetrated deeper into the southwest, by which time the term Jellabah had become synonymous with slave dealer.

Frederic Thomas gives in *Slavery and Jihad in the Sudan* this description of a Jellabah: “The Jellab is thin and sinewy, with deep-set eyes, mustache and beard little more than a tuft of hair under his mouth, and three parallel slashes on his cheeks... Many are Jaaliyin of Arab admixture whose ancestry is traced through a certain Ibrahim al-Jaali to the uncle of the Prophet”.



The Jellabahs can be divided into five classes.

The first is slave dealers in Cairo and Khartoum, mainly individuals from Upper Egypt/north Sudan specialising the black-slaves trade. They were organised into a guild with a sheikh. Cairo and Khartoum were main centres of the trade, and slaves were sold in their markets all year round.

The second class is the great slave merchants of Darfour, Kordofan and Khartoum, known as the “Khartoumers”. Khartoumer companies collected ivory and raided for slaves in the area of Bahr el-Ghazal, financed the business and owned the “Dayems” and “Zeribas”, fortified trading settlements in the White Nile areas. They employed armed bands and mercenaries and made pacts with local leaders to trade with or help in raiding neighbouring villages.

The third class is the “Wakils”, agents or partners of the Khartoumers, who settled in Zeribas, nearly always in the capacity of the “Fakis”, religious adviser.

The fourth class is the colonised dealers, who lived on their own property in the Dayems of Bahr el-Ghazal. Some penetrated beyond the borders, traded with the Nyam-Nyam or used them as “Bezingir”, black slave soldiers.

And finally, the petty dealers, who, with only a single donkey, went to the south in January and returned in March or April with Sudanese goods to sell in Khartoum or in Wekalet el-Jallaba in Cairo.

Until its gradual suppression in the 1860s to 1870s, the slave trade was the most profitable undertaking in Sudan and was the focus of Egyptian interests in the country. The government encouraged economic development through state monopolies that exported slaves, ivory, and gum Arabic. Wadidi Soliman was the Sheikh of the slave traders, basing his business in El Hoseineya in Cairo from the 1830s.





Fig. 13: May 31, 1861, a contract written on revenue paper between a trader “jellabah” from Ibrim, Nubia, and the Sheikh of the Jellabahs of Cairo Waddidi Suleiman in which the latter contracts the trader to buy goods from Cairo with 1530 piastres and trade these goods for slaves in the Sudan. The contract states that the profit will be split one third to Waddidi Suleiman, two thirds to the trader “jellabah”.

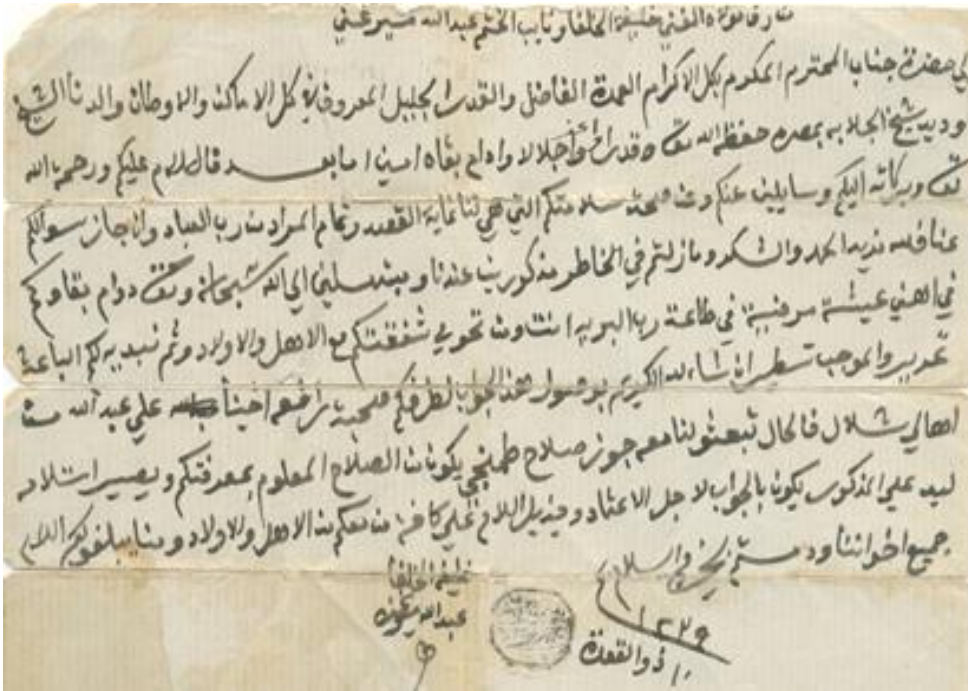


Fig. 14: April 29, 1863, a letter from Khalif Abdullah El Merghani, (Khalif of the Khatemeyya sect to which most of Jellabahs and Nubians belonged) to Waddidi Suleiman, head of the Jellabahs in Cairo, with a request to send him two hand guns.

فأبديت هذا السحنة وجدته في خزينة
 سيدنا سليمان ابن داود عليه السلام
 ثم انتقل الى ملك لعله ابنه سنوان
 ثم انتقل الى سيدنا علي ابن ابي طالب
 كرم الله وجهه وحاشية حكيمة
 عن اعين الناس وهي سحنة تادوة
 لم يوجد مثلها عند الاطباء والاحكام
 وهو هذا الاخذ المزخرف
 توتوبيا
 درهم
 درهم
 ربع مثقال
 زعفران
 زعفران
 قراما
 قراما
 في الماء حتى يقطليه وترجي فيه
 الادوية وتقلبه بالنار حتى تبقي

Fig. 15: (left) A letter of instructions for making eye medicine, describing the ingredients and procedures. It contains the origin of the recipe, stating that it was found in the safe of King Solomon, son of David.

فأبديت هذا السحنة وجدته في خزينة
 سيدنا سليمان ابن داود عليه السلام
 ثم انتقل الى ملك لعله ابنه سنوان
 ثم انتقل الى سيدنا علي ابن ابي طالب
 كرم الله وجهه وحاشية حكيمة
 عن اعين الناس وهي سحنة تادوة
 لم يوجد مثلها عند الاطباء والاحكام
 وهو هذا الاخذ المزخرف
 توتوبيا
 درهم
 درهم
 ربع مثقال
 زعفران
 زعفران
 قراما
 قراما
 في الماء حتى يقطليه وترجي فيه
 الادوية وتقلبه بالنار حتى تبقي

Fig. 16 (above right) A letter of instructions for making a wish come true. It describes in detail the steps a person should take, such as burning incense while repeating the names of genies a specific number of times.

فأبديت هذا السحنة وجدته في خزينة
 سيدنا سليمان ابن داود عليه السلام
 ثم انتقل الى ملك لعله ابنه سنوان
 ثم انتقل الى سيدنا علي ابن ابي طالب
 كرم الله وجهه وحاشية حكيمة
 عن اعين الناس وهي سحنة تادوة
 لم يوجد مثلها عند الاطباء والاحكام
 وهو هذا الاخذ المزخرف
 توتوبيا
 درهم
 درهم
 ربع مثقال
 زعفران
 زعفران
 قراما
 قراما
 في الماء حتى يقطليه وترجي فيه
 الادوية وتقلبه بالنار حتى تبقي

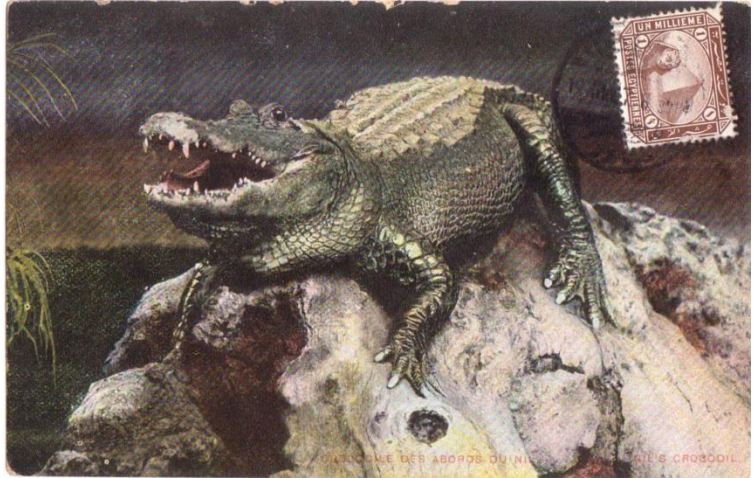
Fig. 17: A paper containing meaningless words and symbols, which served as an amulet for the jellabah who carried it.

Watch Out: There are Crocodiles About

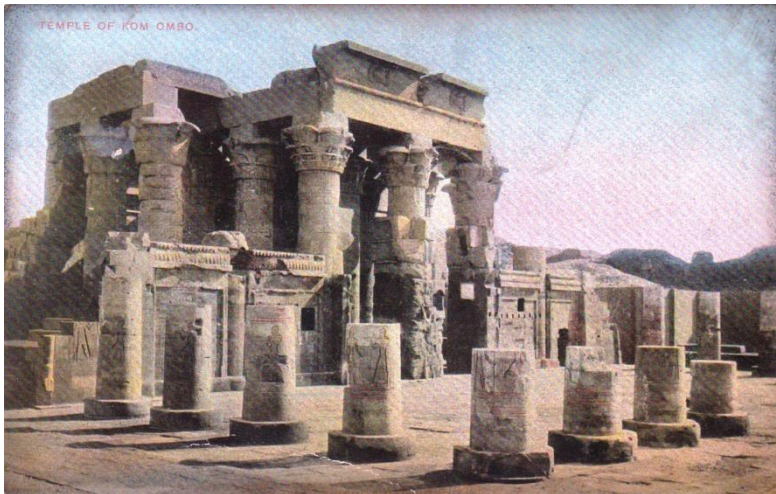
Roman A Rimonis (ESC 486)

While searching out new items of interest among the many fine Egyptian postcards, alongside the tourist orientated cards and the many wonderful historic aspects of Egypt, it might pay to look beyond the normal to discover more interesting subjects. Such as the Nile crocodile.

Right, an unmistakable crocodile with its dark bronze colouration, long teeth and apparent smile.



Crocodylus niloticus is the scientific name given the Nile crocodile by Laurenti in 1768. For thousands of years they had been revered and even worshipped. A temple Kom Ombo, between Luxor and Aswan, was dedicated to the crocodile, which was seen as the incarnation of the god Sobek. He symbolised the pharaoh's power, strength and fertility and acted as a protector from harm. Crocodiles were even regarded as royal pets.

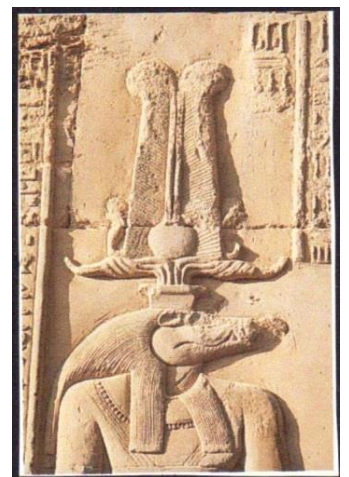


Left, Kom Ombo – entrance to the temple of Horus and Sobek

This temple was one of the most important and largest centres for the worship of Sobek. It was here that archaeologists discovered some 300 crocodile mummies: all had been well cared for in life, and when they died a ritual equal to a pharaoh's burial was performed as they were reverently laid to rest. The temple was actually a double temple, also dedicated to Horus the falcon-headed god.

An added attraction in front of the temple nowadays is a museum devoted entirely to crocodiles, which was opened in 2012. Visitors can see 22 mummified crocodiles of various sizes. The museum also contains statues and other items on the worship of the crocodile god Sobek.

Crocodiles once populated the whole of the Nile valley, found in canals, pools and in Lake Moeris at Fayoum. As well as being worshipped, they were very much feared by the local people, who had to keep a watchful eye when fishing to avoid being surprised and even killed and eaten. Alongside the fear, crocodile hunting was a profitable sideline as their skins were made into valuable goods such as shoes and handbags. Construction of the Aswan High Dam in 1970 was the start of their decline. Now greatly restricted to small areas, the crocodile is today vulnerable to attacks and poaching.



The God Sobek

Two early visitors to Egypt who witnessed the crocodile cult were Herodotus and Strabo, both of whom recorded their observations. The Greek historian Herodotus, in about 450BC, noted: "Some of the Egyptians hold crocodiles sacred." Strabo, a Roman citizen around 30BC, visited the town of Crocodilopolis at Fayoum. In Book XVII of his geography he described in detail the care shown to the crocodiles.

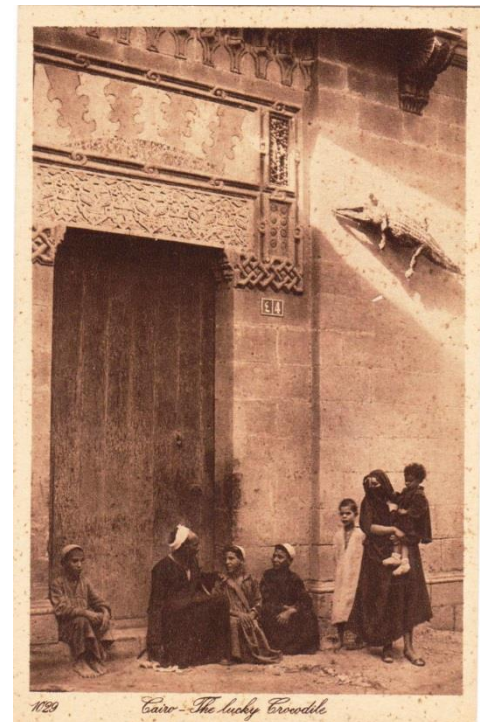
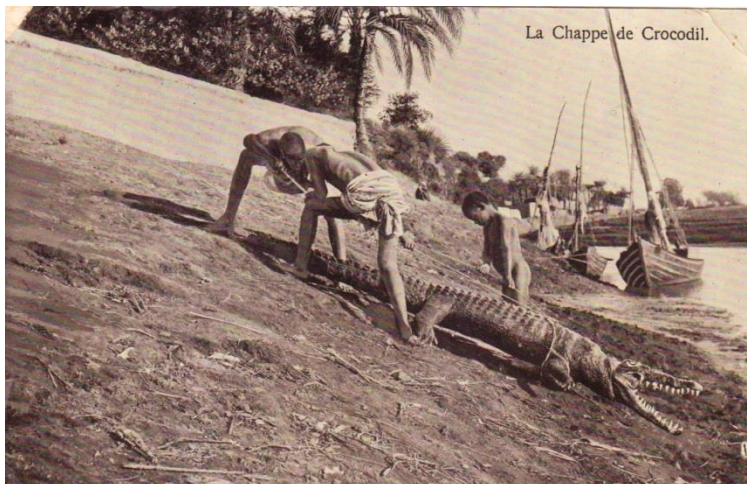
Another element in the slow decrease in numbers was the locals' attempt to please the tourist trade of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by hunting young crocodiles and mummifying them before selling them in the bazaars of Aswan.

Who would actually buy one? Even today they can still be found hidden away in some dusty back street souvenir shop, if you really must have one. But buyer beware: it may turn out to be a fake. In ancient times, many of those Egyptians who made pilgrimages to the sacred sites carried neatly wrapped animal mummies to present as offerings to the gods - but often what they had bought was a faked mummy. Inside were bundles of rags, bones, feathers and pottery, wrapped in bandages and sold as the real thing. Being conned isn't a new thing: it's been around for centuries!

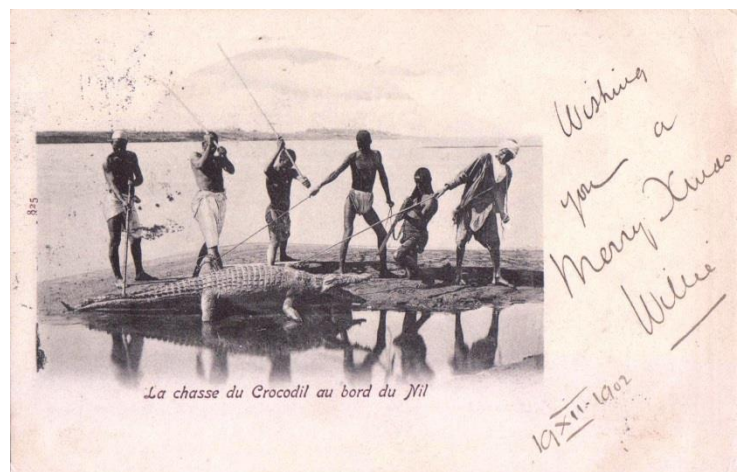
Early postcards – many of which were reprinted over a period of time - often show groups of four or six local men surrounding a crocodile with long canes, beating it to death. One of the men would also have what appears to be a Winchester rifle, holding it rather precariously ready to shoot into its tough skin (a special technique was needed to ensure that the bullet would pass through its skin). The locations would probably have been in southern Aswan and close to the Sudan border. All the images present what appears to be a crocodile hunt to the death. The scenes all look so primitive. But these were obviously staged and even the crocodiles strewn around were all taxidermy specimens - no fear of being attacked and eaten here!

THE POSTCARDS

Lehnert and Landrock No 1029. *Cairo - The lucky Crocodile* (unlucky for the crocodile, in fact), showing a mummified crocodile hanging on the outside wall of a Cairo home. This practice actually took place because mummified crocodiles were considered a lucky ornament to ward off evil.



Edition Egyptienne serie 120, early 1920s. *La Chasse de Crocodil*, in which a crocodile is dragged ashore by three locals. The scene looks as if it has been partly animated. For emphasis, the mouth of the crocodile has been greatly exaggerated.



Lichtenstein and Harari. *La Chasse du Crocodil au Bord du Nil*. This particular picture was originally an early albumen photograph taken around 1880 by Zangaki

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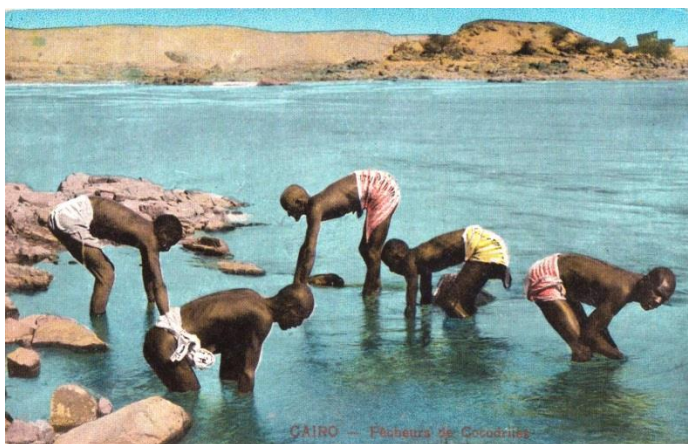
INTERNATIONAL
Robert A. Siegel
 IN ASSOCIATION WITH CHARLES F. SHREVE



Lichtenstein and Harari. *Prise d'un Crocodil*. This card is similar to the last. Note that the background and the six local men are the same: the scene was pictured more than once

MacGillivray's Photo Stores, Aswan. A real photograph showing a boy with two tiny mummified crocodiles. On the reverse the buyer commented in 1942:

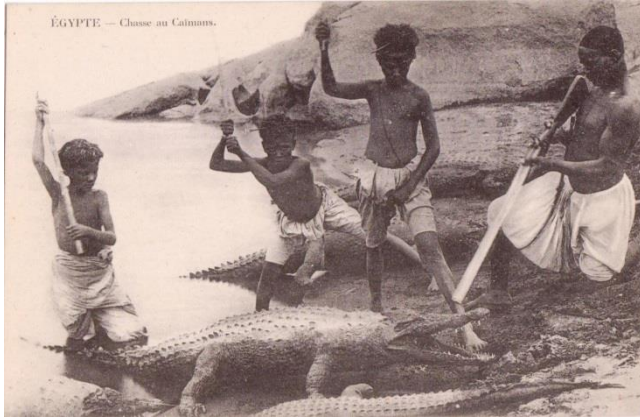
"My dear Giles
Here is a postcard of a baby crocodile. They find swallows in the Nile at a place called Assuan which I visited yesterday. But I am afraid that I didn't see any. Love from Dadda."



The Cairo Postcard Trust, series 647. *Cairo - Pêcheurs de Crocodil*. Paddling in the river fishing for crocodiles would seem rather dangerous, but the catch would have been tiny ones and with the mother away.

Made for Arougheti Brothers, Suez, 13. *La chasse des crocodiles*. Three boys with canes and a man with a rifle pictured with five crocodiles.

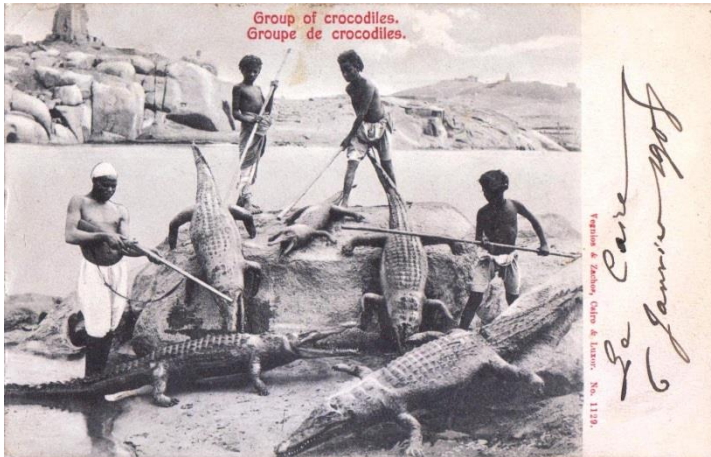




The same picture reprinted but greatly enlarged with the title *EGYPTE – Chasse au Caimans.*

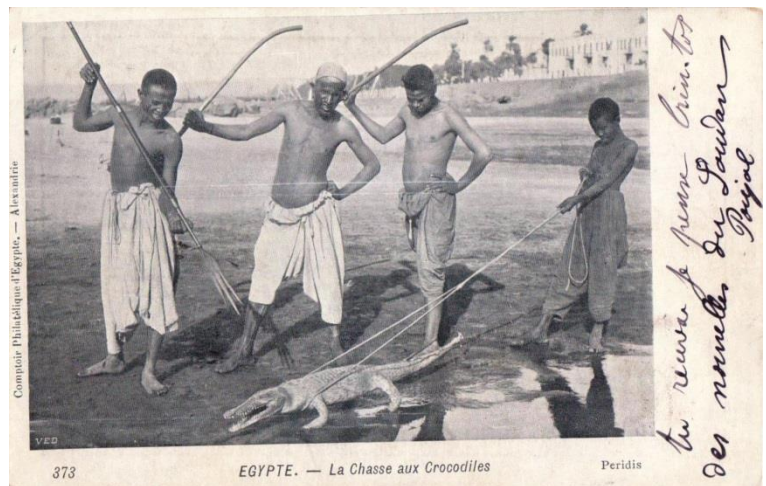
The Cairo Postcard Trust. *Group of Crocodiles on the Nile.* A late reprint of a real photograph, dated January 27, 1919. On the reverse the sender writes:

“Dear Emily
How would Lenny like to see some of these? I have not seen any out there but there’s plenty in the Yamuna River in Delhi, India.....”



Vernios and Zachos, Cairo and Luxor No 1129. *Group of Crocodiles.* This early picture was published before The Cairo Postcard Trust took over the business. The card is dated January 1, 1905, with a postmark from the post office of the Savoy Hotel in Cairo.

Comptoir Philatélique d’Egypte, Alexandria No 373. *Egypt. – La Chasse aux Crocodiles.* Four locals with canes, a probe and a lasso, all for a small crocodile.



373 EGYPT. — La Chasse aux Crocodiles Perdis

tu veux le faire
des nouvelles du Louvre
Pajal

There is a humorous side to this reptile. Captions like: "Time to drop in", showing a crocodile's mouth open and waiting. Or a crocodile asking "Send more tourists." Pictures of children and adults riding on crocodiles too. Remember a Punch and Judy show? Remember Roger Moore in *Octopussy*, when he was in Q's crocodile submarine? Or remember Paul Hogan in *Crocodile Dundee* from the 1960s.

Lehnert and Landrock. *The Interrupted Luncheon*. Left, A hand-drawn coloured postcard signed by S Bocain. A man and woman enjoying a picnic are rudely interrupted by a crocodile, which looks a little undernourished.



In the 1950s professional hunters came scouting the rivers for crocodiles. They were even invited to do so: it was considered good business, as the skins brought high prices. Hunting today is illegal, but that certainly does not stop the occasional safari despite legislation – including Law 102/1983 for National Protection Areas and Article 28a of Environment Law 9/2009 which clearly forbids the capture, trade or killing of crocodiles. There is also protection by international legislation covering trade in endangered species.

It seems that many of us are attracted by crocodiles: is it curiosity or simply fascination to see a living example of one of man's worst predators? Crocodiles are protected in certain areas and there are tourist attractions around Lake Nasser. Tourists mean money and crocodile teeth are on sale even by the site guards

Canadian Post Offices During UNEF I and II

Scott Van Horn (ESC 619)

The first United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) was established by the UN General Assembly in November 1956 "to secure and supervise the cessation of hostilities, including the withdrawal of the armed forces of France, Israel and the United Kingdom from Egyptian territory and, after the withdrawal, to serve as a buffer between the Egyptian and Israeli forces and to provide impartial supervision of the ceasefire".

The first UNEF was withdrawn in June 1967 at the request of the Egyptian Government, just before the Six Day War. As one of several countries taking part, Canada supplied the personnel and materials for light armour, transportation, signals and medical units. In addition, Canada was also responsible for establishing and maintaining the post office, and worked with the UPU to provide free frank mail privileges for the participating countries.

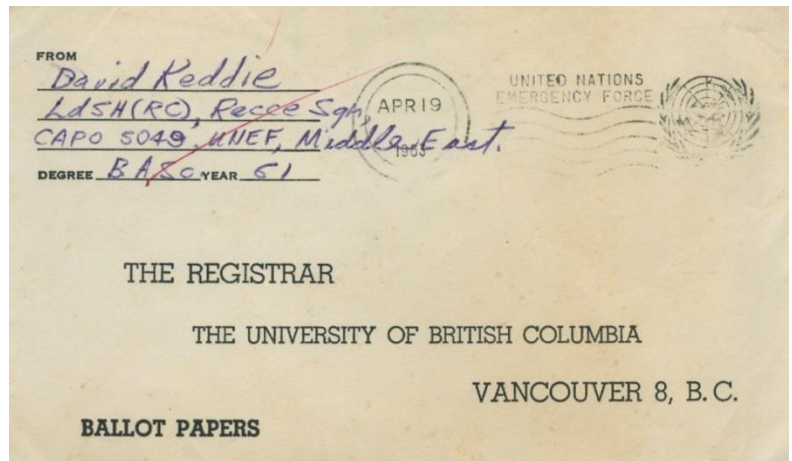
A UN Base Post Office was established in Naples, Italy, and in Abu Suweir, close to Ismailia in Egypt, in November 1956. All mail was cancelled, bagged by country, and transferred from Abu Suweir to Naples, where it entered the Italian postal system for further processing. For the Canadian troops, the Canadian Army Post Office (CAPO) 5048, and Canadian Field Post Office (CFPO) 34 were established in Naples in December 1956, while CAPO 5049 and CFPO 35 were opened in Abu Suweir in November 1956.



Canadian detachment at the post office at Rafah, 1959

During the next few months, additional post offices were established and/or moved: CAPO 5049 moved to Rafah in Gaza in April 1957, CFPO 33 was established in Rafah in the same month, and CFPO 32 was established in Gaza city in August 1957. Later, in March 1958, the UN Base Post Office was moved from Naples to Beirut airport, which by this time acted as nothing more than a transfer point for commercial airlines.

Right is a cover dated 19 Apr 1963 from CAPO 5049 (Rafah) during UNEF I from David Keddie, a member of the armoured reconnaissance squadron of Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians). It includes the long-used United Nations Emergency Force wavy line cancellation.



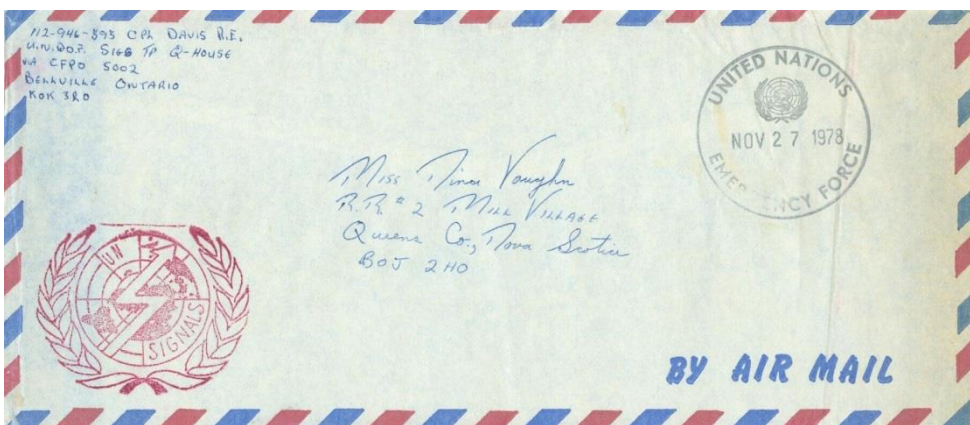
Before 1965, CAPOs used four-digit numbers, while CFPO's used two or three-digit numbers. This all changed in January 1965, when all CF(ield)POs and all CAPOs were redesignated as Canadian Forces Post Offices (CFPOs). As such, this necessitated the need to change all of the CAPO cancelling devices to the new CFPO format.

The second United Nations Emergency Force was established by the UN General Assembly in October 1973 "to supervise the implementation of Security Council resolution 340 (1973), which demanded that an immediate and complete ceasefire between Egyptian and Israeli forces be observed and that the parties return to the positions they had occupied at 1650 hours GMT on 22 October 1973. The Force would use its best efforts to prevent a recurrence of the fighting, and in the fulfilment of its tasks it would have the co-operation of the military observers of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO). UNEF II was also to co-operate with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in its humanitarian endeavours in the area".

The second UNEF was withdrawn in July 1979 after several extensions. In June 1974 components of UNEF II were designated as the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) to create a buffer zone between Syria and Israel. Canada continued to provide similar logistical duties in both UNEF II and UNDOF.

As in UNEF I, Canada was a major participant supplying logistic, aviation and medical units, as well as postal services. The UN Base Post Office was established in June 1974 at Beirut airport. This was preceded by CFPO 5002 at Camp Shams, Cairo, in November 1973, and CFPO 111, also at Camp Shams, in January 1974.

The next 12 months also saw numerous changes in both establishment and locations of several CFPOs. In June 1974 CFPO 111 moved to El Quneitra in Sinai, CFPO 112 moved to Ismailia from Rafah, and CFPO 113 was established in Cairo. In July 1974 CFPO 5002 was moved to Ismailia, followed by CFPO 112 in August 1974. The UN Base Post Office was moved to Tel Aviv in December 1975, along with CFPO 112, where it remained until March 1980. CFPO 5002 moved to Tiberias, Israel, in November 1979.



Left is a cover dated 27 Nov 1978 from CFPO 5002 (Ismailia) during UNEF II/UNDOF from R.E. Davis, a member of the 73rd Canadian Signal Squadron. The cover includes a red handstamp of the 73rd Canadian Signal Squadron crest and the UNDOF free mail cancellation.

Handwritten Notation on French Disinfected Mail Rediscovered

Guy Dutau (ESC 678), translated by André Navari (ESC 534)
and Abdel Nassar (USA)

This article was first published in French under the title "«Décachetée au Lazaret le bâtiment étant infesté de peste»: quand une mention manuscrite déjà répertoriée réapparaît..." in July 2015 in *Documents Philatéliques* 225, journal of the French Academy of Philately (academiedephilatelie.fr). Foreword from the translator: French postal notations, cities and ships remain in French, with a translation in parenthesis if necessary. "Author's notes" are indicated by (x), a sequential number. Bibliographical references are indicated by a number in parentheses (Bibx).

1. Introduction

Between 1721 and 1885 some ten handwritten notations on French purified (disinfected) letters have been inventoried. Some were long known, others discovered in the past ten years: they have been described in several articles (Bib1-3). One of them, illustrated by Marino Carnévalé (Bib4), is attributed to the Health Department of Marseille: "Décachetée au Lazaret le bâtiment étant infesté de peste" (Opened in the lazaretto [quarantine centre], the ship being infected with plague). On page 56 the author illustrates this handwritten notation and gives the following information: "Handwritten notation on the back of a letter from Alexandria (April 26, 1825) and addressed to Lyon" (Fig. 1).

To our knowledge no one had seen this piece except its original owner – Doctor Lamy – and the other (or others) subsequently, who are unknown to us. As luck would have it, it became part of my collection of French purified letters and it is now possible to describe its characteristics in more detail and place it in a wider context.

Fig. 1. Reproduction of Fig.10 on page 56 of Marino Carnévalé's book. He writes: "handwritten notation on the back of a letter coming from Alexandria (April 26, 1825) and sent to Lyon (Coll. Dr. Lamy)."

2. The letter



Fig. 2. Front and reverse of the letter, showing the handwritten notation "Décachetée au Lazaret le bâtiment étant infesté de peste". Centre, the embossed B.F; left, the resealing with a simple wafer.

Addressed to “Messieurs Lasausses & Jullien, Lyon”, it is a letter entrusted for carriage by an individual and so bears no marking of having gone through the postal service. On the flap the recipients wrote “1825 / Alexandrie 26 avril / B. Fresquet” (Fig. 3). The ship that carried it (at this stage unknown) being “infected with plague”⁽¹⁾, the letter was opened and resealed (Fig. 2). The embossed marking placed in the centre of the letter is the sender’s, with the initials “B. F.” To the left of this mark the letter was reclosed with a simple red wafer seal. The letter comprises three pages, summarised below. The paper’s colour suggests an internal and external disinfection with perfume⁽²⁾. Its opening by the addressee led to a small loss of paper. An important fact: it shows no incision or any characteristic mark of liquid disinfection with vinegar.

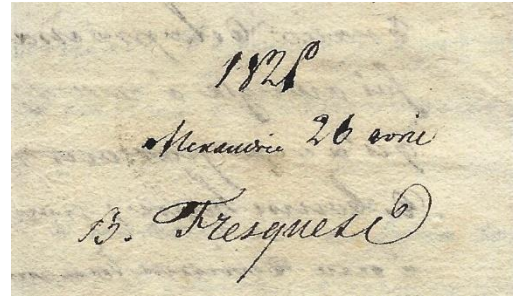


Fig. 3. Arrival notation

3. The text

The letter, dated April 26, 1825 is from Alexandria. In delicate handwriting, its text deals with commercial matters with Egypt, in particular Alexandria (Figs. 4, 5). It concerns the supply of different types of gums and exotic goods, together with their price fluctuations in response to economic and political conditions.

Among the goods in question gum arabic⁽³⁾ is mentioned several times, as well as other gums such as galbanum⁽⁴⁾, myrrh⁽⁵⁾ and Gedda gums⁽⁶⁾. Silks, cottons, indigo, benzoin resin, etc., are also mentioned.

“We confirm to you, Gentlemen, the letter that we had the honour to write to you last January 13th. The news that was spread of the forthcoming seizure of gum arabic was not confirmed... but again we receive news that the government wants to seize it and that it has made purchases in Upper Egypt. It is to be feared that this news, so often spread, would finally come true: meanwhile the price has increased from P (piastre) 260 to 270...”

“Galbanum that arrived recently in Cairo is of inferior quality but we are awaiting a caravan that will carry this item. If the quality is good the price will increase by P. 22 to 25 per ounce. Myrrh and Gedda gums are lacking in the production areas and according to the letters we have received it seems there will be none this year. Turmeric was sold at P. 120 per quintal...”

The presence of ships coming from Marseille is indicated. The letter ends with a post-script: “the fear increasingly true that the Pacha⁽⁷⁾ will seize the gum arabic has pushed the price to P. 315.” It is signed “B. Fresquet & Cie.”

4. Commentary

This commercial text confirms that the letter was in fact written in Alexandria on April 26, 1825. On the other hand, it gives no information about the name of the ship that carried it to Marseille.

4.1 The position of this letter in the context of plague pandemics

The epidemiology of plague distinguishes three pandemics [that is, cholera epidemics that spread over very large geographical areas]. The first, known as Justinian’s Plague (6th to 8th centuries), lasted about 250 years. The second (14th to 19th centuries) started in Kurdistan around 1330: its two main manifestations were the Great Plague of Marseille and Provence (1720-1722) and the Moscow Plague (1770-1771). But Europe, North Africa, the Levant and the East experienced other outbreaks, often and deadly⁽⁸⁾.

The third pandemic has lasted since the end of the 19th century: it began in China during the second half of that century, during which Alexandre Yersin (1863-1943) discovered the bacillus causing it in Hong Kong (1894). The letter from Alexandria to Messieurs Lasausses and Jullien is part of the second pandemic.

4.2 Characteristics and identification of the letter

In one of his numerous works Adrien Proust⁽⁹⁾ reports that “between 1741 and 1845 thirteen ships infested with plague arrived in Marseille” and “each time, the plague died out in the lazaretto where the sick and suspected people were isolated⁽¹⁰⁾” (Bib6). Proust specifies the characteristics of the 13 infected ships, then gives a summary table that recaps the ships’ names, the number of sick and dead on board during the crossing, the number of sick and dead affected with plague who were disembarked in the lazaretto, and the number of years separating these events (bib.page 153).

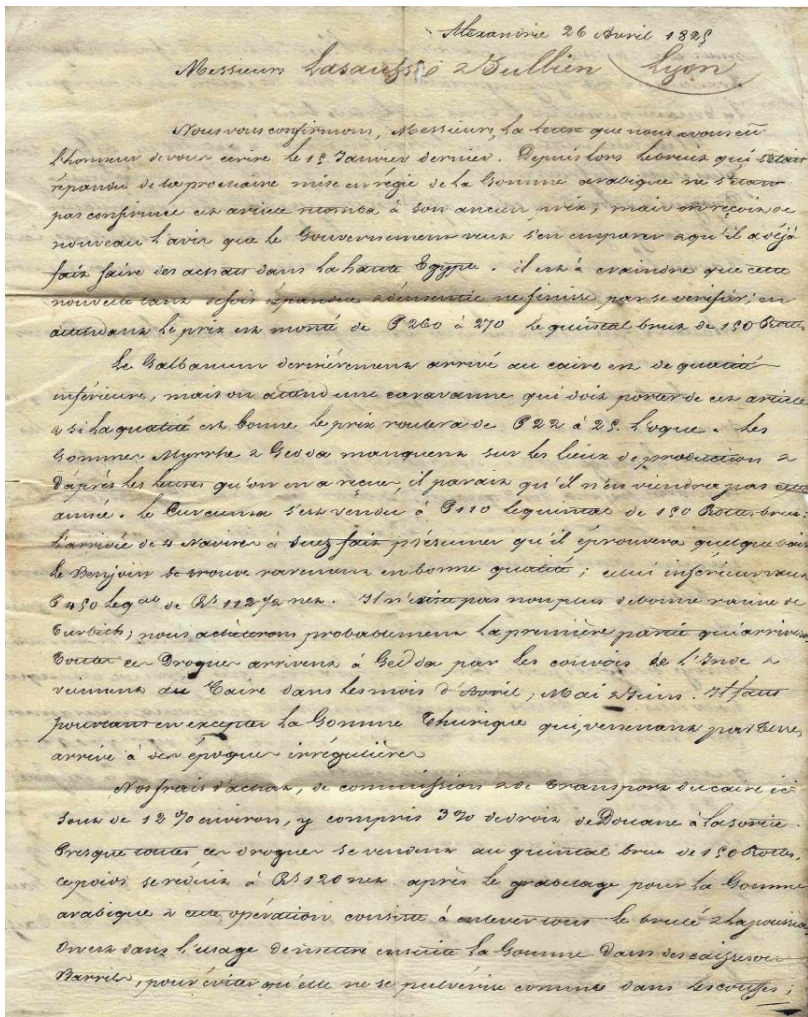
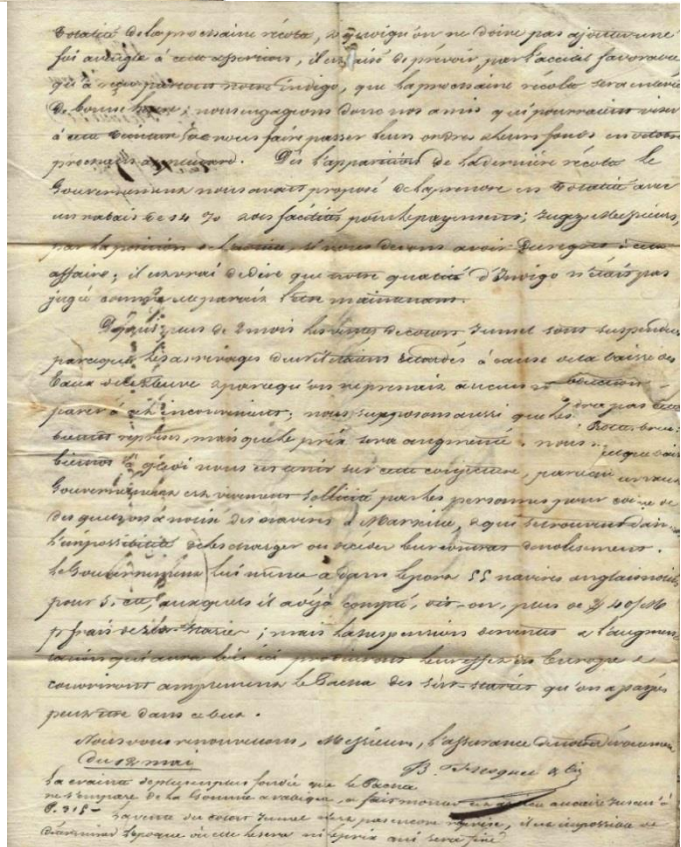


Fig. 4. The text of the letter, page 1, dated “Alexandrie 26 avril 1825”. The paper’s colour indicates disinfection with perfume.

Fig. 5. The text, page 3, with the signature of “B. Fresquet & Cie”. The paper has the same appearance as page 1



He specifies that “on May 29, 1825, Captain Audibert, in command of the French ship *Heureuse Marie*, arrived in Marseille from Alexandria where the plague prevailed”. Six people became sick on board during the crossing, but no deaths were reported. However, two sick people infected with plague disembarked in the lazaretto: they would recover (*Table 1*). The table also tells us that, 12 years later, the French packet *Leonidas*, coming from Constantinople with ports of call in Smyrna and Syra, also arrived at the lazaretto with plague on board.

ANNÉE	NOMS DES BÂTIMENTS.	PROVENANCE.	Nombre des malades et des décès survenus à bord des navires pendant la traversée.		Nombre des malades débarqués au lazaret atteints de peste.		Nombre d'années d'inter- valle d'une importation à l'autre de 1750 à 1845.
			MALADES	DÉCÈS	MALADES	DÉCÈS	
1741	<i>Etoile-du-Nord</i>	Alger.	5	2	2	* 1	10 ans.
1760	<i>Sainte-Famille</i>	Saint-Jean-d'Acre	2	2	7	* 7	19 "
1768	<i>Elisabeth</i>	Tripoli de Barbarie	4	4	7	1	8 "
1784	<i>Assomption</i>	Alexandrie.	3	3	4	* 3	16 "
1785	<i>Marianne</i>	Tunis.	4	2	2	"	" "
1786	<i>Providence</i>	Bône (Algérie)	1	1	3	3	" "
	<i>Malouet</i>	Bône (Algérie).	1	1	3	"	" "
1790	<i>Fortuna</i>	Algèr.	2	2	"	"	10 ans
	<i>Saint-Hilaire</i>	Algèr.	2	2	"	"	" "
1819	<i>Continuation</i>	Tunis.	5	4	5	* 2	23 "
1825	<i>Heureuse Marie</i>	Alexandrie.	6	"	2	"	6 "
1837	<i>Leonidas</i>	Constantinople.	1	1	2	2	12 "
1845	<i>Louqsor</i>	Alexandrie.	1	"	1	"	8 "
			37	24	38	19	

* Décès du garde de santé.
 * Y compris le médecin du lazaret.
 * Décès de 3 gardes de santé.
 * Y compris un garde de santé.

Table 1. Table extracted from Adrien Proust's book. Between 1741 (*l'Étoile-du-Nord*) and 1845 (*le Louqsor*) 13 ships infected with plague arrived in Marseille. There were 24 deaths on board out of 37 patients afflicted with plague during the crossing (65 per cent). Among 38 sick people disembarked in the lazaretto, there were 19 deaths (50 per cent), mainly male nurses and a doctor.

The letter with the handwritten notification “*Décachetée au Lazaret le bâtiment étant infestée de peste*” (Opened in the lazaretto, the ship being infected with plague) and written in Alexandria on April 26, 1825, by B. Fresquet & Cie, was thus indeed carried by the French ship *Heureuse Marie*, commanded by Captain Audibert. We do not know to whom the sender entrusted this letter, but the written inscriptions on the flap show that it reached Lyon without having entered the postal service, and so by private carrier⁽¹¹⁾. On the other hand, a search in the “*Recueil critique de jurisprudence et de législation*” (Critical compendium of case law and legislation) (1832, p. 179) confirms that B. Fresquet was a French merchant established in Alexandria.⁽¹²⁾

From the middle of the 17th century to the 19th, plague was endemic in Egypt (Bib8-10). It was very common in Alexandria: Daniel Panzac states that “from 1701 to 1844, date of its extinction, it was present for 59 years, or two out of five years”. In the 18th century the epidemics were spread in the city mainly from ships already infected. Later, these vessels infected other Mediterranean ports, but very often the disease was contained.⁽¹³⁾

After a remission of about ten years, the plague would reoccur in Egypt, particularly in Alexandria in 1813, remaining until 1825, and reappearing again from 1834 to 1844 (Bib9). According to Panzac, the endemic presence of plague in Alexandria between 1813 and 1825, then 1834 to 1844, is explicable by the considerable expansion of the city, and thus by the increase in area frequented by domestic rodents (rats) and wild rodents (jerboas), colonised by the same species of fleas, *Nosopsyllus fasciatus* and *Xenopsylla cheopis*.

4.3 Treatment of the letter from the *Heureuse Marie* at the Marseille lazaretto

It is at the end of the first endemic cycle of plague (1813-25) that the *Heureuse Marie* left Alexandria with plague on board. When she arrived in Marseille, with the six cases of plague that occurred during the crossing, the ship was issued a foul bill of health⁽¹⁴⁾, held in the quarantine port of Pomègue, and the crew and passengers were admitted into the lazaretto⁽¹⁵⁾ for quarantine.

The possible reasons for opening and resealing B. Fresquet's letter are on the face of it quite mysterious. If opening letters to disinfect inside and outside was a common practice in some lazarettos of the former Italian states, particularly Livorno, it was exceptional in Marseille, and carried out only from 1834 to 1837. In this respect, Articles 386 and 387 from the 1836 regulation from the Health Department of Marseille state the duties of the captain of the lazaretto:

Art. 386 – “He will purify commercial letters that captains will bring, in white vinegar, without mixing sulphuric acid or unfamiliar drugs, or he will perfume them, depending whether the administration orders it.”

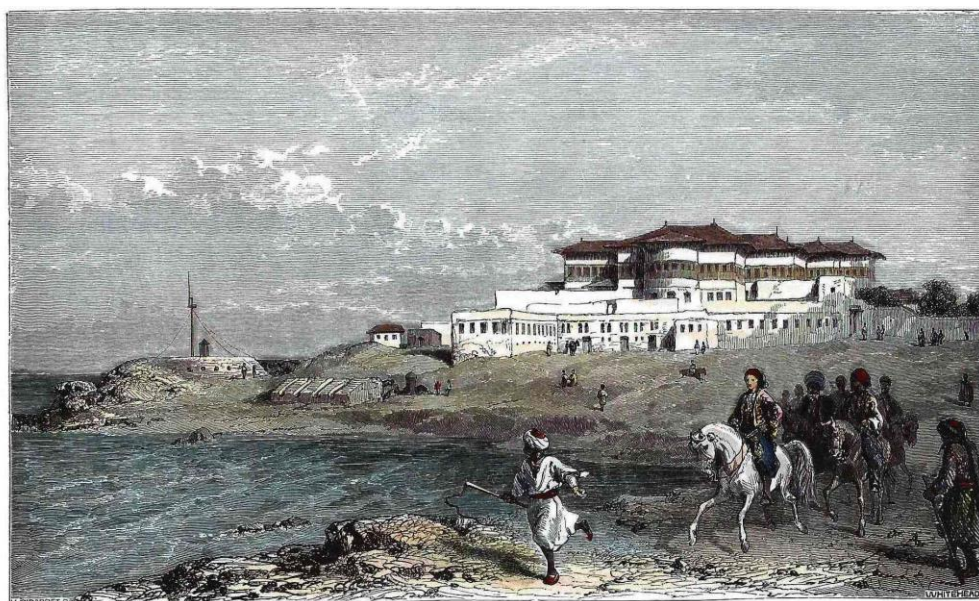
Art. 387 – “As for the dispatches addressed to the government, he purifies them in the perfume box in front of external affairs officials, whom he asked to come to receive them; he will have them open and spread sheet by sheet in said box, and the operation finished, he will have them resealed with the seal of the Health Department.”

We know of fewer than ten letters purified as indicated in Article 387 and resealed with the administrative wax seal of the Health Department. All except one are private letters, addressed to merchants of Marseille. Only one originated from Cairo, transiting through Marseille, for Livorno where it was purified a second time. None is an official, diplomatic or governmental letter. All are also struck with the 52mm two line hand stamp “PURIFIE LAZARET / MARSEILLE.

However, the letter in question from the *Heureuse Marie* was carried in 1825, nine years earlier, before the era of letters being opened and resealed by the Marseille Health Department wax seal (1834-37). The Health Regulation of 1730, in the chapter concerning “treatment of letters, currencies, and bills of exchange”, tells us that the treatment varies depending on the type of bill of health.

In cases of “foul bill of health,” as with the *Heureuse Marie*, when a particular circumstance requires that a letter be submitted to the perfume disinfection, “one unseals it in the presence of the owners and competent witnesses at the door of the lazaretto and one perfumes the papers carefully”. In addition, any letter suspected of containing fabric samples or closed by ribbons is opened and treated with vinegar or perfume.

It is not possible to further specify the treatment of this letter except on three points: 1) the colouring suggests disinfection with a non-liquid perfume; 2) the opening followed by resealing is evident, attested by an unequivocal handwritten notification; 3) it is the first known case of a treatment occurring at the lazaretto of Marseille whose regulations suggested this possibility.



PALAIS DU PACHA A ALEXANDRIE.

Fig. 6. View of Pacha's palace, Alexandria. Wood engraving, drawing by K. Girardet, engraving by G. Whitehead, 1860. Coloured (15.5 x 9.5 mm).

5. Conclusion

We have rediscovered a letter reported in Marino Carnévalé's work published in 1960, written in Alexandria on April 26, 1825, with the handwritten notation on the back "*Décachetée au Lazaret le bâtiment étant infesté de peste*". The letter's characteristics were unknown until today. Documented research allowed us to identify it among the list of ships that arrived in Marseille with plague on board in Adrien Proust's book *La défense de l'Europe contre la peste et la conférence de Vienne de 1897*. It is now known that this French ship, the *Heureuse Marie*, commanded by Captain Audibert, arrived in Marseille on May 29, 1825. This unique handwritten notation, mentioned by Carnévalé under reference N°10, is now identified.

NOTES

Tribute: This article is dedicated to the memory of Marino Carnévalé, pioneer in the study of purified letters, who left us, at the age of 89, on March 7, 2014.

- 1 – "Plagued" is a synonym often used at that time.
- 2 – Disinfection by fumigation, with specific plants in a perfume box.
- 3 – Gum Arabic was known in Ancient Egypt. It is extracted by tapping species of acacia, particularly the *Acacia senegal* that grows in Africa (Sudan, Mauretania, Senegal). It was coveted by European countries, including France and England.
- 4 – Or giant fennel (*Ferula gummosa*), a herbaceous plant native to Iran and Turkey, from the family Apiaceae. The gum resin extracted from its roots is used in preparing several kinds of incense.
- 5 – Aromatic gum resin extracted from the myrrh tree (*Commiphora myrrha*) akin to incense.
- 6 – Variety of gum arabic.
- 7 – Pacha Méhémet-Ali or Muhammad Ali (1769-1849), viceroy of Egypt (1804-1849). His politics were focused almost entirely on the Mediterranean and made Alexandria the economic and political centre of the country, to Cairo's detriment.
- 8 – In his Annexe IV, the author Jean-Noël Biraben inventories localities and countries affected by plague in Europe and the Mediterranean basin from 541 to 775 and 1346 to 1850: this list runs from page 375 to page 449 in two columns!
- 9 – Adrien Proust (1834-1903), professor of hygiene at the Faculty of Medicine of Paris and general inspector of International Health Services (1874-1903), is the author of numerous publications, particularly on hygiene, and new medical specialties in the 19th century. He is the father of the novelist Marcel Proust.
- 10 – Eleven of these 13 ships disembarked sick people with plague at the lazaretto; the other two had deaths by plague during the crossing.
- 11 – It is impossible to rule out that the letter was included in another sent via the postal system, but it is very unlikely.
- 12 – This confirmation is known to us due to a decision by the Royal Court in a case concerning bills of exchange drawn on April 24, 1826 by Schillizi & Cie, Austrian merchants in Alexandria.
- 13 – Between 1710 and 1792, among 22,651 ships arriving in Marseille from the Levant and the Barbary Coast, 140 French ships were infected with plague, an infection rate of 0.6 per cent, which seems low. But the disease manifested itself 16 times in the lazaretto, among the crew and/or the passengers, and some died in the city, exposing it and its surroundings to an extremely serious epidemic such as that of 1720.
- 14 – The foul bill of health was given to a captain leaving the port of a city afflicted with plague, as in the case of Alexandria from 1813 to 1825.
- 15 – The Arenc lazaretto, in the north of the city, founded in 1653, was enlarged from 1729 to the end of the 18th century.

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Airmail Letter Cards – The Official Paid Version

John Davis (ESC 213)

Edmund Hall's article on the above subject ("Air Mail Letter Card", *QC* 259, pp286-88) was a source of some interest since I have two such illustrated in Chapter 29 in Part III of my book (*Egypt: From the Postal Concession until Suez, 1932 to 1956*), not yet available as it is not yet published!



Fig. 1. Alwyn Peel's Official Paid AMLC with EPP date-stamp.

One of the authorities on this subject is Alwyn Peel who came recently to talk on Air Mail Letter Cards to my 'home' society at Worcester. In correspondence with him he sent me a copy of an album page with one of the Official Paid cards mounted and written up. Shown below at Fig. 1., Alwyn's write-up states:

"A single printing of 220,000 'Official Paid' Air Mail Letter Cards was made and issued on May 1st 1941 to avoid a sudden Egyptian Post Office refusal to allow the use of British postage stamps. One day later this refusal was withdrawn but the forms were used until sold out at the usual postage rate of 3d."

That brings me to Ed's comment that 'few are seen'. I have only one and had not come across any at all until fairly recently but, with nearly a quarter of a million printed, it would seem that most were used both before and during the currency of the 'standard' types of AMLCs over the subsequent years. Ed called for the earliest known date of use of standard types from Egypt to be advised. In addition, may I suggest that the latest known date of use of the Official Paid version should also be the subject of our enquiries?

The only one in my collection is illustrated at Fig. 2. and is dated 5th September 1941

Fig. 2. Dated 5th September 1941 from my collection. Sent from 261/94th HAA Regiment Royal Artillery, Middle East Forces, the question is, "Were these all used in Egypt, or did they get issued to troops in Palestine or even elsewhere?"



So the list thus far is:

Date	Source	Comment
11th May 1941	Ed Hall	Left hand in <i>QC</i> 259.
June 1941	Entwistle	Quoted in Ed's article.
27th June 1941	Alwyn Peel	Fig. 1. above.
23rd July 1941	Ed Hall	Right hand in <i>QC</i> 259.
5th September 1941	John Davis	Fig. 2. below

In answer to Ed's call for the earliest date of use of the standard types of Air Mail Letter Cards, I have one dated 1st May 1941 but, as it was posted on board a Royal Navy ship that may or may not have been at Alexandria, Suez or Port Said when it was dropped off, this item was most probably obtained by the sender outside Egypt itself, probably in Palestine. Illustrated at Fig.3. below, it is printed in darker ink than many of the later versions and has the pre-printed country of destination – Australia and New Zealand had their own versions but not as early as this one. It has definitely been in Egypt as the stamps are cancelled with a Benians' EPP datestamp.



Fig.3. Dated 1st May 1941, this AMLC was probably acquired in Palestine.

So, please advise both the early dates of use of AMLCs in Egypt and also the later dates of use of the Official Paid version. As this is in answer to Ed's article, may I suggest that the Q.C. is the appropriate forum for your answers, but this also seems to be an ideal topic for discussion on our Facebook site.

Membership changes

New members:

- ESC 704** **Richard A Barnes**, 11715-123 Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5M 0G8
(Middle East, North Africa, Horn of Africa)
- ESC 705** **Adel Qasem Ali Al-Sarraf**, PO Box 67496, Bayan, Kuwait 43765
(Egypt pre-1965, including royalty stamps, errors, varieties etc. Middle East errors)
- ESC 706** **Michael R Florer**, 1805 Biglerville Road, Gettysburg, PAS 17325-8030, United States
(World revenues and cinderellas: ration stamps of Egypt)
- ESC 707** **Rob Parkes**, 13 Ryeworth Road, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, Glos GL52 6LG
(Egypt mint, used and varieties)
- ESC 708** **Alex Ben-Arieh**, Teyvat Doar 34189, Jerusalem 9134101, Israel
(Holyland and related postal history, rates and routes)

Deceased: ESC 170 Erik Menne Larsen **Resigned:** ESC 320 John Birkett Allan ESC 672 Shamel Rashad

Change of Address:

- ESC 399** **Dr Michael G C Dahl**, 5 Montague Avenue, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 4HX
- ESC 606** **Jos Strengholt**, Livingstonelaan 1068, 3526JR Utrecht, Netherlands
- ESC 700** **Kevin J Everett Jr**, 41763 Carleton Way, Temecula, CA 95291, United States

Editorial

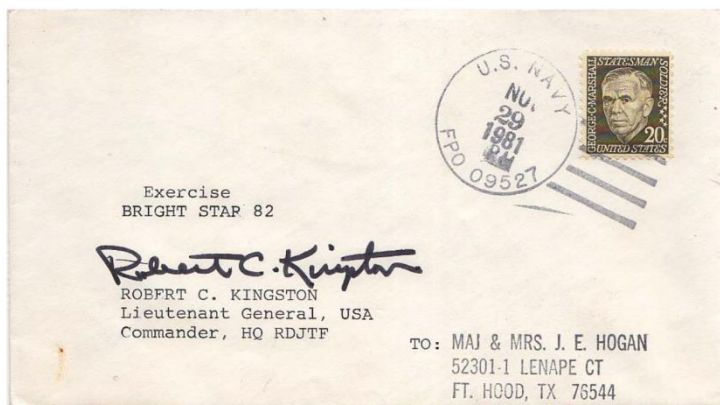
This edition begins to whittle down our backlog of articles, so please be patient of yours has not yet appeared. I have recently submitted a number of articles to another philatelic journal, and the first has just been published after nearly a year. Articles I wrote for the *QC* four years ago are yet to appear, having given precedence, to some degree, to other authors. **PLEASE NOTE:** My email address changed over 12 months ago and I look at the old one only infrequently. If members have any queries for the *QC* – whether it be non-receipt, deadlines (nothing is set down, but roughly one month before publication), or any other – please send to me and not to the Secretary. Similarly, articles intended for publication should be sent to me direct: sending to Mike or to Mike and me together, has caused some unnecessary confusion and duplication of work.

Military Matters: Bright Star

Edmund Hall (ESC 239)

For more than 30 years there have been nominally bi-annual joint military exercises, concerning principally Egyptian and American forces, under the heading Bright Star. The first exercise was conducted from September to December in 1980. US Army units (Task Force "Strike", 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment) of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and US Air Force personnel were deployed in Egypt for the exercise. Bright Star 10 took place in October 2009, including a strategic airborne jump of more than 300 soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division partnering with Egyptian, German, Kuwaiti and Pakistani paratroopers, while more than 1,000 Marines from the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit rolled onto El Alamein beach in an amphibious landing. Because of the political turmoil in Egypt Bright Star 12 (2011) and 14 (2013) were cancelled. Other forces taking part have included elements from France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Spain, Somalia, Sudan and the United Kingdom.

Needlessly to say, Bright Star correspondence is scarce and I have only two examples, both philatelic in nature.



Left, a cover from Lt General Robert Kingston commander of the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force in the year in which he took command Cancelled FPO 09527, which was used by the Marine guards at the American Embassy. Bright Star was run from Cairo West air base but I assume that in 1981 he was planning the operation and the only military postal service would have been from the embassy.

The other example is from the French Field Post Office set up in the Western Desert. This came in a philatelic collection of French FPOs in use around the world at the time. The sheet reads:

The military postal office 126 was activated for the first time from October 1 to October 29, 2001, for the benefit of French and German elements of the exercise Bright Star 2001 in Egypt. Set in the camp "Mubarak City" located 300 km from Cairo, it takes place in the building of the General Staff FRANCE to serve all contingents including Cairo West Air Base detachment and that the camp "General Kœnig".



The 1st Free French Brigade (Général de Marie Pierre Kœnig) played the major role in the battle of Bir Hakeim, an oasis in the Libyan Desert south and west of Tobruk, defending the position from May 26 to June 11 against much larger German and Italian forces, as part of the Battle of Gazala (May 26 – June 21 1942).



Three pictures taken from the philatelic sheet and a French stamp celebrating 30 years of liberation with Général Kœnig and the words Bir Hakeim.