

# The Quarterly Circular of THE EGYPT STUDY CIRCLE



December Quarter 2020 – Vol XXIV No 4 – Whole Series No 275 – Pages 73-96

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**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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## Draft Meetings Programme

*Please bear in mind that the following programme is provisional only, dependant on government pandemic regulation*

Spring 2021	Date, venue TBA	Postal Auction 62	All members
Late March?	Spring Stampex?	Virtual exhibition, online only	
Jul 3 2021, 2-5?	Victory Services Club	Letters A-B-C-D and ten sheets	All members
Autumn?	Morley Hayes Hotel, Derby	Joint meeting with Sudan group	All members
Oct 2 2021, 2-4	Autumn Stampex	Room and postal Auction 63	All members
Nov 13 2021, 2-5	Victory Services Club	Conflict: wars, invasions etc	Speaker needed

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**Facebook**

2020 has been a trying time for all of us, whether philatelists or not. It has divided families and brought tragedy to many, led to immense strains on health services and national economies the world over, and, closer to home, wiped out the Study Circle's regular face-to-face meetings right back to the AGM in February. Below are reports suggesting that, despite the turmoil, we are ready to bounce back when the virus is beaten.

**Meetings - the way forward:** By now we have all got used to having our plans dashed as coronavirus continues to throw our lives into chaos. Most of the 2020 Circle programme was cancelled and now it is having an impact on 2021. England has just come out of its second national lockdown and London is in the middle tier of restrictions, which effectively bans society meetings. On the other hand there are now three effective vaccines and phased vaccination will start in the UK before Christmas. Light at the end of the tunnel means there is merit in looking at our potential 2021 programme.

Our first meeting was to have been at Stampex on February 20, but the organisers have decided it will be online and virtual, like last time, and have switched to the end of March. Our spring postal auction will proceed no matter what: Sami Sadek will announce dates soon and is happy to receive lists of lots for sale.

In April we were to have had our second joint weekend meeting with the Sudan Study Group at the Morley Hayes Hotel in Derby, but this will also be postponed. Because of concerns that widespread vaccination will not be completed by then, the SSG is trying to reschedule for autumn 2021.

From there on things begin to look more positive. Our July 3 and November 13 meetings at the Victory Services Club will probably go ahead as global vaccination may well have had a notable effect by then. In the same way the organisers of Stampex, where we have a meeting on October 2, have every intention of running it as a physical exhibition and are optimistic that it will be possible.

The Covid landscape is continually changing but should become clearer in the New Year. Some members are investigating holding a virtual meeting by Zoom that we hope to announce in due course: all we need is a little more expertise! If there is positive progress in the New Year we may even add another meeting in late spring when the subject would probably be Sinai to replace our Stampex topic. We hope to have a clearer and more positive picture for the March *QC* and ask our members to be patient for a little longer. Let's hope we can get together again in the not too distant future. **Jon Aitchison**, Programme Secretary (ESC 661)

**Website – lockdown window of opportunity:** The 2020 lockdown has been used to advantage by your webmaster, who has spent most of the past nine months locked in his home office. With the very much appreciated (and never properly acknowledged) guidance of your Secretary and a few other members work has been progressing, mainly in the background, on the site; much of the work has involved rewriting and updating the more popular pages to reflect positive progress in new coding practices and html updates.

We are now in the happy situation whereby members will see, during the next few quarters, many of the more visited pages gradually being replaced by a clearer and far more screen-friendly format. The first change, in the New Year, will be a new front page. Others will then be introduced into the 16 categories on the banner page. The auction page, which will be transformed from a single-entry single-auction page to one from which more recent auctions can be accessed for those who wish to review lots and prices paid.

We shall also introduce a page to provide a comprehensive list of all those who have ever been members of the ESC in the 85 years since its inception by the late, great Dr Byam in 1935. Information on current members will be covered and censored by the current GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) rules.

One positive taken from this period of employment torpor has been that your webmaster has also managed to use new technology to start digitising ALL issues of the *QC* – from the very first in February 1938. He has found many anomalies, such as the decision midway through Volume II to repaginate everything, and the apparent re-issuance of many issues before 1950, resulting in several versions of the same *QC*.

The aim is not to rewrite every single issue, nor to correct anything but the most obvious errors – each piece is of its time and later research by ESC members may well have changed conclusions reached at that earlier point. It is instead intended to be a historical record of the time of issue.

However, the quality of many issues, especially before the change from quarto to A4 in 1977, remains much to be desired. This is through no fault of anything expect age – production techniques have improved in 85-plus years and as such it is only with incredibly careful cleaning, reorientation, and the use of pixel sized editing that many early issues have been saved completely for posterity.

This project will continue over the winter. Members should keep an eye out on the website from week to week as to my progress!  
**Neil Hitchens**, Webmaster (ESC 651)

**Auction – success born from enthusiasm:** - Auction 61, postal-only after our November meeting with room sale was cancelled, has been a challenge and a new experience for our new Auctioneer. For a first attempt, it has been a resounding success thanks exclusively to the enthusiastic participation of members. It has provided a central point of contact between QCs when meetings were forced to a halt.

For the first time Auction150 invoices have taken into account PayPal fees and postage/packing costs, a feature that has been an instant help to both buyers and organisers but which will probably benefit from a little fine tuning.



*Lot 368, a remarkable readdressed UK cover with a total of three groups of three Postage Due stamps (one more on the reverse), fetched £400. But doubt was raised about the Boy King swastika-and-palm "German overprints" and they were withdrawn from the Auction.*

The sale provided 557 lots from 15 sellers, all of them illustrated online, and no fewer than 325 were sold (58%), an outstanding result. Of the 61 bidders (four came back for second attempts), 54 were successful. Commiserations to the few who failed to win anything – astonishingly, 175 lots sold went to a single bidder.

Top price paid was £400 for a remarkable incoming cover from UK which received nine Postage Due stamps as it followed its touring dignitary down the Nile; and most bids (ten) were for the very last lot, an 1873 French Alexandria PO cover that quadrupled its reserve price.

As I write, final invoices are being calculated and lots mailed. Total bids amounted to £7,213, generating much needed income for the Circle as the Auction remains one our financial pillars. Please do not hesitate to email me with any thoughts on how we can improve. Thank you all. **Sami Sadek**, Auctioneer (ESC 559)

**QC – cupboard starts to fill:** Members have clearly not been sitting staring into space during the enforced lockdown. I have had a pleasing influx of several articles clearly suggested by spare-time sorting through long-forgotten treasures – but that the cupboard is no longer bare does not mean that it is time to stop searching. As ever, I should very much welcome more pieces – however detailed, maybe no more than a query, maybe half a dozen pages more – to entertain, delight and tantalise fellow members. Postal history always acceptable, stamps perhaps even more...  
**Mike Murphy**, Editor (ESC 240)



## Egypt's first – a stamp with a hole

Mike Murphy (ESC 240)

While the Covid pandemic brought much of the world to a halt, the staff of the newly refurbished Printing House of the Egyptian National Postal Organisation have been labouring through the summer to produce no fewer than 70 million stamps never seen before – each has a small five-pointed star hole punched into its top left corner.

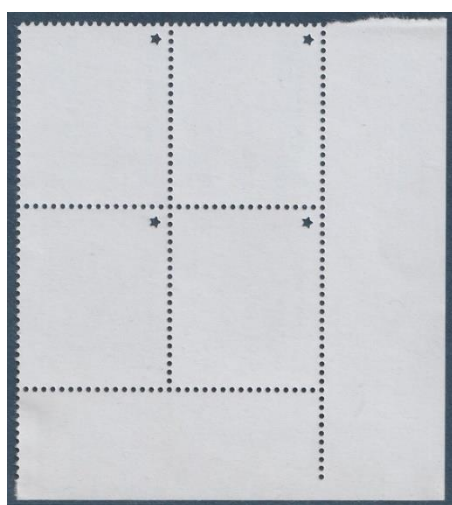
This is nothing to do with perfins, nor with the circular holes cut from stamps of some countries to indicate proofs, to cancel them after use as revenues or on telegraph forms, or even to do with the “fun” designs with holes issued by a dozen nations since the mid-90s. Egypt is the first in the world to pierce its stamps in mint condition as a necessary and important security measure.

We are grateful indeed to the eagle-eyed Scott Van Horn (ESC 619), of Chandler, Arizona, who was first to alert me to the sale of a “reprinted” £E3 definitive on a well-known online sale site. I contacted the vendor, who told me he had found a half-sheet by happenstance in the central Post Office in Cairo. As his online offers included blocks with selvedge on all four sides, however, he clearly had obtained more than half a sheet.



*Left, the original 2017 £E3 definitive, and right, the 2020 version with star-hole and other security features*

On examining the stamps closely I found several differences from the original £E3 definitive showing Amenhotep, Son of Hapu, released on November 21 2017. Most obvious was the tiny star-hole, 2mm at its widest, in the top left corner (*see below left*). But there were others – the overall colour is a paler and greyer blue, the value lettering in a different font, with the “3” descending below the LE, and there are four italic ovals at bottom left outside the stamp vignette.



The word “post” is dropped from “Egypt Post” in both languages, and - astonishingly - the body of the statue appears to be covered in Arabic lettering! In addition, the stamp vignette is 2.45cm wide against 2.4cm, and on the brand-new printing machinery from Heidelberg the old perforation of 13x13 has been replaced, as I measure it, by 14x14.

This really did need investigating, so I sought the help of Dr Sherif Samra, President of the Philatelic Society of Egypt (ESC 311), who has been exemplary in answering my myriad questions and has supplied several of the illustrations. He is to be highly commended for providing much of what follows.

Dr Sherif tells me that the Printing House in Nasr City, which has been supplying Egypt's stamps since the 1960s, has been totally transformed, with new buildings and new machines, and is now immensely proud of producing philatelic material capable of accepting modern security features required to combat increasingly sophisticated photocopied forgeries. With some consular revenues of face value £E400 (£stg 20) and more, Egypt Post is determined that however today's copying techniques develop, forgeries can be spotted easily and quickly.

Immense security for a stamp of face value £E3 (15p) seems like a piledriver to crack a walnut, but the printed definitive discussed above is far from alone. It seems that the complete small-size output of Egypt Post is now to be printed with much-improved security. The large commemoratives have been protected by elliptical perforations for about four years, but the new machinery has the capacity to apply the punched hole to other sizes as well as the smaller stamps.

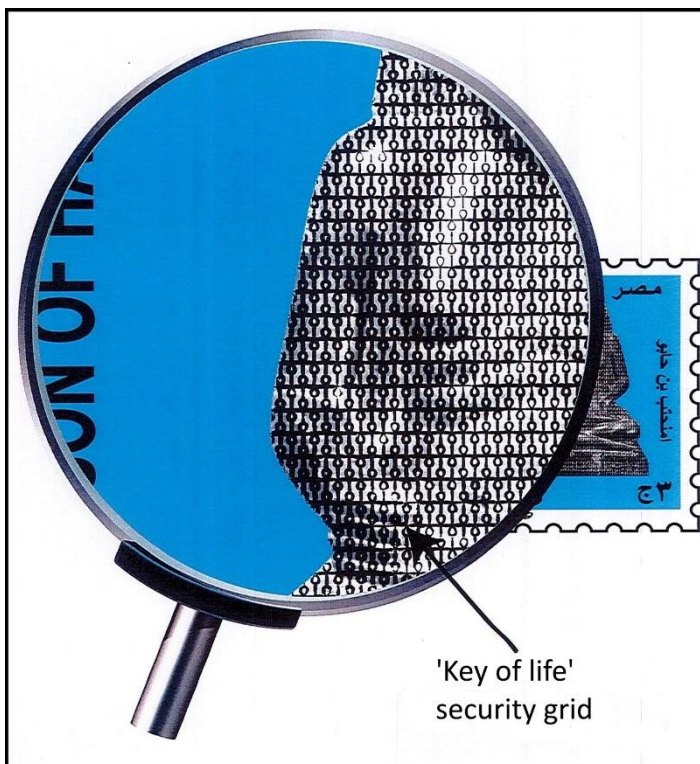
These include not only the day-to-day definitives (£E4 is the normal internal rate, with an additional £E5 for registration, and the £E3 stamp is to make up overseas or overweight mailings) but all future stamp designs with 2.5x3cm vignettes. Also printed with the star-hole are all Official issues, and the myriad stamps printed for use by universities, syndicates (engineers, doctors, lawyers, teachers and so on), and by state government (foreign affairs, interior, housing, health etc).

Hence the total of 70 million this year. More than 55 million have been supplied to the syndicate groups, five million of the £E3 definitive, a further three million for the £E3 Official (*see below*), and seven million of a new £E50 fiscal stamp required for keeping track of the government's public health service.



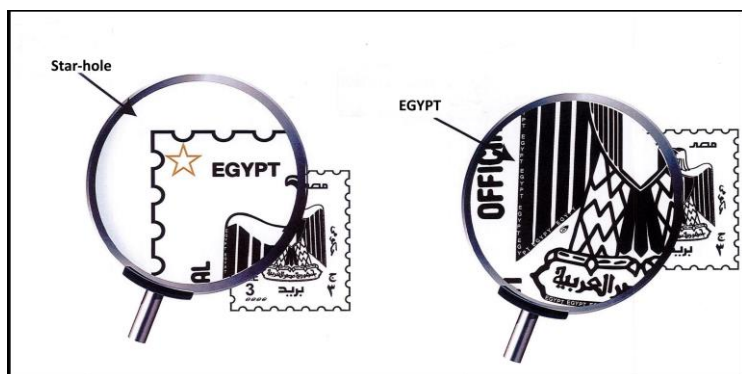
Examining the new £E3 definitive more closely, we discover that the “Arabic” lettering over the statue’s surface is

not Arabic at all but a security grid using an image similar to the ancient Egyptian sign of life, the *ankh*, though apparently having lost its cross-bar. At lower left, the four ovals are miniaturised versions of the Egypt Post flying bird logo, each carrying a single letter to form the word *POST* (*left*). These ovals will be included in all Printing House products as identification, and loss of the word “post/barid” has happened merely to make a little more space for the star.



The full sheet of 100 (10x10) has no printing date or other information in the selvedge, but instead has a series of flat ovals in all four corners and perforation guidelines that – certainly in the sheet supplied by Dr Sherif – were followed precisely. There is no watermark in the new issue, and the gum is shiny.

Dr Sherif has also been able to share details of two more of the new-security stamps with their star-holes, as follows:



The £E3 Official, replacing one of a set of five (including 50pt, £E2.5, £E4, and £E5) produced on August 16 2018, shares the star-hole at top left and the four P.O.S.T. ovals at lower left beneath the value, but also a tiny single oval with the letter P tucked neatly inside the eagle’s right wing (*see detail, right*). In addition, the edges of both wings and the frame around the Arabic phrase at the eagle’s feet contain the word EGYPT in minuscule capitals.



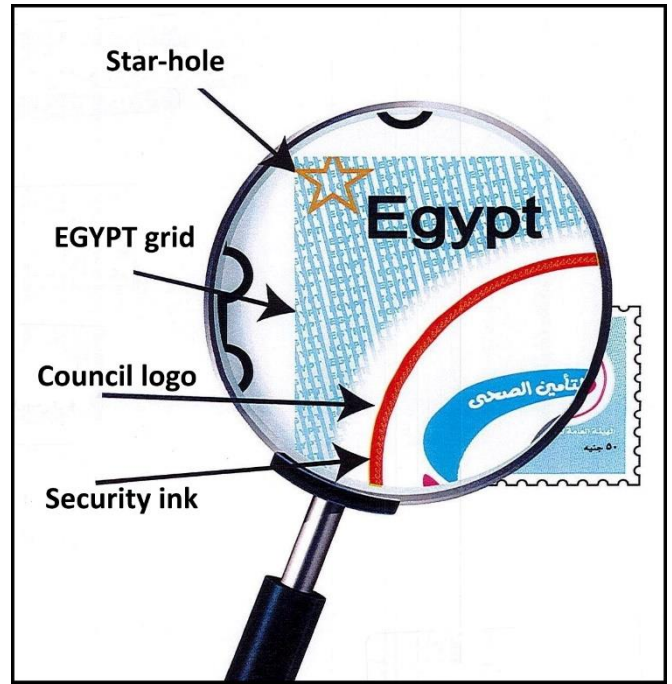


As if all that additional security were not enough, the high-value £E50 fiscal stamp for the General Council for Health Insurance has more. As well as the star-hole, the four P.O.S.T. ovals this time form part of the main design, set within an overall pale blue grid reading EGYPT in tiny type diagonally behind the

Council’s mother-and-baby central design feature.

Part of the stamp has been printed in high-security inks that can be detected only when they change colour under ultraviolet light, and a tiny version of the mother-and-baby logo is somehow squeezed within the printed red border of the central logo (*see illustration at right below, enlarged to spot the security printing*).

For obvious reasons, these new security measures have been neither officially announced nor publicised; the post office does not want to warn the forgers of what is being done, so the man in the street will most probably buy the stamps he needs without even noticing the star-hole. The current security features mark an important move in helping the government to combat forgery, and the Post Office is planning future developments for post offices to detect fake issues. There is far to go, but this is a fascinating and important first step.



### Only in Egypt...

Only in Egypt could such a welcome good-news story as the one above, crammed with hope for a better future with superb new machinery and surroundings in which to produce secure and delightful stamp designs, head for another design disaster. Vahe Varjabedian (ESC 390) tells us from Heliopolis that after its commemorative issue to mark the 47<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the October War (October 6, £E4), the Post Office decided to issue two more commems on October 20 – one (£E5) paying tribute to the valiant efforts of Egypt’s “White Army” of frontline medics who have done so much to save the country during the coronavirus pandemic, the other to mark World Statistics Day (£E4).

Here (*left*) is the Statistics stamp, without a star-hole, as planned because it is a commemorative, but with other security features to the fore, with elliptical perforations, the P.O.S.T. ovals, minuscule lettering around the black circle – and EGYPT misspelled as EYGPT not once but three times - in the main national identification of the stamp, in the central design, and even, as it transpires, in the special first-day cancel. At the time of writing it is believed that the error was not noticed until the stamp was released to post offices throughout the country. But there will be red faces all round after precisely the sort of blunder that the new machinery can’t possibly be expected to handle – human error.

- Mike Murphy



## Edouard Empain and the Genesis of Heliopolis

Pierre Louis Grech (ESC 266)

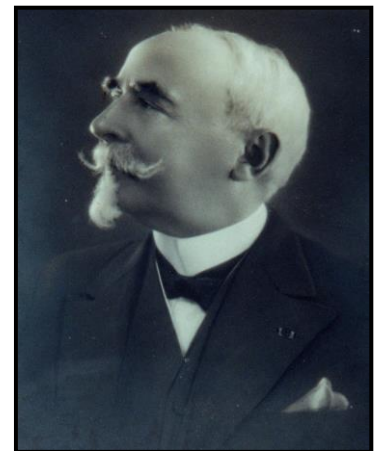
Who was this man known to us as the "Baron Empain", founder of Heliopolis? Edouard Louis Joseph Empain was not of noble blood, but actually the son of a Belgian schoolteacher. He was born at Beloeuil in 1852. He studied engineering and joined a mechanical company where he rapidly rose to chief engineer, then director. As he wanted to be his own boss he acquired a quarrying company near Liege and became quite successful. He then discovered electrical transportation. He sold the quarry, set up a bank to fund his own engineering projects and set about building trams and constructing rail networks, thus controlling all aspects of financing, manufacturing and implementation. After Belgium he went on to build part of the Paris Metro, then supplied tramways to the Congo and China. In 1894 one of his companies (*Société des Tramways du Caire*) embarked on building the highly successful Cairo tramway system. In 1904, he came to Egypt concerning two electric railway projects he had planned: one towards Helwan, the other towards the Delta. He failed to be selected for these new ventures, but by the time he arrived in Egypt he was exceedingly wealthy. For services rendered to his country, in 1907 he was given the title of baron by King Leopold of Belgium.

At that time Cairo was already expanding rapidly and there was a housing shortage. Rather than build homes, landowners sat on their property for a few months then resold the land at a profit. Empain immediately saw an opportunity. What happened next was chronicled in *L'illustration Belge*, Special Egypte 1930.

"In the spring of 1905 a small group of riders on an outing in the desert, dismounted to rest on top of a hill. They could see Cairo in the distance some miles away. One man stepped up:

"Look at this sprawling city, so much in need of good housing.

I will build a new city here, where it is cooler, the air is purer and away from Cairo's bustle. It will have beautiful villas and gardens, and the greatest hotel in the world."



**Fig. 1. - Baron Edouard Empain.**

Then pointing to the Gizeh pyramids in the distance, with his stick he drew a line in the sand:

"The main artery will be in this direction and it will be called Avenue des Pyramides.

And I will name my city HELIOPOLIS".



**Fig. 2 - G.- L. Claude.**

In the party, listening to Edouard Empain, was Boghos Nubar Pasha, Egypt's Minister of the Interior. Together on 13 May 1905 they purchased a plot of desert land 10km north-east of Cairo, which for contractual purposes was designated as the "Oasis of Abbassiah", even though there was not even a bush there, never mind an oasis. They set about identifying suppliers and builders. In Shepherd's Hotel, where he was staying, Empain met Ernest Jaspas, a young Belgian architect on holiday. Jaspas was fascinated by the project and Empain, thrilled by a few sketches, invited him to work for him. He was joined by a French team: Alexandre Marcel, architect, and his decorator Georges-Louis Claude. The pseudo-oriental design of Heliopolis is their handiwork, on the directives of Empain. The future baron specified that there should be no brick constructions; buildings were to be yellowish in colour and built from calcium-silicate stone, manufactured locally by the company's own plant on the outskirts of Heliopolis.

Jaspas is responsible for all the Arabesque buildings along Boulevard Abbas and the Palace Hotel with Marcel, who designed the baron's Hindou Palace and the Basilique. Claude conceived the interior of the Palace Hotel and all the decoration of the "Villa Hindoue", the baron's palatial residence. For this, all the exotic carvings (elephants, etc.) were cast in France and shipped to Egypt for assembly on the palace. A kind of 1910 Lego kit!

On 23 January 1906 a company called THE CAIRO ELECTRIC RAILWAY AND HELIOPOLIS OASIS CO. (C.E.R.) was formed. Empain had also negotiated a concession for an electric Metropolitan railway ( the "Metro") from Heliopolis to Pont Limoun (journey time 12 minutes), as well as two tramway lines:

- a) one from Abbassiah to Heliopolis Midan El Gameh, via Faggalah, Daher and Sakakini, picking up and bringing construction workers to/from Heliopolis. Inaugurated 10 May 1908, journey time 45 minutes.
- b) the other from Heliopolis Almaza to Koubeh Palace to connect with the Mataria railway line from Cairo to El Marg. This tramway became operational in 1909.



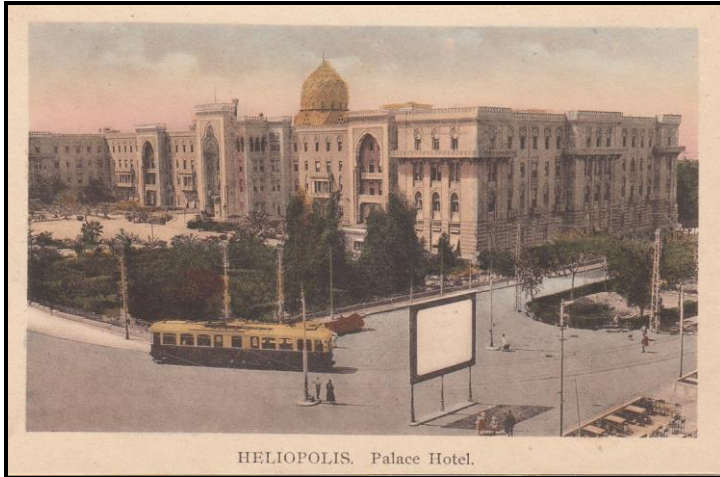
**Fig. 3 - The C.E.R.'s domed offices opposite the Palace Hotel.**

Originally there were to be two oases:

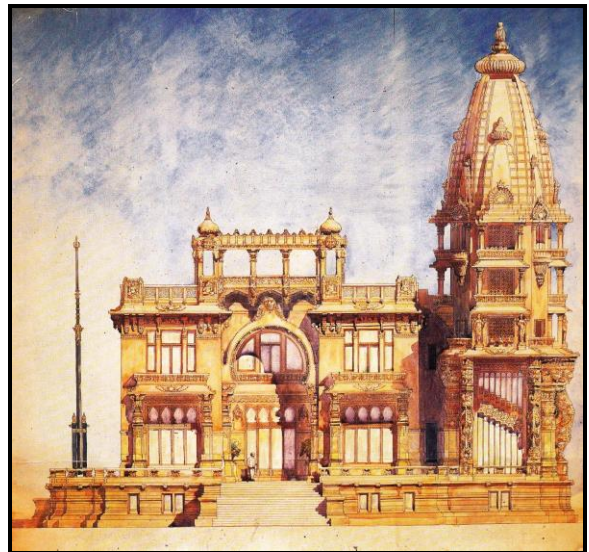
- One, the Oasis d'Heliopolis, at the present site, would be for the hotels, fine villas for Europeans and palaces for the Egyptian aristocracy.

- The other, Oasis d'Almaza, further out, would provide affordable housing for natives, levantines and workers.

With a financial crisis in Egypt in 1907, the sale of plots for building at Heliopolis came to a virtual halt. It was clear that the scheme had to be re-dimensioned; which led to a single town of Heliopolis, the other oasis being abandoned. The baron used his own fortune and the strength of his companies to keep the scheme going, when all thought the project would collapse. By 1908 things were getting better as construction advanced. Tramways were easing transport, Heliopolis was now opened to the public. The Metro began functioning in July 1910, and was extended to Rue Emad-el-Dine in December.



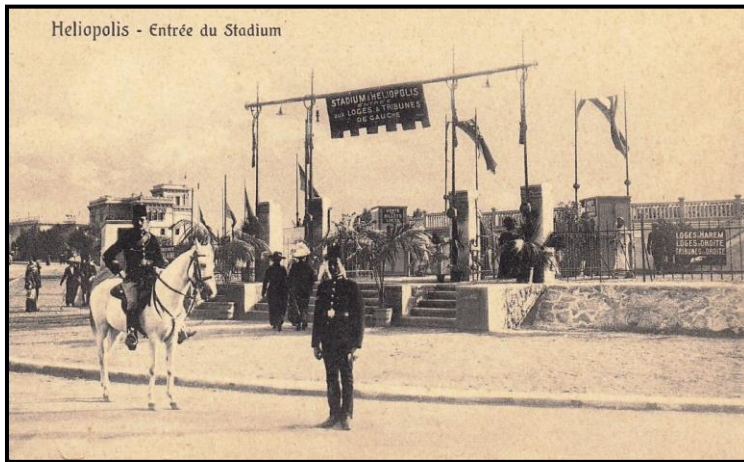
**Fig. 4 - The metro passing the Palace Hotel on its way to Cairo. The screen is for the Heliopolis House Hotel cinema.**



**Fig. 5 - Concept preparatory illustration by Georges-Louis Claude for the external decoration of the Hindou Palace.**

For the first two years access was by road only, on double-decker omnibuses, bringing workers every day. At first by the road to Suez, but a direct road to Cairo was built in a year to carry road traffic as well as a bus service to Opera Square. In 1909 the Heliopolis House Hotel was already in operation. The Heliopolis Palace Hotel was inaugurated on 1 December 1910. With 300 rooms, central heating and lifts that could carry 20 persons at a time it was one of the most luxurious hotels in the world. In World War I Heliopolis was commandeered by the British administration. Villas were taken over by the HQ. The Heliopolis Palace Hotel was closed and became a hospital, and subsequently a British flying training school (in preparation for the Western Front). The flying was done from a nearby new aerodrome behind the hotel. It was only in 1923 that Almaza Airport was built.





From 1911 until the First World War there was a Sports Stadium adjacent to the Heliopolis Palace Hotel (Fig. 6). The **Heliopolis Sporting Club** was opened in March 1911 with the best golf links in Egypt (18 holes). Around the club house there would eventually be two polo grounds, six tennis and two squash courts and a cricket field. Members included the best families and most officers in Cairo.

**Fig. 6 - Entrance to the Stadium and its location.**

### The 1910 Grande Semaine d'Aviation.

The baron had been at Rheims in 1909 for the Grande Semaine d'Aviation de Champagne, the world's first proper air meeting. The huge crowds and the interest raised made him ask the Aero-Club de France to organise a similar meeting at Heliopolis to publicise the new city. It was set for 6-13 February 1910 and would be held at a newly laid airfield north of the burgeoning city. Twelve international aviators took part. It was highly successful, the first such meeting in Africa/Middle East. Commemorative sets of postcards were issued. Refer to *1910 - Heliopolis, Grande Semaine d'Aviation*, by P.L.Grech. That airfield would also see the arrival of Jules Védrines on 20 November 1913 (the first France to Egypt flight) and the visit of the French aviator Marc Pourpe on his solo raid to the Sudan in 1914.



**HELIOPOLIS - General view of the Stadium and showing the Palace Hotel.**

There was only one monument ever erected in Heliopolis. That was to Louis Pierre Mouillard. Postcards of this statue refer to him grandiosely as the First Aviator. Born in Lyon in 1834, he was fascinated by the flight and gliding of birds and came to Egypt where the clear skies allowed him to study these features. He wrote a couple of books on the subject, and some of his ideas proved to be an inspiration for the Wright Brothers. He was no real aviator. Gliders with which he was experimenting crashed, causing him grave injuries. He died penniless in Cairo in 1897. See: "*Louis Mouillard - Pioneer Aviator*", by P.L. Grech, *QC* 230, September 2009, pp. 164-166. At the 1910 Heliopolis Aviation Meeting his achievements were remembered and the French Ligue Nationale Aérienne (L.N.A.) raised a subscription for the statue. Comprising a bronze bust of Mouillard on a granite pillar, it was inaugurated on 21 January 1912 in the gardens of Avenue Cleopatra at Heliopolis. After the Suez crisis of 1956 it was removed, like all statues of Frenchmen and Britons and its present fate is unknown.



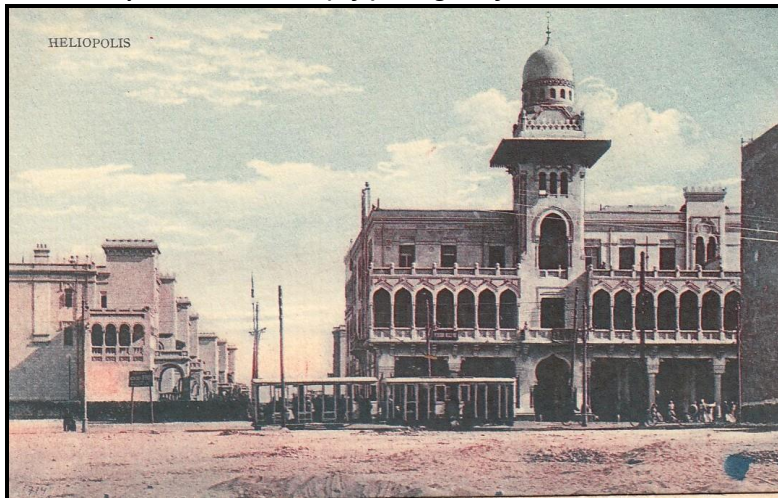
**Fig. 7 – Commemorating Heliopolis Centenary, 2005.**

In 1911, shortly after the Belgian royal visit to Heliopolis, Empain caught a severe intestinal infection and had to return to Belgium. It would take him two years to recover. In World War I, on 18 December 1916, he was made a major-general by King Albert 1. Though he was not himself involved in the fighting, he worked actively in support of the Allies, co-ordinating supplies, munitions and organising transport, central stores, etc. With Belgium occupied by the Germans, he put his offices and personnel in Paris at the army's disposal. After the war he was allowed to keep his honorific title, hence General Baron Edouard Empain. Subsequently he would return to Egypt only once, in 1927, two years before his death in 1929.





**Fig. 8 – The tram to Koubeh Palace in 1909 passing the Oasis Bar (right) and Heliopolis House Hotel (left) along the future Boulevard Abbas.**



**Fig. 9 - Tram to Abbasiyah in 1908 passing in front of an Ernest Jaspard designed building. In the background the villas of Rue Dr Boutros-Ghali.**



**Fig. 10 - At the entrance to Heliopolis was the exciting Luna Park, opened in 1911. It was one of the main attractions. In WWI it was taken over as a military hospital for the ANZAC Gallipoli casualties.**

The major building contractor for Heliopolis was the Belgian firm of Léon Rollin & Cie (highly regarded and established in Egypt). Originally, people were expected to buy a plot and build their house, to certain design specifications. The crisis of 1907 led to the company building flats at its own expense, and letting them out at favourable prices to government employees and professional people. The demarcation line between the two districts was at Rue Saïd (Sh. Beirut) where two large blocks with fake minarets were built behind the Basilique. From there two avenues spread out in a Y-shape: **Left**, Avenue de la Mosquée (Rue San Stefano, Shareh Harun el Rashid), leading to Midan el Gameh and the covered food market; **Right**, Rue Tanta (Sh. Osman Ibn el Affan), along which the Metro was extended in 1926, leading to Midan Ismaïlia.

A temporary electricity station was established at Demerdach for the Oasis and trams, until the special Shoubra electricity station was completed in December 1910. Heliopolis had electric street lighting, paved roads and a water distribution network. It even had a sewer network before Cairo did.

In Heliopolis water was supplied from a tower near the racecourse. It was pumped up to it by the “Compagnie des Eaux du Caire”, using extremely pure water from an underground Nile, running about 100m below the river itself. Later there would be three water towers at Heliopolis as the city grew. Earth for the gardens was transported from the Delta.

The **Luna Park** opened in 1911. This was the first of its kind in Africa/Middle East. With rollercoasters, a flume, carousels, etc. it was an attraction that drew people of all social standings. During the First World War it was closed to become a military hospital. See "*The Heliopolis Luna Park in World War One*" by P.L. Grech, QC No. 225, June 2008. pp.30-31. It reopened after the war until the 1930s. Part was then demolished for urban needs, part became the Roxy Cinema and amusement complex.



### The Race Course (Hippodrome)

This was one of the landmarks of Heliopolis for its first 50 years. Located to the north-west, and at the edge of the city, its large oval track stretched from the Luna Park as far as Zeitoun. The Heliopolis Racing Club was inaugurated in 1910, but the Race Course Pavilion, in the Moorish style, was one of the city's earliest buildings (1908). It faced Avenue Ramses and had been originally conceived as a casino/restaurant/brasserie. To the left of the Pavilion was a small kiosk reserved for H.H. the Khedive. There were camel races and horse racing, which proved extremely popular. For practical constraints, the main stables were at Helmeiya; horses were brought by train to Zeitoun on race day, then led the short two miles distance to the Heliopolis race-course paddock.

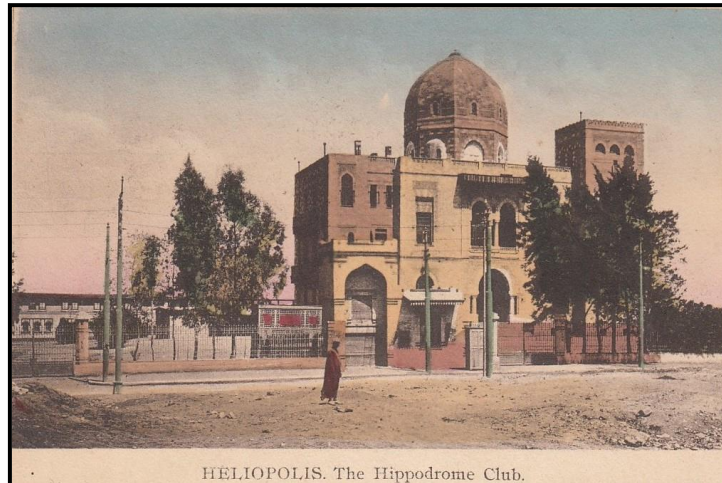
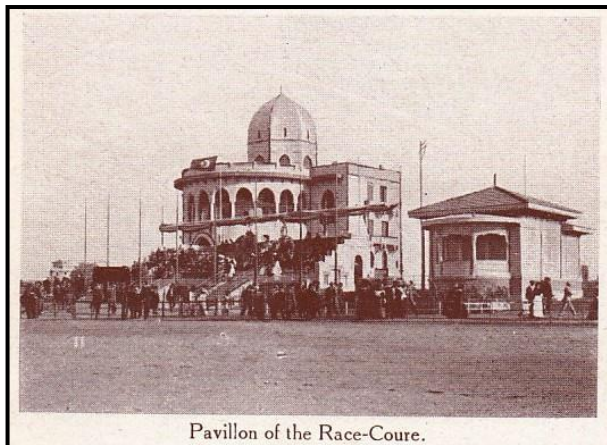


Fig. 11 - In 1912.



Pavillon of the Race-Coure.

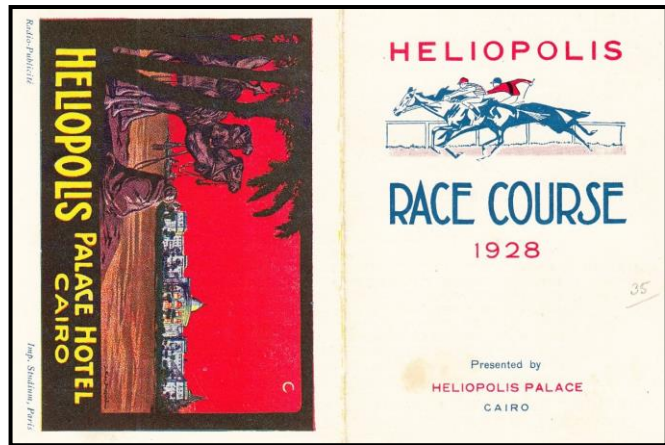


Fig. 12 - The Khedive's kiosk is on the right. Fig. 13 - Race card offered by the Palace Hotel, listing events programme.



Heliopolis - Horse Race.

During the First World War a military camp for ANZAC and Empire Forces was set up in the middle of the race track. A **British Camp P.O. / Heliopolis** special postmark was used by a temporary Egyptian civilian post office installed near by to expedite the mail of the troops. The hippodrome remained in use until 1959 when it was abandoned for horse-racing and converted to the Merryland amusement park, inaugurated in 1961 (itself now disaffected!).

Fig. 14 - Expanded with new stands, 1920s.



The Egyptian *Postal Bulletin* of 8 July 1909 announced the creation of a Post Office at Heliopolis. This was situated in Rue de la Poste and was still operating in that building well into the 21st century. Initially its postmark stated "Heliopolis - Cairo", and in Arabic "Wahat Ain-Shams, (bi Masr). (See Fig.15). But this was short lived as in January 1910 the wording changed to "Heliopolis" and in Arabic a transliteration of Heliopolis (Fig.16). This was because the Arabic text of the original postmark had apparently led to confusion with the village of Ain Shams on the Mataria railway line. Refer to the following articles in the *ESC Quarterly Circular*:

- "The Early Postmarks of Heliopolis". P.L. Grech, *QC* No. 230, September 2009, p.160.
  - "The First Heliopolis Civilian Postmark". Vahe Varjabedian, *QC* No. 230, September 2009, p.161.
  - "Heliopolis". Jos Strengholt, *QC* No. 264, March 2018, pp.118-119.
- In 2001 a detailed listing of all the Heliopolis non-military and non-hospital postmarks was published. See:
- "Civilian Postal Markings of Heliopolis", by Vahe Varjabedian, *QC* No.197, June 2001, pp.227-230.



Fig. 15 - "Heliopolis-Cairo" postmark, 15 November 1909.



Fig. 16 - Replacement "Heliopolis" postmark January 1910.

At the previously mentioned Heliopolis Air Meeting week, from 6 to 13 February 1910, there was a temporary Post Office at the airfield with a special handstamp (**Heliopolis Aerodrome**), used only at that event. That postmark is scarce and much sought after by collectors. Many forgeries exist. See "1910 - Heliopolis, Grande Semaine d'Aviation", by P.L. Grech and the "Addendum" to that book in *QC* No. 272, March 2020, pages 9-16. In WW I British troops were encamped north of the city, where the Air Meeting had been held. They used a special postmark **Military Camp/ Aerodrome Heliopolis** (rare).



Fig. 17 - The Aviation Meeting postmark.



According to some sources, another P.O. was opened in 1910 near Midan el Gameh, but no official announcement exists and no mail has been seen from it. Since this was in the not yet fully developed native district, the need for an extra office seems unlikely. Several years later, however, a second P.O. did appear, near the Mosque, as the city's population grew. Postmarks of this **Heliopolis Bahari** (north) office, seen from 20 January 1937, are scarce compared to those of the original P.O.

Fig. 18 - 12 February 1927: 10 mills Registered Envelope plus 15 mills (making Empire Rate) with Heliopolis boxed Registration cachet.

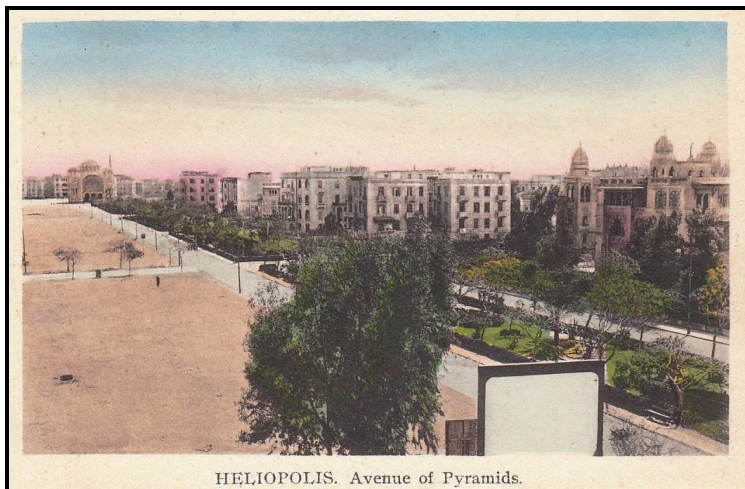


The first place of worship in Heliopolis was the Islamic Mosque at Midan el Gameh, inaugurated 2 June 1911. The first Christian church was the Greek-Catholic church of Saint Cyrille, at the first Korba, completed in 1912. This was due mainly to the dynamism and influence of the Syrian entrepreneur Habib Ayrout, its architect and the right-hand man of the baron. The prime contractor for Heliopolis, he was a very devout man. Ayrout adapted Empain's European ideas to local requirements, making him wealthy. *Below*, the churches in construction.



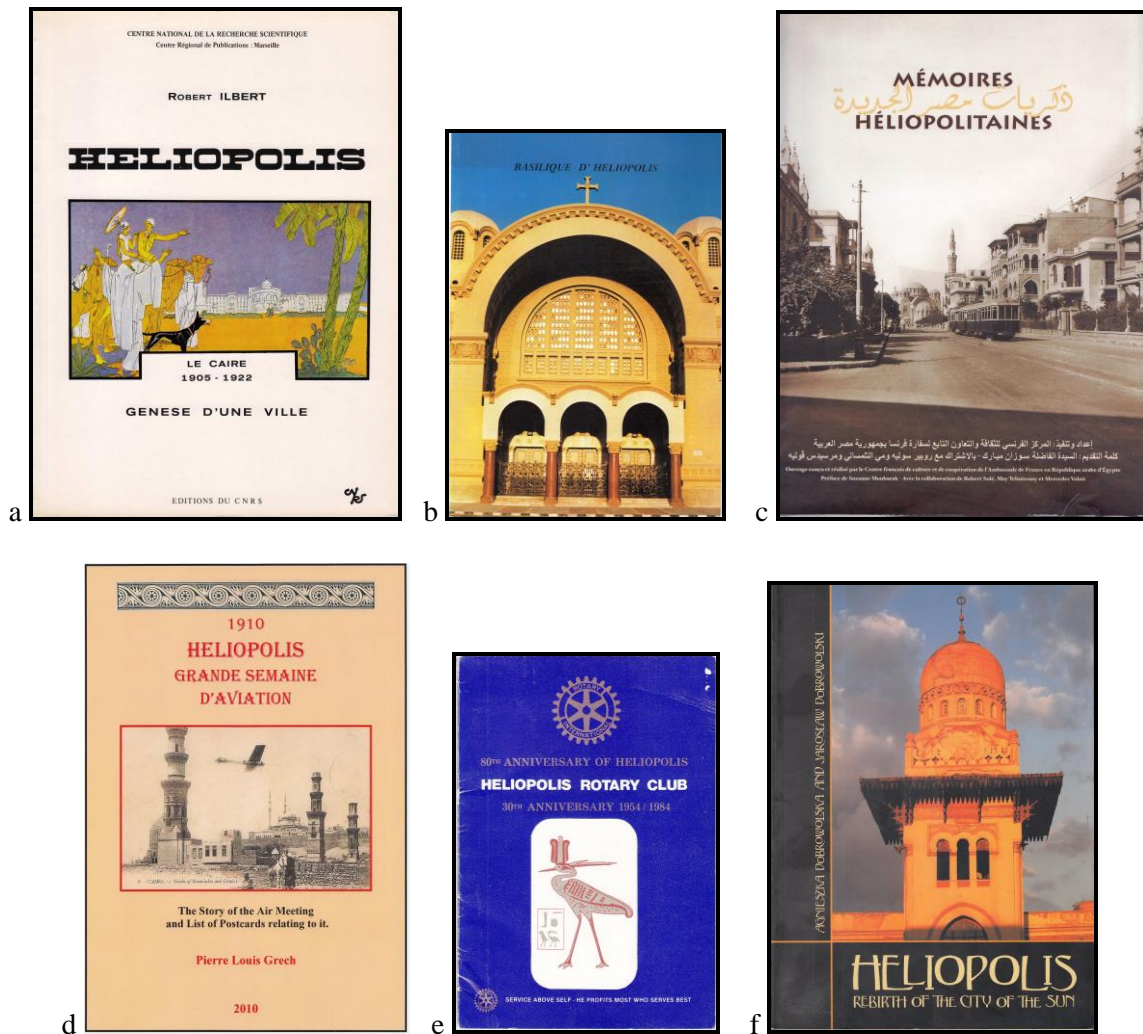
**Fig. 19 - Basilique Notre Dame de Tongre (later renamed N.D. d'Heliopolis.). Fig. 20 - Greek-Catholic church of St Cyrille.**

Work on the majestic Basilique began in November 1910. Conceived by the architect Alexandre Marcel, who designed it in a Byzantine style, a scaled-down copy of Saint Sophia in Constantinople, but without minarets. The baron wanted Heliopolis to be a haven of tranquility, in contrast with Cairo, and banned extraneous noise. There were to be no bells in any of the churches of Heliopolis. The Basilique "first stone" was laid on 13 April 1911, in the presence of the King and Queen of Belgium. In her honour the square in front of the church was named "Place Reine Elisabeth", today Midan el Ahram. Construction was completed in 1913. The Basilique and the Évêché Latin (Bishop's Palace) were the property of Baron Empain and his descendants. It was only on 31 October 1956 that the Empain family formally transferred their ownership to the Vatican in Rome.



**Fig. 21 - The Basilique at the end of Avenue des Pyramides, 1912. Fig. 22 – Baron Empain's sarcophagus in the crypt.**

The baron died in Belgium on 22 July 1929. After a state funeral on 25 July he was temporarily buried at the Evere cemetery, near Brussels. On 8 February 1930 he was transferred to Heliopolis (by rail to Marseille, *Champolion* to Alexandria, and on to the Villa Hindoue). For his funeral on 17 February 1930 all Heliopolis was in mourning, and Cairo's entire diplomatic corps was in attendance. The procession went down the Avenue to the Basilique where he was laid to rest in a crypt beneath the altar. His son Jean, who died in 1946, is buried alongside him. Subsequently, Egyptian authorities did not allow any other family members to be buried there.



Essential literature on the story of Heliopolis:

- a) "*Heliopolis - Le Caire 1905-1922 - Genèse d'une Ville*" - Robert Ilbert. Editions du C.N.R.S., Paris, 1981.
- b) "*Basilique d'Heliopolis*" - Published by Évêché Latin, Heliopolis, for the church's 75th Anniversary, 1985.
- c) "*Mémoires Héliopolitaines*"\* - Centre Français de Culture of the French Embassy in Egypt. 2005 Centenary.
- d) "*1910 - Heliopolis, Grande Semaine d'Aviation*". Pierre Louis Grech - Published by the author, 2010.
- e) "*80th Anniversary of Heliopolis*"\* - Heliopolis Rotary Club, 30 Years (1954-1984). Heliopolis, 1984.
- f) "*Heliopolis, Rebirth of the City of the Sun*"- A. Dobrovolska & J. Dobrovolski - American University Press, Cairo, 2006. (Very well illustrated).

\* = Part of the text is in Arabic.

For the history of the Empain family:

"*Les Barons Empain*", by Yvon Toussaint. Éditions Fayard, 1996.

**Some Heliopolis Street Name changes:** Boulevard Circulaire > Boulevard Abbas > Shareh Ibrahim el Laqqani.  
 - Avenue des Palais > Avenue Fouad 1er > Shareh El Uruba (to the airport, past the Villa Hindoue).

**Postscript:** Today Heliopolis is a congested suburb of Cairo. Gradually the beautiful villas and gardens planned by Baron Empain have been replaced by giant skyscrapers. But those who have known Heliopolis in happier times will remember a safe, friendly, diverse cosmopolitan environment, never to be equalled.



## Farouk Imperforates, gift of George E Lee

Gregory Todd (ESC 585)

At the wonderful December 2019 “Egypt” Monte Carlo exhibition, we as visitors were privileged to see the Farouk Imperforates formerly in the collection of George E. Lee, author of the first booklet on these issues, *Egypt - Royal Imperforate Printings* (1959) after the King Farouk sale of 1954 in Cairo, source of all these items that then flowed on to the philatelic market.

It was not until Monte Carlo that I realised where the rarities and the major bulk of the Imperforates from Lee’s collection had gone. Imagine my surprise on visiting the exhibition prior to the show to mount my own collection, and seeing there an exhibit of Imperforates that had been conveyed from the Smithsonian National Postal Museum in Washington, DC. The items exhibited by the museum were all donated by George Lee.

Below is a short list of some of the more important pages shown or held by the museum:

1926: *International Navigation Congress*, the set of three in marginal singles from left of sheet. *Nile Post* C14a-C16a, 50 sets printed.

1933: *International*  
five in marginal blocks  
*Nile Post* C42a-C46a,

1927-37: *Fouad*,  
range of low values  
the 500m photogravure  
marginal single (25  
frame lithographed in a  
125g, 100 printed); and  
value in both printings  
D126f, each with only



*Aviation Congress*, set of  
of four from right of sheet.  
50 sets printed.

*Second Portrait Issue*, a  
including shades but also  
(*Nile Post* D125b) in a top  
printed), the 500m with  
horizontal pair (*Nile Post*  
single examples of the £1  
(*Nile Post* D126b and  
25 examples printed).

1933: *Airmail* set (Lee donated a complete set - only eight values were exhibited), all in marginal blocks of four from left of sheet. *Nile Post* A3d-A23a. 50 full sets printed.

1934: *Postal Union Congress*, the set of 14. *Nile Post* C47a-C60a, 50 full sets printed.

1940: *Child Welfare* 5m.+5m., single and block of four. *Nile Post* C86a, 100 printed.

1941/43: *Airmail* set of four values in singles and blocks of four. *Nile Post* A24b-A27b, 100 full sets printed.

1942: *Millenary of Al-Azhar University*. The unissued set of four values in marginal blocks of four from right of sheet, *Nile Post* C87a-C90a, 50 sets printed.

1944/51: *'Marechal' Issue* 40m sepia in lower sheet marginal block of 12 (6 x 2), *Nile Post* D167b, 245 printed, and 50m greenish blue in lower sheet marginal block of 12 (6 x 2), *Nile Post* D168b, 250 printed.

1944: *Express* 40m. essay in brown, a single and block of four, *Nile Post* EX4b, 100 printed.

1946: *Anniversary of the 1866 First Issue*, the set of four values in vertical pairs, marginal from base of sheet. *Nile Post* C98a-C101a, 50 sets printed.

1947: *Airmail Nile Barrage* set of 12 in singles, pairs and in centre-line blocks of four. *Nile Post* A28a/39a. 150 full sets printed.

1949: *Agriculture & Industry Exhibition*, the set of five values in pairs, *Nile Post* C122a/C126a, 50 sets printed.

1951: *Mediterranean Games*, the set of five values, *Nile Post* C137a/139a. 50 sets printed.

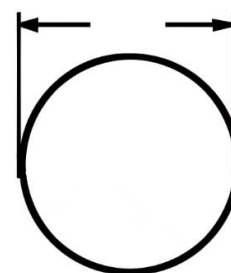
I took photographs of many of the items shown in Monaco - they unfortunately came out too poorly to show here. But the Smithsonian National Postal Museum website ([postalmuseum.si.edu](http://postalmuseum.si.edu)) provided the glorious illustration of the Express essay, for which we are immensely grateful.

Collectors of Farouk Imperforates should now know that where I, as a describer for Corinphila, may state “50 examples printed”, one should perhaps state, after seeing the above listing, “just 46 examples available to the collector”. The importance of George Lee’s gift to the American National Stamp Collection can be illustrated by the fact that he donated to the American public in perpetuity between five and eight per cent of all the Farouk Imperforates printed.

I apologise for boring collectors who may have already been aware of this donation, and would like to thank the Philatelic Department of the Smithsonian for bringing this collection to Monaco and to Beth Heydt of the Smithsonian Philatelic Department who, during lockdown, so kindly answered my questions.

### Update 1 – Members’ contributions

**Ronny Van Pellecom** (ESC 618) – Referring to **Frank Van Geirt** (ESC 649, QC 274), writes that each collector uses his own personal method in measuring the diameter of circular datestamps. He illustrates a drawing from his postal history book *Alexandrie* explaining that his measurements are as precise as possible and taken from the inside of one side of the circle to the outside of the opposite side. Differences in inking and impression are unavoidable and a deviation of 0.5mm is possible.



**Lucien Toutounji** (ESC 264) responds to **Richard Wheatley** (ESC 168, QC 273) on Egypt parcel rates by observing that Cavala was and still is a major tobacco growing area. Muhammad Ali’s father was a tobacco merchant and exporter. The main export market at the time was France, but the French Revolution of 1789 stopped the trade and his father’s business most likely floundered. Unable to take over the business, Muhammad Ali joined the Ottoman army. The rest is history....



**John Clarke** (ESC 497) also responds to **Frank Van Geirt** but veers off at a tangent from checking TPO cancels in his Star and Bridge collection to offer an update on the Cairo-Alexandria TPO (type 5A3) of 1- XI 07 T 19, 11 days earlier than illustrated in QC 274. The postmark, on a postcard sent from Mansoura to Chartres in France, is difficult to read as it is struck over the personal oval stamp of André Sakakini, Mansourah member d'honneur of the CAIRO-PHILATELIQUE-CLUB, No 970. Our Treasurer, **Sami Sadek** (ESC 559) would be delighted to hear of other TPO dates beyond those listed on the website.

### Membership changes

#### **New Members:**

**ESC 734** **Jean Grillot**, 33 Route de la Celle Saint Cloud, 738380 Bougival, France  
(Egypt Hotel Post, thematic Bridges)

**ESC 735** **David Sutton**, 81 Surig Road, Canvey Island, Essex SS8 9AG  
(Egypt and Sudan)

**ESC 736** **Ragui H Michael**, 214 Garces Drive, San Francisco, California 94132, United States  
(Pre-1900 stamps and covers of Egypt and Commonwealth)

**ESC 737** **Jay Daschadhuri**, 128A Meghnad Saha Avenue (4<sup>th</sup> Floor), Kolkata 700029, India  
(British India Army posts EEF, WWI, WWII, Indian Forces EPPs and censorship)

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

**ESC 179** **Trenton K Ruebush**, 324 Sunset Creek Circle, Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27516, United States

**ESC 456** **Dr Sherif K El-Kerdani**, 12 Sabbagh Street, Flat 1, Heliopolis, Cairo 11341, Egypt



## Third Issue franking – Zagazig to Bologna 1875

Dr Peter Newroth (ESC 394)

It is not pretty, but I think it is interesting. The "half" wrapper shown below, with Egypt adhesives cancelled only with a numeral 5 and part of a letter written in Italian on the reverse, has been a mystery lurking in my Egypt postal history box for about 40 years. I was invited to share this with fellow enthusiasts and hope to learn more: perhaps you have the "other half", or related correspondence with "Signor Eduardo"?



An opinion was sought in 1993 from the Expert Committee of the Royal Philatelic Society of London, and their certificate states:

"Egypt - 1874-75, S.G. No. 37, 38. 20 pa. Grey-blue with 1 pi. Red - Used on part cover, is Genuine. Memo. - Italian cancel 5 of Bologna on arrival."

Both adhesives (*above*) show rough perforations characteristic of the second printing, perforated 12.5. The one-piastre shows a typographic "bite", but the 20 para is a "flatter" printing. I could not see the varieties described by Joe Chalhoub.

The 20 para (and others in my collection of loose stamps) displays a white space where the "P" of "Poste" should show, which at first I thought was scuffed damage. But this is a feature described by both Byam and Smith. Efforts were made to reconstruct this defective inscription panel and the "P" during the preparation of the 20 para printing surfaces. Vaccari confirms the numeral "5" as a Bologna obliterator. Based on other markings present (letter dated 6 September, 1875, and datestamped on the reverse Bologna, 11 September '75), this piece appears to be appropriately franked at the UPU foreign letter rate established on 1 July, 1875. It seems unlikely that the missing half wrapper had additional adhesives.



I located an illustration of a similarly franked envelope from Cairo to Italy in 1876 (Lot 20130, Feldman sale May, 2013), but the adhesives bore Cairo datestamps. Smith (pp. 211-212) mentions "adventitious cancellations" and illustrates an example similar to that on the Zagazig wrapper. Presumably the added memo from RPSL is correct - the adhesives were cancelled on arrival in Bologna.

I have searched without success for other examples of Third Issue Egypt with similar numeral "5", "chamfered rectangle-of-dots" cancellations. Occasionally examples of the Italian "234" obliterator are seen used at Alexandria. These cancellations, however, were on Italian adhesives.

So, for me the interest is the cancellations on the Zagazig wrapper. Are they (or other Italian obliterator) occasionally found on Egyptian stamps of this period? Are these cancelled stamps another philatelic curiosity, or rarely seen treasures? Perhaps Circle members can advise me!

### References:

William Byam, "Egypt Third Issue, 1872 and 1874-75", *The London Philatelist* (1956), pp. 21-27, 54-60.

Joe Chalhoub, *The Nile Post* (2003), pp. 106-108.

David Feldman, *Middle East, Egypt, Persia & Gulf States* (Feldman Galleries, Geneva, May 3-4, 2013), p.45.

Peter Smith, *Egypt: Stamps & Postal History* (1999), pp. 94, 211-212, Fig. 137.

Paolo Vaccari, *Annulli numerali italiani 1866-1889* (Italian Numeral Cancellations 1866-1889) (2006).

## T.E. Lawrence and stamp designs for the Hejaz

Michael Ryan (ESC 722)



**The postage stamps designed by Lawrence and issued for the Hejaz in 1916-17 (SG 11-16).**

Though the words uttered in 1953 by Winston Churchill were directed towards Russia they could just as easily be applied to T.E. Lawrence in that he was - “a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma”.

Immortalized by Lowell Thomas as “Lawrence of Arabia”, first in his worldwide lecture/multimedia presentation of *With Allenby in Palestine and Lawrence in Arabia* in 1919-24<sup>1</sup> and then rather more sensationally in his book *With Lawrence in Arabia* in 1924, Lawrence initially shied away from self-aggrandizement, but then rode the crest of this notoriety with his own *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, followed closely by an abridged version, *Revolt in the Desert*.<sup>2</sup>



**Lawrence in military uniform  
while serving in Cairo**

History has tended to focus on “Lawrence - the man and the myth” as related to the Arab Rebellion during the First World War and has generally given short shrift to what some see as his lesser accomplishments, such as his archaeological endeavors at Carchemish, Crusader fortifications in the Holy Land or even his writing/translation/analytic skills.

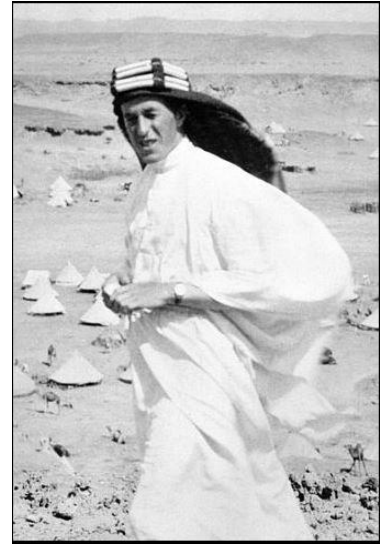
Falling into the “lesser known” category might well be his venture, albeit brief and limited in scale towards the beginning of his military career in 1916, into the realm of philatelic design. While never a secret, Lawrence’s efforts gained little notice as he relatively quickly embarked on exploits that set him on the path that would lead him to military and public acclaim.

The public, for the most part, was not fully aware of this aspect of his career until late April in 2010<sup>3</sup> when British newspapers such as *The Sunday Times* and *The Daily Telegraph* carried articles revealing the discovery of an original sheet of 50 stamps in proof form designed by Lawrence for the emerging Kingdom of the Hejaz<sup>4</sup> together with a handwritten note by him.



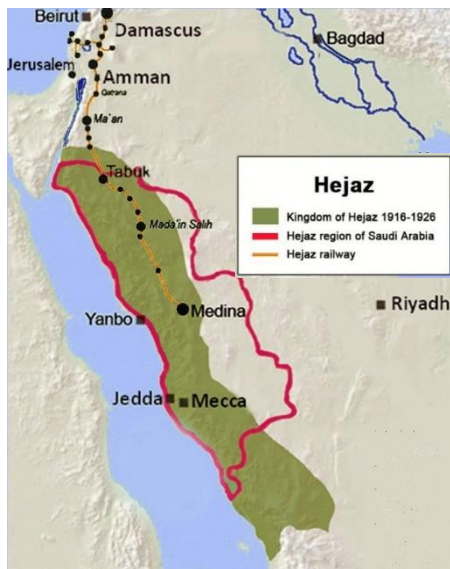
The stamps had been enfolded in one of George V's 328 personal albums<sup>5</sup> in the king's philatelic collection in the Royal Philatelic Collection in St James' Palace in such a manner as to render them out of normal sight until discovered by a member of the collection staff.

The inception of the Hejaz stamps was necessitated by the Arab Revolt beginning in June 1916 and the quest for an independent kingdom by King Hussein dovetailing with his siding with Britain against the Ottoman Empire and, by extension, Germany.



***Lawrence in Arab dress in Cairo and in camp at Akaba***

It has been acknowledged in diplomatic/political circles that among the salient points in establishing the existence of and credibility of a new nation are such identifying components as a flag, coins and stamps. Tribal flags of the key insurgents in the Hejaz already existed, coinage would have to wait (besides, the Survey of Egypt was not involved in such activities as minting), but the subject of stamps was another matter. Enter Lawrence.



In all, six postage stamps were produced by the Survey of Egypt (one piastre, one-half and one-quarter piastre in 1916 and two piastres, one-eighth piastre and one para/one-40th of a piastre in 1917) plus three tax (postage due) stamps in the values of two and one piastres and 20 paras/one-half piastre, which were added in mid-1917. Every postage stamp, apart from a lone run of almost 45,000 for the two piastres, had at least three printings for a total of just over 2.1 million. The tax stamps each had just one printing (all on June 27, 1917) for a total of 553,400. (See table below for full specifics.)

The designs fell to the purview of Lawrence (then serving in Military Intelligence in Cairo) with some assistance from Colonel (knighted in 1924) Ronald Storrs, Oriental Secretary of the Residency in Cairo. Initially the concept of Hejaz stamps belonged to Storrs who, after receiving the go-ahead from the High Commissioner, Sir Harry MacMahon, and then the Foreign Office in London, contacted King Hussein about the idea. Hussein not only consented wholeheartedly, but promptly submitted his own design ideas, albeit not the most appropriate in detail.

“I felt this would never do,” wrote Storrs, who even likened Hussein’s effort to looking like the Eddystone Lighthouse off Cornwall, “and wandered around with Lawrence round the Arab Museum in Cairo collecting suitable motifs in order that the design in wording, spirit and ornament, might be as far as possible representative and reminiscent of a purely Arab source of inspiration.”<sup>6</sup> As such, the stamps are all of decorative designs due to the Islamic proscription of depicting humans or animals.

As Surveyor-General of Egypt, E.M. Dowson (later Sir Ernest) oversaw production of the stamps, even though this was new territory for that department, as well as official correspondence with Hussein. Being a little more diplomatic in his wording, Dowson explained the “rejection” of the king’s designs (which exhibited a distinct Ottoman flavour<sup>7</sup>), noting that a major focus was, in essence, to distance the new kingdom from Turkish control and influence, to wit:

“(1) to make it self-evident to the world that the series was not a survival ... of Ottoman postage stamps in any form whatsoever, but an entirely new and independent national issue which had not moulded itself on that of any other Government, least of all on that of the Ottoman Empire.

“(2) That the design should in wording, spirit, and ornament be, as far as possible, representative and reminiscent of a purely Arabic source and inspiration.”<sup>8</sup>. And later in this crucial correspondence an even further diplomatic comment: “I would, however, point out to His Highness that, beautiful as the stamp would be, it would none the less in the eyes of the world be an obvious copy of the Ottoman postage stamps.”<sup>9</sup>

After consultation with his own advisors Hussein graciously accepted the situation at hand and full production and “ownership” of the project fell to Dowson and the Survey.

While Lawrence is credited with the designing, calligraphy is attributed to Agami Effendi Ali for all of the tax stamps and all of the postage stamps apart from the one piastre stamp and some of the work on the one-eighth piastre stamp, which fell to Mustafa Effendi Ghozlan. In addition, A. Kirichdjian was charged with executing the finer points of the designs.<sup>10</sup>



***The three postage due stamps were produced in a vertical format to distinguish them from the postage issue***

The postage stamps have a common central wording of “*Makkah el-Mukarrama*” (Sacred or Honourable Mecca). The two piastres stamp in purple features a design adapted from the first page of Mamluk Sultan Faraj’s Quran, while the one piastre stamp is blue with the design from a prayer area of the al-Amri mosque. “Hejaz Post” appears above the central panel and the price below.

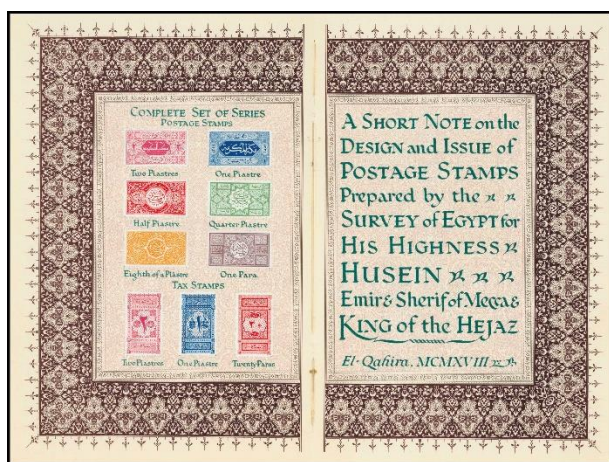
The half-piastre stamp in red has a design from a page of the Quran in the Sultan Barquq mosque in Cairo and the quarter-piastre stamp in green featured a design from a door panel of the al-Salih Tala’i mosque, also in Cairo. The one-eighth piastre stamp is yellow<sup>11</sup> and carries a Quranic passage in the centre with details of a stone carving from the entrance arch at the Ministry of Waqfs while the brown one para (1/40 piastre) stamp reflects a design from stucco work above a door at the main Cairo railway station.

Printing of the stamps was co-ordinated through Dowson, but as he noted, “the resources of modern photo-process work and offset lithography are great and no intrinsic difficulty was expected which could not, with the aid of the Government Press, be overcome by suitable improvisation.”<sup>12</sup> There were at first blush, however, two notable obstacles to overcome: the dearth of suitable stamp paper and lack of suitable ink for stamps. It took actual commencement of the task, though, to reveal perforation as the real concern, resulting in several different types.



In the case of the paper stock, it was noted that it needed “(1) to meet the needs of a postage stamp’s career; (2) to provide satisfactory surfaces to print upon and to carry the adhesive.”<sup>13</sup> Interestingly, rather than use stock in use by the Egyptian postal service, the Survey tested its own existing stocks and found problems with applying the desired gum; this prompted the trial of using previously gummed paper, which solved the problem and “proved to be one of the factors without which success would not have been achieved.”<sup>14</sup>

The subject of adhesive flows into some delightful, if whimsical, stories promulgated by Lawrence himself as to flavours being added to the gum. Recalled Wing Commander R.G. Sims, a flight lieutenant at the time, of a visit to his Hornsea home, “I always loathed the taste of gum smeared on the back of the average stamp. In our issues we flavoured the gum on the red ones [half piastre] with strawberry essence and the green ones [quarter-piastre] with pineapple juice. The Arabs liked the taste so much they sucked it all away, and the stamps fell off in the post. We charged double at the other end and made a very good profit.”<sup>15</sup>



***Dowson published a brief monograph on the production of the stamps in 1918***

He even floated this tale originally in a letter to his mother in noting his work on the stamp project: “I’m going to have flavoured gum on the back, so that one may lick without unpleasantness.”<sup>16</sup>

The question of a watermark was raised in the beginning, but the difficulties arising and failed tests on watermarked paper led to its omission, leading to Dowson’s opinion that “the absence of watermark on the series was not considered a defect of practical importance, if even, under present conditions, it can be considered a defect at all.”<sup>17</sup>

However, the question of the ink was a little more tricky and initially a blue already in stock for map printing was used for the one piastre stamp, but ink for subsequent values was a problem. “Samples of suitable inks in other colours were cabled for, and the only real difficulty experienced was initial objection on the part of British firms to supply shades other than those in the current British stamp issues, although it was particularly desired, at least in the earlier issues, to depart from these.”<sup>18</sup>

As for perforation, Dowson found the existing perforating machines in Egypt not quite up to the task, but, in the end, involved a compromise not entirely to the Survey’s liking which resulted in several types of perforations being used. He noted: “the appearance of a detached stamp leaves much to be desired.”<sup>19</sup> The appearance improved with the introduction of zig-zag rouletting, which proved “very laborious, and could only be utilized as emergency measures for limited issues.”<sup>20</sup> As it developed, zig-zag rouletting was used on 13 of the 25 postage stamp press runs and all three of the tax stamp runs.

To identify individual reprint press runs a control number was devised as ensuing designs incorporated a successive letter of the Arabic alphabet followed by figures for the Gregorian calendar year separated by a hyphen and enclosed in a cartouche-shaped oval. These numbers appeared at the left-hand bottom of each sheet.

<b>Table of Issues and Design Evolution – Postage Stamps*</b>			
<b>Denomination</b>	<b>Colour</b>	<b>First Issued</b>	<b>Quantity (Printings)</b>
2 piastres	Purple*	Aug 1 1917	4,4750 (1)
<b>Preliminary designs†:</b> 1. In many ways this was the easiest as the lone original design was adopted virtually in toto. The main difference from the other stamps is the use of Kufic characters which were slightly modified for easier reading. <b>Separation:</b> Zig-zag Roulette 13x13.			
1 piastre	Blue	Aug 20 1916	261,200 (5)
<b>Preliminary designs:</b> There were nine true preliminary designs with the ninth the favoured option. Designs 10-15 featured variations on the chosen design with the phrase for "Hejaz Post" <i>Barid Hejazi</i> replacing the original <i>Bosta Hejaziya</i> as the former was deemed to be "purer Arabic". Designs 16-24 provided final options including reverse type faces in the centre block and two colours (red and blue). Option 24 was the final selection and version 25 in blue became the actual stamp. <b>Separation:</b> Printings 1-3 Perforation. Printing 4 Straight roulette 20x20. Printing 5 Zig-zag roulette 13x13.			
1/2 piastre	Red	Sept 10 1916	333,050 (5)
<b>Preliminary designs:</b> One of three original options was selected, but it was felt there was a "flatness" about it so three variations on the chosen design were each presented with a greater degree of definition and offered with different scripts, leading to the ultimate selection. <b>Separation:</b> Printings 1-2 Perforation. Printing 3 Straight roulette 20x20. Printings 4-5 Zig-zag roulette 13x13.			
1/4 piastre	Green	Oct 3 1916	485,400 (6)
<b>Preliminary designs:</b> The quarter and eighth piastre stamps probably were the most contentious in arriving at a design choice. Six options met with resistance resulting in a wide variety of modifications from general design to script to the background before a tenth attempt was selected. <b>Separation:</b> Printing 1 Perforation. Printings 2-3 Straight roulette 20x20. Printings 4-6 Zig-zag roulette 13x13.			
1/8 piastre	Yellow	Feb 5 1917	319,950 (3)
<b>Preliminary designs:</b> Four critical comments arose after just one option was proffered, including that the background was too "lacelike" and the country of origin and value were "too prominent". Eight variants were presented with a successful end result, perhaps in part by accentuating the design of the four corners. <b>Separation:</b> Printing 1 Straight roulette 20x20. Printings 2-3 Zig-zag roulette 13x13.			
1 para / 1/40 piastre	Brown	July 24 1917	669,900 (4)
<b>Preliminary designs:</b> Meant for publications such as newspapers, there were five original choices, all quite similar, and then two subsequent options after a selection from those five. In many ways this was the easiest as the lone original design was adopted. <b>Separation:</b> All printings Zig-zag roulette 13x13.			
<b>Tax Stamps</b>			
2 piastres	Purple*	June 27 1917	184,500 (1)
1 piastre	Blue	June 27 1917	182,525 (1)
20 para	Red	June 27 1917	186,375 (1)
<b>Preliminary designs:</b> Conceptually eight similar basic designs were submitted with the premise that they would all resemble each other, but be distinctly different from the postage stamps. Tax stamps were designed in a vertical format whereas postage stamps were horizontal in nature. A further eight designs of the three selections were then produced - three for the two piastres, two for the one piastre and three for the 20 paras. The centre panel for the three designs is slightly different with the size of the value on the 20 para stamp being noticeably smaller than on the two higher values. All three carry the phrase <i>Barid Hejazi</i> in the top panel and <i>Mustahiqin</i> at the bottom with the value in the centre in Arabic figures and script. <b>Separation:</b> Single printing for all three values, Zig-zag roulette 13x13.			
* In order of issue. Preliminary designs reflected changes in wording, design elements, size of design areas, etc.			
* Dowson's production chart lists the 2 piastres stamp and the 2 piastres tax stamp as purple. Many modern catalogues, including Gibbons, list them as red.			
† Denotes the final total of options and therefore does not include the final selection (with the exception of the two piastre stamp) as that would result in a double counting.			



As with many Arabic words, transliteration carries many difficulties per the following for this article: Hejaz carries a variant spelling in English of "Hijaz" and the lesser version of "Hedjaz". Sherif Husein [bin Ali] of the Dowson publication generally has a variant spelling of "Sharif" and the more common "Hussein" and the lesser "Husain" and "Husayn".

1. The presentation was given its debut in the United States at New York City's Century Theatre on March 9 1919 before moving to the Madison Square Garden. From there it travelled to England and opened on August 14 1919 at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Eventually Thomas took the programme worldwide to audiences estimated in excess of four million.
2. *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* was completed in 1922, but not published until 1926 with the original manuscript going to the Bodleian Library at Oxford and a 200-run private subscription distribution.
3. David R. Beech, Curator of the British Library Philatelic Collections, 1983-2013, most notably wrote articles related to Lawrence and the stamps in *The London Philatelist* in November 2005 and March 2007. In addition, passing references were made in such sources as Sir Ronald Storrs' *Orientalism*, Ivor Nicholson & Watson, Ltd., London (1937)/*The Memoirs of Sir Ronald Storrs*, G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York (1937) and Jeremy Wilson's *Lawrence of Arabia*, Atheneum, New York (1990).  
Probably the earliest published reference to Lawrence's involvement comes in a veiled manner in Sir Ernest Dowson's *A Short Note on the Design and Issue of Postage Stamps Prepared by the Survey of Egypt for His Highness Husein, Emir & Sherif of Mecca & King of the Hejaz* (El-Qahira [Cairo], Survey of Egypt 1918) when he mentions in the introduction a desire "to take this opportunity to express the obligation due to all those who gave assistance or counsel, in particular to El Emir 'Awrunis of the Northern Armies of His Highness the King of the Hejaz". There is no Arab equivalent of "Lawrence" and as Lawrence himself wrote, he was addressed as "Auruns", "Aurans", "Runs" and "Lurens" with lesser used variants of "Awrunis" and "Urens". ([http://telstudies.org/discussion/war\\_service/list\\_what\\_does\\_el\\_aurens\\_mean.shtml](http://telstudies.org/discussion/war_service/list_what_does_el_aurens_mean.shtml)).
4. The Kingdom of Hejaz, along the eastern shore of the Red Sea, had a life span of 1916-25. It was conquered by the Sultanate of Nejd in 1925 and incorporated in 1932 into the western province of Saudi Arabia.
5. While only 328 albums were officially compiled by the king, the collection contains enough loose items to fill more than another 2,000 albums according to collection officials.
6. *Orientalism*, op. cit, p. 220.
7. Not to mention, among other things, the submitted design should include the words "Stamps of the Government of the Sherifate of Sacred Mecca and Its Dominions"; hardly a viable option given the size of a stamp.
8. *A Short Note*, op cit, p. 19
9. *Ibid*, p. 20
10. *Ibid*, Plate 12
11. *Ibid*, p. 14. Dowson states that the colour was orange, but the Table of Stamp Issues in the appendix lists the colour as yellow.
12. *Ibid*, p. 2.
13. *Ibid*, p. 2.
14. *Ibid*, p. 3.
15. Ramage, James P., "T.E. Lawrence and the Postage Stamps Issue for the Hejaz", *Journal of the T.E. Lawrence Society*, Autumn 1996, 6:1, p. 10. Cited from *The Doings of T.E. Lawrence*, Sims, Wing Commander R.G. (Reginald) Sims, privately printed, 1937 and 1973; reprinted commercially as *The Sayings and Doings of T.E. Lawrence*, ed. Dr. Leo John de Freitas, The Fleece Press, Wakefield (1994).
16. *T.E. Lawrence The Selected Letters* ed. Malcolm Brown, W.W. Norton & Company, New York (1989), p. 85.
17. *A Short Note*, p. 4.
18. *Ibid*, p. 8.
19. *Ibid*, p. 9.
20. *Ibid*, p. 9.

## Update 2 – Port Said's architecture

Following up on the recent Simon Arzt monograph by **Richard Wheatley** (ESC 168), **Anabright Hay** (ESC 600), of New Zealand, writes: I have discovered an excellent piece of research on the history and future of Port Said's historic architecture, and current residents' feelings about it: Jasmin Shata, an architectural scholar, has written a 150-page masters thesis titled "Urban Stress Relief in Heritage Sites: The Case of Port Said" supervised by staff at Ain Shams, Port Said and Stuttgart universities. As well as good information it also includes excellent illustrations and references. She covers a number of landmarks including the De Lesseps statue and the Simon Arzt store, and I have read a recent media report about how the domed Canal HQ may be converted into a Canal museum. It is great to see young students doing such important research and public research on the history of this once great city, even though the huge number of Port Said postcards provide the most comprehensive record of its glory days in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. See [iusd.asu.edu.eg/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/14-Shata.pdf](http://iusd.asu.edu.eg/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/14-Shata.pdf)

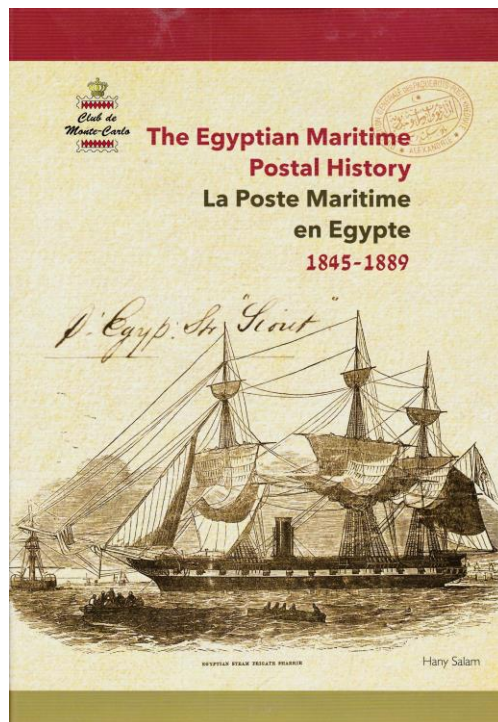




## Book Review: *The Egyptian Maritime Postal History 1845-1889* by Hany Salam

In his foreword to this most welcome book, Patrick Maselis says that “More than a publication about sea mail, this history book takes us back to Egypt during the time of the viceroys and the 19th century, at a time when the Western world was showing a growing interest in rediscovering the traces of an ancient civilization.”

The book is well articulated in four main sections. Chapter 1 deals with Egypt’s early attempts to have its national merchant shipping company serving the routes of the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. Egypt found itself in a most strategic position where Asia, Africa and Europe converged, a continental and maritime crossroads of enormous importance. In 1807 the Viceroy of Egypt defeated the British forces and took control of Alexandria; as a result, he became the ruler of all Egyptian territories. It took two decades to reach less tempestuous times conducive to the formation of a new Egyptian fleet which was able to maintain communication between Alexandria and Constantinople. Concerned about the size of the Egyptian fleet and army, the superpowers coerced Egypt to implement downsizing which led to the expansion of a trade fleet. By 1850 Egypt had a fleet of nine packet boats carrying mail and passengers.



The next ruler undid most of the progress achieved during the 1840s, even giving the best Egyptian ship to the sultan as a gift. A new fleet (*El Dayra* and *El Elhameya*) secretly owned by the prince served the route Alexandria-Constantinople during the 1850s. In 1855 the company of Red Sea steamers was established; these ships made calls at Suakin and Massawa, which were considered the gates to East Africa. In 1857, the Medjide Company of Steamships operating on Mediterranean and Red Sea routes was launched. From a postal history perspective, we learn about the private trading ships between 1793 and 1836; the overland mail route, and the establishment of foreign maritime lines in 1836 with the terminus at Alexandria. Additionally, we get detailed information about the Packet Boats of the Egyptian company 1845-1849.

Section 2 delves into the coming of age of the Egyptian merchant navy; 1865 consular letters; and consular and official letters from 1866 to 1870; foreign mail delivery; and postal rates. Section 3 examines the administration of the Khedivial Packet Boat Post (PPK) from 1870 to 1898, and mail routes and shipping lines. Section 4 sheds light on shipping agents in the Mediterranean ports including Alexandria, Port Sa'id, Jaffa, Haifa, Beirut, Tripoli, Latakia, Alexandretta, Mersina, Cyprus, Rhodes, Crete, Scio, Smyrna, Metelino, Dardanelles, Gallipoli, Constantinople, Kavala, Lagos, Saloniki, Volo, Syra, Piraeus, as well as the Italian lines and their home ports: Corfu, Trieste, Venice, Ancona, and Brindisi. The Red Sea ports agencies are also discussed: Suez, Yanbu, Jeddah, Sawakin, Massawa, Al Hudaydah (Hodeida), Aden. The book ends with a useful listing of the cachets of PPK agents.

The author must be congratulated on having succeeded in presenting such a complex subject in a very articulate, orderly and highly informative manner. He also provides ample views of historical developments which had a major impact on Egyptian maritime postal history. The book is lavishly produced and generously illustrated; congratulations also go to the Club de Monte-Carlo under whose patronage a series of important monographs has added to our knowledge while promoting philately and postal history.

**Giorgio Migliavacca**

*The Egyptian Maritime Postal History 1845-1889* by Hany Salam, published by le Musée des Timbres et de Monnaies de Monaco, December 2019, hard-bound, colour jacket, 105 A4 pages (21x29.7 cm) in English and French, replete with colour and black and white illustrations and maps; bibliography and table of contents. €50, postage included. Orders to Patrick@maselis.be Kaaistraat 19 8800 Roeselare Belgium.

\* Review by Giorgio Migliavacca, Editor of the journal *Fil-Italia* and president of the Italy and Colonies Study Circle

## Season's Greetings from the Egypt Study Circle – and it's subscription time again

We would rather use the pages of the QC to publish articles on the philately and postal history of Egypt than to remind members to pay the £20 annual subscription. But a small number of Committee members (Treasurer Sami Sadek, North America Agent Trenton Ruebush and Secretary Mike Murphy) have each year to spend a great deal of time and effort in chasing members who have overlooked paying by the due date. Please remember ... the due date for 2021 is

**January 1 2021**

Please ensure that payment is made. Members are given a little leeway, but if your subscription is not received by the date of the Annual General Meeting (February 20) your membership will be terminated: no more QCs, no website access. If you live in the UK or have an English bank account **PLEASE create a standing order** (our Treasurer will supply the details) so that the bank does the work for you, saving us much time and effort and avoiding memberships being lost by accident. And if you download the magazine from the net you don't even have to pay £20.

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There is no longer any need to consider adding small amounts to cover PayPal fees; they are included. Payment via PayPal should be made to our account at [egyptstudycircle@hotmail.com](mailto:egyptstudycircle@hotmail.com), while cash, cheque or bank draft payments may be made to Treasurer Sami Sadek, Trent Ruebush (note change of address, pages 73 and 88), Dr Ibrahim Shoukry in Egypt or Tony Cakebread in Australasia. All addresses are on the first page of every QC.

Please do your best to keep up to date. It is a painful and unnecessary task having to write people off; much better that we all pay up on time.

## MacArthur Award 2020

It is a sad reflection on members' interest in and interaction with the QC that the number of members voting for the annual MacArthur Award for the most interesting article of the past year is dropping steadily. The award is intended to encourage members to write for the QC, to share their discoveries and knowledge, and to help us to produce a bright and useful magazine. But few votes can only suggest that members do not care sufficiently to choose a favourite article.

If you do not recognise this description in yourself, perhaps you might add a vote for the best article of 2020 to your PayPal or postal subscription note. Or drop in a nomination by email to [egyptstudycircle@hotmail.com](mailto:egyptstudycircle@hotmail.com). Whichever method you use, please vote to encourage continuing excellence in the QC.