

The  
Quarterly Circular  
of

THE  
EGYPT

# STUDY CIRCLE



June Quarter 2019 – Vol XXIII No 10 – Whole Series No 269 – Pages 219-242

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**We're on our way to Cairo - would you like to join us?**



From September 9-16 our Cairo PSE colleagues celebrate their 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a Continental exhibition ... all members are welcome to enter or to join in the fun with specially arranged tours and visits – and enjoy the famed Egyptian hospitality. All you need to know, **page 220**

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

*Massawa, November 11, 1879: Cover, written in the hand of General Charles 'Chinese' Gordon, docketed at top 'No. 323, C.G.' in manuscript addressed to Colonel Harvey of the Royal Engineers, Gibraltar. Massawa 'Maktab Bosta Khedewiya Masriya' negative seal handstamp in black (Egyptian Khedevial Post Office) and 'Poste Khedevie Egiziane / Massawa' datestamps at left. Suez transit (Nov 25) and cover awaited forwarding and mailed with 1879 2pi. orange cancelled at Port Said (Dec 8). Rare.*



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## Meetings Programme for 2019

|  |                                |                                  |                  |
|--|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|
| July 6, 2pm  | <b>Kings Head, Marylebone*</b> | AGM, Competition, TPOs II        | Sami Sadek       |
| September 9-16   | Cairo Exhibition Centre        | PSE 90 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary | All members      |
| Nov 7, 1pm   | Royal's new premises           | Egyptian Hotels                  | Richard Wheatley |
| Nov 9, all day   | Victory Services Club          | ESC Auction 59                   | All members      |
| December 4-7   | Monte Carlo, Monaco            | Monacophil celebrates Egypt      | Hany Salam plus  |
| <i>*Please note change of venue. For details see page 220 or contact Jon Aitchison (see below)</i> |                                |                                  |                  |

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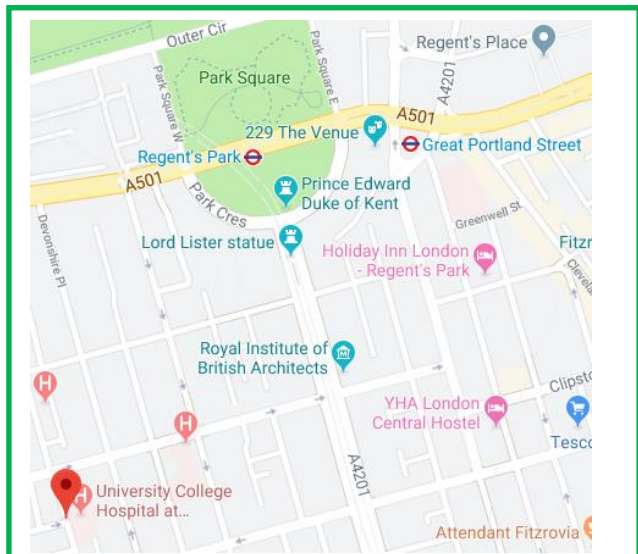
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## The World of Egypt: Study Circle news

**ESC visit to Cairo exhibition, Sept 9-16:** We are delighted to be able to announce that application forms for entries in the big Cairo exhibition in September are now available from the Secretary or Jon Aitchison (at [britishlocals@aol.com](mailto:britishlocals@aol.com)). And we have news of some wonderful off-the-beaten-track visits. Our colleagues in the Philatelic Society of Egypt cannot (yet) confirm a trip to the still-unopened Great Egyptian Museum at the foot of the Pyramids, but are still working on it... but new to the list are a visit to the new Egyptian capital being built between Cairo and Suez (together with Ismailia and the four new tunnels under the Suez Canal), another to a Delta city, yet another to the Post Office Museum and the main sorting office. And the ladies are not forgotten. Trips are being arranged to the fascinating bazaar of Khan el-Khalili, to Old Cairo, and to look at the work of a charity NGO. Truly a breathtaking list of attractions, in addition to the better-known tourist sites – and the stamps themselves.

Study Circle visits to Cairo have always been truly enjoyable, and this year we will be helping the Philatelic Society of Egypt to celebrate its 90th anniversary. The Circle is arranging a trip to coincide with the PSE's Continental Exhibition from September 9-16. The FIP-recognised exhibition marking the 90th Anniversary of the PSE will be held at the Cairo Opera House Exhibition Centre in Zamalek, at the southern end of Gezira Island in the centre of the city. We have sourced three hotels within a few hundred yards of the venue: the 4 star Novotel El Borg, literally a few minutes' walk away, the more luxurious 5 star Sofitel, on the southern tip of Gezira, or if on a budget The Nile View, a permanently-moored floating hotel on the Nile. All can be booked online via the well-known travel sites.

Though members booking their own accommodation may result in colleagues staying at different hotels, it is our intention to offer a daily get-together at one of them, or nearby, to discuss exhibition events and potential excursions. There are, of course, many other hotels available. The main airlines flying to Cairo from Heathrow are British Airways and EgyptAir, but there are also flights from regional airports and other countries. You can book cheap flights through most comparison websites which can also book hotels.



**IMPORTANT! New venue for July AGM:** As already announced by email, for our AGM on July 6 we are going to try out a new venue, The King's Head public house at 13 Westmoreland Street, Marylebone, London W1G 8PJ (*bottom left on the map*). We have a bright upstairs room with good display boards, and drinks, meals and coffee are available. The pub is 300 yards from Regent's Park Underground station and close to Baker Street and Great Portland Street Tubes. The meeting starts at 2pm but early birds can meet in the pub from 12.30pm. The main display will be the second part of Sami Sadek's TPO display, covering Upper Egypt, Shallal-Halfa and the lines of the Delta-based Basse Egypte company. It's a busy afternoon, for we will also hold our first club competition: 16 sheets on any aspect of Egyptian philately. The winner will receive a certificate and we will pay to enter the exhibit into the national competition at Stampex if they wish. Please enter: you might become the first winner of the new competition! You are also welcome to show TPOs, new acquisitions or other items of interest. Everyone welcome.



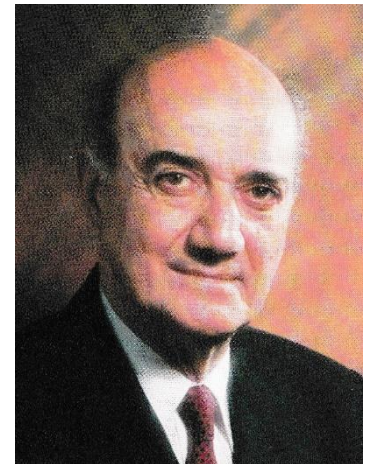
Among the excursions on offer during our visit is a five-day cruise down the Nile from Luxor to Aswan, with temples and ancient sites galore on each bank. If you are interested please make contact because you will need to arrange dates

before booking a return flight (the exhibition closes on Monday September 16). As well as the list above, we will be able to tour the Pyramids and Saqqara, the Citadel and Alexandria. We shall arrange tours to suit all of us when we know who is going.

As for the exhibition itself, the organisers will welcome entries of 1 to 8 frames of 16 sheets in the Traditional Philately, Postal History, Postal Stationery, Aerophilately, Revenues, Thematic Philately, Maximaphily, Open Class or One Frame classes. Entries can be competitive or non-competitive, and the cost of entry is £30 per frame. Each will receive a certificate and medal. If you are not able to attend in person we can carry your entry and return it to you without charge.

Please do think about making what promises to be an exciting and enjoyable the visit and/or entering an exhibit. In either case it would be a great help if you could email Jon Aitchison (see above) or phone him on UK 01279 870488. We hope to see you in Cairo. It will be a very friendly gathering – Egyptian hospitality is rightly renowned worldwide - and great fun!

**Leon Balian (ESC 251):** We are sad indeed to have to report the passing of Leon Balian, author of two defining Egypt philatelic catalogues and a master of minutiae, who died peacefully in his Canadian home on March 15. He was 87. Leon and his wife Magda split their time between homes in Quebec and Heliopolis (where he was delighted to say that his apartment overlooked that of former President Hosni Mubarak), bringing up their daughter May and son Rafik while he was for many years chairman of Swissair Cairo, a company for which he worked for 37 years.



It is said that he was introduced to stamp collecting at 13 when a family friend gave him 100 stamps and an old catalogue, promising to double the number of stamps as soon as Leon could identify 75 of them from the catalogue. He soon had a large collection – and perhaps more importantly for his future, learned how useful a catalogue could be.

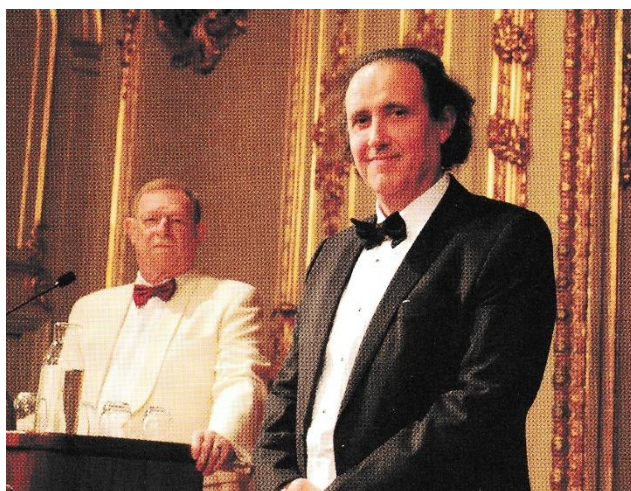
Though he specialised in Egypt's classic stamp issues, and particularly the Third Issue, he is probably best known for the two-volume *Stamps of Egypt* catalogue, published in 1998 and 2007, which illustrated clearly his infinite attention to detail, listing and illustrating every flaw he could find. And he missed very few. It is perhaps unfortunate that the catalogue did not gain the recognition it deserved, coming as it did at about the same time as *The Nile Post* (2003) and the *Egypt* catalogue of Magdy Moukhtar Abdel-hadi (2010).

Leon joined the Philatelic Society of Egypt in 1964 and the ESC after attending his first philatelic exhibition at London 1970. Since then his international exhibition successes have been outweighed only by his personal charm and friendly manner. As a specialist he was world renowned. But as a good friend and mentor, he was without parallel. We have lost an excellent colleague. A sad day for Egyptian philately.

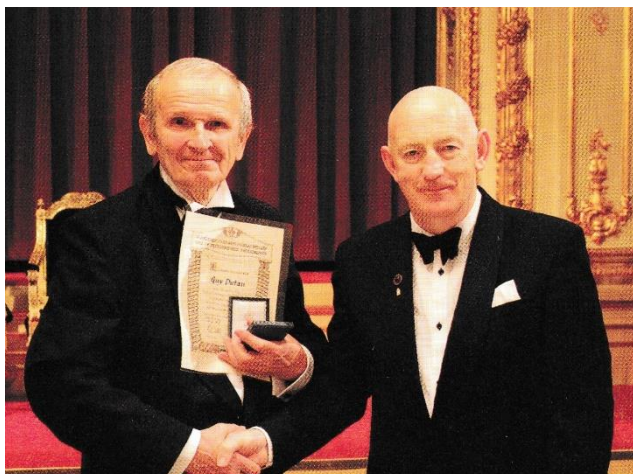
## ESC members receive philately's greatest honour

Two members of the Egypt Study Circle were honoured at the Stockholmia 2019 exhibition on May 31 by receiving the highest and most prestigious award in philately – to sign the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists. Hany Salam (ESC 580) of Egypt and Guy Dutau (ESC 678) of France were among four new signatories, raising to 388 the number of international collectors to have received the accolade since it was created by the Philatelic Congress of Great Britain in May 1921, recognising achievement, research, publication and service to philately. The Circle can claim 11 signatories down the years: the last was John Gilbert (ESC 50) in 1971.

• **Hany Salam**, best known to our members for his many *QC* articles, is only the second Egyptian to receive the honour, following the late Ibrahim Chaftar (ESC 42), who was made RDP in 1950. The citation for his award says that he has filled several roles with the Philatelic Society of Egypt, has several times been commissioner for Egypt in international exhibitions, is equally active on the European stage with his close connection with the Federation of European Philatelic Associations, and is a qualified international postal history judge. He has formed an important large gold-medal collection on Egypt maritime mails, and made a special study of the first Fuad photogravure issue. He is a renowned searcher in the Egyptian National Archives, uncovering and recording a wealth of important information.



*Hany Salam at the signing ceremony with his sponsor, Chris King (UK). Photo: RPSL*



*Guy Dutau, left, is congratulated by Jon Aitchison, Keeper of the Roll. Photo: RPSL*

• **Guy Dutau**, of Toulouse, is best known on the international stage for his collections relating to the disinfection and purification of mail, but has also formed and displayed collections on many subjects including Egypt, France, Chile, Peru and Haiti. He displays at local, national and international level as well as serving on national and international juries, and shares his researches personally and through his many publications. His most recent work is on the disinfection of letters in France and its colonies, a massive monument to his decades of research which brings together meticulous scientific, historical and philatelic information. He was created a Chevalier in the French Order of Arts and Letters in 2001.



• **Prakob Chirakiti, Thailand**, is a member of the board of directors of FIP and a driving force behind many international exhibitions. His collection of Classic Siam has won recognition with several Grand Prix awards.



• **Alan Warren, USA**, who has been active both at home and in the Nordic region since the 1970s, is a chief judge and prolific author, with articles in more than 70 philatelic journals and magazines.



**Cinderella honour:** Jon Aitchison (ESC 661), who is Keeper of the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists, received his own personal honour in a ceremony during the Second World Cinderella Congress held at Stockholmia on June 2, when he was invited to sign the Roll of Notable Cinderella Philatelists.

Photo: Maurice Williams

Among the many delights of Stockholmia2019, which ran from May 29 to June 2 and also marked the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Royal Philatelic Society of London, was a staggering exhibition of no fewer than 294 exhibits (27,332 pages of philately) in non-competitive exhibition classes and nine competitive classes, with a large number of exhibits emanating from the RPSL. The outcome was that the jury awarded no fewer than 70 Large Gold medals and 96 Gold. The best exhibit of each class received a beautiful glass figurine and took part in the Grand Award competition organised for the end of the Palmares dinner. Daniel Ryterbrand (USA), winner of the postal history section with his fascinating historical exhibit on the effects of the American civil war on the mails, was the runaway winner.

As far as Egypt and Circle members were concerned, Greg Todd (ESC 585) was most successful, with a Large Gold and 95 points for his five frames on the 1966 First Issue. Jon Aitchison's wide-ranging collecting interests were rewarded with Gold (90 points) for five frames of Egyptian Officially Sealed Mail; Large Vermeil (5 frames, 87 points) for A Great Survivor of Philatelic Importance, and medals in the Literature class for *British Parcel Carrier Stamps, The Story of SS Ibex and the Mail Recovered from it*, and *The Stamps and Postal History of Lundy Island*. Richard Wheatley (ESC 168) and Alan Rothwell (ESC 652) both received 88 points and Large Vermeil for Netherlands East Indies Mail Routes during World War One and Tristan da Cunha – "A Life in Exile" respectively.



Members enjoyed a convivial lunch in Stockholm. From left, Richard Wheatley, Shameera and Jon Aitchison, Neil Hitchens, Hany Salam (Egypt), Seppo Laaksonen (Finland), Albert 'Chip' Briggs (US), Tanya Laaksonen, Yvonne Wheatley. Greg Todd, Mats Edstrom (Sweden) and Ronny van Pellecom (Netherlands) were unable to attend.

### Membership changes

#### **New Members:**

**ESC 727 Bernard Smith**, Unit 1 3891 Ness Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R2Y 1T3  
(Egypt, World War II censor covers, Pyramids)

**ESC 728 Sameh Shaheen**, Fraunhoferstrasse 23D, 80469 Munich, Germany (Egypt, Nazi Germany)

#### **Membership restored:**

**ESC 241 Alain Stragier**, c/o Paredes, Graven Egmont en Hoornlaan 32, 3090 Overijse, Belgium

#### **Change of address:**

**ESC 461 Dr Grier H Merwin**, 75 Cambridge Parkway, Unit 206, Cambridge, MA 02142, United States

**ESC 528 Jay David**, PO Box 45292, Phoenix, Arizona 85064, United States

**ESC 708 Alex Ben-Arieh**, PO Box 43063, Jerusalem 9143001, Israel

**Lapsed:** ESC 399 **Michael Dahl**, ESC 639 **Atef Sarian**

## Report of the April 26-28 joint Meeting with the Sudan Study Group



*Richard Stock, vice-president of the Sudan Study Group, opening the conference displays*

A most interesting and enthusiastic weekend joint meeting was held with our neighbour colleagues the Sudan Study Group at the Morley Hayes Hotel near Derby at the end of April. The numbers from each of the societies was roughly equal, and both groups soon found themselves deeply involved in examination and discussion of some fascinating displays of material from both countries.

Those in attendance from the Circle were: John Davis (Chairman), Jon Aitchison (Vice Chairman), Mike Murphy (Secretary), Sami Sadek (Treasurer), Brian Sedgley (Committee), Mike Bramwell, John Clarke, Cyril Defriez, Ted Fraser-Smith and Richard Wheatley. Brian, together with Laurence Kimpton and Paul Grigg, is among a number of members of both societies. Guests included Sarah Sedgley and Yvonne Wheatley.

The Friday evening was off to a wonderful start with a welcome by Richard Stock, of the SSG, who introduced an astonishingly wide-ranging display of Airmails and Airgraphs from the early pioneer flights to the 1950s, enhanced by members' contributions, including two "Sudan" members who had flown in from northern China and Sydney for the conference.

After dinner there was time to examine the seven entries for the SSG Norton Collier Trophy, which attracted a wide range of material from both countries, including Suez Canal Company stamps, RAF Censorship, Illustrated Covers and Sudan: The Unusual. After very much discussion, the winner was announced – by a single vote - as Richard Wheatley, for his display of the Alexandria Seamen's Home.



*Richard Wheatley, right, receives the Norton Collier Trophy from Andy Neal, SSG president*

Members of both groups combined to show an astonishing series of displays next morning on the Travelling Post Offices, concentrating on the myriad versions of the Shallal-Halfa TPO, its markings and services, but also extending far into the south with some fascinating and delightful covers and memorabilia. The displays, and those that followed on Egyptian Post Offices in the Sudan, allowed a large amount of overlap between the topics as seen from the two societies, and the amount of eager discussion was delightful to experience. Neither society can be said to be exactly flourishing at the moment, but this range of communication clearly indicated a high level of interest among those present.



This common ground was explored further with members' displays on transit mail via Egypt and the Sudan, followed by a superb dinner, and then a return to the conference room for a vast display of memorabilia including a number of items relating to General Gordon and extracts from Lady Wingate's scrapbook – altogether riveting with photographs and documents relating to the great names of the area's shared past.

On Sunday morning there was an active Bourse and a series of static displays again exploring the differences and the similarities of the neighbouring postal administrations. We as a Circle have never had a great deal of success with “regional” meetings – but this shared effort with the Sudan Study Group was an undoubted success. All those attending hope we can do it again.



*Clockwise from above, Cyril Defriez takes a close look... Sami Sadek involved in an even closer examination.... Laurence Kimpton explaining how the air mails worked ... interest from both societies as members get up and close to the material... Paul Grigg on the memorabilia trail*

*Photos: Andy Neal, Richard Wheatley*



## Hai-El-Arab, Port-Saïd

**Pierre Louis Grech (ESC 266)**

On Easter Monday, 25 April 1859, on a beach in north-east Egypt, Ferdinand de Lesseps with a pick-axe struck the first blow into the soil to initiate work on the Suez Canal. On that deserted spot the city of Port-Saïd would eventually rise to become the northern entrance to the Canal. Present at this ceremony were five directors, administrators and section heads, plus about 150 workmen. The future harbour was named after Saïd Pacha, ruler of Egypt, and friend of de Lesseps to whom he had granted a Firman to excavate the Canal.

At first the European engineers and personnel were housed in seven tents, whereas the native workers had to make do with shelters built from palm fronds and reeds, some distance away. These men were predominantly Egyptians, but were erroneously generally referred to as "Arabs" by the foreigners at the time. Thus their small agglomeration was given the name "Le Village Arabe".



*Fig.1 - Arab Village Near Port-Saïd. ("Land of the Pharaohs, Egypt & Sinai" by Rev. Samuel Manning, 1877)*

From July 1859 these temporary arrangements were replaced by a few pre-fabricated wooden houses sent from France for the Europeans, tents for the natives and gradually some more permanent accommodation. At the end of 1859 there were 300 inhabitants in Port-Saïd, of whom 80 Europeans. Later in 1860 the population rose to 2,000, with better habitations for the Europeans and a significantly expanding village for the Egyptians, as well as stores, workshops, water distillation plants, etc. During the early months of excavation, the greatest part of the workforce was engaged in preparing and raising of the ground by 2.5 metres above tide-level to enable erection of proper housing in the future Port-Saïd, and claiming land from Lake Menzaleh nearby through damming and draining to allow building expansion.

Two jetties (piers) were constructed from locally manufactured concrete blocks to form a "V" channel delineating the eventual entrance to the Canal. The annual silt and alluvium from the Damietta branch of the Nile were trapped against the western jetty and being regularly deposited, resulted in the northward steady advance of the shoreline, with a consequent progression of the town on this new ground.

The Village Arabe had by now been renamed "Quartier Arabe" as it developed, becoming a western suburb of Port-Saïd's European centre. In the map at *Figure 2* it can be seen, about 300 meters to the left of the main town. In time both would expand and merge together, while retaining their designation until the 1950's.

Labour was freely recruited: desert bedouins, Druzes from Syria, and many europeans (Greek, Maltese, French, etc.). Only later would many thousand fellaheen be forcibly enrolled under the "Corvée". This supply of reluctant manpower was withdrawn in 1864 under pressure from Constantinople, in exchange for financial compensation to the Company, since this infringed the terms of the Firman "to supply labour as necessary". With these funds de Lesseps acquired the most modern excavating machinery from Europe.

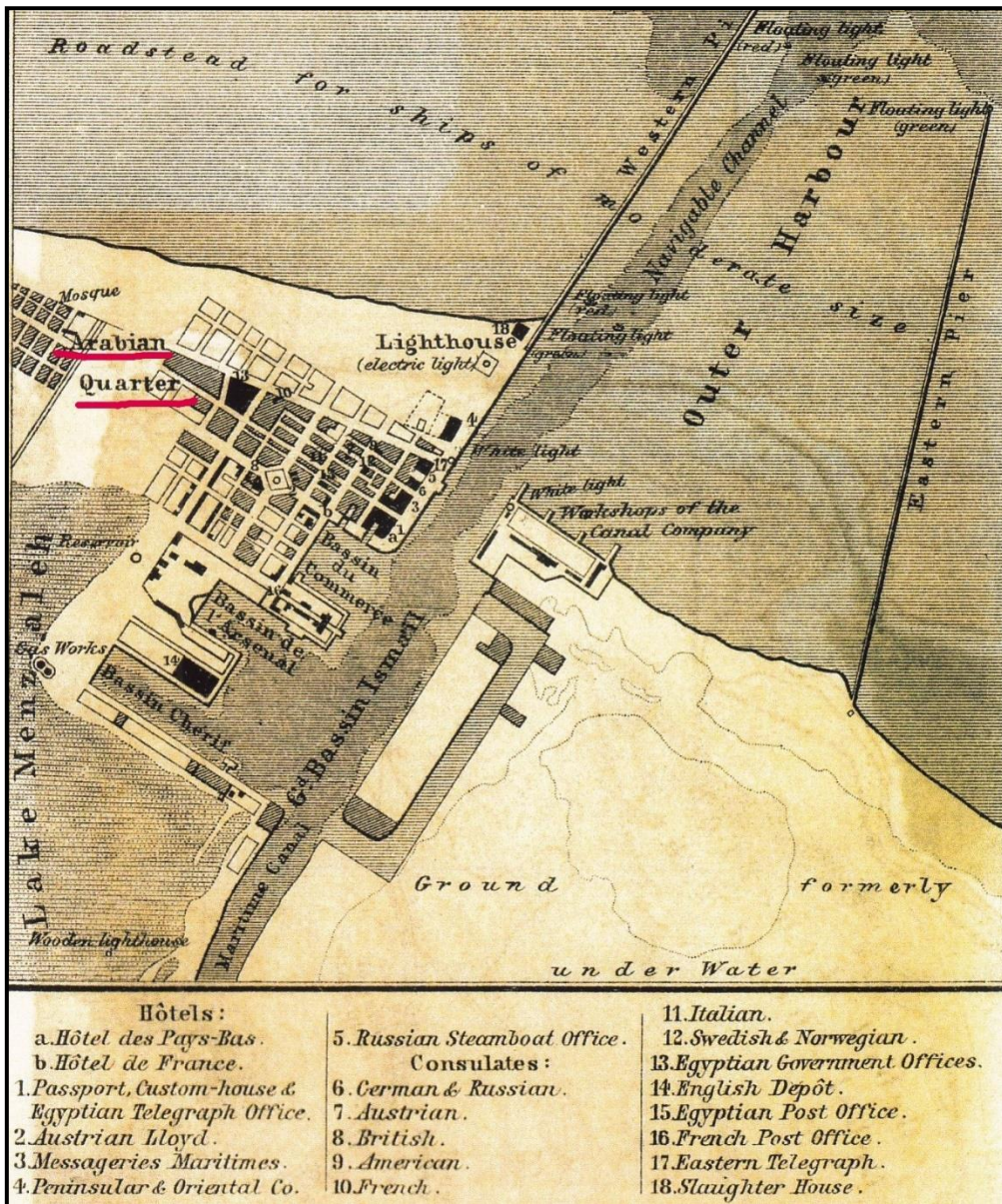


Fig. 2 - 1884 Map of Port-Saïd, showing the Quartier Arabe (marked in red, top left).



Fig. 3 - Main Street in the Arab Quarter, circa 1890. The Mosque is just visible on the right. This was the prolongation of Rue Quai du Nord, later Rue de Lesseps, today Saad Zaghloul Street.

All work stopped in 1865 because of the terrible cholera epidemic which ravaged Egypt. When work resumed in 1866 unforced labour poured in from all sides. The native fellaheen were well fed and paid, being attracted by the good wages, and Egyptian standard of living began to rise. "Thousands of men were employed - Dalmatians, Greeks, Croats, Nubians and Egyptian fellaheen, all directed by French officers." ... The Administration of the Canal was at first installed in Damietta, the nearest town to the Port-Saïd site. On 20 March 1863 Damietta was abandoned, the Company's Headquarters being transferred to Ismaïlia.

A traveller's report on Port-Saïd and the Canal in 1869 makes a brief mention of the Arab Quarter: "This hamlet has today become the suburb of the city. Founded at first by fellahs who came to Port-Saïd to work as porters, water-carriers, manual labourers, etc., this village where habitations are made of wooden planks, now holds a population of 1,500 Egyptians, who have brought their country's customs with them ..."



De Lesseps had insisted on freedom of worship for all faiths in the Canal area. So the Canal Company initially built churches of all denominations, and in the now well established Arab Quarter they erected a Mosque and a Coptic Church, to accommodate the two main Egyptian religious communities. Later, as Port-Saïd's multi-national population grew, various communities built their own grander places of worship (Greek, Anglican, Orthodox, Catholic, etc.), mainly in the European part.

Fig.4 - Coptic Church in the Arab Quarter, c.1890.

**Water:** The main problem at the beginning of the work on the Canal, and on the construction of Port-Saïd, was to provide drinking water in what was actually a dry wilderness. It would be years before the Sweet (Fresh) Water Canal, eventually linked the Nile to Zagazig, and Lake Timsah. In 1859 water was carried overland from the Nile, transported in barrels by camels or donkeys across desert to Lake Menzaleh, where it was loaded onto barges bound for Port-Saïd. This was not always reliable, and to ensure this vital supply for his workmen, de Lesseps rushed through two seawater distillation installations at Port-Saïd (June-July 1859). A third was added later (1860) and all these sources together provided the necessary supply until the arrival of water from the Sweet Water Canal, pumped from Ismaïlia through a conduit in April 1864. There were five water distribution points/fountains. A spur from the town centre provided water to the Arab Quarter, where it was distributed to homes by water carriers. A second pipeline, in July 1866, resolved the water worries for the township until the Sweet Water Canal was extended from Ismaïlia to Port-Saïd in 1893.

As for the food, supplies of flour as well as ingredients used by the native workforce could be obtained in Cairo, Alexandria, Zagazig and Damietta. Livestock was kept at Port-Saïd where there was a slaughter house, situated well apart at reference 18, north of the lighthouse, on the 1884 map in *Figure 2*.

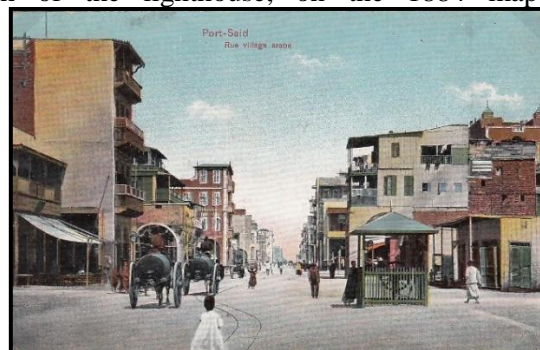
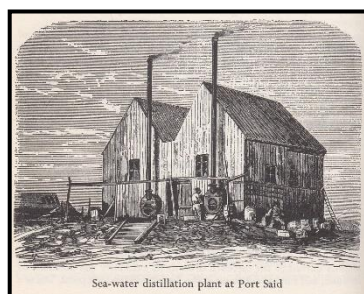


Fig. 5 - Left: The seawater distillation units. Coal fired, it took 1kg of coal to make 5 litres of water. Right: A convoy of water cisterns, pulled by mules, supplying water to the native quarter, c.1900.

**Port-Saïd's Post Offices:** When work began on the Suez Canal in 1859, there was no postal service in the isthmus, so the Canal Company established its own. The communication between Cairo (or Alexandria) and Port-Saïd was by railway via Tanta to Samanoud, from there by dahabieh down the Nile to Damietta, by camel to the shore of Lake Menzaleh and then by boat to Port-Saïd. Mail was then delivered by runners or camel riders. At the southern end, correspondence was via the Suez-Cairo railway, inaugurated 25 May 1859. Within the isthmus, travel between worksites was by camel.

In 1860 the Canal Company made an agreement with the Posta Europea to carry all of the Company's mail within Egypt and up to the ports of foreign departure, against an annual fee. This included carrying for free all of the private correspondence of the Company's employees. In 1865 Khedive Ismaïl acquired the Posta Europea converting it to the Poste Vice-Realì Egiziane. Later that year, Giacomo Muzzi, head of the new Egyptian Postal Service looked into the possibility of putting Egyptian P.O.s in the isthmus, but recoiled at the cost and complexity. There had been a Posta Europea office in Suez since 1859, to assist the Overland Route. It was transferred to the Egyptian Post from 15 April 1865.

So it was that the first post office in Port-Saïd was the French one, opened 18 June 1867 with the arrival of the paquebot *Volga*, at this new stopover on the Ligne X, sailing from Marseille to the Levant and Smyrna. That P.O. would remain open until 31 March 1931, serving the large French community. There would later be a short-lived Austrian P.O. in Port-Saïd, 1869 - 1872. Also a maritime Russian Agency, ROPit. 1867 - 1875.

In the 1860's, whereas the French Ligne V sailed directly between Alexandria and Marseille in 7 days, the Ligne X looped around the Mediterranean clockwise and anti-clockwise taking in Alexandria, all the Levant ports (Jaffa, Beyrouth, etc.) plus Rhodes, Smyrna, Syra, and the Italian ports, making the journey in 17 days. Both lines sailed every 10 days, but difference in travel time meant that occasionally it was better to go from Port-Saïd via an inland route, as in the cover shown below, rather than wait for the next Ligne X sailing.



**Fig. 6 - 21 June 1868:** Letter from the French P.O. at Port-Saïd franked with three 40c Napoleon stamps, (1F20 double rate to Livorno), cancelled GC 5129. It took 5 days to travel down along the Canal to the French PO at Suez (26 June transit CDS). From there by train to Alexandria, and by the paquebot "Peluse" (Ligne V, sailing 29 June) direct to Marseille, arriving 5 July. Sorted on the Marseille-à-Lyon T.P.O., it reached Livorno on 8 July. (Arrival CDS and postman's oval delivery mark). The letter went via Suez because it had missed the 18 June sailing by French Ligne X from Port-Saïd to Marseille (by the clockwise circular route via the Levant), and the next Ligne X ship was not till 29 June, arriving Marseille 13 July.

With the new state-of-the-art machinery, excavation work on the Canal advanced at a faster steady pace. The size of the undertaking now led to a considerable growth in the European engineering and trading communities, with a corresponding increase in the volume of mail carried free by the Company. At the beginning of 1868 the director of the Canal's post and telegraph proposed to convert the free service into a paying one.

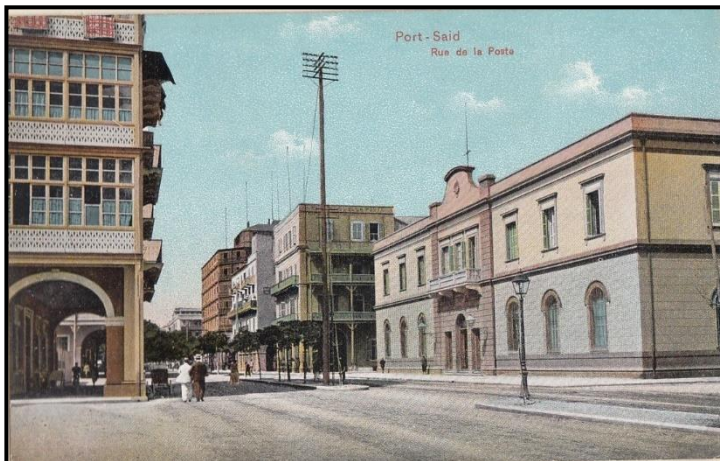
The Administration accepted his proposal and stamps were ordered from France (the famous short-lived *Suez Canal Stamps*), together with postmarks for the various locations along the Canal.

The stamps were received on 8 July, and a 20c charge for a letter from Port-Saïd to Suez became mandatory. Since the stamps were not valid outside the Canal zone, the public protested about double postage, also having to pay the Egyptian Post for mail to destinations beyond. e.g. Port-Saïd to Alexandria would need a 20c Canal stamp as far as Ismaïlia, plus the Egyptian Post's 1 piastre stamp to carry it onward to Alexandria.

Under pressure, the Egyptian Post resurrected its plans to establish its own service in the isthmus.

Meanwhile, on 1 July 1868 the railway from Zagazig to Ismaïlia was inaugurated and on that same day an Egyptian Post Office was opened at Ismaïlia, in Place Champollion. On 7 August 1868 an agreement was signed at Ismaïlia, stipulating that from 16 August the Poste Vice-Real-Egiziane would take over postal operations in the isthmus under its own responsibility and with its own postal agents. The Canal's services ceased on the evening of 15 August 1868 and the stamps were no longer valid, becoming consigned to the philatelic Cinderella market.

The Company handed over some buildings and all the "Canal de Suez" postmarks, some of which were used by the Egyptian Post until their own date-stamps were ready. Consequently, officially the Egyptian Post Office at Port-Saïd was created on 16 August 1868.



*Fig. 7 - The Port-Saïd Egyptian Post-Office, seen here before and after the addition of an elegant entrance porch. Opened in August 1868, as part of the transfer of Canal post offices to the Egyptian Vice-Regal Posts, it was originally situated in a small street off Place de Lesseps. It was moved in the early 1900s (before 1908) to a new building (shown above) in Rue de la Poste (formerly Boulevard du Port, then Rue du Nil) renamed Boulevard Fouad el Awal, and today Sharia el Goumhouria.*

To further improve things, the stretch of railway from Ismaïlia to Suez was completed on 15 August 1868. The earlier Suez-Cairo desert railway was abandoned. Mail from Port-Saïd or the work-sites was now taken to Ismaïlia, the mid-point along the Canal, by dahabiehs pulled along the "rigole de service" (small service canal, from Port-Saïd to Ismaïlia), and later by the Company's steam launches on the advancing Canal.

The Suez Canal was inaugurated on 17 November 1869 in the presence of the French Empress Eugenie, Khedive Ismaïl and numerous royal guests. It was Ferdinand de Lesseps' finest hour. Gradually the great number of persons involved in the digging dwindled away and what was left were permanent staff, forming maintenance and operational crews.

Under Khedive Ismaïl Egypt made giant steps towards modernisation (railways, telegraph, irrigation, urban Cairo, postal reform, bridges, sugar mills, etc.). By 1875 its international debts had become unmanageable and to avoid defaulting Ismaïl sold all of Egypt's Canal shares to the British Government, under Disraeli, making Britain a major shareholder.

Gradually through the 1870s traffic crossing the Canal built up, and Port-Saïd became an important stopover for journeys to/from the Far-East. However this progression was interrupted in 1882 by the Egyptian Army's rebellion, led by Colonel Ahmed Orabi, against the ruling Khedive Mohamed Tewfik.

To protect foreign populations and interests the French and British sent expeditionary forces to Alexandria. The French eventually withdrew, but the British bombarded Alexandria (11 July 1882) and landed to restore order and push back Orabi's forces. Later in August a larger British force landed at Alexandria, under Sir Garnet Wolseley. He divided his army by leaving a large part to guard Alexandria, but re-embarking the rest in ships which sailed around to Port-Saïd, then down the Canal as far as Ismaïlia. From there they moved inland westward and caught Orabi's army from the rear, defeating it at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir on 13 September. This opened the route to Cairo and to a British occupation of Egypt which lasted until 1956.

During these events, the rail service between Alexandria and Suez (for the India Mail) was interrupted from 9 July until 30 November. Mail to/from Brindisi was diverted to Port-Saïd where it met a special service of the Khedivial Mail Line carrying mails between Alexandria and Port-Saïd. When the land mail service between Suez and Ismaïlia was suspended because of the fighting, the Egyptian Government conducted a daily special mail service by boat between these two cities, using the steamers of the Suez Canal Company.

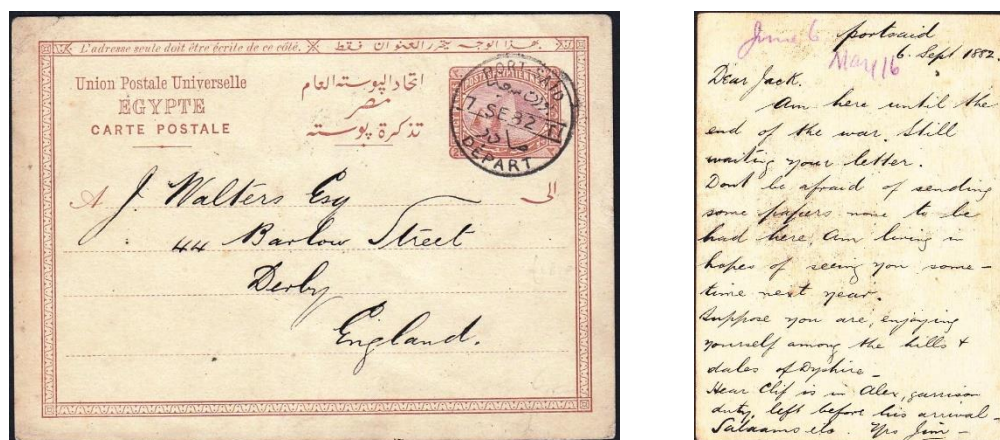
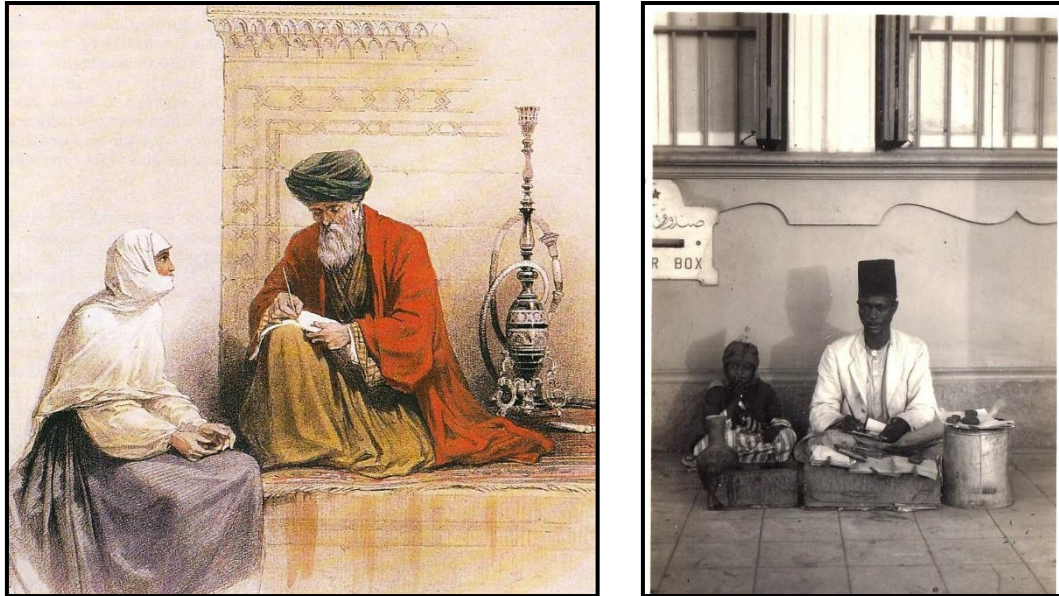


Fig.8 - 20 Paras Egyptian stationery card addressed to the UK by a soldier who arrived at Port-Saïd with the British Expeditionary Force sent against Colonel Orabi in July 1882. General Wolseley kept some troops at Alexandria, but the rest sailed down the Canal to Ismaïlia on 19 August to attack Orabi's positions from the rear. The card is postmarked **7 September 1882**, at the Egyptian P.O. Port-Saïd, six days before the battle of Tel el-Kebi, where Orabi's forces were defeated. Orabi was tried and exiled to Ceylon, but pardoned in 1903. The message on the back of the card reads: "Portsaid, 6 Sept 1882. Dear Jack, Am here until the end of the war. Still waiting your letter. Don't be afraid of sending some papers, none to be had here. Am living in hope of seeing you some time next year. Suppose you are enjoying yourself among the hills & dales of Derbyshire. Hear Clif is in Alex, garrison duty, left before his arrival. Salaams etc. Yours, Jim."

Port-Saïd remained a mainly French town, limited in its expansion by geographical features and by the terms of the Canal's concession, becoming well overpopulated. In 1926 it would obtain from Egypt an additional concession to build on the east bank of the Canal a new European city, at its own expense, Port-Fouad, which would revert to Egypt upon the expiry of the 100 years Canal concession in 1969.

There were no such limitations on the Arab Quarter, which spread westward and southward. Many new Port-Saïd residents from the Levant and southern Europe (Greek, Maltese, Italian, etc) settled in the Arab Quarter and if not working directly for the Canal Company ran various trades, shops, markets and services for both residents and for the numerous tourists from ships transiting the Canal; they went down to the harbour for each new arrival. Not only travellers to India, the Far-East or Australia, on the several shipping lines, but also many military expeditionary corps on their way to East Africa and the Indian Ocean (British forces) or Cochinchina and Madagascar (French troops). Port-Saïd was a major coaling station for steamers and several hundred tons of coal could be supplied in two hours. Dozens of men would run back and forth on gangplanks carrying baskets of coal from barges tied-up alongside the ships. (An operation requiring more labourers).

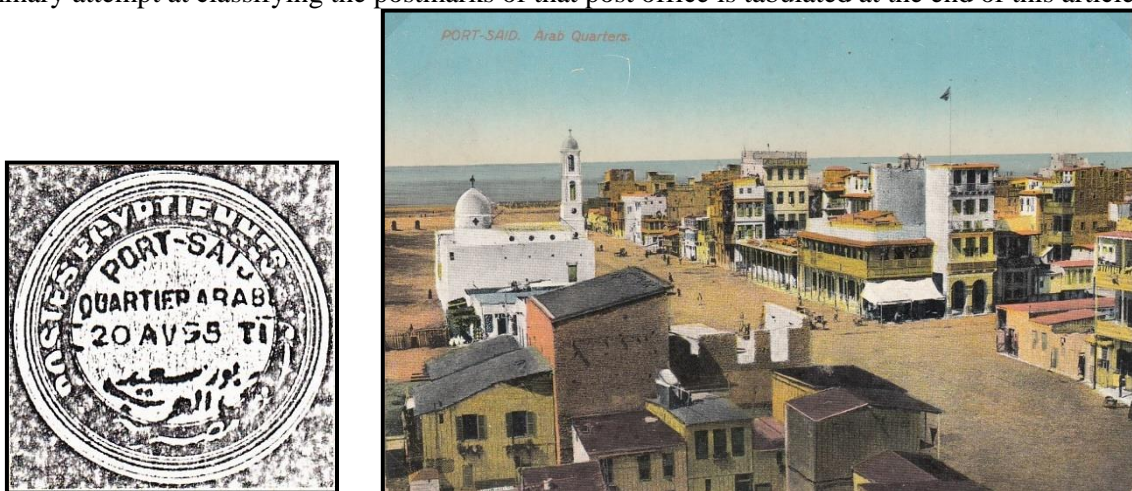
**Quartier Arabe / Hai-el-Arab:** Initially there was no need for a post office in the Arab Quarter. Besides the rather small community, much of the native population at the time could not read or write, so correspondence with friends or relatives was virtually non-existent. If ever there was the requirement to send a letter, then the services of a Letter-Writer would be employed (*Figure 9*) and the letter taken to the Egyptian Post in the European Quarter, some distance away. But as the Arab Quarter expanded, its residents became more international, and the levels of literacy in the Egyptian population increased significantly in the later part of the 19th century, so it became necessary to provide a more local postal service.



*Fig. 9 - The essential Letter-Writer, since ancient times. Left: Letter-Writer, c.1840 (by David Roberts). Right: a Letter-Writer and his assistant, sitting outside a post-office next to a convenient mail-box, c.1920.*

**Opening of the Post Office:** The Administration des Postes Egyptiennes' *Bulletin Hebdomadaire* No.8, for Thursday 21 February 1895, contained the following announcement: "Post Offices created from 1st March 1895: (10 offices are listed) including **Port-Saïd (Quartier Arabe)**. They are admitted to the service of correspondence, both ordinary and registered, and to postal parcels."

The first known date for the new office is 20 April 1895 on an Interpostal seal, Kehr Type XI. (*Figure 10*). A preliminary attempt at classifying the postmarks of that post office is tabulated at the end of this article.



*Fig. 10 - The first recorded Port-Saïd Quartier Arabe date stamp and a view of the area in the 1890s.*

Very few items of mail have survived or been recorded with that particular name; most of them on detached stamps. However a special item shown in *Figure 11* demonstrates that some must lie dormant in collections.



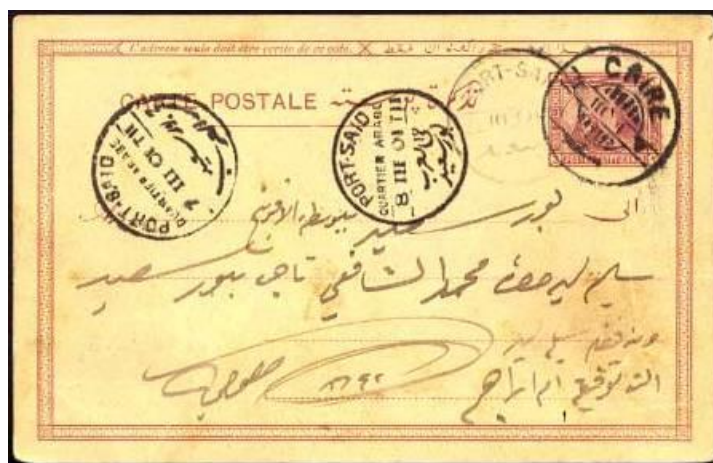


Fig. 11 - A very rare item! A 3 mills postal stationery card sent from Cairo, transiting through the main Egyptian P.O. at Port-Saïd, and with a "Port-Saïd / Quartier Arabe" arrival date stamp of **7 March 1901** (HEA-3), left. In the centre, a second "Port-Saïd / Quartier Arabe" date stamp of a different model (HEA-4), with the next day's date, **8 March 1901**. Perhaps it had been impossible to deliver the item the previous day? Whatever the reason, having these two different postmarks on an item from a post office with such a low volume of mail traffic is exceptional; as is the quality of the imprints which point to both types being in service simultaneously. (Scan very kindly provided by Mike Murphy, ESC 240, from an archive library).

The last certain recorded date for **Quartier Arabe** is November 1903: HEA-4 on blue 1 piastre Postage Due in the Postmarks Table. (A reported 9 September 1904 is dubious; no illustration has been seen to confirm). Between that date and 20 March 1905 the name of the post office was changed to **Hai-El-Arab, Port-Saïd**.

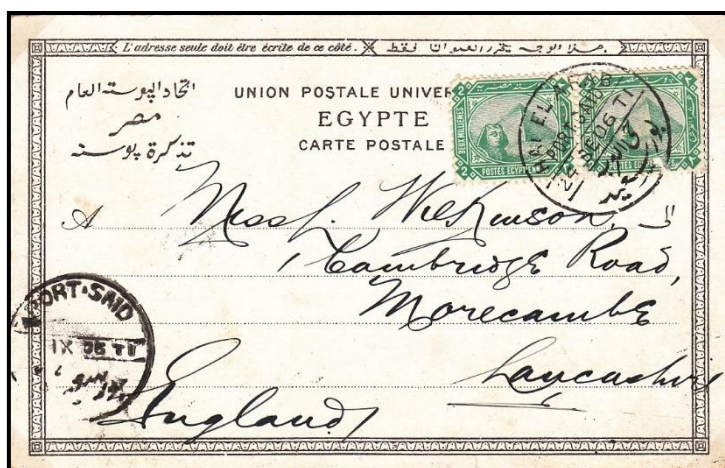


Fig. 12 - Postcard from Hai-El-Arab / Port-Saïd to England, transiting through the main Egyptian P.O. in Port-Saïd. Franked with a pair of 2 Mills. 4th issue, cancelled **24 September 1906** by type HEA-5 CDS. As mentioned earlier, postcards from this P.O. are scarce. (Represents statue of Ferdinand de Lesseps). This CDS is reproduced in the Postmarks Table, extracted and highlighted for clarity. (Apologies for the colour).

It should be noted that in general, after the opening of the Suez Canal, the volume of mail from Port-Saïd is relatively modest until about 1890. It is the introduction of postcards which resulted in a huge boom in their dispatch around the world by tourists and travellers transiting through the Canal, substantially increasing mail traffic. While most of these cards went through the Egyptian and French Posts, postcards sent from the native quarter are few and far between.

For the next 30 years there were several designs of regular Hai-El-Arab datestamps, HEA-5 to HEA-8 being a representative selection, but again being limited by the scarcity of available material. The month is at first shown as two letters in the dateline band, with collection as "T I, T II, etc". It was later changed to Roman numerals for the month and AM/PM time expressed in hours and minutes (7 00 AM, 5 40 PM, etc.).

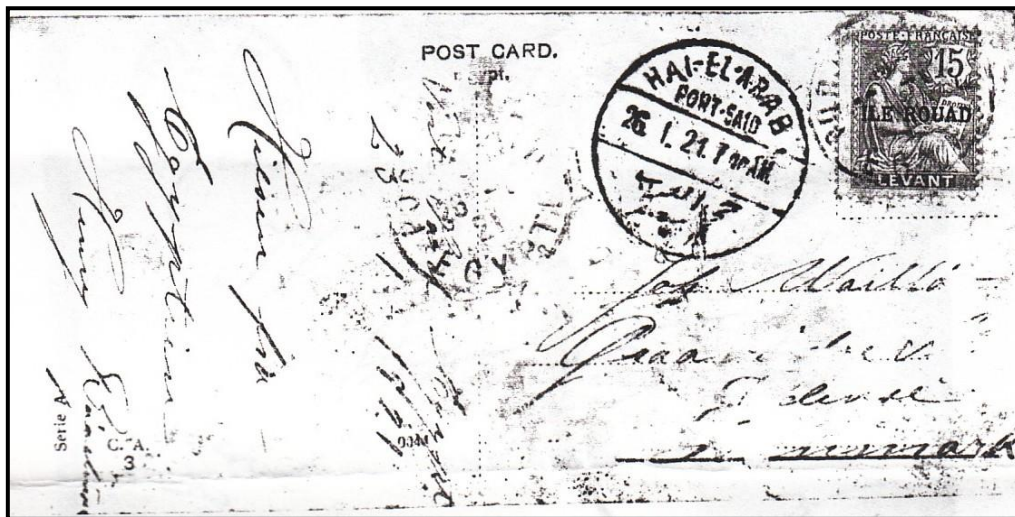


Fig. 13 - Poor photocopy of a postcard, obtained many years ago, before colour scanners. It is shown here because it is a very interesting item, probably unique. Addressed to Denmark, it was sent from Hai-El-Arab/Port-Saïd (HEA-7) on **26 January 1921**. It is franked with a 15c French Levant stamp, overprinted Ile Rouad (overpaid as the UPU postcard rate was still 10c until April 1921). In 1920-21, due to a shortage of stamps, Ile Rouad stamps were used at the French P.O. in Port-Saïd. The same day that card was taken to the French P.O. which cancelled the stamp with its Port-Saïd/ Egypte CDS, with a second strike alongside, and forwarded it to Denmark. The fascinating part is that the card was not taxed at the Hai-El-Arab office, which should have crossed out the Levant stamp and applied a boxed O to show invalid postage, or should have indicated Postage Due. Was there some informal agreement between the postmen for the transportation of mail between those two P.O.s since they were quite some distance apart? (See map Fig.19) The sender obviously found it easier to drop the card into the Hai-El-Arab mailbox rather than walk over a kilometre to the French P.O. in Rue Eugénie (today Sharia Safiya Zaghloul), in town, near the harbour.



Fig.14 - Left: Hai-El-Arab / Port Said / A (arrival) dated, **22 March 1921**, a perfectly struck postmark with double-arched name (HEA-9), cancelling a 4 mills pyramids stamp of the 1914 pictorial issue. It is unusual as it is one of few known philatelic items from that P.O. It shows a Cairo bridge and the postcard is unused. Right: Hai El Arab / P&R datestamp (HEA-11), **1 January 1925**, on 2 mills Postal Stationery Isis envelope, of 1922 (Balian 27, 108 x 71 mm) to Ismaïlia. It probably contained a Carte de Visite New Year greetings.

**The Railway and Port-Saïd:** Since the opening of the Suez Canal, mail sent inland (i.e. not picked up by transiting ships) would travel along the Canal in one of the Canal Company's postal steam launches. On 5 February 1891 an agreement was signed between the Company and the Egyptian Government for the construction of a Steam Tramway (narrow gauge of 75 cm) between Port-Saïd and Ismaïlia. "In the interest of the Egyptian Postal Service" the Company agreed to transport on that railway mailbags from Port-Saïd to Ismaïlia and vice-versa.

Postal despatches and parcels would be carried, together with the accompanying agent, in a special carriage assigned for that purpose on every train. For the Company this railway freed the maritime Canal of the mail boats which provided communication and supplied the stations along its banks. It began operating on 3 December 1893. In 1898 there were two trains a day, making the journey in less than 3 hours. Passengers from Port-Saïd switched over to the State Railways at Ismaïlia. But the growth of Port-Saïd made a proper railway necessary. By a Convention dated 1 February 1902 the Canal Company agreed to upgrade the steam tramway to a full standard 1.45m gauge and to lease it to the Egyptian Government who would operate it.



Fig. 15 - Registered cover addressed to the Vice-Minister, at the Ministry of Education, in Cairo from Hai El Arab, dated **11 January 1923**. P&R datestamp (HEA-11) cancelling a 15 mills Ramses II stamp of 1922 (with the incorrect "...mat" Arabic caption in the right margin). Balian 149/SG 97. Cairo R.A.2 arrival: 12 January. It bears the rare Hai El Arab - Port Said boxed Registration cachet (R 512).



Fig. 16 - "Arab Town", circa 1905.

**Qism Sani:** From 10 September 1930 the name of the Post Office changed from Hai-El-Arab to **Port-Saïd Qism Sani**, (Section 2; Second District), as announced in *L'Orient Philatelique* No.6 of 1930. However the earliest dates reported are 9 September (pre-empting the name-change) and 10 September 1930, the date of conversion. The earliest date I have is 22 September 1937, HEA-13 in the Postmarks Table.

There are Registration postmarks Port-Saïd / Qism Sani / (R.), HEA-15, shown on *Figures 20 and 21* below. Also a Port-Saïd Qism Sani / (P), for Parcels (HEA-14), seen 3 December 1941.

Another postmark recorded by our late and greatly missed *QC* Editor Edmund Hall, is the only known date of Port-Saïd / Qism Sani / Savings Bank (HEA-17), 8 March 1943, showing the scarcity of this post office.

One intriguing postmark is **Port-Saïd Qism Sani / Facteurs** (HEA-16), only date seen: 14 June 1938. In *L'OP* No.88 of 1954, Gabriel Boulad described the Postmen or Facteurs cancellations. These were used in Cairo, since March 1918, and Alexandria from March 1922. Alexandria was the only one to have some of these postmarks entirely in English, whereas all the others were bilingual with Arabic. It seems that these cachets were originally used for internal service, for Avis de Reception or notices given to customers concerning certain mail items. Later these postmarks were used on letters where the recipient was being searched for or to cancel the stamps on returned mail. Finally they were also used for the delivery of express mail and occasionally on registered mail.

The only other city to have these cachets was Port-Saïd, but "Postmen" was replaced by the equivalent "Facteurs", denoting the strong French influence there was in that city and within the boundaries of the Canal concession. Gabriel Boulad reports that he had Port-Saïd Facteurs dates from 31 July 1933 until 22 August 1940. See Figure 17.

In the article he then reports the only known Port Saïd Qism Sani / Facteurs (HEA-16), imprint of that cachet shown in the Postmark Table. Fig. 17 - Port-Saïd / Facteurs.



At some unknown date in the mid-1950s, the spelling became **Qism Tani**. Only one item is so far recorded, Port Saïd/Qism Tani/R., shown at HEA-18. It is dated ?-3-60 on a brown 20 mills Postage Due of 1958 (Balian 577). To make the postmark clearer, the colour has been altered to green.

Fig.18 - Port-Saïd/Qism Tani/R.



As it was only a spelling change it did not have an official announcement. "Sani" was a European version of "thani" (th as in "things"), i.e. "second" in classic Arabic. In colloquial Egyptian it is pronounced "Tani".

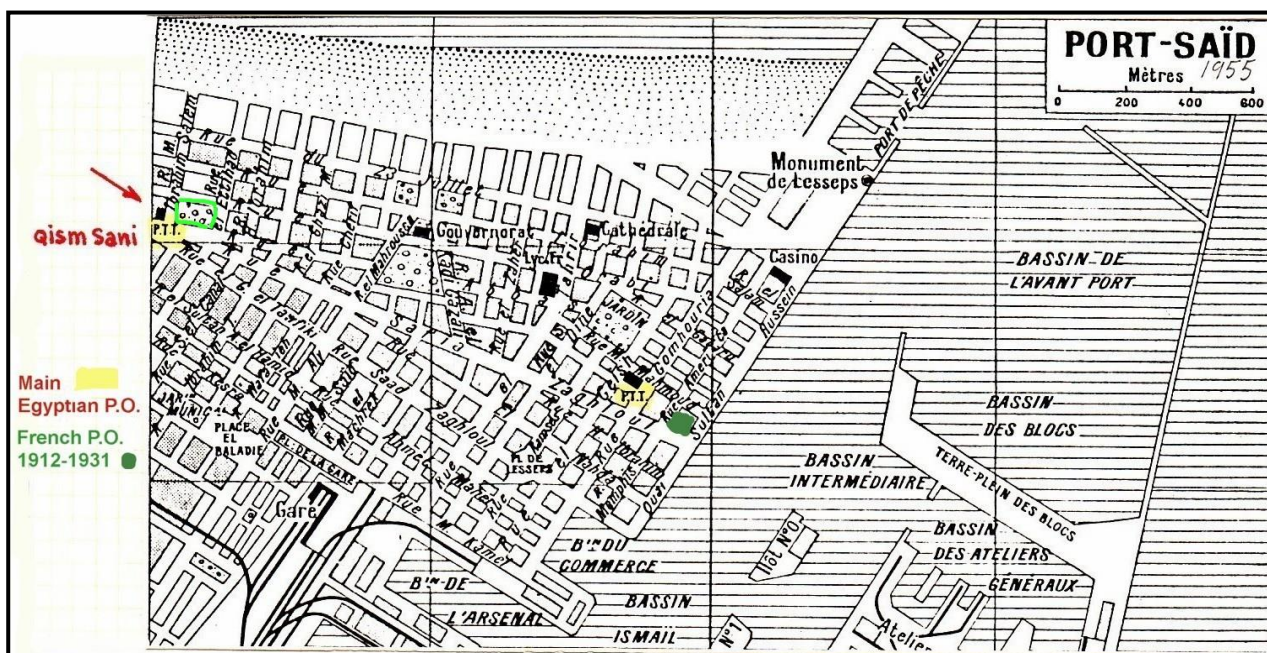


Fig. 19 - **Port-Saïd Qism Sani** - In the early 1950s the Qism Sani Post Office was at the corner of Rue Ibrahim Salem and Rue Safia Zaghoul (ex-Eugénie) west of the Zaghoul Park. In 1922 it was on the east side of the park, in Sharia Nubar (Rue el Ettihad in 1955). Its early location in the Arab Quarter is unknown.

Most items shown here are from my limited collection of that post office. Please would *QC* readers send to the Editor illustrations & details of new extreme dates for that P.O., to be collated in an eventual *QC* update.

**Qism Sani**



Fig. 20 - **Qism Sani** returned letter, which was sent from Cairo on **27 May 1939** by the famous Al Chark insurance company, franked 15 mills inland registered letter rate. Red Registration label. Addressed to: Hadrat el Mohtaram Mohammed Mohammed Sarag Effendi, "at The Canal". (The double Mohammed indicates that the recipient had been twice on the Holy Haj to Mecca). The letter found its way to Port-Saïd (arrival postmark on the back "Port Said" (1)), and forwarded to the Arab Quarter, with Qism Sani arrival, (2) 28 May (Type HEA-15). Insufficiently addressed, it was not delivered or collected, and a month later it was returned to sender. On the front a boxed "Rebut à Remettre à l'Envoyeur" and the Qism Sani (R) departure 1 July 1939 -10 AM (HEA-15), plus two blue pencil lines and "Masr". It reached Cairo the same day, at 5 PM (3) and on to the registration office 5-6 PM (4). Boxed "Non Réclamé". Returned to Al Chark which annotated in pencil on the front "Received on 3/7/39" and struck "A Classer" handstamp (to be filed).



Fig. 21 - Free-franked Registered letter from the Arab Quarter to Cairo, with Port-Said / Qism Sani / (R) (HEA-15) dated **3 May 1945**. Cairo Delivery arrival mark, 6 May. Purple oval free-franking mark.

"On His Egyptian Majesty Service" (O.H.E.M.S.) green Registration label. The letter, from Mr Mohamed Abdou Abd el Ghany, is to the Ministry of General Knowledge (education). Addressed to the Chancellor of Technical Assistance, it is to request a pay rise. At the bottom of the letter there are a) the signature of the Headmaster and b) the signature of the General Inspector agreeing to send this letter to the payroll office for consideration.

**POSTMARKS TABLE** - An initial attempt at Classification.

Type **HEA-1**: This is the earliest recorded "Quartier Arabe" CDS, dated **20 April 1895** TI, found on a Kehr Type XI Interpostal Seal of 1890.  
 Month in letters: AV=Avril.

Note: HEA-2 and HEA-6 are from ancient tracings by Alfredo Dazzi.












HEA-1

**QUARTIER ARABE / HAI-EL-ARAB**

|  |  |  |   |   |
|--|--|--|---|---|
|  |  | Quartier Arabe<br>HEA-2 - HEA-4<br>Earliest: 8.I.96<br>Latest: 9.IX.04 |   |   |
| <b>HEA-2</b><br>No hyphen.                               | <b>HEA-3</b> Ø 28 mm<br>With hyphen                            | Month in Roman Numerals.   | <b>HEA-4</b> Ø 26 mm<br>With hyphen; larger letters; wider line 2.                      |   |
|  |  | Hai el Arab<br>HEA-5: Month in letters.<br>No hyphen.                  |   | HEA-6: Month in Roman numerals.<br>No hyphen.<br>HEA-6 to HEA-8:<br>Broader date-band.<br>Earliest: ...VI.09<br>Latest: 17.I.25                       |
| <b>HEA-5</b><br>24 SE 06 (from Fig12) - 7 DE 07.         |  |  | <b>HEA-6</b><br>Smaller letters.  |   |
|  |  |  |   |   |
| <b>HEA-7</b><br>With hyphen - Only date 26.I.21 (Fig.13) |  | <b>HEA-8</b><br>Smaller "Port-Said". Earliest 7.IV.24. Latest: 17.I.25 |   |   |
|  | HAI-EL-ARAB<br>curved<br>PORT SAID<br>A<br>Month in 3 letters. |  | HAI-EL-ARAB<br>straight line<br>PORT SAID<br>A<br>Smaller letters.<br>Month in letters. | From HEA-9 the postmarks are reverting to 2 or 3 letters for month. No more minutes (eg 540PM) for time in the date-line. It is now 7-8 A or P , etc. |
| <b>HEA-9</b><br>Only date seen: 22 MAR 21                |  | <b>HEA-10</b><br>Only seen .../.../28                                  |   |   |
|  |  |  |   | HEA-12<br>No brackets around the bottom line of Arabic.<br>(error in tracing?)  |
| <b>HEA-11</b><br>P.&R. Registration                      | <b>HEA-RB1</b><br>Boxed Registration Cachet - 11 JA 23         | <b>HEA-12</b><br>P.&R. Only date seen: 2 AP 25.                        |   |   |

**QISM SANI**

|   |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|---|--|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>HEA-13</b><br>22 SE 37-<br>Author's only date                                  | <b>HEA-14</b><br><b>(P) Parcels</b><br>3 DE 41- Only date                         | <b>HEA-15</b><br><b>(R.) Registration - See Figure 20.</b><br>Earliest: 28 May 39 |  | <b>HEA-15</b><br><b>(R.)</b><br>Latest: 3 May 45                                    |
|  |  | HEA-16 and HEA-18: see the text in the article.                                   |  |  |
| <b>HEA-16</b><br><b>Facteurs</b><br>14 JU 38 - 22 AU 40                           | <b>HEA-17</b><br><b>Savings Bank</b><br>8 May 43 - Only date                      |   | <b>HEA-18- TANI</b><br>Qism Tani R.<br>...3. 60                                    | <b>HEA-18</b><br>Colour altered to highlight postmark                               |

The Arab Quarter of Port-Said has always been ignored in guide books, the plans of the city stopping short at the edge of the area, with the focus being on the European city and the Canal. It also gets only a passing mention in historical or travel books. Impossible therefore to establish the exact locations of the Hai-el-Arab post office before 1922. The only exception is the French "Hachette Guide Bleu" for Egypt, which used to show the position of that post-office on the edge of its Port-Said map (*Figure 19* is 1955) and a 1922 overall map of the area produced by the Canal Company which includes it.

It would be very interesting if, after reading this article, an ESC member in Egypt, who is familiar with Port-Said, might update us on what has happened to Qism-Tani today. Thank you.



*Fig. 22 - Port-Said "Native Quarter", in the 1950s.*

Reference: P.L.Grech "French Post Offices in Egypt" Vol 1, Chapters 15 - 17; Vol 2, Chap. 26, 26.1 & 32.

## Consular revenues, 1982-2012

Vahe Varjabedian (ESC 390)

The late Peter Feltus published his classic work, *Catalogue of Egyptian Revenue Stamps*, in 1982. Since then, silence, with virtually nothing written or brought to light in any organised way. We greatly regret the passing of those two supreme enthusiasts, Robin Bertram and Nabil el-Hadidi, but the situation is dire. Since 1982 Egypt must have issued literally thousands of revenues of all sorts, and we have no record of them.

I do not claim to be an expert on revenues, merely a philatelist who enjoys all aspects of Egypt collecting. So in recent years I have been gathering together what “post-Feltus” issues I can discover. It is not easy. The Egypt Post Philatelic Bureau does not seem to acknowledge, or at least to publicise, any new issues, they rarely appear on internet sale sites, and as a particular interest of mine is consular revenues, I have had to resort to collecting passports on which they have been used.

Even here there is a difficulty: how to display the revenue stamps when they form only a small part of a passport of up to 48 pages? I have had to take desperate measures, concentrating on the adhesives themselves and forced to lose the context by releasing the stamps from their pages. I have taken notes about context where possible, and am happy to present the fruits of some of my labours here.

The following issues were used at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Cairo, or were applied to documents requiring legal validity at Egyptian consular offices in other countries. Most of the examples I show – which are by no means exhaustive – were affixed to passports or other documents alongside other Egyptian revenues, and pen-cancelled.

1. **The Building Fund Issue, 1982-2010.** Feltus recorded this issue, with the stamps used to raise funds for building Egyptian embassies around the world, with a single example (£E1 ½) from 1981



£E2, recorded on documents and visa pages 1983-1990



£E5, recorded 1985-2010 on documents and visa pages. Two shades of blue, and one forgery discovered on a visa page issued in Lagos, Nigeria, on January 15 1998



£E36.55, recorded 1997-2001; and £E36, 1999-2002, mesh colour purple



£E11.20, 2002-2004, mesh colour changed to green



A Consular Service revenue issued in about 2000 with an astonishing face value of £E422.40



2. The Sphinx Issue 1988-2002



£E1,2,5,10,  
recorded  
1988-2002



£E168.40, 1998-  
2002, work  
permit in  
passport issued  
in Kuwait

3. The Fourth Lotus Issue. Feltus recorded First and Second Lotus issues, with a 200m stamp issued in 1978 and 500m in 1980



£E204.55,  
recorded 1996  
on a work permit  
seen in a passport  
issued in Kuwait

The examples that follow show some extraordinary changes in values, and some equally extraordinary values in terms of pounds and piastres, incomprehensible on the surface, for example values at £E141.50 and £E142.05. But it was explained at the last ESC meeting that costs of consular services were increased specifically according to the official exchange rate of the time. So a change in the exchange rate may well have led to another issue of stamps with different values – a nightmare both for the post office and for the collector.

4. The Small Eagle Issue, 1998-2012



£E11



£E24 1/2



£E25



£E47.90



£E48.45



£E141.50

All seven examples  
shown here were  
used between 1998  
and 2012



£E142.05

5. The Tutankhamun Mask Issue, 1992-2001



5850 piastres, 1994-1996



£E192.40, 1992-1998



As last, without £E, 1992-99



£E422.40, 1998-2001

## 6. Egypt's Renaissance Statue Issue, 1988-2011



40pt,  
1988-1995



50pt,  
1987-  
1998



10.40pt,  
1990-92, to  
add name  
to passport



10.50pt,  
1992-94,  
tourist visa  
from Amman



10.90pt  
1986-1988,  
for visa  
issued in  
Abu Dhabi



£E27.20  
1999-  
2001\*



£E27.20,  
1996-98,  
entry visa,  
Jeddah and  
Kuwait



£E57, 2004-  
2011, fee for  
translation†

\*Single-entry tourist visa, issued only at Cairo and Hurghada airports

†Seen on documents from Milan, Rome, Montreal, Quebec, New York, Washington and San Francisco

## 7. The Two Statues Issue, 1995-2009



Left, £E37.55, 1995-2000, and right, £E37, 2002-2009. It seems that at some stage the fee for adding an extra person to a passport was reduced by 55 piastres.



## 8. The Television Building Issue, 1989-2012



1380pt, 1989,  
single-entry  
visa issued in  
Kuwait.  
Large size



Left, £E54.70, 2001-  
2012, single-entry visa  
from Djibouti and  
Dacca. Right, £E97.70,  
multiple-entry visa  
issued in Niamey,  
Nigeria



## 9. The Qait Bey Fort Issue, 1996-1998



Left, £E27.50, 1996, on entry visa issued in  
Dacca. Right, £E43.55, 1998, from visa issued  
in Lagos, Nigeria



As mentioned above, these are merely some of the thousands of revenue adhesives that must have been issued since publication of the Feltus catalogue. The author - and the Circle - would be grateful to learn of other examples in members' collections, and indeed to learn of any member who is actively collecting and researching this regrettably under-supported branch of Egyptian philately.

## 1948 Malta-Cyprus surface mail censored in Egypt

Marc Parren (non-member)

The 1948 Arab–Israeli War, or the Israeli War of Independence, was fought between the newly declared State of Israel and a military coalition of Arab states over the control of former British Palestine. It is also known as the First Arab–Israeli War. There had been tension and conflict between the Arabs and the Jews, and between each of them and the British forces, ever since the 1917 Balfour Declaration and the 1920 creation of the British Mandate of Palestine. In 1947 these tensions erupted into civil war, following the 29 November 1947 adoption of the United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine, which planned to divide Palestine into three areas: an Arab state, a Jewish state and the Special International Regime for the cities of Jerusalem and Bethlehem.

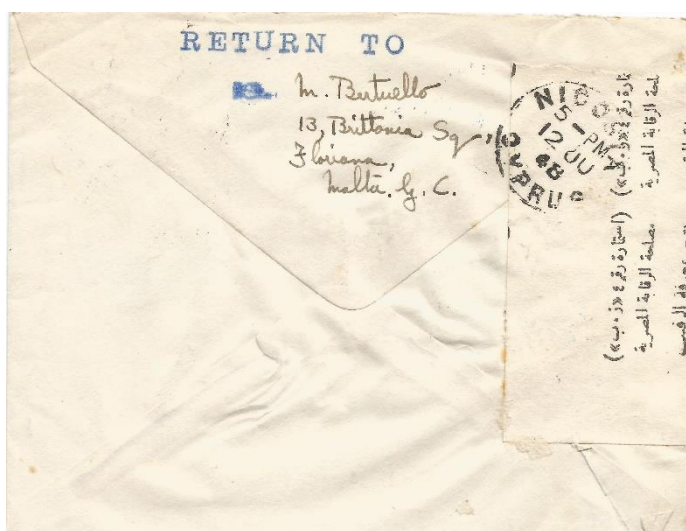
On 14 May 1948, the British evacuated Palestine and Israel declared Independence. The next day, the continuing civil war transformed into an inter-state conflict between Israel and the Arab states, with Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, together with expeditionary forces from Iraq, invading Palestine. The invading forces took control of the Arab areas and immediately attacked Israeli forces and several Jewish settlements. The ten months of fighting, interrupted by several truce periods, took place mainly on the former territory of the British Mandate and for a short time also in the Sinai Peninsula and southern Lebanon.

Commencing in April 1948, some airmail addressed to Palestinian Jews was removed by Egypt as the aircraft landed in Cairo. There it was opened, censored and resealed by the Egyptian censor before being returned to sender. When the Cairo-Lydda mail route was ultimately suspended by Egypt on 25 April 1948, Egypt's practice of tampering with the mail was extended as it prepared for the impending war with the eventual State of Israel. Kibble (2014) shows that mail addressed to Palestine that was intercepted in Egypt was normally delayed for months before being returned to sender. Here, however, I can show the first Egyptian tampering with a cover in transit destined not for Palestine but for Cyprus (*Fig. 1*).

The cover, addressed to Cyprus, was posted in Malta on 29 May 1948 and intended for transport by surface mail. Most likely it was still carried by air since I have seen a cover from the same correspondence posted 6 April 1947 in Malta with a 20 April 1947 Cairo transit machine cancellation at the back and 26 April 1947 Nicosia arrival postmark.



*Fig. 1. Cover sent on 29 May 1948 from Malta to Cyprus, opened for censorship in Egypt and resealed with a label in white and imprint reading 'OPENED BY CENSOR' with arrival postmark Nicosia 12 June 1948.*



I do not know when the cover arrived in Egypt, but it was intercepted and opened and censored before being resealed. Maybe it was opened since this involved correspondence between two British Mediterranean colonies at the time and it was thought that sensitive information about the British in the region could be derived.

The re-sealing label has been reported by Andrews (1994) to have been seen used between 11 June 1948 and 25 November 1949. I cannot report an earlier date, although this is most likely with a Nicosia arrival date of 12 June 1948. The circular Egyptian censor handstamp with number 76 is Andrews type 6, recorded in use between 25 April 1948 and 5 October 1957.

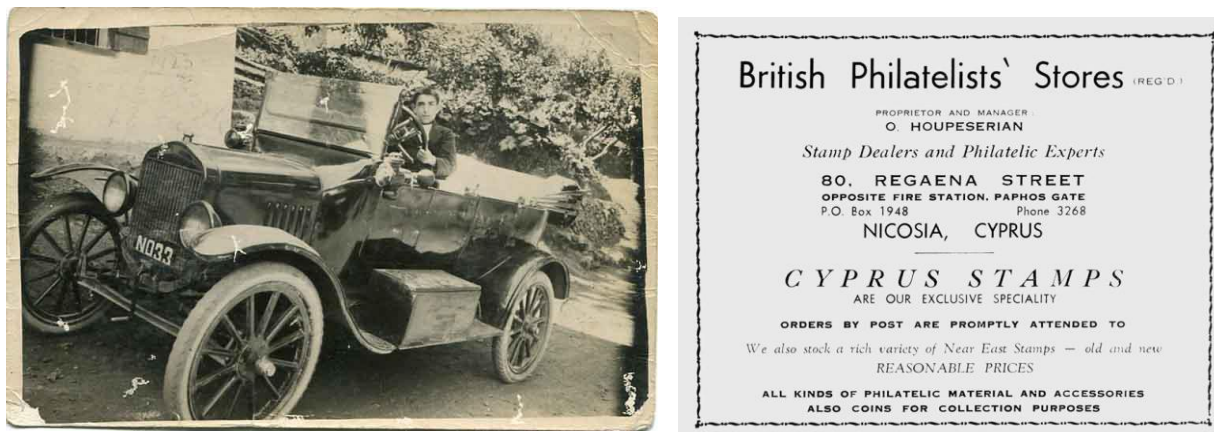


Fig. 2. Onnick Houpeserian, a photograph taken in Nicosia, 1923; and an advertisement for his business

Another item censored by Egypt was recently reported by Van Horn (2018), a printed matter cover posted 26 April 1948 in Brussels destined to O. Houpeserian in Nicosia, which arrived on 17 June. The same Egyptian re-sealing label was applied and the same censor handstamp type but with number 90. After checking on the internet for O. Houpeserian there were only a handful of hits, but it seems that his first name was Onnick and that in 1923 he was already driving a car at a young age (see Fig. 2). In 1944 his business, “British Philatelists’ Stores”, was registered at Ledras 92 in Lefkosia/Nicosia, the same address as on the Belgium cover.

Most probably the Egyptians were looking in these covers for any clues related to the Jews interned since mid-1946 in Cyprus. Some 12 displaced persons camps were operated by the British to accommodate more than 50,000 Jews, most of them Holocaust survivors and would-be emigrants to Palestine. The rate of entry to Palestine was limited by the British, which led to a lot of frustration by the internees. The Egyptians had reasons to be suspicious about the interned Jews since after the establishment of the State of Israel numerous internees left for this country. The Cypriot camps were finally being evacuated by February 1949 (Brinson and Kaczynski 2011). It could be that the Egyptians believed that Houpeserian was a Jewish name as no other covers in transit to Cyprus have been recorded with Egyptian censorship at the time.

So these are rare covers sent during the First Arab–Israeli War which the Egyptian censors tampered with, but this time destined not for Palestine but rather Cyprus.

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