

The  
Quarterly Circular  
of  
**THE**  
**EGYPT**



**STUDY CIRCLE**

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Joe Chalhoub's treasures to go under the hammer. See page 99



**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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**Website: [egyptstudycircle.org.uk](http://egyptstudycircle.org.uk)**



**Facebook**

## **John Sears stands down as President**

John Sears, FRPSL, our respected leader for 45 years, has informed the Committee of the Circle that he feels it is time to stand down as President. Well into his tenth decade, with most of the collection disposed of and the Covid virus making access to our now irregular meetings ever more difficult, he says his decision did not come easy but that 2021 seemed a suitable moment. He remains of course a Life Member, and with respect and gratitude, the Circle wishes him a long retirement free of the responsibilities of being at the heart of our affairs.

John has been at the centre of the Egypt Study Circle since joining in 1974. He was elected Chairman on December 4 1976 in succession to Major “Mac” MacArthur and, as if 20 years’ service overseeing the revival of the Circle were not enough, moved on in November 1997 to take over from Professor Peter Smith as President. His collecting has covered all important areas of Egypt, having first built a comprehensive collection of the 1923-24 issue of definitives, Egypt’s first venture into photogravure, and the first to feature the face of the reigning monarch.

His main loves, however, have been the study of maritime mail carried to, from and through Egypt’s waters, together with deep research into air mails that led in 1990 to the publication of *The Airmails of Egypt*. This detailed for the first time a comprehensive listing of all the test and experimental flights, together with the myriad rates that depended not only on distance and destination but also on which airline was carrying the mails. So much new material came to light that a second edition followed, and then a third in 2001. John’s “Airmails Jottings” column in the *QC* has been a constant source of information about new discoveries in his favourite field of collecting.



***The unflappable John Sears speaking at a Circle meeting in 2013***

But the role played by John and his wife Pat over the years extended well beyond the philatelic into the social... regular get-togethers over a glass of wine and a tasty meal at their home in northwest London will long be remembered not only by local members but also by numbers of visiting overseas members who arrived as collectors and quickly developed into long-term friends.

Technically, changes in Officers’ positions should happen only at Annual General Meetings, but since a face-to-face event cannot be arranged for the foreseeable future, there is provision for provisional changes. So it is that, with the Committee’s unanimous approval, John Davis steps into the President’s role, Jon Aitchison becomes Chairman and Neil Hitchens Vice-Chairman. These changes will need to be ratified when we can meet again. The Circle wishes those selected all good luck in their new roles, confident that the Circle will continue to flourish as it has done under the gentle patronage of our retiring President.

**John Davis adds:** I have spoken to John a couple of times recently – in fact he rang me on both occasions and, despite Covid-19 and the inevitable restrictions, he seems contented, I’m very pleased to say. What a legacy he, and other Presidents before him, have left the Circle, and what an example to follow. If I can live up to that myself I shall also be contented. Thank you for the honour. May I take this opportunity to ask members to continue to keep in touch with John and Pat. I wish them all the very best.

- After 27 years of keeping a close official eye on our income and expenditure, our Auditor, Stephen Bunce (ESC 272), of Northants, has decided to put away his calculator. We are immensely grateful for his efforts and his kindnesses over the years, and will not find it easy to replace him. If however, any UK member has the wish to replicate this unpaid role, we should be very happy to hear from him/her.

## Alan Jeyes (ESC 293): An Appreciation

The Circle is sad to have to report that one of its long-term stalwarts, Alan Jeyes (ESC 239), passed away on Saturday February 13. Alan, who joined the Circle in the mid-Eighties, perhaps fittingly as a future Treasurer, first appears in the pages of the QC among “subscriptions paid-up” members in October 1987.

He served for a dozen years with distinction and dedication as Secretary / Treasurer from November 16 1996, following the late Robin Bertram, and continued as Treasurer thereafter. For more than ten years he was at the heart of our increasingly successful Auctions, working with John Sears in taking in the payments but mainly in the crucial role of despatcher.

Always at the heart of things, he attended virtually all of our regular meetings, as well as the ten-year London extravaganzas, and was invariably first to support a speaker with material from his own collection – ranging from boxed-O markings via Republican imperforates to his special love, postal stationery.

Alan and his wife Joan (*pictured*) shared wholeheartedly in the social life of the Circle, delighted to have the chance to visit Egypt for the special local celebrations of 1991 and 2006, and were always at the centre of our events with their bubbling togetherness. Alan’s final years were difficult after Joan’s long-term illness but he bore it with fortitude and continued to travel long distances to attend meetings after her passing.



Alan Jeyes was an inexhaustible source of knowledge and encouragement for collectors old and new but, suffering from a gradual and frustrating loss of sight, had sold the majority of his wide-ranging collection of Egypt in recent years. He died peacefully after a short stay in hospital near his home on the South Coast. By his passing we have lost an excellent collector, and good companion and a wonderful friend. – **Mike Murphy**

### Joe Chalhoub Foreign Post Offices and Offices Abroad under the hammer

Our cover illustrations show just two of the 275 staggering lots of postal history on offer at David Feldman in Geneva on May 29.

At left is a beautiful and rare Ballon Monté cover flown out of Paris in 1870 and eventually reaching Alexandria; at right is an entire from the Gedda consular office with two pairs of the Second-Issue 10-para stamps and perfect strikes of the Gedda pmk. Both are among the unique items offered in the fourth in the series of sales of the remarkable Chalhoub collection.

Alongside the philatelic material, Feldmans are producing a series of spectacular books based on the collection, in the Great Collections of the World series: five of the lavishly illustrated volumes are published already, with seven more to come. Auction details will be available online very shortly: [www.davidfeldman.com](http://www.davidfeldman.com)

### 2021 Circle subscriptions – it will soon be too late!

Subscriptions to the Circle for 2021 were due by January 1. Many members have so far failed to renew: this is causing a drain on our resources, and a good deal of extra work for those who have to chase non-payers with emails, phone calls and so on.

Please ensure that your payment has been made (you will get reminders) by April 30; after that you will lose your membership. We are making it simple: if you pay in GBP, it is £20 for printed QC, £21 via PayPal and £15 online; in \$US it is \$26 printed, \$27 via PayPal and \$20 online; and in euro it is 22 euro printed, 23 euro via PayPal and 16 euro online.

Via cheque or bank draft, please send to our Treasurer, Dr Sami Sadek, at 19 Sinah Lane, Hayling Island, PO11 0EY, UK. If paying by PayPal, please use [egyptstudycircle@hotmail.com](mailto:egyptstudycircle@hotmail.com)



## News from the official ESC Facebook page

### Hani Sharestan (ESC 595)

As many of you know, the Circle has a continuing, and very active, Facebook presence. What started out as a London meeting between Mike Murphy, myself and the late Edmund Hall in the summer of 2015 became reality shortly thereafter and in December 2015 the Facebook page was launched.

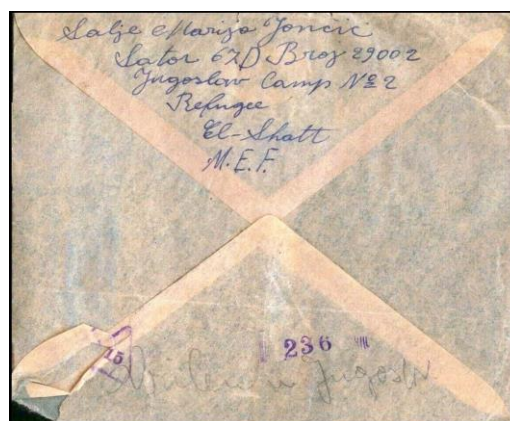
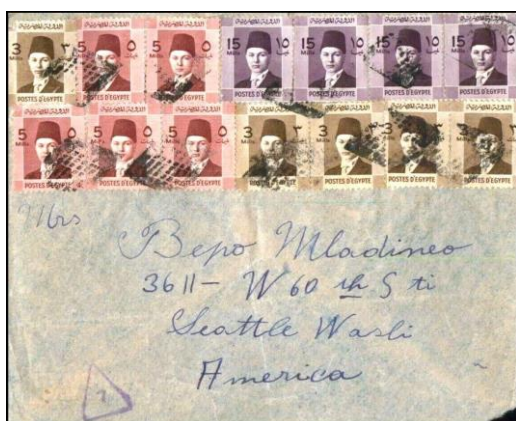
Today that page claims 562 members, of whom 382 are considered "active". Regular contributors to the page with posts, comments, and "likes" include a new ESC member, Ragui Michael (ESC 736) from San Francisco, another new member in Abdelrahman Daw (730) from Cairo, Tobias Zywiets (696), Rob Parkes (707), Jos Strengholt (606), Armen Varjabedian (646), Adel Al-Sarraf (705) and Malcolm Coe (721), to name only a few.

Most of the posts are member queries about varieties, postal history, and the occasional question by non-Arabic speakers seeking translations of Arabic words on stamps or covers. The page has three or four queries a week, which are usually answered virtually instantly, a much better result than those typically found on the website. Recent discussions include:

**Korosko cover** by Adel Hanna (ESC 715), who queried the 1929 postmark against the understanding that Korosko (Kurusku) post office closed in 1902. Fifteen replies revealed that the office was still in operation in 1928 at least, so this cover may be a very late date for this tiny village 120 miles south of Aswan.



**Yugoslav refugee cover.** Ragui Michael shared this cover and provided useful information about the Shatt refugee camp in the Sinai desert which housed mainly Croatian refugees from 1944-46. Others, including Lucien Toutounji (EC 264) and Malcolm Coe, contributed photos of other military covers from camps in Egypt and Sudan.



**Airmail/Zeppelin variety.** I posted this illustration to share my excitement at finding a seemingly non-recurring variety of a blank letter E (circled) in the frame of the Zeppelin surcharge stamp. There were ten comments from members, one of them by Adel Al-Sarraf explaining that most probably a piece of foreign matter or an air bubble trapped on the printing plate had caused the ink not to print on the letter E as it should have done.



It is well worth mentioning that the Facebook page has attracted several full members to the Study Circle since 2015. I estimate the figure to be about ten novice and even advanced members who have used this very solid stepping stone to convert to complete membership, which allows full access to the website members' pages, the *QC* and the Auctions.

No buying or selling is allowed on the Facebook page and, to maintain high standards, any and all posts must be approved by the page's administrators before they are presented on the page. If you are not yet a member of the Facebook page, please sign up, have a long look round and join the discussion. There are absolutely wonderful debates happening there all the time and you might be surprised at the quality of posts and discussions there. Here's the link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EgyptStudyCircle>

### Giza ambulance charity label

Here is an illustration that could equally well have found its place on the Queries page (*page 120*), but is positioned here alongside the Facebook article because of the story behind it...



It comes from Tobias Zywiets (ESC 696), Editor of the online *Middle East Philatelic Bulletin*, who is passing on a query from Alex Brockmann, himself Editor of *Junge Sammler*, the journal of the German philatelic youth organisation Deutsche Philatelisten. Tobias asks what information might be found - what was its purpose? Is it a stamp at all? Is the cancellation postal or fiscal?

He posted the query on our Facebook page, with the observation that it appeared to be a 10 millime charity stamp from an ambulance organisation in Giza. Two full members who are active on the Facebook page, Khalid Omaira (ESC 684) and Adel Al-Sarraf (ESC 705) were quick to respond, Khalid reading the cancellation as "Social Affairs Monitor, Giza", and Adel suggesting that the label may have been produced in the 1940s.

But we are still short of information. If any member knows what purpose the label served, and how it was used (perhaps as a record of a mini-payment towards ambulance insurance, or as a gift towards a private ambulance service?), we shall be pleased to pass the information back to the young German collectors.

### Recent publications

Late last year a new postal-historical publication appeared, and what a giant! *A Century of 'Notices to the Public' 1782-1880*, by Paul Wijnants, has four volumes and 1780 pages detailing in facsimile form the British Postmaster General's announcements to the world ... USA, South America, Asia, Australian colonies, or Europe. Parts 2, 3 and 4 contain schedules, routes, rates, you name it ... Part 1 is the index of 1500 keywords. Editions La Marque Postale offers a limited edition of only 75 sets and no reprints. Sold out is sold out! Costs vary with postage from 275 to 340 euros. Contact [paul.wijnants@scarlet.be](mailto:paul.wijnants@scarlet.be)

Not quite so large, but certainly as spectacular, is a new English-language magazine published in paper and online in Italy. Volume three of the *PostHorn Magazine of International Postal History* has just been published ([posthornmagazine.com](http://posthornmagazine.com)) with a stunning 124 pages of truly elegant design and fascinating articles. Full of dazzling illustrations both historic and philatelic, it includes deeply researched articles on shipping routes to Australasia, Napoleonic military posts, the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of air mails. Well worth a long look.

## 5 Piastre – 1874 **Settings, Substitutions, Varieties and Perforations & Watermarks**

**Ramez Atiya (ESC 246)**

### **Introduction**

Egypt's Third Issue stamps were typographed in sheets of 200. The printing plate consisted of 200 individual stereos clamped together in a forme. Studies carried out by Byam, MacArthur and others suggest that (with the possible exception of the 5 para) only one primary plate was prepared for each value. Either during the printing process or when the plate was being cleaned for reuse, a stereo would occasionally become damaged. When this occurred, the damaged stereo was usually, but not always, removed and an intact one substituted in its place. The result of the substitution is a modified printing plate or new setting of the primary printing plate containing a new stereo. Sometimes an original stereo would be reset upside down. This too represents a new setting. Any change in the layout of the plate defines a new setting.

It is important to distinguish between two different primary plates, consisting of two completely different sets of stereos, and two settings, where the plate is modified either through the substitution of an original stereo by a new one or by inverting an original stereo.

### **5 Piastre – 1874**

In spite of the foundation laid by Byam and other students, the 1874 issue remains a rich field for further investigation, with many open questions. This is particularly true of the 5 pi value. 1) How many primary plates were used to print this value? 2) How many settings were derived from the primary plates? Smith and *The Nile Post* list the settings for all but the 5 pi. 3) What substitutions were made and what additional ones might have been made?

The second set of queries deals with distinguishing plate flaws associated with each position on the sheet. Smith claims that apart from frame flaws, distinguishing individual stereos is generally not possible given the poor quality of printing of the 1874 issue. This turns out not to be true. In fact, the 5 pi has some of the most spectacular constant flaws of the Third Issue. They are virtually all unlisted.

The remainder of this study is devoted to unlisted perforation varieties to watermarks.

### **SETTINGS AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Five-piastre stamps fall into two groups with very distinct colors and appearance. The first, group A, is printed in light apple green and distinguished by beautiful clear lines. The second group, B, is printed in a darkish oily ink that tends to blur the image, resulting in an over inked appearance. The relationship between the two groups has not been studied and the catalogues list the two groups collectively as the 1874, 5 pi.

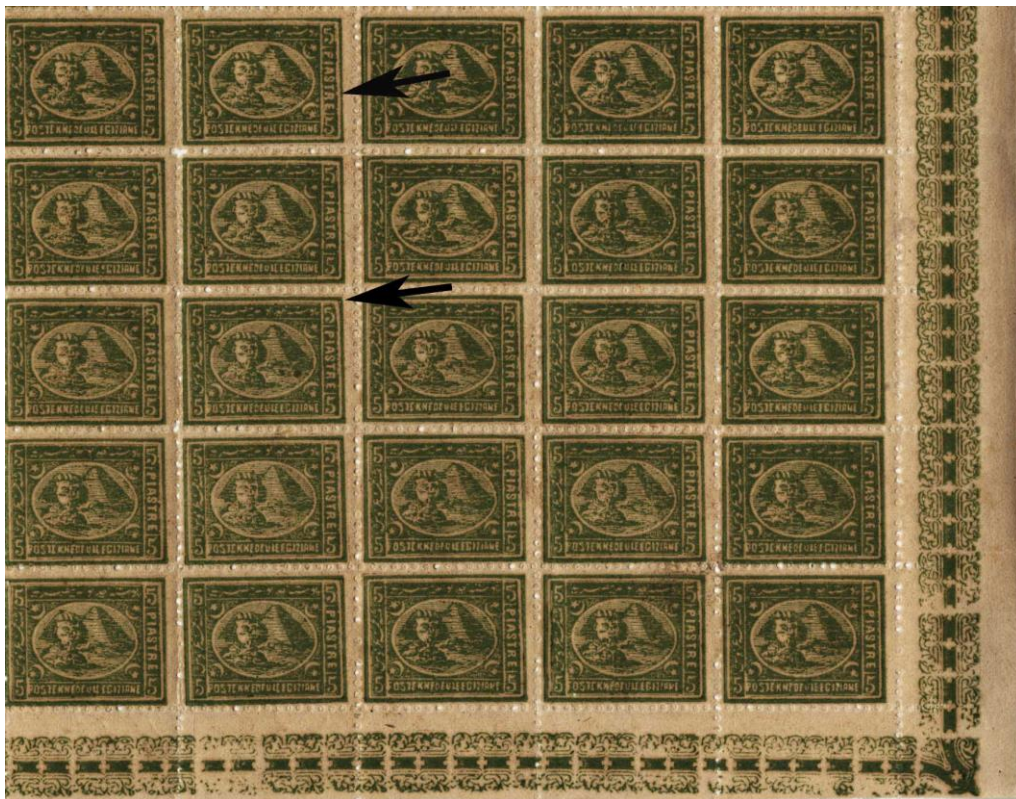
We will be establishing, first, that groups A and B are two settings of the same plate. Second, that setting A is the original setting from which the first print was taken. Setting B is the result of a substitution of the badly damaged stereo showing a nearly missing "5" in the lower right tablet (NP D19c) and its replacement by an intact one. There may have been additional substitutions, but there is no conclusive evidence.

These conclusions are based on an examination of the two corresponding blocks of 25 (positions 159-200) shown below. The first is from A, the second from B. That these are blocks from the same positions can be seen by examining the scroll work, which has distinguishing features from which the column can be determined. Compare the scroll work.





**Setting A**  
**positions 156-200**



**Setting B**  
**positions 156-200**



This is further corroborated by comparing stamps from the same positions. Position 199 from A and B below shows them to be prints from the same stereo. Likewise, a comparison of position 177 from settings A and B shows them to be also printed from the same stereo. Position 199 shows the white spot variety, the false 1872 variety (NP D 29c).



**Position 199 – Setting A**



**Position 199 – Setting B**



**Position 177 – Setting A**



**Position 177 – Setting B**

A detailed examination shows that other positions from corresponding positions were printed from the same stereos, thus proving that A and B differ only where a stereo was substituted. We conclude that A and B are settings of one same primary plate.

**The Substituted Stereo – Damaged Frame Variety (NP 29b): Determination of its position**

*The Nile Post* states that the variety is from row 16 but that its position is not known. We now know that it is from position 157. *The Nile Post* adds “we believe that the damaged stereo was subsequently substituted”. The images below (next page) show the damaged “5” variety from setting A and the substituted stereo from setting B.





*Position 157 – damaged “5” – Setting A*



*Position 157 – substituted stereo – Setting B*

**Other Possible Substitutions**

There are other possible substitutions, but the scarcity of blocks of stamps from setting A makes it difficult to confirm. One example shown below with large white flaws does not appear in setting B and is a likely candidate. It is most probably a constant flaw on setting A which was removed and substituted with an intact stereo in setting B.



**Chronological Order of Settings A and B**

Further evidence that setting A preceded B is provided by an examination of the broken frame variety (*Nile Post 29 D a*) shown below. The variety shows progressive deterioration in the break, which is partial in setting A and almost complete in setting B.



*Position 139 – Setting A*



*Position 139 – Setting B*



## **Multiple and Relative Scarcity of Setting A and B**

Blocks of setting A are much scarcer than those of setting B. The block of 25 shown above is the largest I have seen. A sheet of setting A is known to exist, as well as a block of 100 and one of 80. However, used singles from setting A are more plentiful than those of B. This suggests that A had a long run prior to B, which is consistent with the greater availability of mint blocks that undoubtedly came from the sale of remainders.

## **PERFORATION VARIETIES**

Five-piastre stamps are perforated  $12\frac{1}{2}$  or  $12\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{2}$ . The  $12\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{2}$  is far scarcer than the  $12\frac{1}{2}$ . All the  $12\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{2}$  appear to be from setting A. I have examined 12 copies. *All are from setting A.* I am not aware of larger multiples than pairs. I have seen only three, one of which (ex-Chaftar) was offered by Feldman as unique. Perf  $12\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{2}$  is a very scarce stamp mint.

*Unlisted Variety* - Horizontal and vertical double perforations. *The Nile Post* lists no double perforations. I have in my collection a corner block with double horizontal perforation and a used single with vertical perforations.

Imperforates - Setting A - I have seen imperforates only from setting A. I would appreciate further information from members.

## **Watermark Varieties**

*Unlisted Variety* -  $12\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{2}$  with inverted watermark. I have a mint copy. *The Nile Post* lists inverted watermark only for perforation  $12\frac{1}{2}$ .

*Unlisted Variety* – Unwatermarked. The application of the watermark by the dandy roll tended to be carried out carelessly so that the watermark appears off centre on many Third Issue stamps. In some cases the watermark is shifted an entire column, so that one column is entirely unwatermarked and the shifted watermark appears in the decorative border instead. I have a block of 80 showing such a variety. *The Nile Post* lists unwatermarked stamps for the 2 piastre value.

## **Plating the 5 piastre– Flaws and Varieties – Collecting the 5 piastre**

The printing plate consisted of 200 individual stereotypes so that in principle it should be possible to carry out a plating study by determining unique plate flaws from each stereo. For Third Issue stamps this is difficult on account of extraneous ink spots, “blobs” of ink adhering to the plate because of poor quality control. Only damaged frame flaws are listed.

Yet some of the most striking and collectible varieties are coloured flaws. Differentiating between accidental ink spots and actual colour plate flaws requires the comparison of two full sheets. Few collectors have had the opportunity to examine pairs of full sheets, especially of the 5 pi.

Many years ago Peter Feltus (ESC 114) sent me photographs of a nearly complete set of sheets (including the 5 pi sheet) which he offered in 1974. Comparison of the photographed sheet with a top half sheet of 100, a block of 80 from the bottom half sheet, together with some smaller blocks, shows many *constant* varieties that open new collecting opportunities.

At least 30 positions show clear varieties that are as prominent as those listed in the catalogues. A sample of some is shown below. It is my view that these should be listed. The varieties shown below are found at least on both the photograph and the actual block. Position 5 is possibly the most spectacular flaw of the 1874 issue!





*Position 1*



*Position 5*



*Position 5 – The Sphinx by night*



*Position 30*



*Position 35 – Large inked area to right of pyramid*



*Position 56 – Broken corner*



*Position 65 - Missing "V"*



*Position 61 – Damaged tablet*



*Position 78 – Sideburns*



*Position 132 – Heavily bearded Sphinx*



*Position 139 – Broken frame (NP D 29a)*



*Position 147*



*Position 161 – Fractured wig 1*



*Position 181 – Fractured wig 2 (matched pair – Setting A and B)*



## Crust Flaws



**Position 21 – Coloured flaw on NE boundary of the central oval**

Position 21 shows a major coloured flaw in the central oval from an upper half sheet of setting A. It is not present on the photograph of the full sheet. Nor is it listed in *The Nile Post*. However, precisely the same flaw is listed and illustrated in a detailed photograph in Abdel-hadi's *Egypt Stamps Handbook* Vol. I as 29 g. With such flaws, there are two possibilities. It might be indicative of another setting; but it is almost certainly a crust flaw caused by the accumulation of encrusted ink to printing height. Crust flaws are well known. Once formed, the flaw appears on all subsequent sheets until the crust is removed by cleaning. Such flaws are therefore semi-constant, are collectable and should be listed.

The consistency of the green ink used for the 5 pi appears to have been prone to encrustation. It is probably the case that position 5, "the Sphinx by night", and the other coloured flaws shown in the illustration are due to such encrustation. Ink of the same composition was most probably mixed for the 1872 5 pi with similar results. Smith shows the identical flaw illustrated below in a photograph, Fig 12, page 191. It may be that the second image is the same crust flaw in progress. Crust flaws can be philatelically useful in determining the sequence of printings.



**1872 – 5 pi crust flaw – Variety listed in Smith**



**1872 – 5 pi crust flaw**

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**Update 1 – Port Said architecture.** Richard Wheatley (ESC 168): It was a complete surprise to see this piece in *QC* 275, and the young student got most of it correct about Simon Arzt, apart from the date of opening of the new store: it was June 1932 (not 1924). See page 8 of my book *The Simon Arzt Story*.

**Update 2 - The Council of the Ornato** (*maglīs al-ūrnâtū*), mentioned in this *QC*'s article "Alexandrie French P.O. farewell", was formed in 1834. Originally comprising mainly foreign businessmen and consular officials (only two Egyptian members), it was constituted to oversee urban development and construction in Alexandria, according to certain ordered forms, following Mohamed Ali's liberalisation of land ownership. It was Egypt's first such civic organisation, the name deriving from similar organisms in Italy. Over time it evolved with greater Egyptian participation, finally integrated into ministerial reorganisations brought about by the British occupation after 1882.

**The Editor**

**Update 3 – George Lee imperforates.** Richard Wheatley. In *QC* 275 I am afraid that Greg Todd quoted the wrong Nile Post catalogue number for the Express stamp, which should have been EX1a. The Smithsonian says that Lee took about 10 per cent of the imperforates at the Palace sale, so that those on the market today presumably come from the remaining 90 % now perhaps mis-attributed to Lee's purchase.

## A TPO on Lake Nasser

Antoine Winter (ESC 149)

When President Anwar el Sadat inaugurated the Aswan High Dam half a century ago in January 1971 he turned the section of the Nile between Aswan and Wadi-Halfa in Sudan into a massive lake, named after President Gamal Abdel Nasser, who launched the pharaonic-style project.

Lake Nasser (some 500km long and between 5km and 35km wide) flooded all villages and archaeological sites (except Qasr Ibrim) throughout Lower Nubia. The most important sites were dismantled and rebuilt elsewhere, the best known being Ramesses II's temple of Abu Simbel, which was cut out of the living rock and relocated in its entirety on an artificial hill high above the lake. Since its opening in September 1968 it has become a popular tourist attraction.



**The air letter and its datestamp (admittedly, with a little "help" from the writer), indicating a previously unknown postal service on the lake**



Visitors can travel on private cruises linking Aswan with Abu Simbel, but it seems that at one time there was also an official government steamboat service: I have discovered a cover with the TPO marking of ABUSIMBIL-ASWAN dated 26 FE 76 (the 7 is reversed and its right side flattened). Smith Type 6A1.4.

The three impressions on the aerogramme are faint and the Arabic text does not show clearly, but there is no doubt about the wording. This surprising TPO is the latest successor to the Shallal-Halfa TPO, of which the last known date is 1945. Both of these harbours have disappeared under the waters of the lake.

The text within the letter is also very interesting. It was written in Qasr Ibrim, a site with a complex history of more than 2000 years some 240km south of Aswan, on the right bank of the Nile. The important city was perched on a cliff 67m above the Nile, named for its fortress (*qasr*). The last inhabitants left in 1813.

Today Qasr (or Kasr) Ibrim is transformed into a small island, the only important archaeological site in Lower Nubia to have survived the floods. It is not permitted now to go ashore, apart from the archaeologists who study there for two months each winter. The writer of the letter is in fact Dr Janet Bottomley, of the University of Cambridge, the doctor of the English archaeological team during the winter of 1976, and is named as expedition doctor and photographer of the Egypt Exploration Society expedition to Ibrim working under the leadership of the Rev Martin Plumley.

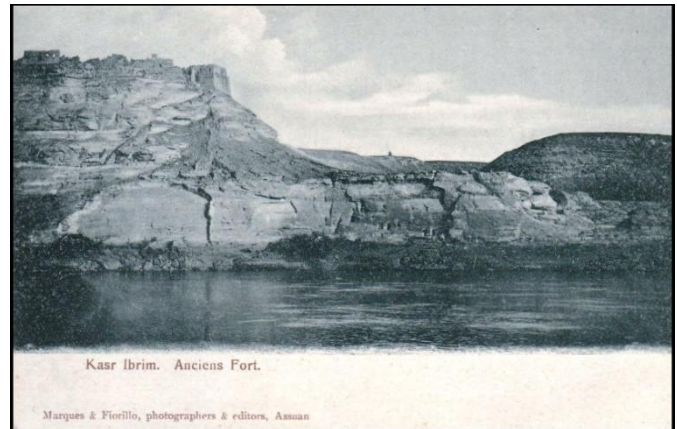






***Qasr Ibrim is today a rarely visited rocky islet in the middle of the giant Lake Nasser. Half a century ago, its Citadel perched on the cliff 70m above the waters of the Nile. But then Egypt built a dam...***

She gives some interesting details: “I enjoyed being there but I am rather glad we shall be starting down the river on March 12<sup>th</sup>. As well as seeing patients, I also help cleaning ‘textiles’ over 1000 years old. The dry climate here preserves them well... Our paraffin (for the stoves) is running very low and we have sent workmen for more. It takes about 6 days for them to get to Aswan and back...



“I shall be glad of a good bath, after washing in cold water only, since mid-January. When in England, it will be a change to see plants growing. Here it is just water and desert. We get a lovely light on the hills in early morning and in the evening some good sunsets at times.”

Until recently, tourist cruises sailing to Abu Simbel could admire Qasr Ibrim when passing at a distance, specially in the evenings when the ruins are illuminated by floodlights. Today, Abu Simbel is a town of some 3,000 people and has an airport.

The writer dates her letter from “Qasr Ibrim 25.2.76” and the TPO shows 26 FE 76, so we must suppose that the steamship linking Aswan and Abu Simbel called at Qasr Ibrim (at least for mail) while the archeologists were present. My Egypt guide for 1975 says that vessels sail up the river twice a week with no stop until Abu Simbel.

This remarkable aerogramme reminds us all not to overlook modern mail research. Nice surprises are possible.

### **Members' Matters**

• Congratulations to Mahmoud Ramadan (ESC 358) and Hany Salam (ESC 580), two of our leading members in Egypt, who have been notified of their election as Fellows of the Royal Philatelic Society of London. It is good to see selfless work on behalf of furthering the ideals of philately honoured in this way.

#### **New Member:**

**ESC 738 Roy B Dixon**, 517 Belson Street, Parksville, British Columbia, Canada V9P 2P9  
(GB QEII, Channel Isles & Isle of Man, Andorra, Europa)

**Resigned:** **ESC 451** Adel Abdel-Hafez (Egypt)  
**ESC 553** Richard Smith (UK)  
**ESC 610** Dawn Lucaci (Australia)

**Deceased:** **ESC 257** Michael Michaels (USA)  
**ESC 293** Alan Jeyes (UK)

## 'KES' proof overprints via K. Bileski

Peter Newroth FRPSL (ESC 394)

Egyptian philately appeals because of diverse material, linking an incredible history with challenging stamps and interesting people. I enjoy history, philately and exploring connections between collectors and dealers.

This began as a "short" article about one stamp in my Egyptian collection and its association with K. Bileski. But soon I

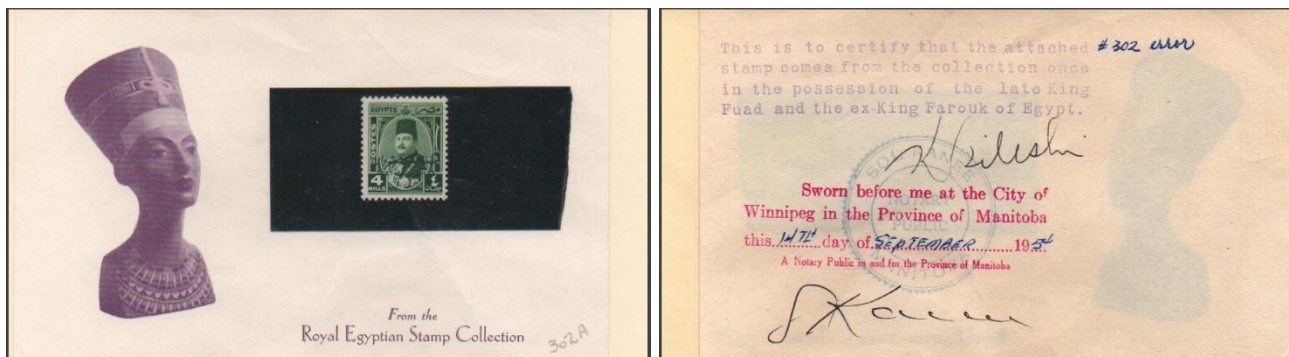
was challenged about the origins of this stamp. My review here of English language literature on the subject cannot be complete so I fear details in other languages were missed.



**Fig. 1. Engraved letterhead for K. Bileski, by the artist SZYK**

Figure 1 shows the artistic letterhead of the Canadian stamp dealer Kasimir Bileski (1908-2005). Sadly, I never met Bileski, who is remembered as a knowledgeable, successful philatelic promoter and dealer. He led mainly in mail order approval sales (some I received) of stamps from Liberia, Newfoundland, Canada, South America and Egypt. Varieties, proofs and rarities were special interests.

Biographies by Tauber (1996) and Jamieson (2005) outlined Bileski's contributions over 85 years as a dealer. His name is associated with Egyptian philately through his sales of unusual stamps originating from the Royal Collection, to which references now appear mainly as records of provenance for rare items at auction. I found no information on the establishment of any Egyptian "national" philatelic collection before Sultan Fouad was appointed King of Egypt in 1922. But Savidis (1955) described Fouad's acquisitions of intact collections belonging to Mackenzie-Low (£3725 in 1929) and Albert Eid (£5000) to add to his personal holdings.



**Fig. 2. Front of the Bileski sale card with a hinged single of proof KES. Reverse with square hieroglyphic imprint.**

**Fig. 3. Back of Bileski card with his authentication handstamp, ink signature and notary seal and signature, 14 SE 54**

As king and collector, Fouad directly influenced the production of Egyptian stamps, counselled by philatelic advisors and others on the social and political aspects. In 1924 he authorised credits for the Survey Department to buy photogravure equipment for stamp printing from England (Smith, 1999, pp. 303).

Doubtless Fouad was expected to approve new stamp issues. So he had opportunity and encouraged Survey Department presentations of "special stamps", a practice continued by Farouk, his philatelist son and successor. Eid (1963) described how both acquired these printings for their collections. Survey Department production of Egyptian stamps began with the 1925 Geographic Congress issue. In 1924 Fouad chose the format for these stamps and the original drawings were placed in the Royal Collection. Single sheets with imperforate and skewed perforations are reported (Smith, 1999, pp. 317-319), and Smith (p. 320) also described special proofs for the 1926 Agricultural set on heavy paper, marked "CANCELLED" on the reverse (Royal Printings).

The full extent of the Royal Collection will probably never be known. Records of material for the 1954 auction sale, after Farouk's abdication, and what has appeared since indicate much interesting material. The sale, arranged by the Republic of Egypt with H. R. Harmer Ltd at Koubbeh Palace in Cairo, included the Mackenzie-Low collection, described in a 1929 Harmer catalogue (Harmer, 1929) and the Albert Eid collection as confirmed in the sale prospectus brochure (Harmer, 1953a).

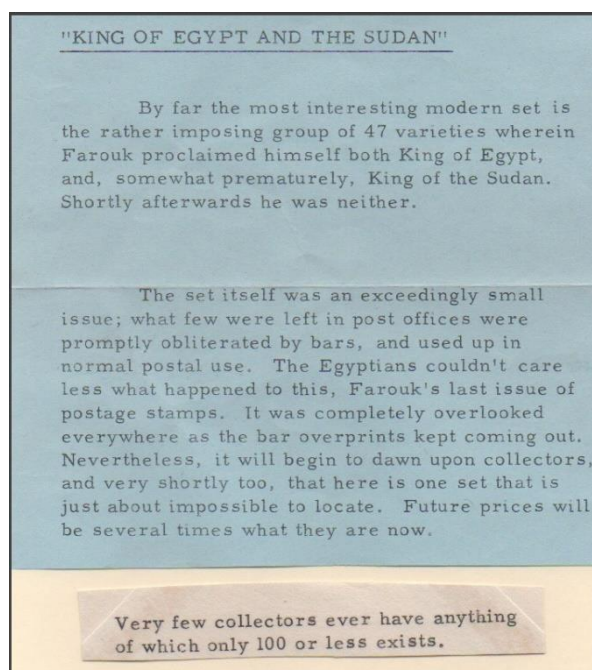
Savidis (1955) noted that, as part of a committee of expert philatelists (led by Mehanny Eid, then Vice President of Philatelic Society of Egypt and director general of the Finance Ministry (Eid 1963)), he assisted Harmers to catalogue the sale. These advisors were needed to organise large volumes of material including previously unreported or unknown rarities. Reserves were placed on many lots, of which large numbers were withdrawn during the sale. According to Toutounji (2002), J. Kassab purchased (£25,000) all remaining philatelic items after the sale. This included two suitcases of misperforated Egyptian stamps that Harmers had declined to include in their catalogue. Smith (p. xxxi) recorded that Kassab saved those that were designated for the Postal Museum in Cairo.

Figure 2 shows a Bileski sale card with a colour trial of the "King of Egypt and the Sudan" commemorative overprint in Arabic on the 4m Farouk definitive. As I write in 2020, this year is the 100th anniversary of Farouk's birth. Issued on January 16 1952, the "KES" overprints were the last definitive issues of the Royal dynasty. In the trial shown here the overprint is in black - on the issued 4m stamps the overprint was printed in red. Chalhoub (p. 187) and Smith (pp. 353-354) describe how one pane of each denomination was overprinted in three to five colours as a trial.

Bileski attended the Palace Sale with his wife and was a major buyer. Accounts of participants by Mazloum (1954) and Uehlinger (1954) confirm his presence but do not identify buyers of specific Egypt lots. Lee (1959, p.2) described purchase of a large number of the imperforate printings by Vinson, Minkus and Bileski. Smith (1971) wrote of Bileski's purchase of the colour trials, one of which is described here, and Hass (1999, lot 303) describes him as buying all of the colour trials.

Figure 3 shows the reverse of the Bileski sale card and Figure 4 the descriptive texts that accompanied it. They document his distinctive marketing and presentation style. To understand more about the origin of this stamp (and the lot it came from) I reviewed the Palace Sale catalogue and Prices Realised. I assume the latter is accurate - it indicates both lots sold and the price at which others (those presumably later purchased by Kassab) were withdrawn. Occasional blanks in prices " — " are not explained, perhaps these 22 lots were held back for retention by the Postal Museum. Blanks are noted only in the Egyptian section of the sale.

My Palace Sale catalogue overview suggests that nearly all lots were well described, especially within the Egypt section of 1143 lots (Realization £49,757 without 5 per cent surtax) . The only lots described with 1952 "KES" overprinted stamps were 1110 and 1111. The former was two presentation albums with complete overprinted mint sheets including colour trial overprints in unadopted colors. This totaled 14,050 stamps and was estimated at £5000. Lot 1111 was a presentation folder of "KES" overprinted sheets (3950 stamps, estimate £180) but without mention of colour trials. Lot 1110 sold at £2750 - a huge sum then, and remarkable as the highest price for any Egyptian lot - and presumably a Bileski purchase (probably also lot 1111). Hass's catalogue (1999) described other lots from the Palace Sale mounted on Bileski sale cards (lots 236, 303, 329).



**Fig. 4. Bileski's description of the stamp reproduced on blue paper, accompanied by a typed original text addressing this variety**



Online searches of recent auction sale records indicated a number of items connected with Bileski, although consignor details are unknown.

Feldman (2015) offered sets of with both colour trial and issued-colours overprints (probably ex-Bileski). More recently, Siegel Auctions (2018) offered 12 lots of Royal Collection material, possibly from the same consignor. Lots 1531-1534 comprised more than 3000 Bileski sale cards and envelopes, each estimated at \$1000-\$4000. Most cards were Egypt stamps but some other countries indicated Bileski purchases from the non-Egypt section of the Palace Sale.

This auction also offered three large lots (1528-1530) with "KES" overprints which must have originated from Palace Sale lots 1110 and 1111. Lot 1528 (582 stamps, Estimate \$5000 +) included only one 13m block of colour trial overprints. The following two lots offered nine and 28 colour trial blocks and higher sale estimates. No Bileski card or "KES" lots sold; they, and some other Egypt lots in this sale, possibly were remainders from stocks held by the Bileski family.

To conclude, research identified the source of my single colour proof and revealed philatelic stories linking two Egyptian kings, their stamp collection and an interesting dealer. More study is possible! Perhaps this article will interest readers in the topic and stimulate a reader to clarify my conclusions and share more details?

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Uehlinger, M. 1954. "The Palace Collections of Egypt", *The Philatelist*, p. 151, March 1954, Volume 20, Number 6. (Article signed "M. U." who was at the sale; Max Uehlinger was an expert cataloguer and valuer for Robson Lowe).

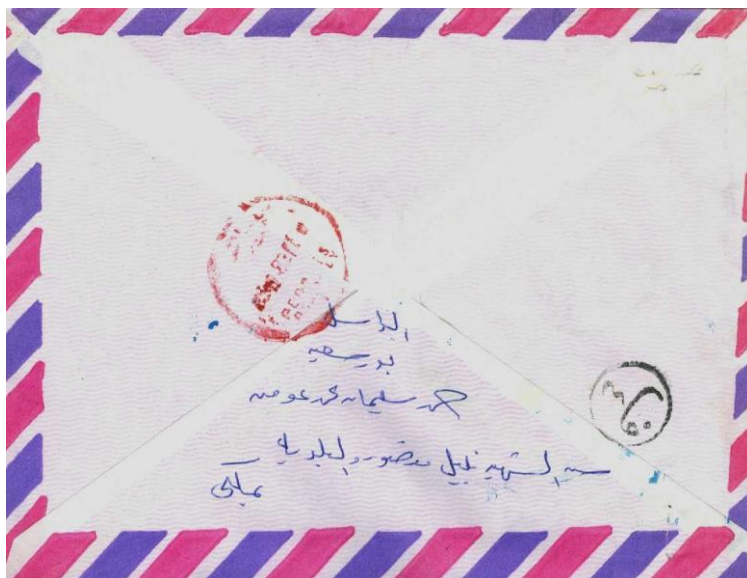


**Fig. 5. From Harmer's publication of the Prices Realized after the 1954 sale: A view of the Stamp Auction in progress at Koubbeh Palace, Cairo.**

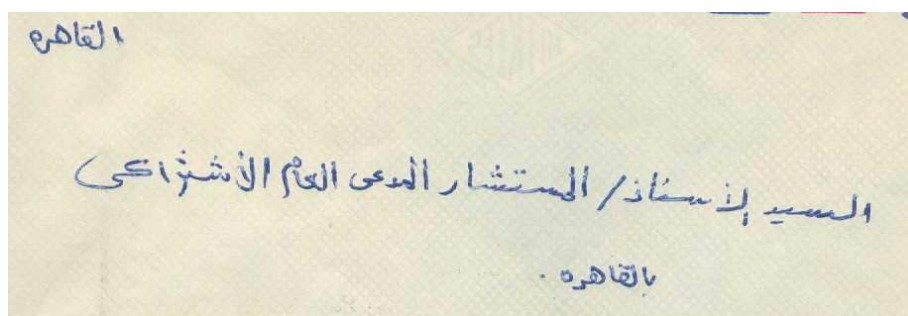
## Modern censor or receiving marking?

Scott Van Horn (ESC 619)

While examining a large accumulation of 1980s-90s Egyptian correspondence, I noticed an unusual marking on the reverse of several of the envelopes, combining an Arabic letter “f” and a figure. At first, I considered it some kind of censor marking, but then remembered that civilian censorship ended in 1974. Then I noticed that most of the correspondence also received a black or red “PEOPLES ASSEMBLY” transit or arrival datestamp, also on the reverse.



All the correspondence, except for one from Japan, was internal to Egypt and posted from various locations, but all of them with what appears to be the same destination.



The letter from Japan was addressed to the National Assembly Library in Cairo, so I am assuming that all the others were sent to the same location (sorry, but my Arabic is sorely lacking). Dates of the marking range from 1982 to 1989, including an earlier 17mm version (with number 3 or 4 below), and a later 22mm version (number 1 at the top). Any member's help in understanding this marking would be greatly appreciated.



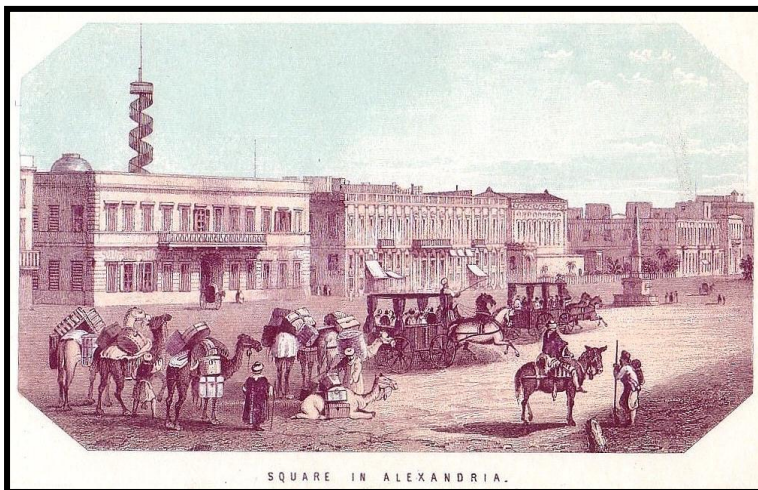


## Alexandrie French P.O. farewell

**Pierre Louis Grech (ESC 266)**

In May 1837 the French Postal Administration introduced a number of Paquebots-Poste (Postal Steamships) to provide a mail service between France and the eastern Mediterranean. (They also carried passengers and freight). The main line went from Marseille to Constantinople, with another line from Alexandria to Le Pirée (Athens). They intersected at the island of Syra, where passengers and mailbags trans-shipped. There were ten stopovers along the two routes, manned by local agents (often the local consul), but additionally in three of these ports an employee of the French Postal Administration was installed to provide a comprehensive postal service: receiving and despatching mail, dealing with transfers of money and payments, shipping parcels, etc.,. These agents were provided with circular date stamps. The three locations were Constantinople, Smyrna and Alexandria: "French Post Offices Abroad". On 6 May 1837 the paquebot *Scamandre* arrived at Alexandria bringing on board the newly appointed Director of the Alexandrie Post Office, Mr Gérardin. He was installed in the French Consulate.

When in 1834 Alexandria's *Council of the Ornato* relaid the Manchiyya square (the Great Square) into what became the Place des Consuls, Mohamed Ali assigned land around it to the major foreign communities: Greece erected the Tossiza palace; Britain, the church of Saint-Mark; France built its Consulate circa 1836 (*Fig. 1*), etc... This Consulate was expanded about 1865 by the addition of a second floor with twin gabled-roofs (*Fig. 2*).



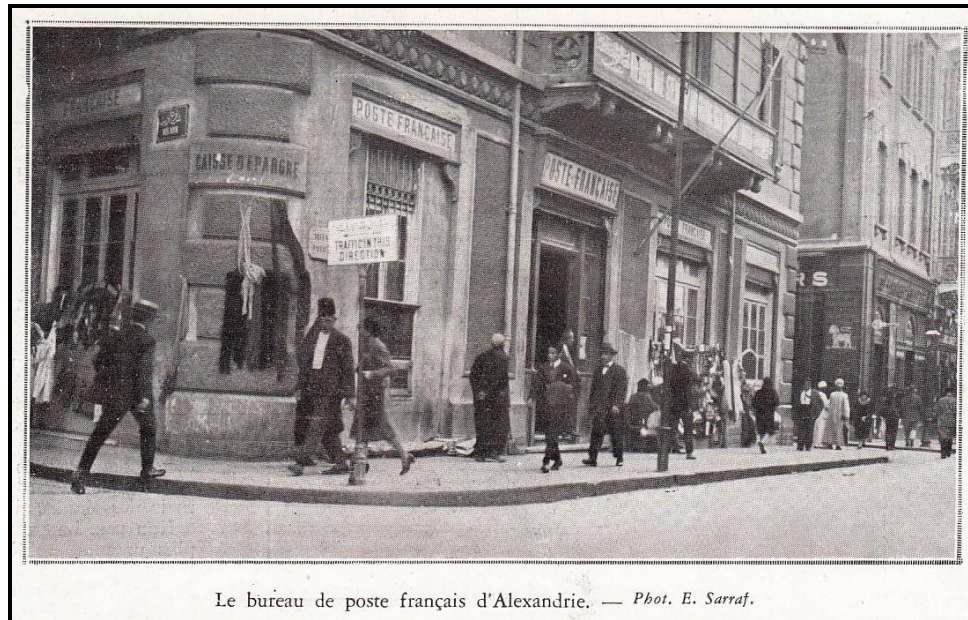
**Fig. 1. Overland travellers arriving at the Great Square c.1840. This was later still renamed Place Mohamed Ali, the Pacha's statue standing where the obelisk can be seen here. The building with the observation tower is the French Consulate.**



**Fig. 2. Mohamed Ali Square before the destruction of July 1882 during the Arabi revolt. The building centre-left with gabled-roofs is the French Consulate. The red dot shows the location of Mohamed Ali's statue, unveiled August 1873.**



The French Post Office remained domiciled in the Consulate from 1837 until that was totally demolished during the riots of July 1882. The P.O. used to be accessed from a side entrance in Rue de la Poste Française, on this side of the building in *Fig. 2*. After the destruction, the Consulate used the Hotel Abbat (in Place de l'Eglise) as temporary premises before moving into another location in Rue de Rosette (1885). It then moved slightly further down the street on Rue Nabi Daniel (1898). There it remained until 1911 when it moved to a new purpose-built Consulate at the corner of today's Midan Orabi and the Corniche, where it still stands in the 21st century.



**Fig. 3 - The French P.O. at 4 Boulevard Saad Zaghloul, Alexandria, in 1930 (corner with Rue Adib).**

The French Post Office initially followed the meanderings of the Consulate, but because of the remoteness of the Rue de Rosette address from the heart of the city, the P.O. installed itself on the ground floor of the old stock exchange (at the corner of Rue de l'Ancienne Bourse) in Rue du Télégraphe Anglais. On 3 August 1899 it moved nearby to purpose-built premises at 2 Rue de la Gare de Ramleh. After Egypt's independence in 1922, many street names were changed, including the address of the French Post Office, which became 4 Boulevard Saad Zaghloul (*Fig. 3*).



**Fig. 4 - Same view of corner with Rue Adib in 1994.**

There were three other French P.O.s in Egypt: Suez (1862-1888), Le Caire (1866-1875) and Port-Saïd (1867-1931). By the 1890s all the foreign P.O.s in Egypt, of all nationalities, had been closed. There remained only the French P.O.s of Alexandria and Port-Saïd, which stubbornly resisted all attempts by the Egyptian Postal Administration to close them. They were flying the French flag in an Egypt which was now under British occupation. This situation continued for many years, and it was only in the worldwide economic crisis after the 1929 Wall Street Crash that France could no longer afford the luxury of keeping these non-viable Post Offices open. Negotiations for their suppression began.



On 15 January 1931 the French Minister Mr Gaillard met H.E. Ismaïl Sedky Pacha at the Ministry of the Interior to inform him that France had approved the suppression of these offices. Consequently this was implemented and on the evening of 31 March 1931 the offices of Port-Saïd and Alexandrie closed their doors for the last time.

There the matter rested. It was believed that the subsequent occupiers of the premises (at first a travel shipping company) would remove all the fascias, panels and insignias pertaining to the P.O. It was therefore with some astonishment, a few weeks ago, that we received a series of photographs from Ronny Van Pellecom (ESC 618) in Belgium. These archive photos originated from Mr Jean-Yves Empereur of CEALEX at Alexandria. Taken in 1994, they showed the former P.O. building being gutted for refurbishment. What was surprising was that, in spite of modifications, the original signs indicating **POSTE FRANÇAISE** were still there, having been hidden by a wooden framework, supporting later fascias. A discovery which was a brief resuscitation before the final end of that P.O. which had been the longest lasting (1837-1931) of all foreign post offices in Egypt, of any nationality.

**Fig. 5.**  
**Looking**  
**East**



**Fig. 6.**  
**Looking**  
**West**

Reference: Pierre Louis Grech, *The French Post Offices in Egypt, Parts 1 & 2* (published 2012-2013).

## Heliopolis 1914 Aviation Week

Richard Wheatley (ESC 168)

This early Egyptian colour ppc of the Sphinx and two Pyramids came my way together with other items connected with the Mena House Hotel. This card was written at that hotel on January 3 1914 and the 4 mills stamp has been cancelled by a poor strike of a Type 7 Mena House Hotel postmark the following day.

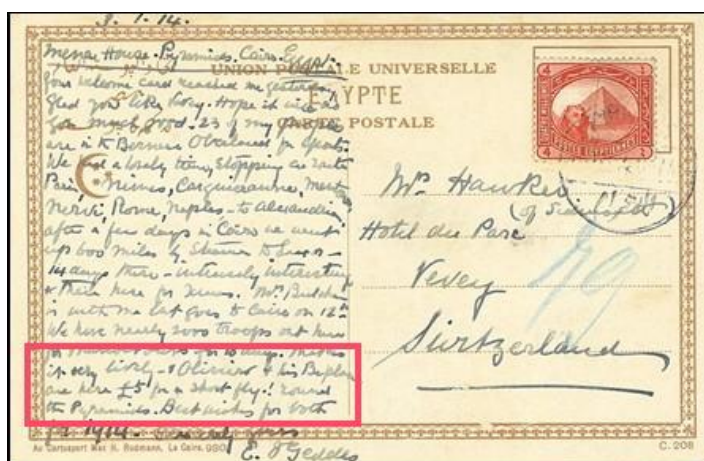
However, the main interest is part of the written message:

Olivier & his Biplane are here  
£5 for a short fly! Round the Pyramids

So, I wondered, who was Olivier and what was he doing in Egypt – apart from flying around the Pyramids?

### Olivier

He turned out to be Louis Olivier, an early French airman. When he arrived in Egypt late in December 1913 he claimed that he had been flying for the Bulgarian army in their successful siege of Adrianople (November 3 1912 to March 26 1913). He had brought with him an 80hp Henri Farman biplane that he had allegedly flown at Adrianople (Erdine in modern Turkey). In Cairo, after unpacking the plane from a large crate and erecting it, he started flying tourists round the Pyramids. Strangely, there is no record of Farman selling any biplanes to Bulgaria, or to their allies the Serbians.



**Souvenir for the 1910  
Heliopolis meeting**

### Heliopolis

After the February 1910 Air Meeting at Heliopolis, Clark<sup>1</sup> mentions that there was an “Aviation Week” at Heliopolis from January 2 to 12 1914. This was attended by at least eight French airmen plus Oswald Watt. He was English by birth but had spent most of his life in Australia and was to find flying fame in France at the beginning of World War One. He transferred to the Australian Flying Corps (AFC) in 1916, came to Egypt and joined No 1 Squadron when it arrived in April to make its headquarters at Heliopolis in June 1916. Clark also states that there was a “Flying Meeting” taking place at Heliopolis from February 19 to 22 1914.

### Marc Pourpe

He arrived in Cairo mid-December 1913 with his Morane-Saulnier plane. His 1914 flight from Heliopolis to Khartoum and back is well documented by John Sears<sup>2</sup>. Pourpe left on January 4. The previous evening there had been a celebratory dinner for the airmen at the Heliopolis Palace Hotel. At one time Argyll Etkin had in their stock a dinner menu signed by many who were present, including Marc Pourpe and Jacques Schneider, son of the French armaments manufacturer who inaugurated the Schneider Trophy Air Races.

I could not find more information about Olivier, apart from a short piece in “News from Belgium” dated May 20 1944. It reported that 14 Belgian patriots had been executed by the German military occupation force. One of those men was named Louis Olivier!

### References

1. Clark, C., *The High Life of Oswald Watt: Australia's First Military Pilot*, 2016
2. Sears, J., *Airmails of Egypt*, 1991



## Queries sent to the QC

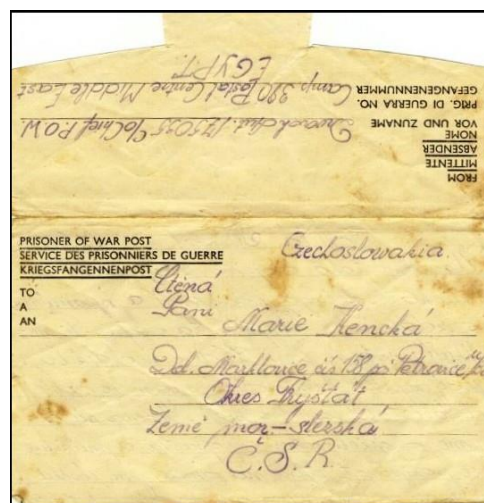
Several queries on various topics have been received by the Editor.  
Here is a selection. Responses would be appreciated.



**Query 1. 1911 parade photograph.** From John Davis (ESC 213), our new President: I have had this postcard for many years and have failed to find out what event is pictured; does anyone know? It is a real photograph card produced by Aziz & Dorés of Alexandria (embossed, top right); the reverse has an unclear handstamp in purple of the British Consulate General at Alexandria, with a handwritten date 22/6/11. As a clue, between the two horses is the figure 6. Was this photo number six? Are there any others?

**Query 2. PoW Camp 508.** From a non-member, Adam Kencki, who writes: I found the Egypt Study Circle while seeking information about my grand uncle, a Czech-Polish soldier in the German army during WWII (he did not volunteer but was enrolled into the army via the census list). He was captured by the British army and transported to PoW camp 380 Fayed/Fanara.

I have two photos of him and one letter from the camp (*right*), and would very much appreciate any information about the camp... perhaps a member might have one of his letters in his/her collection? This search is part of my doctoral research and a personal project about my family history and identity. So that the illustration of the air letter is clear, my uncle's name is Anton (or Antonin) Dworok, his sister is Marie Kencka and the address is Dolni Marklowice (Silesia) Czechoslovakia (or perhaps Sudeten Germany, who knows exactly at that time...)



**Anton Dworok as a boy (left), in uniform as a soldier in the German Army; and a Fayed grave marker for Soldier Dworok, A, dated 23.7.47**



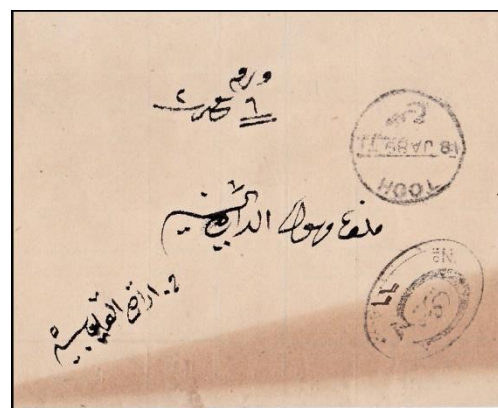
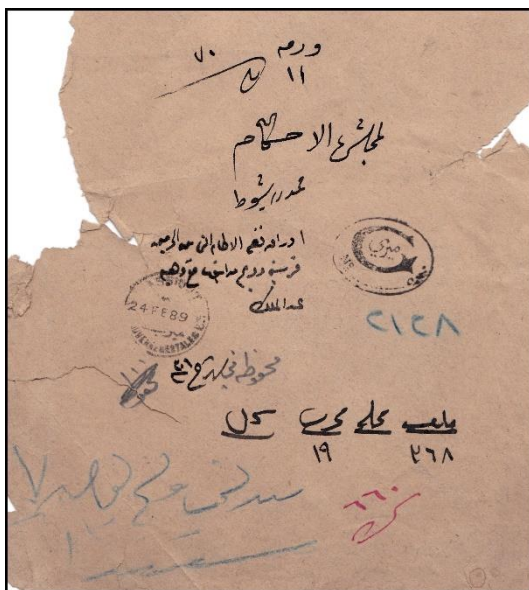


**Query 3. 1894 mis-sent to Girga?** From a non-member. This neat cover, franked at 12 1/2d, sent from London on 2 FE 94 and clearly addressed to Thomas Cooks, Cairo, was delivered to their office on February 18. But before that it had received CDS transit markings of Guerga (17 II 94) and Ismailia-Cairo TPO (perhaps 18 FE 94). So how did it find its way to Girga? The questioner reports that he has seen a copy of a letter from the recipient that was sent from a Luxor hotel on February 14 – so perhaps he was on his way from Luxor to Cairo when Cooks somehow passed on this letter to Girga? But there is no sign of any re-addressing, redirection or associated Dues. And how does the TPO handstamp fit?

**Query 4. Official marking.** From Mike Murphy (ESC 240). Two scruffy covers have recently come to light in my shed with 1889 markings that I do not recognise – each carries an oval in black of 3x2.2cm containing the Arabic word “miry” contained in a large ornate letter G, offset from the centre, and a dotted provision for a handwritten number at the bottom. I do not believe that this marking is contained in the Blomfield/Feltus postmark Study VI, and wonder if members can identify it. One example, with handwritten number 66, is on a long blank document folded into an envelope of 25x9.7cm and sent from Tooh on 18 I 89 to Caire A (reverse, same day arrival). The other, a battered buff envelope 18x14cm, travelled from Assiout Gouvernementeales to Caire A (reverse) on 24-25 FE 89.



The Tooh long cover, I am informed, has an Arabic notation: “To be kept in the file of the Qalioubieh governorate.” The other, made from Government watermarked paper, is said to be addressed to the Legal Counsel of Assiout Governorate, with several notations, including that it contains documents in the case between two people of Qalioubieh, including Wahba Abd el-Malek, and again carries filing instructions. The Arabic is well beyond me; the markings could be postal or fiscal/governmental. Or something else altogether...



*The envelope from Assiout (left) is covered in Arabic notations; that from Tooh is much cleaner, reflecting the state of the cover itself. Both have been trimmed in these illustrations*



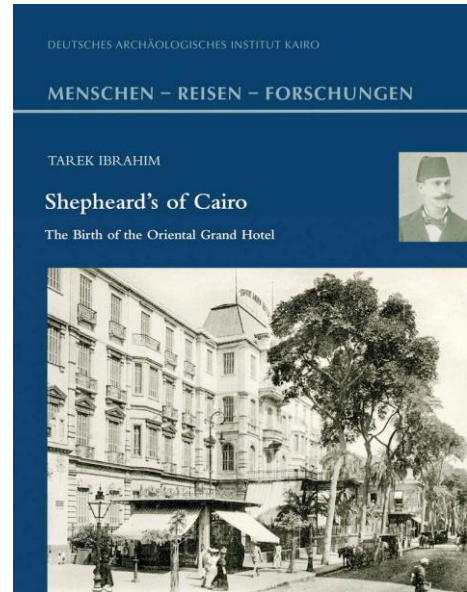
## Book Review: *Shepherd's of Cairo – The Birth of the Oriental Grand Hotel* by Tarek Ibrahim

Anabright Hay (ESC 600)

Fascinating new architectural research, illustrations, plans and photos are contained in this book published in 2019 with the support of the German Archaeological Institute in Cairo.

Originally part of a university thesis, Tarek Ibrahim's research on this famous Cairo hotel, which was totally destroyed in the 1952 Black Saturday riots, took him on a fabulous treasure hunt. The most exciting discovery was the name of the hotel's architect and designer, the German architect Johann Adam Rennebaum (1858-1937).

Photographs, including glass negative prints provided by the owners of the Lehnert and Landrock bookstore in Cairo, provided the initial leads. Internet searches revealed a set of images taken in 1948 by the Egyptian-Armenian photographer Kerop Hagop Keropian. But it was a chance discovery online that resulted in Ibrahim's most spectacular breakthrough. A guide booklet published by Shepherd's Hotel in 1895 disclosed Rennebaum's name as the building's architect and designer. His name had not appeared in any secondary literature on the hotel.



A large part of Rennebaum's estate was donated to the Stromer Foundation at the Grünsberg Castle in Germany. The foundation's owners confirmed that numerous hotel documents, including floor plans, photographs, sketches and correspondence, were preserved in the castle. A meeting in Berlin with a granddaughter of the architect produced more documents giving insights into Rennebaum's life and career working for the Khedival authorities and private clients in Cairo at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

All this material has enabled Ibrahim to provide a detailed analysis of the hotel's layout and the design of its private and public spaces, including the Arab Hall, the Pharaonic Lobby, the dining rooms and bars. Perhaps most interesting is his use of sketches by Rennebaum and other artists to find sources for the hotel's decorative designs. His incredibly detailed book gives an opportunity to take an imaginary walk through the magnificent rooms. Broader themes are also well covered: perhaps the most important aspect of this study of the hotel's architecture is the neglected aspect of the transcultural dialogue between Europe and Egypt. It would not be an exaggeration, says the author, to describe the destruction of the hotel as the end of an era for Egyptians and foreigners alike.

Later chapters deal with how Egypt was represented in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century at western world fairs and in museums. He looks at the history of Shepherd's Hotel and how it, and other hotels, catered to western fantasies of the Orient.



Apart from the ground breaking research, it is the wealth of illustrations, including postcards members may know well (*see left, the Arabesque Reading Room*), that makes this book so riveting. It is essential reading for anyone interested in Egyptian hotel history and Shepherd's impact on Egyptian-European relationships.

• *Shepherd's of Cairo – The Birth of the Oriental Grand Hotel* by Tarek Ibrahim (Wiesbaden 2019, 120pp, A4, hardback), various prices online.