

The  
Quarterly Circular  
of  
**THE  
EGYPT**



# STUDY CIRCLE

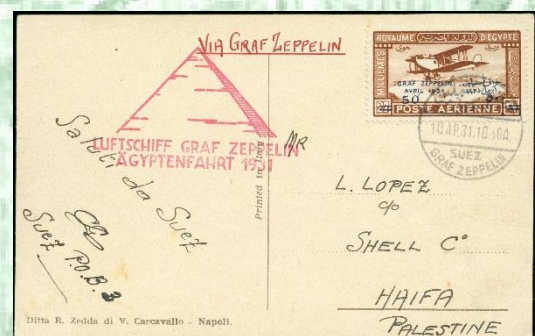
June Quarter 2021 – Vol XXIV No 6 – Whole Series No 277 – Pages 123-146

## CONTENTS

Officers / Meetings 123, Book review - GBLA Catalogue; Members' changes iii

## ARTICLES

Editorial: Study Circle back in action	Mike Murphy	p.124
2021/2022 full list of Meetings		p.125
Delandre's Egyptian Cinderellas	Hani Sharestan	pp.126-127
Turkish Incursion of the Suez Canal 1915	Richard Wheatley	pp.128-133
Notes by CF Hass on 3m/2pi double surcharge Due	Peter Newroth	pp.134-136
NOT Ismailia Station!	Pierre Louis Grech	pp.137-138
1 Piastre 1874 – the settings	Ramez Atiya	pp.139-145
Forged Winter Palace Hotel postmark	Vahe Varjabedian	p.146
Update: TPO on Lake Nasser	Antoine Winter	p.146
Update: British Postal Notices	Greg Todd	p.146



**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.*



**Quality Stamps, Proofs and Rare Postal History of the World always required for Stock or on a confidential Private Treaty basis.**

**CLONFADDA, MACROOM, P12 RV08, Co. Cork, IRELAND**

**Telephone +44 7771 731733 [toddytripzinc@gmail.com](mailto:toddytripzinc@gmail.com)**

**VAT No. GB 561 9567 09**

## Meetings Programme 2021

*Please bear in mind that this programme depends on government pandemic regulation.  
See Page 125 for preliminary programme for 2022*

Jul 3 2021, 10-4	Warwickshire Event Centre, Leamington Spa	ESC society table	All members
Jul 10 2021, 2-5	Victory Services Club	AGM, Live Auction 62, and member displays - letters A-B-C-D	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 and invasions etc	Speaker needed

## EGYPT STUDY CIRCLE OFFICERS

<b>President/Librarian</b>	<b>John Davis</b> , Church View Cottage, Church Rd, Upton Snodsbury, Worcs WR7 4NH <b>john.davis2@btinternet.com</b>
<b>Chairman/ Programme Secretary</b>	<b>Jon Aitchison</b> , Old Tithe Hall, Start Hill, Nr Bishop's Stortford, Herts CM22 7TF <b>britishlocals@aol.com</b>
<b>Vice Chairman/ Webmaster</b>	<b>Neil Hitchens</b> , 46 Rosslyn Park, Oatlands Village, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 9QZ <b>n.hitchens@btopenworld.com</b>
<b>Secretary/Editor</b>	<b>Mike Murphy</b> , 11 Waterbank Road, Bellingham, London SE6 3DJ <b>egyptstudycircle@hotmail.com</b>
<b>Treasurer/Auctioneer</b>	<b>Dr Sami Sadek</b> , The Oaks, 19 Sinah Lane, Hayling Island, Hants PO11 0EY <b>sami.sadek@ntlworld.com</b>
<b>Facebook co-ordinator</b>	<b>Hani Sharestan</b> , 33 Monrovia, Irvine, CA 92602, USA <b>me3alem@aol.com</b>
<b>North America Agent</b>	<b>Trenton Ruebush</b> , 324 Sunset Creek Circle, Chapel Hill, N Carolina 27516, USA <b>tkruebush@gmail.com</b>
<b>Egypt Agent</b>	<b>Dr Ibrahim Shoukry</b> , Apt 1, 10 Kamal El-Tawil St, Zamalek, Cairo, Egypt <b>ishoukry@link.net</b>
<b>Antipodean Agent</b>	<b>Tony Cakebread</b> , 82A Messines Road, Karori, Wellington 6012, New Zealand <b>cakebread@xtra.co.nz</b>
<b>Committee</b>	<b>Brian Sedgley</b> , 6 Mulberry Way, Ashted, Surrey KT21 2FE <b>witchboy19@gmail.com</b>
<b>Committee</b>	<b>Vahe Varjabedian</b> , 6 Mohammed Galal St, Apt 61, Heliopolis 11341, Cairo, Egypt <b>vahev@hotmail.com</b>

**Editorial correction and apology:** Please note that the March issue, No 276, was described in error on the cover as Vol. XXIV No 6. It should have been No 5. This issue (June) is No 6.

All contents © copyright Egypt Study Circle, London, and the contributors.

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



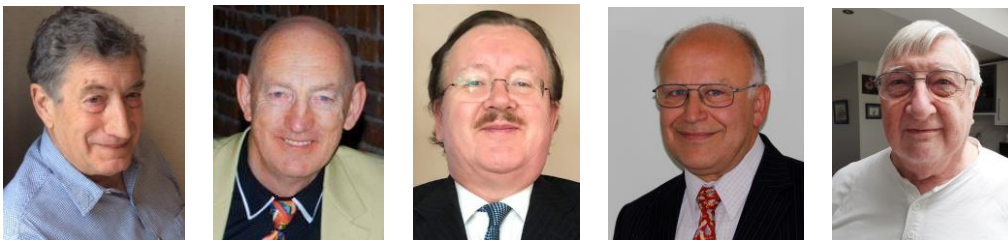
**Facebook**

## **We're back! Study Circle in action again**

[As this issue went to the printers we heard the immensely sad news from Cairo that our member Dr Sherif El-Kerdani (EC 456) passed away on May 23. The Circle sends its sincere condolences to friends and colleagues of this gentleman scholar and to his charming wife Hania.]

It has been a long and hard time since our last meeting – our AGM on February 8 2020 – with every planned get-together since then wiped out by the pestilence of Covid-19. But now we have exciting announcements to make – restrictions willing, we shall be back in action on July 3 at the Midpex exhibition with a society table and a team offering memberships. A week later we plan a full meeting at the Victory Services Club with a live Room Auction, and our Annual General Meeting for 2021. [See full list of meetings opposite].

There will not be a lot to report in the way of formal activity at the AGM, but members present will be required to acknowledge formally the standing down of our long term Chairman and President, John Sears, under whose gentle guidance we have flourished in the twenty-first century. He will be sorely missed, and we wish him a long and tranquil retirement.



***From left: John Davis, Jon Aitchison, Neil Hitchens, Sami Sadek, Mike Murphy***

We are fortunate in having more wise heads to call upon, however, and are delighted to announce that John Davis has agreed to step up to become President, Jon Aitchison to be Chairman, and Neil Hitchens Vice-Chairman. We wish them all well in their new positions. They will already know that the Circle has not been dormant in the past 16 months. Members have been active in maintaining contacts via the *Quarterly Circular*, the Auction, the website and the very lively Facebook page, which has gone from strength to strength thanks to the efforts of Hani Sharestan. He promises there is much more to come.

And there is more to come from the *QC*, where we have depended very largely on old hands including Peter Grech, Ramez Atiya, Richard Wheatley and Peter Newroth: all new articles gratefully received. Ramez has reawakened interest in the minutiae of classical-period stamps, and says many flaws and varieties are unpublished. He is prime mover in an exciting attempt to create an archive of photographs or scans of sheets of the first issues to aid this work. Any member with such illustrations please let the Webmaster know.

The website has been undergoing a gentle transformation during the past months, with many more early copies of the *QC* cleaned and digitised for all to use as reference. There are big plans to improve the design of the site's pages, and to add to it several outstanding collections of members' displays for reference.

Members in North America will be surprised to see this *QC* arriving not with GB stamps but US after Royal Mail hiked its overseas rates yet again, taking to an unbearable £4.20 the postage cost of each copy. Michael Ryan of Wyoming offered to become "distribution manager" for *QCs* supplied to him by courier from London, and even to stand some of the cost himself. We are immensely grateful for his offer, and hope to make a similar distribution for Egypt through the good offices of Dr Sherif Samra.

The Auction continued to attract members' attention even through the lockdown, and we will hold two as usual this year, on July 10 and October 2. Members willing to submit material (with lists and scans) should contact Dr Sami Sadek, whose running of Auction 62, his first, was both efficient and profitable!

All in all, there is much to look forward to. We are up and running again. Now it is for the members to offer their suggestions and support to breath new life into our magic Circle. - **Editor**

## Egypt Study Circle – 2021/2022 full list of Meetings

Sat 3rd July 2021 10am-4pm	The Egypt Study Circle has a table at Midpex, the first major post-lockdown exhibition and bourse. Please volunteer to help on our stand or come and say 'Hello'. Midpex is at the Warwickshire Event Centre, Leamington Spa CV31 1XN.
Sat 10th July 2021 2pm Please note date change	Major room and postal auction at the Victory Services Club, followed by AGM & member's displays on subjects beginning A, B, C or D. Viewing from 11am, auction 2pm.
Sat 2nd October 2021 2pm-4pm	Autumn Stampex meeting at the Business Design Centre. Room and live Auction No 63.
Sat 13th Nov 2021 2pm	At the Victory Services Club: 'Conflicts, wars and invasions', main presenter required, and the annual competition: up to 16 sheets on any subject.
Wed 23rd Feb 2022 10.30am-5pm	Egypt Study Circle table at the Society Showcase during the London 2022 Exhibition. Please say 'Hello' or better still, volunteer to do a session on the stand.
Sat 26th Feb 2022 12 noon-2pm	Egypt Study Circle meeting during London 2022 exhibition at the Business Design Centre. Subject 'Postcards' and displays from overseas members. Please bring something to show.
Fri 18th – Sun 20 <sup>th</sup> March 2022	Joint weekend meeting with the Sudan Study Group at the Morley Hayes Hotel, Derby. All welcome including spouses and day visitors (£16.50). Approximate cost £135 pppn d,b&b in a single room or £82pppn in a double. More details soon.
Sat 7th May 2022 10am-4pm	Joint meeting with the Cinderella Stamp Club at the Royal Philatelic Society London, 15 Abchurch Lane, London EC4N 7BW (close to Bank and Cannon Street Underground). The subjects are 'Maritime and Egypt' but with an emphasis on back of the book material, Cinderellas, revenues, permits, ephemera, advertising labels, poster stamps, event labels, unofficial issues, Suez Canal Company, GBLA, petrol and other rationing, telegrams, airgraphs, forgeries, other strange oddities. (Coffee 10am, meeting 11am, break for lunch).
Sat 2nd July 2019 2pm Date to be confirmed	AGM and annual competition plus TPOs part 2 – Some rare routes, presented by Sami Sadek.
Sat Sept/Oct 2022 2pm-4pm Date to be confirmed	Autumn Stampex meeting at the Business Design Centre. Room and live Auction.
Thurs 24th Nov 2022 1pm-5pm	A major presentation by the Circle at the Royal Philatelic Society London to mark the centenary of the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb. We hope that as many members as possible will display, but want only one display on each topic. Details of how to apply will appear in a future <i>QC</i> . The display will be followed by an ESC dinner at a nearby restaurant. We hope to welcome several overseas members.

## Delandre's Egyptian Cinderellas

Hani Sharestan (ESC 595)

Collecting cinderella stamps has always been an interesting part of our hobby. They may also be referred to as fantasies, poster stamps, vignettes, labels, or stickers, but I shall call them “labels” for the purpose of this article. Egyptian labels were given a mention in the late Peter Feltus' catalogue *Egyptian Revenue Stamps*, published in 1980.

During my regular online search for Egyptian philately I came across a seller offering interesting labels with a connection to Egypt, and specifically to the military. After agreeing a price, the seller promptly shipped the labels to me and was kind enough to share some basic information about them, including the fact that they were produced by a gentleman known as Delandre.

Delandre, whose real name was Gaston Aime Camille Fontanille, was a French entrepreneur and a conman. Born in 1883, he committed suicide by taking poison when his crimes caught up with him in 1927. To learn more about him I went to Wikipedia, which carries a fair amount of information about his many business ventures, or schemes, one of which was the invention of the Delandre vignette, which was a popular form of poster stamp during World War I. The article says that he produced more than 4,000 different labels between 1914 and 1918, mainly on patriotic and military themes from many countries, including England, Italy, France, Sudan, and of course Egypt.



***Egypt Camel Corps was a First World War label, with Union Jack and Egyptian royal banner***



***Labels recalling many military outfits were published: above, South Lancashire Regiment (Prince of Wales Volunteers), Royal Berkshire Regt (Princess Charlotte of Wales's), Royal Irish Fusiliers, East Lancashire, Egyptian Army and Lincolnshire Regiment***

The “stamps” were crudely made yet very colourful, most of them roughly perforated and gummed while others were imperforate and without gum. Yet more were misperforated, though this appears to have been by accident. I am happy to share with members some Delandre labels with an Egyptian connection from my collection plus a couple from Sudan. I do not believe that this group is anywhere near complete.



After seeing the success of such labels, in about 1916 the French Red Cross asked Delandre to produce similar stamps to raise funds for the charity. *See left* for one such charity label with an Egyptian connection. It shows a modern looking Egyptian Pharaoh sitting with a rod of office in his hand, the Red Cross logo, and the words “Port Said - Vendu au Profit des Blessés Français”, which translates to “Port Said – Sold for the Benefit of the injured French”. I am not clear whether any of these labels actually reached Egypt during that time.

Though it is known that many labels were sold, Delandre failed to hand over the Red Cross’s share of the proceeds and in 1917 he was arrested. Several further arrests followed, and eventually he was jailed in 1923. On release, he immediately started several new schemes, including a leprosy charity, and resorted to suicide only when about to be brought once more before the magistrates.



***The Manchester Regiment, 1st Battn Egyptian Army and the 11<sup>th</sup> Sudanese all figured in Delandre’s publishing, with perforation alignment often somewhat questionable***

There are a few detailed catalogues covering Delandre’s efforts and by making a quick online search I found several hundreds of labels available for sale, so they can hardly be described as rare. Their values range from a few dollars each to as high as \$40.

These labels offer visual illustrations of how soldiers would have appeared during World War I and a tiny glimpse into what military life may have looked like during that period. Regardless of how they were produced, for that they continue to attract the attention of a small group of fascinated collectors, including yours truly.



***Other military groups featured by Delandre included The Queen’s, with full battle honours, the Invincible 32<sup>nd</sup> Infantry (French, never in Egypt), and the 21<sup>st</sup> Lancers, who did play an important part in the Battle of Omdurman***

- The Cinderella Stamp Club ([cinderellastampclub.org.uk](http://cinderellastampclub.org.uk)) has published several volumes and detailed catalogues on Delandre’s labels.

## Turkish Incursion of the Suez Canal in 1915

Richard Wheatley (ESC 168)

### Background

Before the First World War the Turkish army was being reformed with expert guidance from Germany and its navy was being developed with British assistance.

The second day of August 1914 was a very busy one for politicians. On that day the Turkish Minister of War, Enver Pasha, signed a secret defence treaty with the German Ambassador – thus joining the Triple Alliance with Austria-Hungary and Italy. And Winston Churchill, British First Lord of the Admiralty, ordered the seizure of two dreadnought battleships being built in Britain, one hour before they were to be handed over to the Turkish navy! On August 4 Britain and Germany were at war.

At that time the German battle cruiser *Göben* and the light cruiser *Breslau* were dodging the Royal Navy and steaming towards Turkey. This cat and mouse chase across the Mediterranean was graphically captured by the German publicity artist Professor Willy Stöwer, who drew a picture card with the caption “S.M. battle cruisers *Göben* and *Breslau* leaving Messina in convoy”. The card was sold for 10 pfennigs, plus a further 3 1/2 pf on behalf of army and naval veterans. The vessels had taken on board badly needed coal in Sicily on August 5, but because of the Hague Convention on wartime belligerents in neutral ports, were allowed to remain for only 24 hours.

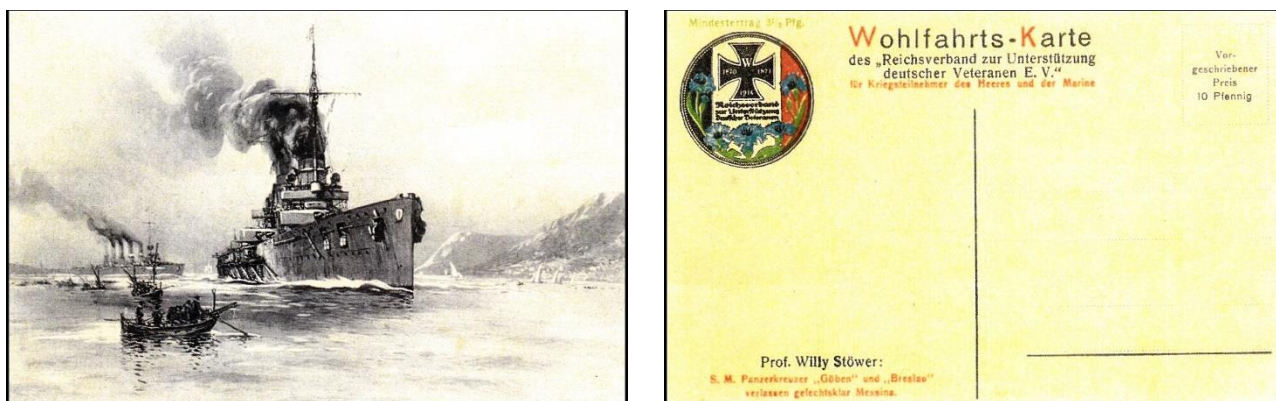
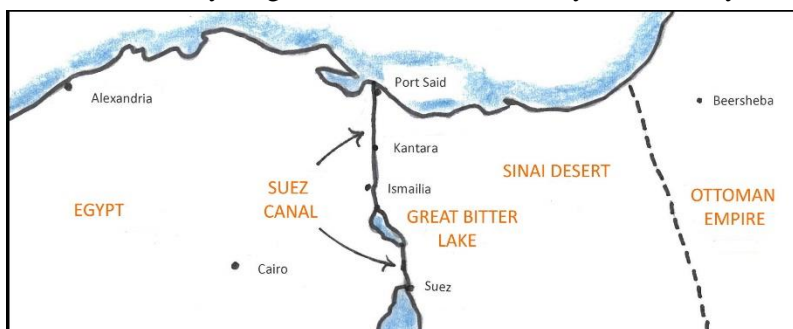


Fig. 1. The charity card showing German warships sailing from Messina for the Dardanelles to be sold

They arrived at the Dardanelles on August 10, and there were “sold” to the Turkish navy, replacing the two ships commandeered by the Royal Navy. By the end of October Britain was at war with Turkey, to be joined early in November by its allies Russia and France.

These events brought into focus two strategic seaways – the Dardanelles, which controlled the entrance to the Black Sea and Russia’s only ice-free port, and the Suez Canal, which was the short sea route from Britain to India, Australia and New Zealand. Turkey beefed up its defensive positions on the Gallipoli Peninsula with immediate effect and Britain diverted the 9<sup>th</sup> Indian Infantry Brigade, which was on its way to France by troop ship. Instead the Indian troops disembarked at Suez on September 14 to help to defend the Suez Canal. The Turkish army was assisted by German troops in constructing the Gallipoli defences, which thwarted the 1915 Anzac attack on the Peninsula.

The initial Indian token force defending the canal was replaced with the arrival on November 16 and December 2 of the Indian Expeditionary Forces (I.E.F.) “E” and “F”.





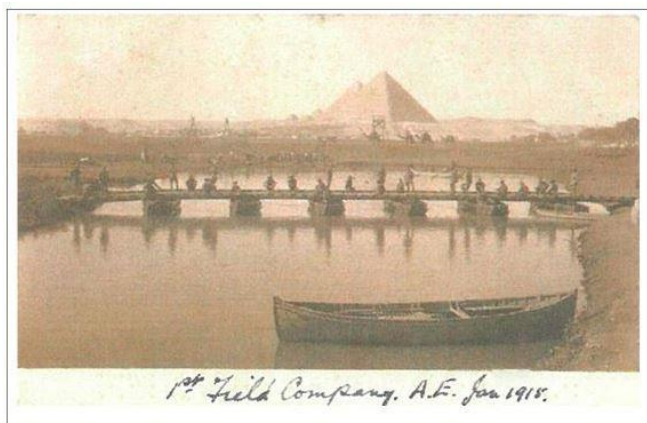
Also on defence duty in the canal were ships of the Royal Navy and the Royal Indian Marine (R.I.M.), from battleships down to tugs, with all 15 of them receiving the battle honour “Suez Canal 1915”. There was in addition the French naval ironclad ship *Requin*, which used her big guns to good effect in the Turkish incursion. Furthermore, aircraft from the Royal Flying Corps (R.F.C.) based at Kantara and Ismailia, plus seaplanes of the Royal Navy Air Service flying from their base on the Mediterranean at Port Said, were used for observation and photographic reconnaissance.

Throughout the war the Suez Canal was blocked to the ships of the Central Powers and during most of 1915 only day-time transit of the canal was permitted for security reasons.

### **Arrival of the Anzac Forces**

On 1 December 1914 the first convoy of Anzac troops (Australian Imperial Forces and New Zealand Expeditionary Force) disembarked at Alexandria to move into camps in the Cairo area, at Mena, Maadi and Heliopolis. For the time being their role was purely training, for which the desert provided excellent territory.

One aspect of this training at Mena Camp was the development of a pontoon-based bridge for crossing any waterway. A series of three picture postcards was produced – one of them dated in manuscript *Jan 1915* - vividly showing this process and each has explanatory text on the address side. The messages were dated 18 and 28 February 1915 and, like many cards sent home by the Australians, were enclosed within an envelope, so no postmarks on the cards.



◀ ***Fig. 2. Australian army building a pontoon bridge at Mena Camp, January 1915. The arrow indicates the position of their encampment right next to the Pyramids***

*(Courtesy Antonio Torres  
Postal History Auctions)*

The writer of the cards says that the pontoons were carried in wagons, and that a 100ft bridge like this could be put together in ten minutes.

The second convoy of Anzac troops, all 12,500 of them, disembarked at Alexandria on 1 February 1915.

### **Allied Censorship in Egypt**

Censorship of forces mail in Egypt during 1914 and January 1915 was pretty lax: what follows is a brief survey of the practice during this period.

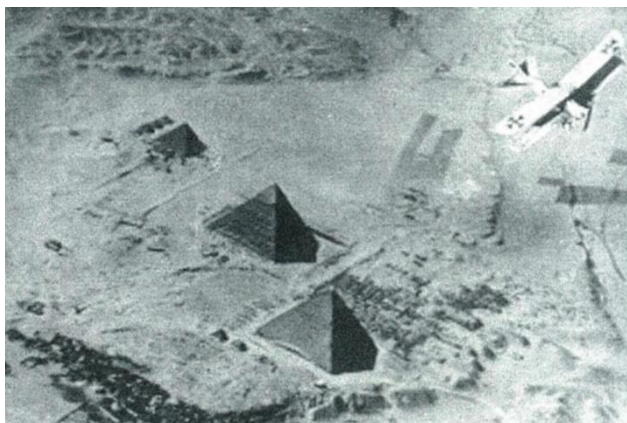
**I.E.F.** - From mid-December 1914 mail was censored, both outgoing and incoming.

**British Force in Egypt** - Censorship was started in December 1915. Letters sent “On active Service, Postage Free” were signed by an officer, his signature treated as a franking, not censorship.

**Anzac Forces** - Mail posted from a convoy ship was censored. When troops arrived at a camp in Egypt during this short period, their mail was not censored. They could also buy Egyptian stamps to frank their letters and post these in an Egyptian post office without censorship. At the end of January/early February 1915 some units were sent to the Suez Canal, where mail was censored in a similar manner as the I.E.F. mail. Occasionally mail was censored on arrival in Australia.

### Prelude to the Incursion

This photograph (*Fig. 3, right*) shows a German military plane flying over the Pyramids in 1915. The large Mena Camp, where many of the Australians were billeted, was right next to the Pyramids. There was no defence to an air attack at that time, but on this occasion it was only spying!



*Courtesy Imperial War Museum*

With the R.F.C. planes in the canal area it is no surprise that the Allied forces knew of the pending Turkish attack. In preparation, at the end of January 1915 some New Zealand forces were moved to the canal to reinforce the I.E.F. and, on the evening of February 3, troops of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Battalions of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Australian Brigade arrived at Ismailia to bolster the defences.

### The Turkish Incursion

An invasion plan was devised by Colonel Friedrich von Kressenstein, a German staff officer from Bavaria, in consultation with Turkish army officers. A force of 20,000 Turkish soldiers was assembled at Beersheba, on the edge of the Negeb desert in southern Palestine. On 14 January 1915 they set off on their 175-mile trek across Sinai, with the aim of capturing Ismailia, some half way along the canal.

During their trek they hauled iron pontoons and large rafts to enable them to cross the canal. Marching took place in the cool of night, but nevertheless progress was monitored by R.F.C. aircraft. When they neared the canal, the force split into three echelons, aiming for Kantara, Ismailia and Suez, and trying to keep the Allies guessing as to which was their main target.

At 3.30 in the morning of February 3 they launched their pontoons and rafts on the canal, under the cover of a battery of howitzer shells and machinegun fire, at Tussum, five miles south of Ismailia, and at Serapeum, some four miles further south. Between 400 and 600 men scrambled on to the western bank of the canal and began digging in. The Indian defence troops, however, were awake and ready for them and by the end of the day all the invaders had been captured or killed.



**Fig. 4. One of the abandoned Turkish pontoons. Faint markings on the side read: '19 Constantinople'**

*H.M.S. Swiftsure*, a battleship, was moored in the canal at Kantara between January 27 and February 4 and took an active part in repulsing the invaders. She had previously been on escort duties for the Indian troops between Bombay and Aden, but was not needed after the *SMS Emden* was destroyed by *H.M.A.S. Sydney* on 9 November 1914.

## Aftermath

By February 4 the main Ottoman force had disappeared. A small rearguard action was carried out by Indian troops: 298 prisoners were rounded up and another 59 Turks were found dead. At British headquarters they estimated that the Turkish/German force had lost about 2,000 men. Allied losses were 32 killed and 280 injured. The Turkish prisoners of war were held mainly at Maadi Camp, nine miles south of Cairo. Mail from this source is rare as most were illiterate. All the pontoons hauled by the Turks from Beersheba were put out of action by the Royal Navy firing into each two rounds from TB043 torpedo boat's three-pounder gun.

## Eye-Witness Accounts

Not surprisingly, there is very little postal history material from this incident. However, a long letter and a postcard have survived which give a graphic insight into the horrors of war.

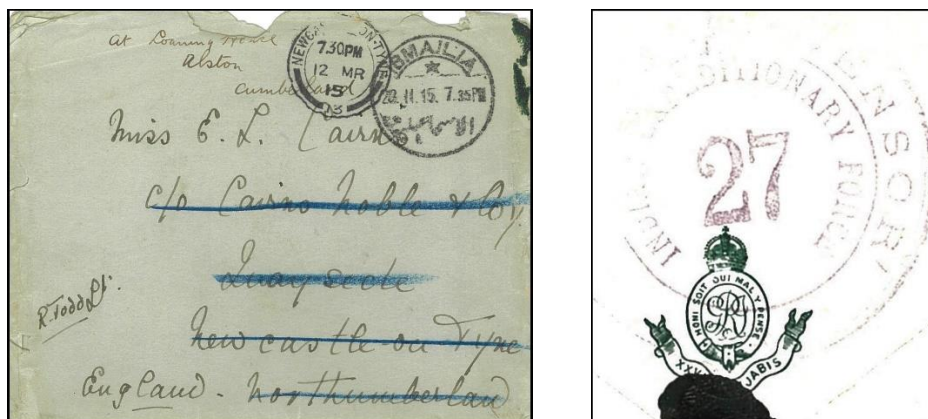
### Picture postcard

This is dated February 21 1915 at Mena Camp from a soldier in the Australian 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, who has just returned from the Suez Canal area: not postally used. The relevant part of his message is:

*We were at Ismailia on Suez Canal got there on the day of fight but had no actual fighting ourselves the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Battalions, we came back after 10 days. The Turks retired and never gave us a chance at them.*

### Long letter

On 29 August 1905 Rex Todd entered the Indian Army in the 27<sup>th</sup> Punjabi Regiment as a Double Company Officer and was part of the I.E.F. defence force based at Moascar Camp on the outskirts of Ismailia. At the time of the incursion this regiment was part of the general reserve, but nevertheless in the thick of the action. He wrote this letter on regimental notepaper and enclosed it in a similar envelope on February 28, signing the envelope *R. Todd L.* On the reverse it received a mauve censor cachet No. 27 of the I.E.F. which was applied at Ismailia. These censor marks are usually struck in mauve and the numbers run from 15 to 95.



**Fig. 5. The tatty envelope from Rex Todd, with the I.E.F. Censor Cachet 27 on the flap**

The letter was sent postage free to a young lady in Newcastle upon Tyne, arriving there on March 12. From the address it seems that the recipient was a member of the Cairn shipowning dynasty.

A close look at the postmark reveals that it is of the Star & Bridge type issued to only nine Egyptian post offices; this appears to be the latest date recorded for Ismailia. This letter is an example of military use of an Egyptian civil post office, for there is no “on active service” endorsement and no postage stamp, yet it has been accepted by both Egyptian and British postal systems.

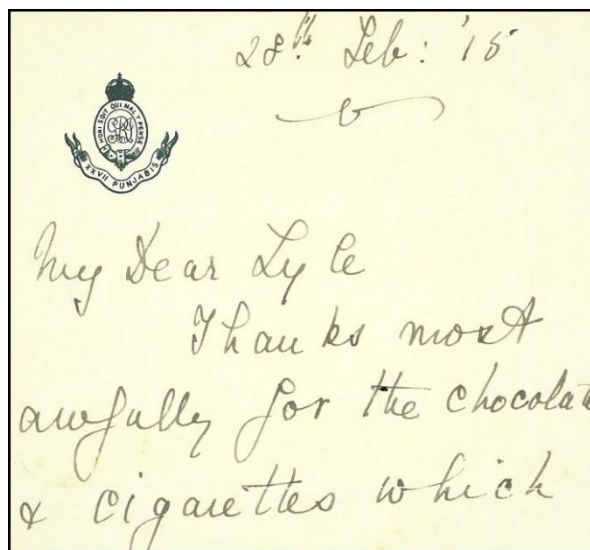
The letter is written on both sides of five pieces of 7in by 9in notepaper and would have been a very tight fit in the envelope.

Here is an unedited transcript of the letter:

28<sup>th</sup> Feb. 15

My Dear Lyle

Thanks most awfully for the chocolate & cigarettes which arrived yesterday. Old Herring tried to make out that half the cigarettes were for him but I wasn't having any! We had quite an exciting time here, & suffered shrapnel & other disgusting things of a similar description. I very quickly came to the conclusion that shells look much nicer in pictures than in absolute fact. No doubt you can get used to them in time but they are rotten things when they are bursting to right & left of you & up above as well. Whilst they are actually arriving they cause a mixture of anger & amusement. The amusement being caused by the various attitudes taken up by fellows when the rotten things come screaming along & you don't know where they are going to burst. We woke up one morning to find them bursting over other people and quite enjoyed it. But as we were having breakfast two came up to join in, perhaps they smelt the fish. Any way we all turned back somersaults & departed hurriedly & began feverishly digging holes in the ground.



**Fig. 6. XXVII Punjabis crested notepaper with the start of Todd's long letter**

There was a funny old dredger working away like blazes, but a shell suddenly burst over her & work stopped like lightning. Her old fog horn started bleating & continued for half an hour whilst the crew did a boat race for the shore. A Royal Indian Marine boat [Author - This was the *R.I.M. Hardinge*] had been firing away with great delight, but a six-inch howitzer landed on her & it was very funny to see the way her funnel collapsed & she steamed away hurriedly. Several poor fellows were killed on her & the pilot found himself minus one leg! His bootmakers bill will be halved in future. I told them at home all about our part in the show, so just write to them and ask for the letter. We did not come in for much but we killed a fair proportion of Turkeys. We buried a lot of corpses but a sandstorm came along and unburied them. The consequence was that next day when a party of Generals, Bishops etc went down to look at the battlefield, they found arms, hands, & legs sticking out of the sand! A week later somebody went there & found that one ambitious Turk had got right out of his grave & smelt 'orrid! Various corpses that fell in the canal are coming up now & floating about. I saw some horrible sights in the way of wounded and killed & came to the conclusion that war is a beastly performance though exciting & exhilarating. Things are all quiet here again now, and we look like spending the hot weather in tents here, which will be perfectly poisonous. A lot of the papers seem to treat this show as rather humorous. It was not at all funny really. Their arrangements for crossing the canal were excellent, but after their journey over the desert they were done in & no wonder. They didn't press their attack home with any vigour, & were of course easily defeated. They had German officers with them, & we killed some of them. We didn't have many casualties, but the proportion of British Officers to Native ranks killed & wounded was more than it should have been.

The Regiment lost nobody at all, not even wounded, but then of course we did not come in for much of the actual infantry fighting, except half the battalion, & they say the bullets were going a good ten feet over their heads, The Turks never had a chance & I don't think they will ever come again. One rather fine & interesting sight was one of our aeroplanes being shelled by the enemy. I seem to have meandered on long enough so better switch off. I am going to Cairo next Thursday for three days peace & comfort in a hotel. I will be jolly glad to get out of the sand for a bit. By the way, I never thanked you for the mittens. They arrived ages ago but I didn't know who had sent them, thanks hugely for them. Mrs Heriz is living at a hotel in Alexandria at present. This letter has reached most enormous proportions, I hope you will be able to struggle through to the end! Do write again soon.

With love from  
Rex

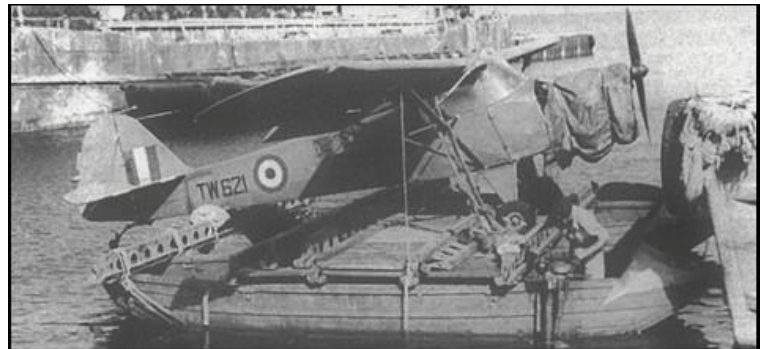
A Turk lopped a Sikh's head off with a spade!  
Wow!

### Postscript

- Lieut. Rex Todd next went to France via Marseille early in September 1916 and fought on the Western Front before being transferred to Mesopotamia (Iraq) in 1918.
- In early August 1914 three German merchant ships arrived at Port Said intending to use the port and the Suez Canal as a haven. They claimed that the canal was "international waters" and so neutral, meaning that they were safe there. The Egyptians disagreed and they were turned back into the Mediterranean where the Royal Navy confiscated them. The crews were a mixed nationality and the Germans among them were interned on Malta until 1919. The *Derfflingen* and *Lutzow* were owned by North German Lloyd (NDL) routed Bremen-Suez-Far East. The *Derfflingen* had left Bremen on July 8 and after capture was adapted as a troopship. On April 25 she ferried the Australian 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion to Anzac Cove, Gallipoli. In June/July 1915 she was renamed *HMS Huntsgreen* and was sold after the war. The *Lutzow* was renamed *HMS Huntsend*. Of the third vessel, the *Helgoland*, I can find no details.
- The use of pontoons by the armed forces continued. This example comes from the same geographical area, but 39 years later. The caption reads:

*On 24 Aug. 54 Capt Sargent, RA, force-landed on a narrow beach while on route Ismailia-Amman in this Auster AOP 6, TW621, of No. 651 Sqn. The aircraft was floated off on pontoons, towed 11 miles up the Gulf of Aqaba, fitted with a new engine and flown back to Ismailia. It did not survive for long; it crashed in Egypt on 27 Aug 55.*

(Museum of Army Flying)



**Fig. 7. Auster AOP 6 plane on two pontoons, 1954**

(ex RAF Squadrons)

### References

- Daniel, F.W.: *An Unrecognised Backwater 1914-1916; the Force in Egypt*, Postscript, 1990
- Emery, Bob: *Australian Imperial Forces Postal History 1914-1918*, 1984
- Firebrace, J.A. & Benians, F.W.: *The Military Use of the Civil Post Offices in Egypt 1914-1916*, QC 122, June 1982, pp. 144-152
- Hart, Peter: *The Great War: 1914-1918*, 2014
- Jefford, C.G.: *RAF Squadrons*, 1994
- Torres, Antonio: *On-line Postal History Auction*, February 2021
- www.kaisercross.com: *The Suez Canal 1914-15*. An excellent in-depth account of the affair.
- Hall, Edmund: *Sinai & Gaza, pre WW1, WW1 & post WW1*, QC 198, 240 & 242. Altogether 32 pages packed full of background history of this area, plus some postal history.

## Notes by C.F. Hass on 3m/2pi double surcharge Due

Peter Newroth (ESC 394)



**Figure 1. Double surcharge, position 26 of 30 stamps**

Few philatelists can claim to have a "unique" stamp in their collection. This illustrates what I came across long ago in an old collection and unrecognised. My minor "gem" benefited from expert examination and certification by Charles Hass (ESC 181), who helped me greatly back 20 to 30 years ago. This I am acknowledging and sharing here.

*Figure 1* shows a mint 2 piastre Postage Due of 1889, doubly surcharged "3 Millièmes" (SG D76 bb, Gibbons 2020). *Figures 2 and 3* reproduce the Hass certificate from 1993 and interesting details. He included his valuable reconstruction of the "error block" from which came the single item illustrated here (position #26).

It makes interesting reading; each stamp comprising this unique block is different. Hass did not describe the source of material for his reconstruction, but did write to me (April 1993) that he had not published an account of his study and reconstruction. My short excursion into the literature has not revealed his planned paper. We have moved house three times since Charlie wrote (his correspondence came to light in my move this year), so I hope he will excuse me for this!

As well as offering expert opinions on interesting material, Charles Hass dealt in Egyptian stamps and periodically offered items for sale. Because of valuable information in his sales catalogues, I retained them. His catalogue for August 1996 (Hass, 1996) offered in Lot 251 a mint example of the 1904 Double Surcharge - "Position 21 of the unique block of thirty error stamps...one of the rarest overprint errors of Egypt."

He also reported:

"All existing genuine doubles are on chalk-surfaced paper, and are from the same original thirty-stamp block. Many forgeries exist, of frightening caliber - the single error stamp illustrated by Zeheri is one of them! All used examples, and all examples on ordinary paper, are forgeries."

Hass' comment about all double surcharges being on stamps printed on chalky paper is of special interest. Gibbons (2020, p. 216) lists D76B, "Chalk-surfaced paper (1907)". The surcharge in this form was described by Gibbons to have appeared in November 1904, as also stated in Hass' Certificate (*Fig. 2*).

CHARLES F. HASS

POST OFFICE BOX 27  
FOLCROFT, PENNSYLVANIA  
19032 USA

After careful examination of the item submitted to me as EGYPT, 1904, 2 piastres yellow orange postage due of 1889 (chalk-surfaced printing of 1902) unused, with original gum with diagonal black, bilingual "3 Millièmes" SURCHARGE DOUBLED Zeh. #20m, S.G. #D766, Scott #5196, of which an exact-size photograph is affixed, I hereby certify it to be

GENUINE IN ALL RESPECTS

SEE REVERSE  
FOR PHOTOS

Charles F. Hass  
27th February, 1993

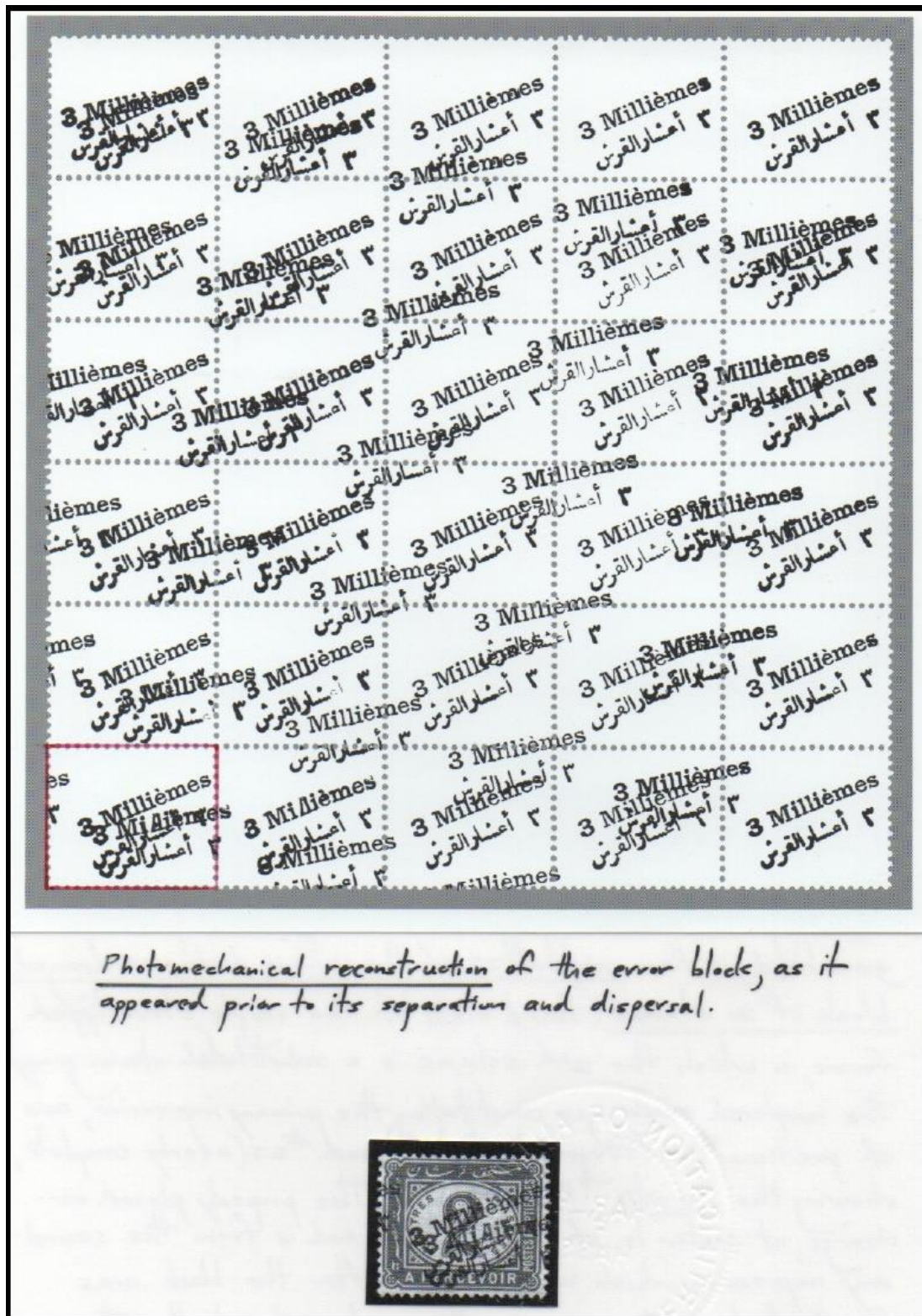
REMARKS- Previously said to have been issued in 1905, this surcharge is now known to have appeared in 1904 (most probably in November). It was produced on half panes (of 30 stamps, 5 wide x 6 deep), from which all marginal selvaage was usually removed prior to surcharging. This stamp (with horizontal gum band) is from position #26 of the unique doubly surcharged block of 30 stamps (third state of the single, stereotyped forme, in which the 2nd column is a substituted stereo group). The misplaced surcharges, constituting the primary impression, are of positions #26 (fragment at left) and #27 (nearly complete, showing the variety "Drunken 1"). The properly placed surcharge, at center is of position #26, and is from the secondary impression, which was applied after the block was found to have been incorrectly surcharged initially. The #27 (variety) surcharge is from the substituted stereo group. C.F.H.

CERTIFICATE No. 1993-9 Submitted by P.R. Newroth

Figure 2. Front page of Charles Hass certificate no. 1993 - 9.

But what was written elsewhere? Smith (1999) devoted several pages to the "1905" Provisional and mentioned the double surcharge. Later, Chalhoub (2003, p. 619) listed these surcharges and their varieties (PD20 k to PD20 p), all of which came from the unique pane, and he noted that all varieties were on chalky paper. He gave the chalky paper date "circa 1908", and illustrated a block of four which may be identified as stamp positions 17,18/22,23 from the Hass reconstruction. He also footnoted double surcharge PD20 l as belonging to position 1 of the pane, but this is unclear to me.

Seems there is more research to do!



**Figure 3. Back page of the Hass certificate with his reconstruction of the error block**

References

Chalhoub, Joseph H., 2003. *The Nile Post Handbook and Catalogue of Egyptian Stamps*, p. 619. (Written with contributions by C. Hass).

Gibbons, Stanley, 2020. *Commonwealth and British Empire Stamps 1940-1970*, 122nd Edition, Stanley Gibbons Ltd. London.

Hass, Charles F., 1996. *Postal Bid Sale, 10 August 1996. Egypt Postage Stamps, etc.*, offered for sale by auction by C. Hass, New Hampshire.

Smith, Peter A.S., 1999. *Egypt Stamps and Postal History: A Philatelic Treatise*, pp. 426-429.



## NOT Ismaïlia Station!

Pierre Louis Grech (ESC 266)

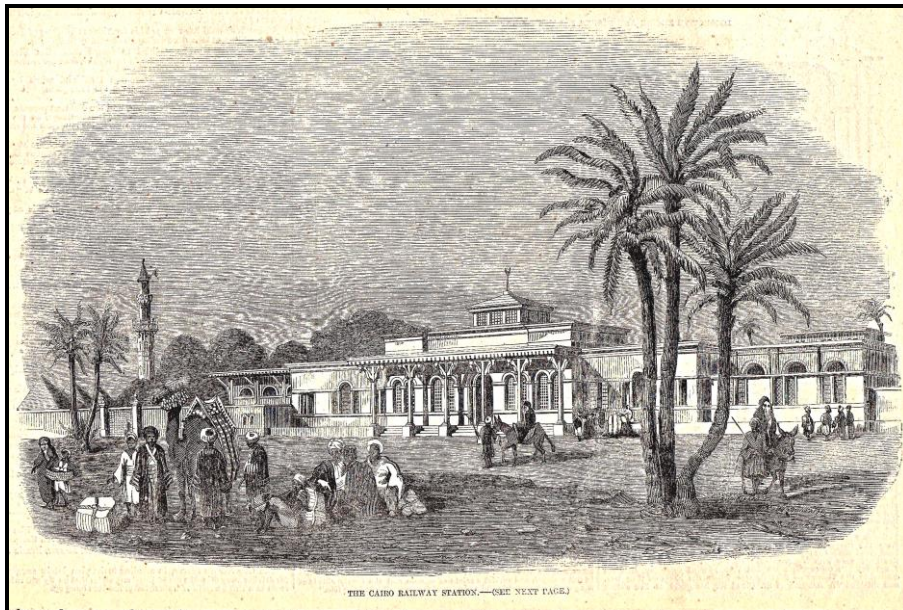
In their interesting series of articles on the *Railway Stations of Egypt, 1879-1914*, Ronny Van Pellecom and Alain Stragier had reached Ismaïlia in *QC* No. 272 of March 2020. On page 20 of that article, the bottom illustration is captioned as "The station of Ismaïlia (P. Agopian, Alexandrie)". *However that is not so.* The station illustrated on the postcard is not Ismaïlia Station on the Suez Canal, but it is the State Railway station (built 1856) in the Ismailieh quarter of Cairo, adjacent to where the Bab-el-Hadid station now stands. My copy of that postcard is illustrated at *Figure 1* below.

In his efforts to modernise Egypt and "bring it into Europe" Khedive Ismaïl had made huge steps: the extension of the railways, the foundation of the Egyptian Post via its acquisition of the *Posta Europea*, the development of the telegraph, agricultural reforms, the Egyptian Steam Navigation Company, the expansion into the Sudan, etc. ... and of course the work progressing on the excavation of the Suez Canal. He also turned his attention to his capital, Cairo.

Ismaïl had gone to Paris in 1867 for the *Exposition Universelle*, and had the opportunity to observe the transformation of the French capital under the directives of Baron Haussmann. As part of the improvements whole neighbourhoods had been cut through to create long straight avenues and boulevards (it was said that this was to allow cannon to fire on rioters in a period of frequent civil unrest!). Back in Cairo Ismaïl wished to replicate the process. An avenue was cut directly west to the Nile from the Ezbekieh Square, itself being radically redesigned. It met up with the construction of the Great Nile Bridge, first such across the Nile (Kasr-el-Nil, named Khedive Ismaïl Bridge before the 1952 Revolution), inaugurated 1871. The whole area from Bab-el-Hadid (one of the city gates) down to today's Midan El-Tahrir (which was called Midan Ismaïlieh before the Revolution), was cleared of derelict ancient buildings, dark narrow alleys and marshy vacant ground and relaid and modernised. To encourage private development, Ismaïl offered free land if a villa or house of certain dimensions was built within 18 months. That new quarter, stretching from the Nile and as far east as today's Midan Abdin, was given the name "Ismailieh"... and therefore the railway station at its northern end was "Ismailieh Station". (See "*Cairo*", *Insight City Guides, 1992 APA Pubs, p.127*). Part of this district was later renamed "Quartier Tewfikiyeh" in honour of Khedive Mohamed Tewfik.



**Figure 1. Ismailieh Station in Cairo.**



**Figure 2.**

**In 1856.**

For the record, *Fig. 2* shows the original Cairo station in 1856, from which trains departed to Alexandria, and from 1868 to Ismailia and the Suez Canal, via Benha and Zagazig. *Fig. 3* illustrates the new Cairo station at Bab-el-Hadid (Midan-el-Mahatta), still in construction with its sides open to the elements. Work on it began in 1893 by Ateliers Nicaise & Deleuve, and it was inaugurated in 1902 by Khedive Abbas-Hilmi.



**Figure 3.**

**Circa 1900.**

Returning to the postcard in question: the caption is quite clear "La Gare d'Ismailieh - Le Caire". Although there are substantial similarities in the standard design of both buildings, Ismailia's station did not have a gabled roof (see *Fig.2* for a view of Cairo station in 1856, which did have a turret on top). Ismailia's station also stood in splendid isolation west of the town on the Canal; however on the left side of the postcard can be seen the projection of the balcony of a nearby building as well as a wall-mounted street lamp. The general level of activity around the station is also not commensurate with the town on the Canal. There are seven cleaners standing to attention in front of the steps and several members of the public circulating. Also in the distance are outlines of other buildings. In conclusion this postcard, which is frequently misinterpreted, does not represent Ismailia's railway station but instead depicts the Ismailieh Station in Cairo.

*Reference. "Le Caire", by Marius Schemel, Pub. Al-Maaref, Cairo, 1949. Chapter XX: Comparison 1885-1947.*

## 1 PIASTRE – 1874 – the settings

**Ramez Atiya (ESC 246)**

*[This article details a thorough re-examination of all that is known of the settings for the 1874 one-piastre. A study of the issue's flaws, varieties and substitutions will follow in QC 278 – Editor]*

The 1874 1 piastre value is as philatelically complicated as it is interesting. While a great deal of effort was expended studying the 1872 issue, the 1874 issue been comparatively little studied, leaving open a rich philatelic area. This is particularly true of the 1 pi value. The purpose of this study is to provide a systematic analysis and a comprehensive list of flaws.

### **BACKGROUND**

The last major study to be published was William Byam's "Egypt third Issue, 1872 and 1874-75" (*L'Orient Philatélique*, no 102, 1960). We summarize the main results pertaining to the 1 piastre value. The 1874 third issue stamps were printed in sheets of 200. Byam reported four settings identified by the number and position of inverted subjects. Presumably the alphabetical sequence reflected the chronological order in which they were printed.

Setting A - Inverted subject, position 114

Setting B - Inverted subjects, positions 1 through 10 (top row), 114 and 121

Setting C - Inverted subjects, positions 38, 58 and 152

Setting D - Inverted subjects, position 1 through 9, and 114

It has been suggested that there is yet a fifth setting, which we shall call X, with 19 inverted subjects in positions 1 through 9, and 191 through 200.

Following Byam (*L'OP* 102), Smith states that setting A was perforated only  $13\frac{1}{3} \times 12\frac{1}{2}$  whereas settings B, C and D were all perforated  $12\frac{1}{2}$ .

Various flaws have been identified and are listed in the *Nile Post* by sheet, by setting and by sheet position. The list is not complete with several prominent flaws unlisted.

This summarizes what is presently known about the 1 pi, 1874.

I wish to thank Joseph Chalhoub for providing images of his set of sheets for settings A, B and D, making it possible to examine and compare pairs of sheets from which constancy of flaws is ascertained. Images extracted from Chalhoub are marked jc.

### **THE STUDY**

Byam and MacArthur set a solid foundation. However, central questions remained unanswered, notably what is the relationship between the settings? Were the settings each printed from a different set of stereotypes or were they rearrangement of the same basic set? The answer to this central question turns out to provide the printing history of the 1 piastre.

Because that history is complicated, we provide at the outset a summary of results. It will be shown that there were two initial sets of stereotypes. Settings A, B and D were printed from one set, set I. The chronological order in which they were printed turns out to be A, D, with final setting B. The study will identify the flaws and substitutions through the progression of settings. Setting C turns out to have been printed from an entirely different set of stereotypes, set II.

Following Byam (*L'OP* 102), Smith states that setting A was perforated only  $13\frac{1}{3} \times 12\frac{1}{2}$  whereas settings B, C and D were all perforated  $12\frac{1}{2}$ . It turns out that setting A exists perforated  $12\frac{1}{2}$ .

## STEREO SETS I AND II

The conclusion that there were two entirely separate sets of stereos follows from the fact that setting C shares no common flaws with A, B or D. On the other hand, settings A, B and D share a great many flaws in identical positions. This leaves little doubt that settings A, B and D were printed from a common set of stereos with the exception of substitutions. In some instances stereos were replaced upside down, giving the settings their characteristic distribution of inverts.

### THE PRINTING SURFACE

The 1874 1 piastre stamps were printed in sheets of 200. An image of setting D is provided at the end of the study. The printing surface consisted of 200 individual stereos surrounded by a decorative border, itself composed of a set of individual stereos. The array of stereos was enclosed in a removable metal frame, the chase. To provide a rigid printing plate, the stereos were tightly secured within the chase using “printer’s furniture”. To maintain the desired spacing between stamps, strips of wood or metal, known as galleys, were inserted between the stereos at a depth just below the printing surface. Wider strips of wood or metal were probably inserted between the rectangle of stamp stereos and the decorative border to create the uncoloured margin seen on the image of setting D. Because the galleys are below the printing surface, they appear as the uncoloured lines surrounding each stamp. When the plate required cleaning the chase was loosened, allowing for the removal and cleaning of individual stereos and for the substitution of new stereos for damaged ones.

### STEREO SET I: Settings A, D and B

Apart from some substitutions which we will identify, we now show that all three settings were printed from a common set of stereos. Two sheets of each setting were examined to identify constant flaws. It was found that positional flaws appear in the same position on different settings, proving that the same defective stereos were reused from one setting to the next. We provide an illustrated partial list since these flaws are collectible in their own right.

Although not a flaw, a prominent feature shared in common by A, B and D is the inverted stereo at position 114. The image below shows this position from settings A and D. A detailed examination indicates that position 114 was printed from the same stereos in all settings. This suggests that each individual stereo was removed, cleaned, then replaced in its original position. By studying the settings, we can almost follow the actions of the printer!



*Inverted stereo – Position 114 – Setting A*



*Inverted stereo – Position 114 – Setting D*

We now list major flaws common to settings A, B and C. The first is shown below, from position 54 of all three settings. It is an uncoloured spot or hole in the wig of the Sphinx. In fact, it is an “air hole” variety.



**Position 54 – Air hole in wig – Settings A, B (jc) and D**

It is not listed in *The Nile Post*. The presence of air holes is interesting since it tells us that the stereotypes were cast and not electrotyped. In casting, a plaster mould is taken from a primary steel die. In the production of the 1874 issue, the plaster moulds were prepared one at a time from a single original die to produce the 200 stereotypes required. The mould would then have been placed in a steel casting box and molten metal poured onto the mould in the box to create the stereo. Air hole flaws arise when the metal is not sufficiently hot. The metal can then solidify irregularly, leaving an air hole which prints as an uncoloured area.

A second air hole variety, position 112 (“white holes in head of Sphinx”), is listed as NP 26 m, but described as present *only on settings A and B*. It is in fact found on D as well. The image below shows its presence on setting D. In fact, position 112 shows multiple air hole flaws, some even more pronounced than the catalogued variety. The uncoloured area looks much like the hackle on a Scottish regimental headdress and the variety might aptly be called “the hackle in wig”.



Position 112 – Setting A



**Position 112 – Setting B (jc)**



**Position 112 – Setting D**

**Position 112 - Setting A**

Damaged framelines are another type of flaw found on many positions. Position 116 (Nile Post 26n) is found on settings A, B (not shown) and D. The flaw shows a break in the left frameline. The flaw is progressive. It is only partial in setting A, but travels through the frame and into the value tablet in setting D. This clearly indicates that setting A preceded settings B and D. We will return to this flaw when we determine the chronological printing order of the three settings.



**Position 116 – Break in frame – Setting A (jc)**



**Position 116 – Break in frame – Setting D**



Another flaw common to all three settings is the blunted corner variety on position 160 shown below. It is not listed in *The Nile Post*. Clearly the same stereo was reused.



**Pos. 160 - Blunt corner - Setting A**



**Position 160 - Setting B (jc)**



**Position 160 - Setting D**

Position 171 below, showing a major progressive break in the left hand frameline, is a major variety. It appears on all three settings. The frameline is weak in setting A. The break becomes practically complete in setting D and somewhat more pronounced, but not convincingly so, in B. The progression supports the contention that setting A preceded settings B and D. It is not listed in *The Nile Post*. The progression of the flaw is interesting. Following printers' terminology, Byam called these "running flaws", flaws produced due to damage during printing. Printers refer to damage caused in making adjustments to the plate in preparation for printing as "make ready flaws".



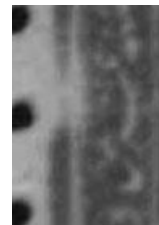
**Position 171 - Broken frameline - A**



**Position 171 - D**



**Position 171 - B**



Another air hole flaw at the base of the wig is found on position 194 of A, B and D. Position 194 is of particular interest since it shows a deterioration to the bottom frameline on setting B but not on D or A. This is a sure indication that setting D preceded setting B. The flaw is unlisted in *The Nile Post*.



**Position 194 - Setting A**



**Position 194 - Setting D**



**Position 194 - Setting B**

The presence of a major flaw in the same position on two settings is proof that the same stereo was used. Flaws make the identification of a stereo possible. The appearance of the same flaws on many positions across all three settings is firm evidence that, with the exception of substitutions, the same stereotypes were employed to print settings A, D and B. This completes the first objective of this study.

## I: THE CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF THE SETTINGS

The occurrence of so many flaws at the same position on multiple settings gives us the most likely sequence at the Khedive's printing house. When the plate became too caked with ink, the stereotypes were unlocked from the frame so that individual stereotypes could be removed. Each stereo was then cleaned and it appears to have been put back in its original position. Perhaps because it fit more easily, a stereo was in some cases replaced in inverted position, thus creating the distribution of inverts distinguishing the settings. When a stereo was found to be damaged it was usually, but not always, replaced. Because damaged stereotypes were not always replaced, we find progressive flaws. The progressive damage on the same identifiable stereo determines the chronological order of the settings.

Having established that A, B and D represent modifications of the same original plate, we must now determine the chronological order in which they were printed. The progressive flaws on position 116 and 171 shows that setting A was the first. Position 194 above shows a more advanced stage of deterioration of the lower frameline in B than in D. This indicates that D was the second setting. We confirm this hypothesis by comparing positions 192 and 191, shown below on D and B. Position 192 is easily recognizable by the indented bottom frameline in settings A, B and D, providing proof of the same stereo. In setting B, position 192 shows a break in the bottom frameline just below the value tablet. It is not present in A or D, proving that setting B was the last setting. In fact, we can say more. Since state 2 shows a wider break than state 1, we conclude that it is a later printing, showing deterioration in progress.



*Position 192 – Setting A (jc)*



*Position 192 – Setting D*



*Pos. 192 – Setting B State 1 (jc)*



*Position. 192 – Setting B State 2*

Another progressive flaw found on position 191 (below) provides definitive evidence that setting D preceded setting B. In settings A and D the lower frame is completely intact. In setting B it begins to disintegrate progressively. In fact, we can witness the disintegration in progress. State 1 shows the frameline beginning to deteriorate. In state 2 it has virtually disintegrated. This brings us to the second major result: it can be concluded with certainty that the chronological order of the three settings is A, D and finally B.



**Position 191 – Setting A (jc) – Lower frame intact**



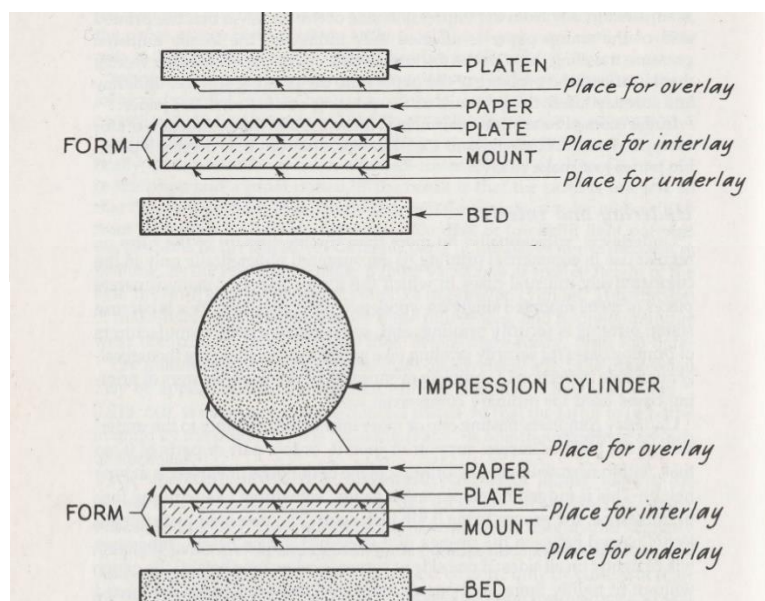
**Position 191 – Setting D – Lower frame intact**



**Position 191 – Setting B – State 1**



**Position 191 – Setting B – State 2  
– Advanced deterioration**



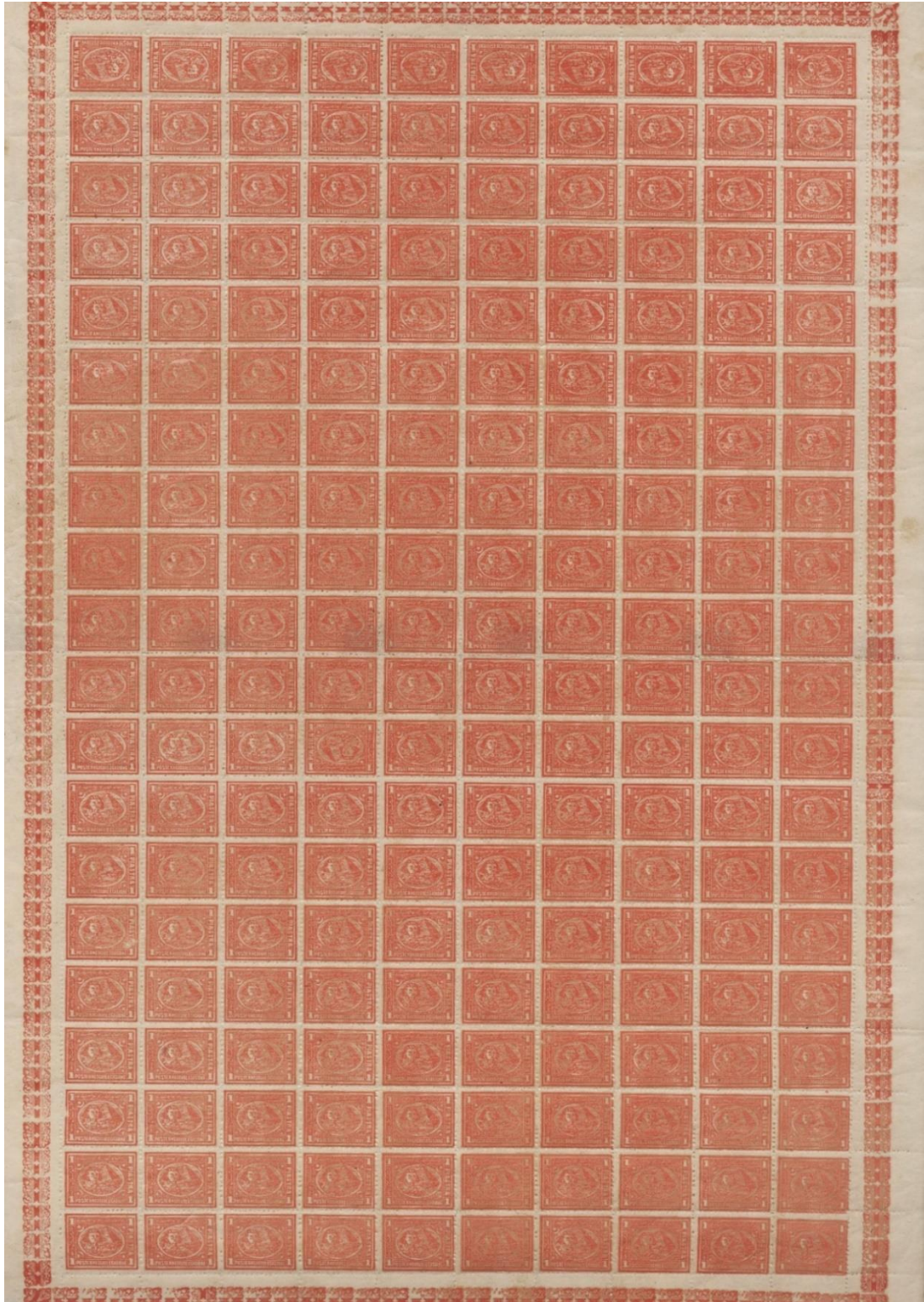
L&N Williams, *Fundamentals of Philately*

The progressive deterioration of the bottom frame lines yields still more information. It demonstrates that the Khedive's printers in Boulac were using a cylinder press, not a platen press. The uncoloured area between row 20 and the decorative border at the bottom of the sheet would have been below the printing surface (see also the image of the sheet at the end of the article). As the cylinder passed over the lower framelines of row 20, the pressure would have been borne entirely by the framelines and the two decorative stereotypes at each end. Note the heavy impression at either end of the uncoloured area (see also the image of position 191 above and on the image of the sheet).



Since setting B was the last, stereos of row 20 were never replaced. The fragile framelines suffered metal fatigue and eventually disintegrated. Had a platen press been used, the pressure would have been uniform across the printing surface and there would have been no preferential damage to the bottom frameline.

**Summary conclusions:** Common flaws found at the same positions on settings A, B and D demonstrate that with the exception of substitutions, all three were printed from a common set of stereos. An examination of progressive flaws shows that the chronological order of the plates was A, the original setting or plate 1, followed by D and finally B. A cylinder press was employed in the printing.



*Setting D*

## Forged Winter Palace Hotel postmark

Vahe Varjabedian (ESC 390)

Postmark forgeries are thankfully not common in Egypt, and even less so in the popular field of Hotel Post Offices. But I have just found this unusual example, said to come from the Winter Palace Hotel in Luxor, but in fact made by combining two markings divided by some 300 miles. The CDS is on a postcard printed by P.C.M.J. of Alexandria and Paris, and sold at the M.S. Bazaar “Au Plus Bon Marche”. Titled “Egyptian Types – Natives Women” it is addressed to Perpignan in France.

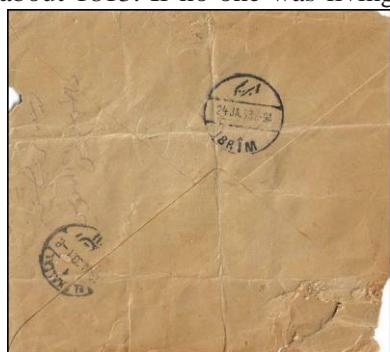


Beyond that, nothing is right. The message typed in French (Wishing you good luck), is dated August 12 1930. But the 80m stamp (at least 50m over the rate required) is from the 20-value Air Mail set issued in February 1933. The date of the CDS – it may be MR 34 – fits with the stamp’s issue – but the cancel is all wrong. The lower half reads simply CAIRO. But the upper half is just as clear in Arabic: *el uqsor / winter balas*, the phonetic equivalent of Luxor Winter Palace. This lettering is

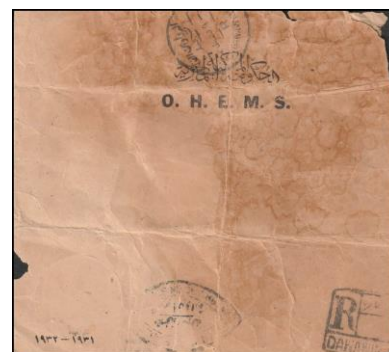
simply not found on genuine Winter Palace markings. Where the Palace name appears in the upper half (HW5-6), Luxor is below the hotel name; in HW2-4, which have Luxor above Winter Palace (as here), it is in the lower half. It is clear that lettering has been borrowed from HW2-4 to make a wholly implausible postmark. I measure the CDS diameter as 29mm; all those of the Winter Palace from 1906-54 are 30mm.

Why go to the trouble? There could be no cash gain in spending 80m on a card to France, and the conclusion must be that was made to fool a collector. Thank goodness there are few examples of this sort about.

**Update 1: TPO on Lake Nasser** - Dr Antoine Winter (ESC 149) has happily been able to update himself with the discovery of a registered OHEMS cover from 1933 that must have travelled on the river before it became a lake. Most record books say that (Qasr) Ibrim was abandoned in about 1813. If no one was living there in 1933, how to explain this new



cover, which started life at Dawawin on 3? JA, reached Shellal on January 19 and eventually received an Ibrim arrival mark on 24 JA 33 8-9AM. So we must suppose some activity there, and travellers of the time mention squatters in the ruins ... but perhaps, as today, Ibrim was closed to all but archaeologists, who have been working there fairly regularly since 1911: their regular digging seasons would be December-March, so the dates fit. An early Cook’s guide mentions that travellers were regularly taken to the peak of the Qasr Ibrim cliff to admire the sunrise. But were there



enough of them to justify a regular mail service (and a post office)?

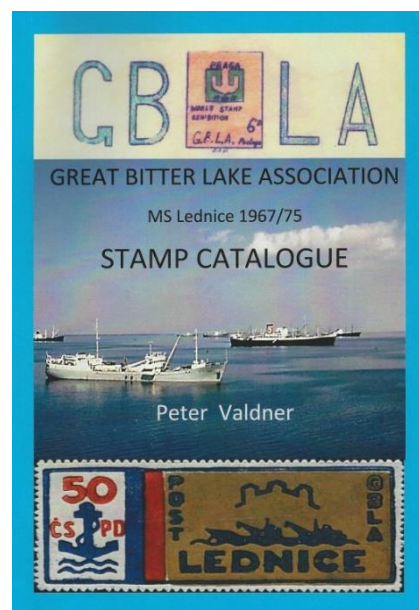
**Update 2: British Postal Notices:** Greg Todd (ESC 585) has responded with a most generous offer to our notice of the gigantic four-volume book by Paul Wijnants (QC 276, p.101). Greg bought himself one of the 75 examples as a Christmas present, and is willing to share it with Circle members who would like a copy of any British Postal Notice of the period 1782-1880. Contact him at [toddytripzinc@gmail.com](mailto:toddytripzinc@gmail.com) for a photograph from his camera (too big to scan!). There is nothing better than primary sources.

## Book review: *Great Bitter Lake Association Stamp Catalogue* by Peter Valdner

Jon Aitchison (ESC 661)

The Great Bitter Lakes Association was formed in 1967 by the crews of 14 cargo ships trapped in the Suez Canal during the War of Attrition that followed the Arab-Israeli Six Day War of June 1967. Membership was open to officers and crew including those who had returned home and was later widened to include visitors. The association enabled members to keep in touch once they had left the Canal but also organised a wide range of social and sporting activities for those who remained in the Great Bitter Lake, halfway along the Canal. The ships were in the Canal until May 1975, almost eight years after their “capture” and then had to be towed out. They were crewed throughout but crew numbers were reduced in the later years.

One main activity in which the seamen indulged was running a postal service and printing stamps. These were used not only for inter-ship post but also on mail to the world and incoming post. The men managed the extraordinary feat of gaining UPU recognition as the association proved that it was the only body that could both collect and deliver mail, and became an official UPU-recognised postal authority. This is why many covers to overseas destinations exist with only GBLA stamps without tax or surcharge. With 14 ships from several nations, many different approaches were taken to stamp production, which is part of the charm of these issues. Some were spirit duplicated while others used lino-cuts with lino from the ship’s deck. They had printed colours and hand colouring, requiring some ingenuity when materials ran low. Even shoe polish was used as ink.



Peter Valdner’s catalogue is a welcome update on the only other book on the subject, which was in black and white, published in 1974 by Brian Hill, captain of one of the ships, who was not a philatelist. Valdner’s approach is different: lists the issues by the ship that produced them rather than purely chronologically. There are summary lists of each ship’s output but it is not priced. Extensive historical and background information, much of it non-philatelic, which was a feature of the original Hill book, is included but can be difficult to follow at times. I think it might have been a better philatelic tool as a pure catalogue with the extraneous information completely separate. It is invaluable, however, for sorting out these confusing issues and giving them proper context. It lists almost 2,000 GBLA stamps and collectibles, that is over 1,000 more than Hill’s book. Bearing in mind that Hill was there at the time and was a contemporary chronicler, one wonders how he missed them. It is known that enterprising forgers continued to issue GBLA stamps long after the event, right up until today, but I have no way of knowing if any have slipped into this publication.

The biggest problem I have with the book is the price which is €112 including worldwide postage or €119 via PayPal. It is full colour throughout but the cost is far more than most philatelic books of similar size and quality. We do however have a copy in the Cinderella Stamp Club library, kindly donated by Chris Harman. On balance it is indispensable for the specialist, interesting throughout, but a bit expensive for casual readers.

The biggest problem I have with the book is the price which is €112 including worldwide postage or €119 via PayPal. It is full colour throughout but the cost is far more than most philatelic books of similar size and quality. We do however have a copy in the Cinderella Stamp Club library, kindly donated by Chris Harman. On balance it is indispensable for the specialist, interesting throughout, but a bit expensive for casual readers.

\* **Great Bitter Lakes Association Stamp Catalogue** (2020). Published by and available from the author, valdpete@yahoo.com, www.valdpete.blogspot.com. Softback, 330pp, colour throughout. ISBN 978-80-570-1594-9.

### Members’ Matters

#### **New Members:**

**ESC 739** **Matt Whealton Jr**, 491 Dewey Blvd, San Francisco, CA 94116, United States  
(Ancient Egyptian iconography on stamps, covers etc in relation to tourism)

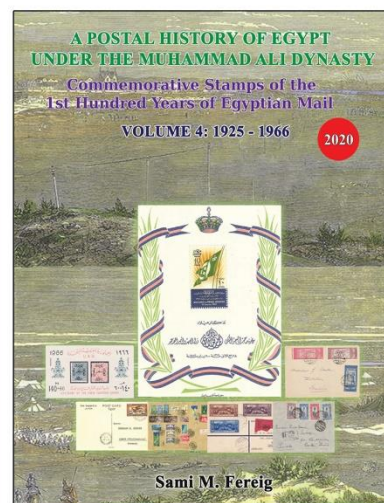
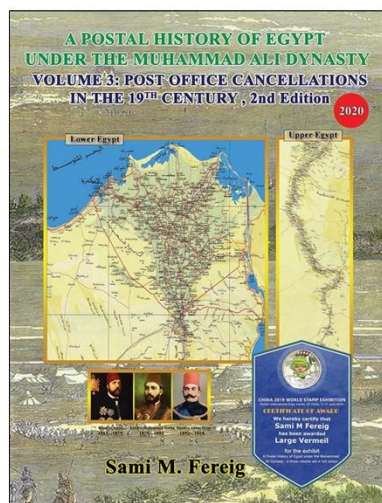
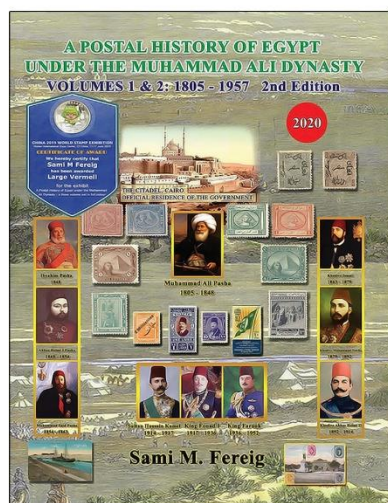
**ESC 740** **Beshoy Sidhom**, Building 20, Street No 1, off el-Mohafza St, Taqsim el Khayat. Assiut, Egypt  
(Royal Egyptian stamps)

**Lapsed:** ESC 647 Jonathan Becker      ESC 686 Moe Rizkalla      ESC 731 Luc de Castris

**Deceased:** ESC 456 Sherif el-Kerdani

## A Postal History of Egypt under the Muhammad Ali Dynasty

Full colour six-volume series by Sami M. Fereig



This set of three books details the history of the Muhammad Ali Dynasty and Egyptian philately. It closes a major gap in the literature, since no other book comes close to the coverage of this set. Its novel perspective on Egypt's history and philatelic development is a unique contribution to Egypt's postal history.

**Book 1: Vols. 1 & 2:** The Muhammad Ali Dynasty began in 1805 until Egypt became a republic in 1953. It includes the governmental post, foreign post offices in Egypt and the various issues of postage stamps, starting with the First Issue in 1866. Also the post offices in Sudan, Postage Due and Officials, Postal Stationery, Commemoratives, Airmail, British Forces in Egypt and Egyptian post offices in Palestine.

**Book 2: Vol. 3:** Post Office cancellations in the 19th Century and the spread of Egypt's post offices at home and abroad are documented from 1866 to 1914. Also included are Egypt's Travelling and Rural post offices, and its offices on the Red Sea. Many examples of these cancellations are given throughout the book.

**Book 3: Vol. 4:** The first commemorative stamp was issued in 1925 to mark the International Geographical Conference in Cairo, followed by over 225 other such issues. This book documents all of these Commemorative Issues up to January 1966, which was the centenary of the first Egyptian postage stamp.

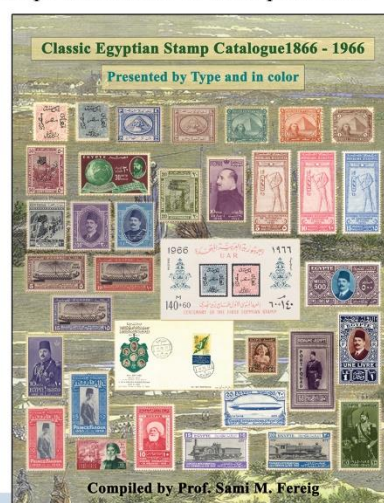
**Books 4 & 5: Vols. 5 & 6** are catalogue listings of the classical Egyptian stamps from 1866 to 1966 presented chronologically (Vol. 5) and by type (Vol. 6).

### Awards received at International Exhibitions:

- Large Vermeil Medal at China 2019 World Stamp Exhibition.
- Certificate of Invitation to Egypt Exhibit at the International Exhibition "MonacoPhil 2019", signed by His Serene Highness Albert II, Sovereign Prince of Monaco.

### Reviews:

- "Professor Sami Fereig ... has succeeded admirably in presenting a unique glimpse into two apparently unconnected worlds – those of philately and daily events – and brought them together with a linking that proves beyond doubt that the two can be seen as halves of the whole." Mike Murphy, Secretary & Editor, Egypt Study Circle.
- "It was a great effort and indeed a remarkable trail to build on previous philatelic works to improve our understanding of the combination between history and philately." Dr. Eng. Sherif Samra, President, Philatelic Society of Egypt
- "These are super books. I've never seen a better example of "postal history." Thanks for your monumental efforts." Prof. John Dunn, History Dept., Valdosta State University, U.S.A.



Published by Fercan Corporation



All five books are available  
in Digital Format and  
Paperback at  
Amazon.com

For additional materials & information,  
please visit our website at  
[egyptianpostalhistory.com](http://egyptianpostalhistory.com)

For the Arabic version @ amazon  
search under "سامي محمد فريج"