

The
Quarterly Circular
of
**THE
EGYPT**



STUDY CIRCLE

December Quarter 2021 – Vol XXIV No 8 – Whole Series No 279 – Pages 171-194

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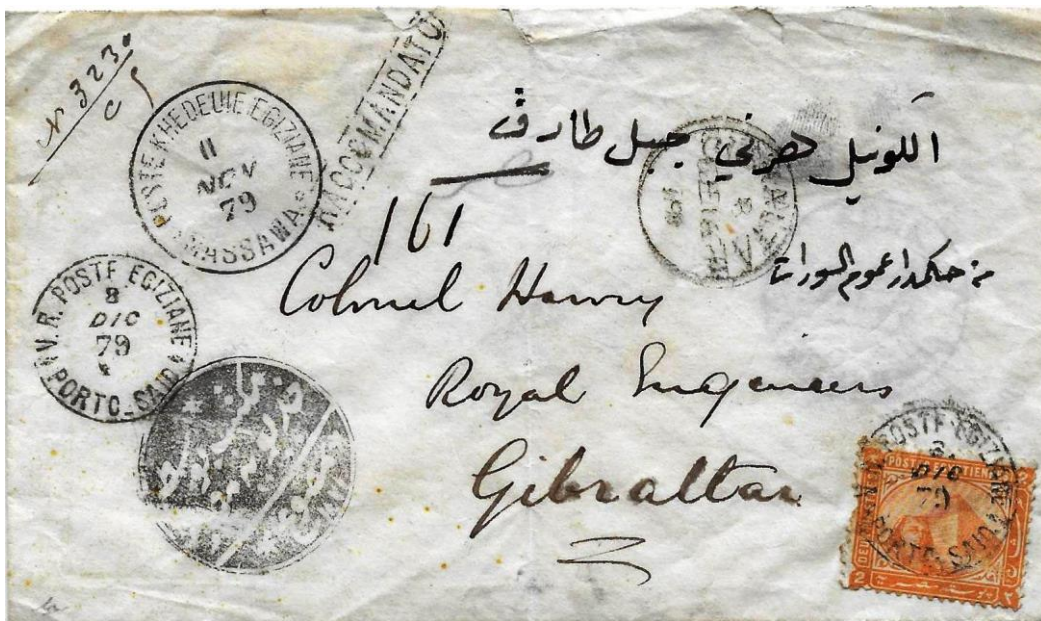
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**Happy Holiday, and Season's
Greetings to all members**

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

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



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Meetings Programme 2022

Please bear in mind that this programme is now in a "likely" draft form. As we move out of pandemic conditions, we believe that every element below will take place as planned.

Feb 23 2022, 10-6	London 2022 Exhibition Societies Day	Egypt Study Circle table	All welcome, specially volunteers
Feb 26 2022, 12-2	London 2022 Exhibition	AGM, Auction 64 & 'Postcards'	All members
March 18-22	Morley Hayes Hotel near Derby	Joint weekend meeting with Sudan Study Group	Details from Jon Aitchison
May 7 2022, 10-4	RPSL, 15 Abchurch Lane, EC4N 7BW	Joint meeting with Cinderella Stamp Club 'Maritime & Egypt'	All members welcome

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Website: egyptstudycircle.org.uk



Facebook

Unknown proof sheets found in Cairo

Neil Hitchens (ESC 651)

Just as this issue was being prepared we were alerted by our Cairo colleagues, via the ESC Facebook page and elsewhere, of dramatic news of the discovery of an unrecorded accumulation of proof sheets from the Fuad/Farouk period. There is uncertainty about precisely what has been found, but photographs of two imperforate sheets of the 10 mills 1936 Army stamp and a sheet of 25 of the 1935 Fuad 500 mills definitive give an idea of what is said to be 60 to 80 full proof sheets including commemorative and definitive issues.

It seems that these sheets were how - from the Survey of Egypt, from 1925 to 1962. The Survey sheets of prepared designs for before the issue could be released. sheet was usually signed off by of the discovered sheets bear a notes, they are most unlikely to be



acquired – we don't know which produced all issues produced imperforate proof approval by the authorities After approval one final the head printer. As several signature and handwritten modern forgeries.

Announcement of the find has collectors who long ago dismissed quantity of new material would

An Army Post sheet with final approval "O.K. – HB" and the date 19.6.38. The control is A/38 A/39

prepared for the market. We can only guess about their origin. From what is reported of the apparently poor to middling quality of many sheets we would imagine that they were not held in any official archive or storage but may have been held privately for up to 70 years in conditions unsuitable for preservation.

ruffled the feathers of many the possibility that such a suddenly appear and be

Dr Sherif Samra, President of the Philatelic Society of Egypt who has been appointed to investigate the find, said: "There is no firm evidence that the sheets came from the Survey archive. If they did, it was many many years ago. They were not included in the inventory when the joint committee of the Post Office and our PSE checked the full inventory more than 15 years ago. It must be made clear that no accusations can be made without solid evidence. The postal authorities are investigating."

What happens next depends on the enquiries about the source. If this amount of new material were to flood the market the resulting price depression would have a serious effect on material of this period. We cannot comment on the validity or legitimacy of this material or how it has been acquired and passed on as a prelude to sale by private treaty or in the auction room. Either way it is extremely unlikely that this archive will remain untouched; it is even rumoured that the sheets are already being split into plate blocks, multiples and other combinations.

Until there is more evidence about the source of this material we remain mystified as to what happens next and what remedies might be invoked. Discovery of the cache has produced a large amount of speculation and the matter is, no doubt, destined to remain at the forefront of attention going into 2022.

Statement from the Philatelic Society, Cairo

After a full meeting of the Philatelic Society of Egypt to discuss the matter on November 27, Mahmoud Ramadan (ESC 358), a senior Board member, was delegated by its Board of Directors to write formally to the Circle as follows:

"Over the past three months there has been much talk circulating about the surfacing of sheets of stamps that are either imperforated or trials. Until recently some of this material has been offered for sale on eBay.

"The Board of Directors of the Egyptian Philatelic Society has convened to discuss this issue and define the society's position. The Board has come to the resolution that everything known to this moment is based on hearsay.

“There is no solid or tangible evidence except the items noted on offer on eBay, and some images shown on the society’s Facebook page. Concluding that some material has actually surfaced. However the original source of such material remains unknown.

“The information available indicates that this material is from the period when Egyptian stamps were printed at the Survey Department. All indications are that these are either trials or proofs. However, they are not among the previously recorded imperfs and/or trials.

“To the best knowledge of the Society these sheets were not in a private collection of a known philatelist. Thus it has most probably come out of a governmental archive. Which, when, how? Is not known to date. The Egyptian Postal Authority has conducted a short investigation in co-ordination with the society, that has not resulted in anything conclusive, and may very well be continuing their investigation.

“The Board of the society are continuing their investigations, and collecting information to reach the true facts about this material.”

• **In light of the above, and the continuing lack of provenance of these sheets, the Circle advises its members to ensure extreme caution if such items should be offered to you for sale. The Circle will not accept material from this cache in its own auctions.**

Important Circle events coming up in 2022

The main featured display at **Autumn Stampex 2022** will be on Africa, and the Egypt Study Circle is committed to being a major contributor. The exhibition takes place at the Business Design Centre, London, from 28 September to 1 October 2022. Entries can be for any number of frames, which cost £25 each, and can be non-competitive or judged, which will win a medal. Every entry receives a certificate. All FIP classes are available; your exhibit can be on any subject related to Egypt.

We are honoured to have been asked by the Royal Philatelic Society London to stage an Egypt display to mark the **centenary of the discovery of Tutankhamun’s tomb**. The date of this event has been moved from an earlier announcement and is now Thursday 17 November 2022. We hope that many members will want to take part. A colour booklet will illustrate all entries. This display is completely free to enter and we are likely to have a Circle lunch to mark the occasion on that day.

To help with planning we should like to know who is interested. Space permitting, there is no limit to the number of entries. Please email our Chairman, Jon Aitchison, at britishlocals@aol.com advising which events you want to take part in, how many entries, how many frames and likely titles. This does not commit you but will help us. More details in the March QC.

Members’ Matters

We are sad to have to report the passing, from coronavirus, of **Tarek Mokhtar** (ESC 692), an active member since 2015 and enthusiastic expert in the postal history of his home town, Chibin el Kom in the Delta

New Members:

ESC 741 Ahmed Selim, 10 Al-Atf, Al-Ayat, Giza 12978, Egypt
(Postcards of Egypt and related studies)

ESC 742 Jeffery Beasley, 4 Candace Court, Durston, Northampton NN5 7LX
(Egypt, Palestine, South Africa, George V)

Membership restored: Jonathan Becker (ESC 647)

Notes and queries from members and others

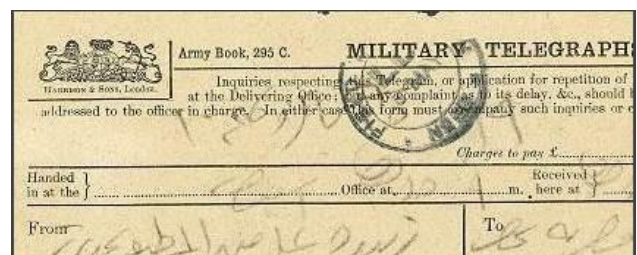
Query 1: 1954 Defense viewcards – Vince Centonze (ESC 571) has noticed mention in *The Nile Post* of an unpublished research document by Charlie Hass (ESC 110) on these colourful and fascinating viewcards. He is interested to carry out further research and, in Charlie's continuing absence, wonders whether any other member might have seen this document. Joe Chalhoub (ESC 305) author of the *NP*, sadly does not have it.



Query 2: Ismail's forehead – Peter Marshall, a Turks Islands collector, recently decided to organise his collection, and found a group of the 1934 UPU set with a note pointing out a circular white flaw above Khedive Ismail's right eye and suggesting that it might have happened during the perforating process, with a "dot" from the perforator falling on the printing plate. It is certainly a strong suggestion, but the Survey of Egypt was a very well run organisation, and it is hard to believe that bits of paper were flying around while printing was taking place. It is not, however impossible. Any member with a similar flaw should let us know.

Query 3: Meter marks – Jim Ashby, a member of the Meter Stamp Society who maintains the online version of the International Postage Meter Stamp Catalogue, is interested in buying Egyptian covers franked by the Moss and Neopost machines. Members with covers to sell or loan should contact the Secretary; and we hope to have exciting news from Jim in the next QC.

Query 4: Luxor Legal? - David Sher, another non-member, writes to ask whether anything specific is known about the British Army Field Telegraph rubber cancel referred to in *QC* 215 pp.82-85. It is a double circle with the two letter code LL in the centre, FIELD TELEGRAPH in the double circle at the top and a number (25?) at the bottom. It is suggested that the LL might refer to Luxor Legal – does anyone know how he might find out more on the use of this cancellation, which was also used in Sudan and South Africa.



Report of the meeting, October 4, 2021

It was a small but select group of members who braved the coronavirus to attend our first full meeting since February 8 2020 at Autumn Stampex at the Design Centre in Islington, North London. The list of apologies for non-attendance was understandably long, given the health advice, but ten members were present, including one making his first meeting. Welcome, Dave Sutton (ESC 735) of Canvey Island.

The full list of those present was as follows: John Davis (President), Jon Aitchison (Chairman), Neil Hitchens (Vice Chairman), Mike Murphy (Secretary), Sami Sadek (Treasurer), Mike Bramwell, John Clarke, David Sutton, Ronny Van Pellecom (Belgium), Richard Wheatley. The meeting welcomed another new member, Ahmed Selim from Cairo (ESC 741), who applied specifically to take part in Auction 63.

For the first days of Stampex we held a society table in the mezzanine gallery, manned by two or three members each day, with Auction items and pages from members' collections on show. Despite the disappointing attendance at the exhibition in general, we received a good number of visitors at the table and handed out publicity material to the majority of them.

The Auction was the main topic of the meeting, with lively room bidding augmenting the postal/email bids, which had closed a couple of days before. There was a total of 31 advance bidders, and overall a satisfactory total of 135 of the 248 lots (55 per cent) were sold. A number of books offered on behalf of the family of the late Alan Jeyes went unsold, but were later purchased as a single lot. The Auction sales totalled £3105, realising a commission of £839.69 toward Circle funds.

The next Auction is planned for the London 2022 Exhibition in spring next year, when we shall have an ESC table on the Societies open day, February 23, to generate publicity and knowledge of who we are and what we do. Our meeting will be held on the Saturday of the show, February 26, from 2pm. Members wishing to enter material for sale should contact Sami Sadek, the Auctioneer (escauction@hotmail.com), with typed lists and (if possible) good scans of the items in question. Please remember that as the Auction ends with room bidding, all items for sale must be present with the Auctioneer on the day. The meeting will also hold our AGM for 2021, and members attending should bring material to display on the theme “Postcards”.

* Sadly, we have to report that Mike Murphy had two packets totalling 32 display sheets of postmark studies stolen from his car on his return from the meeting. If any member sees on the market pages headed “Egypt - Irrigation” (that is, dams and barrages) or “Egypt – Government Offices” please make contact.

Report of the meeting, November 13, 2021

Much of the meeting was spent in discussing how connections might be improved between the *QC*, the website and the Facebook page, each of which appealed to different sections of the membership. The meeting decided that the *QC* should remain the archive of record, while the website had a potential for great expansion in an attempt to attract younger members and interplay with the Facebook page. There were four entries for the second annual Club Competition, which was won by Sami Sadek, who took just over half the votes for his “Waterways TPOs.” Mike Murphy was runner-up with “Farouk and the Palace Post.”

Those attending were: John Davis (President), Jon Aitchison (Chairman), Neil Hitchens (Vice Chairman), Mike Murphy (Secretary), Sami Sadek (Treasurer), Mike Bramwell, John Clarke, Paul Green, David Sutton. Apologies were received from John Sears, Cyril Defriez, Brian Sedgley and Caroline Scannell. The meeting welcomed another new member, Jeffery Beasley of Northampton (ESC 742).

The astonishingly comprehensive display was led by John Davis, who interpreted the title “Conflicts” as being the ideal opportunity to show 144 pages of foreign troops in Egypt and their postal activities, and essentially of course the long British occupation from 1882 through to the end of the First World War. Among the many highlights over more than 70 years were mail from a seaman aboard *HMS Monarch* - franked with a 1d lilac - during the bombardment of Alexandria as a result of the Arabi revolt, and a thorough examination of the various postal markings used by the troops during the long years of the war.



Part of a page from John's display showing combined military/civilian usage of two very rare datestamps

Even during wartime the military used civilian post offices, and John shows two sheets with the rare (civilian) British Barracks Cairo datestamp, the British Camp P.O. Heliopolis, and another as receiver accompanied by Military Camp Aerodrome Heliopolis as well as a civilian transit.

Postal markings of the military TPOs followed, and then a special display of oval hospital and convalescent establishment markings, all of them providing free franking to their patients and staff. But the British Army in Egypt, whatever its title, did not consist only of troops from Great Britain. Allies flocked from the Commonwealth, including New Zealand, South Africa, Australia, India – even France rallied to the call. All had their distinctive postal markings, and India even provided definitives overprinted IEF for its troops. In a spectacular display, John showed all of these in quantity too large to describe.

Members applauded as Jon Aitchison thanked him for an excellent comprehensive and instructive exhibit, and added his own interpretation of “conflicts” with fascinating mail from both sides in the various Middle East wars from 1956.

The procession of El Mahmal

Roman Anthony Rimonis (ESC 486)

Among the most fascinating aspects of some early postcards is that they captured moments in history. Many of the traditions of a country may have faded, but the cards, even though no more than cheap souvenirs, have provided lasting images of the events. Egypt was once noted for an important annual religious ceremonial event - the procession of "El Mahmal" or "The Holy Carpet" - that took place as part of the preparations for the Hajj pilgrimage from the Citadel in Cairo to Mecca.

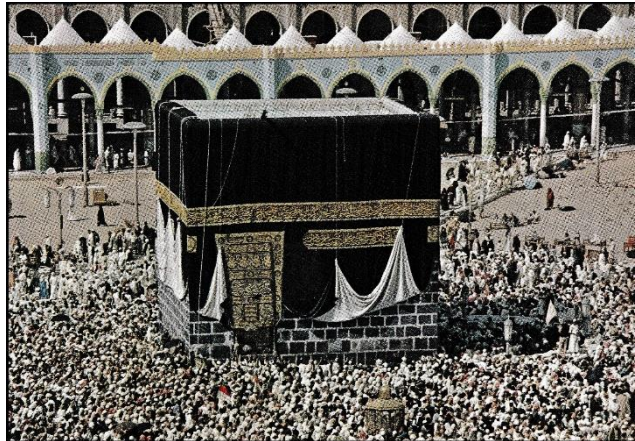


Fig. 1 - Worshippers circle the Kaaba in Mecca, draped in its black mantle

The yearly celebration was to mark the manufacture and display of a new black mantle, woven from silk and richly adorned with gold-embroidered verses from the Koran, that was to drape the Holy Kaaba, the huge black cubelike stone structure in the courtyard of the Great Mosque at Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

For many years this was Egypt's gift, a tradition going back to Sultana Shagarat el-Dorr, who was prominent as the first of the Bahri Mamelukes (1250-1382). Initially a Turkish slave in the harem of Sultan Al-Salih Nigm al-Din, she eventually became his favourite wife. When he died without a line of succession to the Saladin throne, Shagarat claimed power, becoming the first Mameluke ruler of Egypt and Syria, much to the disapproval of the Muslims. She reigned for several years as Sultana, initially making personal pilgrimage to Mecca and later sending pilgrims each year together with a new mantle to assert her reign. There was also an underlying reason: if ever she was threatened, she knew she could rely on assistance from Saudi Arabia.

Shagarat was eventually forced to be married. In her outrage she had her husband murdered while in the bath and she was taken and imprisoned in the Citadel. Still in her rage, she destroyed her jewellery so that no other woman could wear her costly items. She was finally beaten to death and her naked body was thrown into the Citadel moat. A few days passed before somebody gave her a decent burial. Her tomb can still to be seen near the Mosque of Ibn Tulun in Saiyida Zeinab.

The Holy Carpet was replaced annually by a new one that was specially woven in Cairo. This work began in one part of the city, a workshop in one of Cairo's narrow Dar al-Khoronfish streets in the Gamaliya neighbourhood, and is recognised only by the nearby Dar al-Keswah (House of The Holy Kiswah). It is then carried in state to another part of Cairo to be completed.

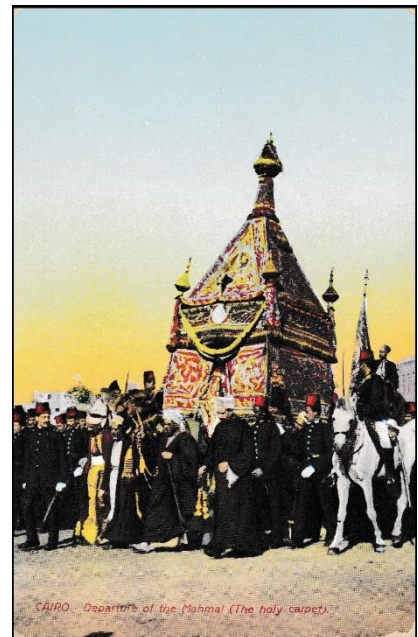


Fig. 2 - Cairo: Departure of the Mahmal (Holy Carpet)

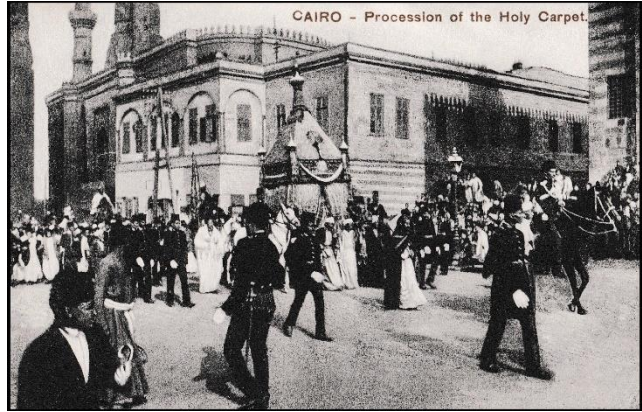
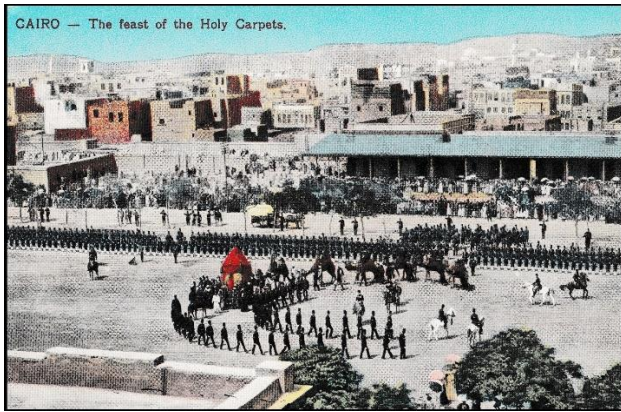
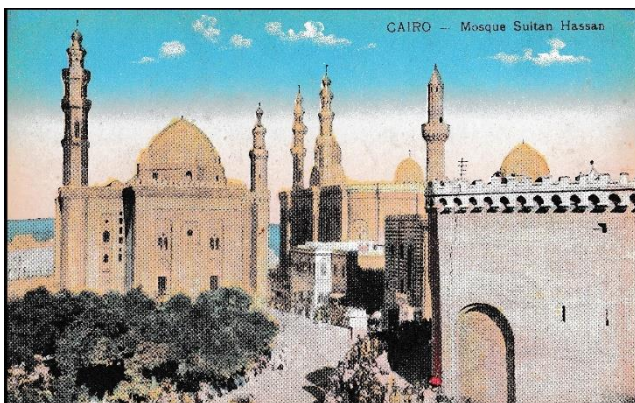


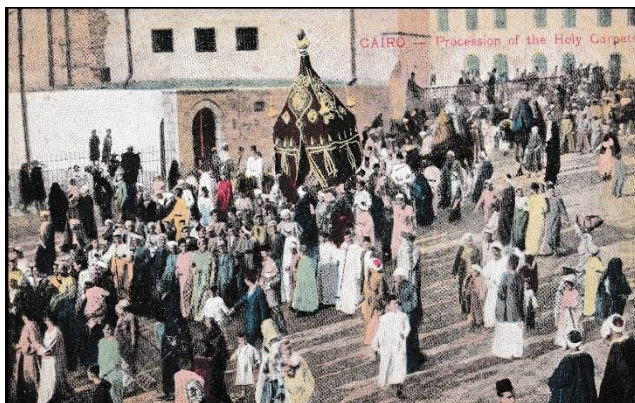
Fig. 3 - Cairo: The Feast of the Holy Carpets (Cairo Postcard Trust 647, hand coloured; also printed in sepia as serial 528). Fig. 4 - Cairo: Procession of the Holy Carpet, Midan Salah el-Din passing Sultan Hassan Mosque (Cairo Postcard Trust, serial 597, taken in 1908?)

Each year on the ninth day of the month of Dhu Al-Hijjah the old covering is taken down, cut up and divided among the pilgrims as holy relics, and the new one is put in its place.

The preparation of the sacred cover follows specific instructions as laid down in the Koran, which states that nothing but silk shall be used, lined with cotton. The eight separately made black silk pieces are stitched together, and a band of coloured silk, into which are woven quotations from the Koran in gold and green thread, surrounds the drape.



Above, Fig. 5 – The crowd waiting for the Holy Carpet at Sultan Hassan Mosque, Roumeleh Square (Cairo Postcard Trust 640). Fig. 6 – The Holy Carpet leaving Sultan Hassan Mosque (Cairo Postcard Trust 581). Below, Fig. 7 – Procession of the Holy Carpet (Cairo Postcard Trust 646, hand-coloured). Fig. 8 – Caire: l'arrivée du tapis sacré (Cairo Postcard Trust 54477)

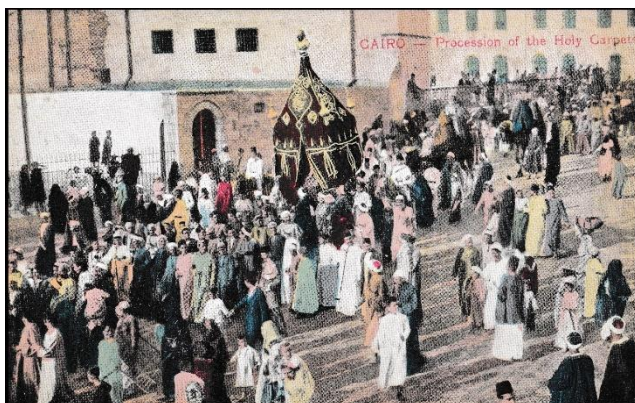


On the morning of departure, the procession started in the large open square at the foot of the Citadel; from early morning vast crowds had gathered. The procession is led three times round the centre of the square, after which the royal representatives - either the King of Egypt or the prime minister - would kiss a crimson cord suspended from El Mahmal and wish the pilgrimage a success. The cord is then given to the chief sheikh, who becomes responsible for its safe arrival in Mecca. The Holy Carpet then proceeds to the Sultan Hassan Mosque nearby to receive a blessing before setting out on its long journey.

The Holy Carpet itself is hidden from sight in a curious pyramid-shaped object adorned in richly embroidered woven fabric and carried on a camel. The carpet itself must not be seen or touched. Cairenes from all levels of society would line its route in Cairo. The first hint of the approaching procession would be the sound of the military band playing in the distance. The enthusiastic crowd grew bigger and bigger, moving forward only to be stopped by ropes stretched along the street; to ensure that people did not get out of control police and troops kept the spectators at bay.

In the age of rail and steamer travel, after touring the various districts of the capital city the carpet took the train to Suez and later Port Said for ship departure to Jeddah. In 1901 a special tour of the Delta was arranged, with Benha, Zagazig and Ismailia among centres visited, and in 1910 the Mahmal travelled to Alexandria, to be greeted by adoring crowds before continuing by sea to Jaffa. Earlier, pilgrimages to Mecca had travelled overland, and not without incident. Robberies and attacks on the caravan were attempted and protection was needed against the Bedouins, especially through the desert.

In one grave incident in 1899 the caravan was attacked and six guards were killed and the carpet stolen. The thieves demanded a ransom, and the pursuit of the Bedouins led to the deaths of four Turkish soldiers and three members of the convoy before the sacred object was retrieved when the Bedouins fled.



Top, Fig. 9 – Procession of the Holy Carpet, Cairo (Rafael Tuck and Sons “Oilette” from Picturesque Egypt series 7204). Fig. 10 – Le Caire: Fête au Tapis Sacré (Ephthimios Frères, Port Said, 55918, postally used 6 November 1920). Fig. 11 – Cairo: Procession of the Holy Carpet, L. Levy serial 133 in sepia). Fig. 12: Same publisher, same serial number, same caption, but here the mounted military band can clearly be seen

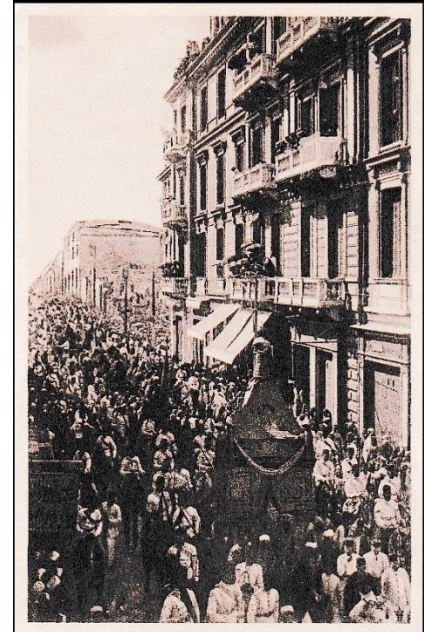
In 1914 there was great civil and political unrest - classified as “disturbed state of Arabia” - which prevented the travels of the Holy Carpet until 1916 because of concern for the procession and the dangers it may encounter en route. When the great journey started again, there were 500 Egyptian foot soldiers and four cannon to accompany the caravan.

A political dispute over El Mahmal erupted between Egypt and Saudi Arabia in 1927, again causing the cancellation of the procession. The next year King Ibn Saud asked India to make the Holy Carpet; and in more modern times it is made in a factory on the outskirts of Mecca.

Many postcards show bustling scenes of people as El Mahmal passed through the streets with banners, flags, and music. One of the more prolific publishers of the event was the Cairo Post Card Trust. The scenes on the previous page are all taken from the same stretch of the street and have been photographed many times. It is tempting to wonder whether there was only one photographer on the site busily clicking away. Many of the photographs were taken within minutes of each other ... and then sold on to a variety of postcard publishers?

On the black and white First World War postcard by L Levy above, postally used on June 28, 1915, the serving soldier writes to his father:

“Dear Father, Just a line hoping you are all well, if the people at Retford saw a procession like this come down the street they would begin to wonder. They are out tonight all night until half past six in the morning. From Frank.”



**Fig. 13 – Alexandria:
Procession of the Holy
Carpet (Livadas & Coutsicos
658). Probably from the
1910 visit**

The original site in Cairo where the carpets were manufactured now lies in a state of neglect. The only remains of what was once this important religious event can be found in the Egyptian Textile Museum in Gamaliya, where one room displays a piece of the Kiswah, the verse of the woven Koran, made during the period of King Farouk in 1942. And at Al Manial Palace on Roda Island in the Nile is the skeleton of a camel that is said to have once carried the Holy Carpet.

Egypt medals at the Athens Notos exhibition

We are delighted to congratulate the following members on their medal successes at the Notos philatelic exhibition, held under FEPA auspices in Athens between November 19 and 22. There were 285 entries.

Championship Class (and Large Gold medal): **Hany Salam** (ESC 580, 8 frames), Egypt: Maritime Mail Routes, 19th Century; and **Greg Todd** (ESC 585, 8 frames), Egypt. 1866: The First Issue.

Hany Salam also took Gold (90 points) with his book *Egyptian Maritime - Postal History 1845-1889*.

Jon Aitchison (ESC 661, 8 frames), Egyptian Officially Sealed Mail, Gold with Felicitations, 90 points.

Sami Sadek (ESC 559, 5 frames), Travelling Post Offices of Egypt, Large Vermeil, 88 points.

Hisham Bassyouny (ESC 391, 5 frames), British Forces in Egypt Stamps 1932-1939, Large Vermeil, 86

John Davis (ESC 213, 2 frames), British Post offices in Egypt, Large Vermeil, 85.

Lucien Toutounji (ESC 264, 8 frames), Egypt Hotel Mail 1890-1939, Large Vermeil 85.

Jon Aitchison (ESC 661, 5 frames), Egypt's Cassette Post, Large Vermeil, 85.

Evangelos Raptis (ESC 720, 5 frames), Modern Egypt through philately, Large Silver, 75.

We also congratulate two non-members for success with collections of Egypt, and would welcome membership applications from both:

Mamdouh Mosley (8 frames), Delta Collection, 1798-1879, Large Vermeil, 88

Nikoloas Garilidis (5 frames), Egyptian Postal Concession to the British Forces in Egypt, Large Vermeil, 85

Qasr Ibrim post office revisited

Mike Murphy (ESC 240)

Dr Antoine Winter (ESC 149) queried in *QC* 277, p.146 how much postal material was likely to pass through Qasr Ibrim in Lower Nubia, since it was said to have been abandoned in 1813. Not quite so, it seems, because the post office appears to have had quite a life. The first official mention I can find, in the *Postal Bulletin* of March 31 1887, is a notice that the stern-wheelers of the Assouan-Shellal riverboat mail service were to be extended to Wadi Halfa on April 1, stopping en route at Oumbaracab, El Sebah, Korosko, El Derr, Ebrim, Masmass and Abousembel. * *Spellings as originally published.*

From May 31 a “bureau ambulante” open to mails, parcels, local and international money orders was created on the Challal-Wadi Halfa postal boat serving Ambarcab, Kalabsha, Abou-Khor, Marieh, Koshtamna, Allaki, Siala, Sobou, Derr, Ebrin, Toski, Farreg, Faras and Deberah. (Debera was closed in February 1889). New postal “stations” were announced for Dakka, Derr and Faras in that month, and a month later, following an unusually low Nile, for Ebrim, Mariah and Daboud: all could handle registered mail, parcels and money orders (ie, Class 6).

In 1890, for the three months of the tourist season (from January 13) Thomas Cook’s (which offered visitors the sight of dawn from the peak of Ibrim) carried mails every Monday, alternating with the Ministry of War’s regular Wednesday service.

In January 1896 Ibrim, a regular stopping place on one of the slave routes from Sudan, is not mentioned in a long list of stations closed by the military for lack of use, but in April all stations but Korosko were suspended or changed to courier service. By November the military situation had improved, however, and most stations opened again: where there was no actual post office, postal services were provided by the vessels’ master. Ibrim was recorded as servicing registered material, parcels and money orders.

Willard Fiske (*All about Postal Matters in Egypt*) recorded Ibrim in 1897 as a Class 6 post office, a river station open to all classes of

business except specie. In 1904 the *Postal Guide* has Ibrim as Class 5 in a re-ordering of office classifications, though with the same services, but by 1911 it had been promoted to Class 2, providing all services except groups, value-declared letters and insured parcels. This position is maintained in the 1914, 1920 and 1924 *Guides*, but with the addition of Savings Bank facilities, which were maintained through the 1928 and 1932 *Guides*.

Since the *QC* article Dr Antoine has himself found another Ibrim cancel, official incoming from Dawawin on 24 JA 33 (*see illustration*), and I have come across two more local examples, both in MA 27, one official and readdressed to

Aswan, the other a registered cover from the grandly-named Bouffet de Shallal. Clearly there was movement, at least in January-March.

One wonders how much business a savings bank might have done with little or no local population, but the British were excavating for at least the early part of the year in the 1920s, so why not in the thirties? Perhaps, like some hotels (though the *Postal Guides* do not record it), Ibrim was open only on a seasonal basis.



Ibrim to Aswan 1927, using Government readdress label



The pseudo-watermarks of the Second Issue

Ramez Atiya (ESC 242)
In Memory of Peter R. Feltus (ESC 114)

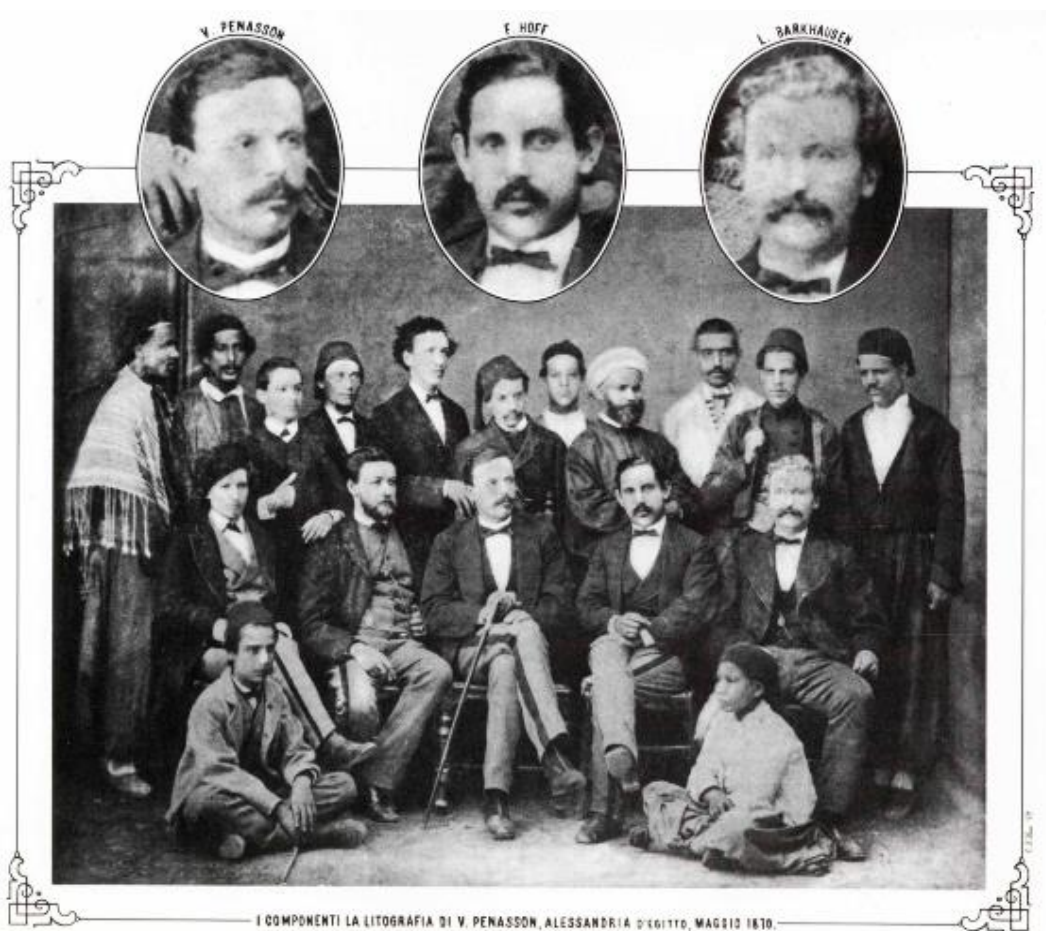


Figure 1 – The printing house of V. Penasson

Although the star and crescent watermarks on the De La Rue issues have been studied extensively, the pseudo-watermarks of the Second Issue have received little attention. These turn out to hold unexpected surprises. We will show that there are ten distinct types of pseudo-watermark arranged in units of 5 x 2. Twenty such units form the full 200 pseudo-watermarks on the sheet. In a subsequent paper, we will show that the ten types hold the key to plating the Second Issue, one of the great unfinished projects of Egyptian philately.

The Second Issue of Egypt was printed by the firm of V. Penasson who, together with his staff, is shown in the photograph above, taken in May 1870. The image (modified by C.F. Hass) shows the principals: V. Penasson, T. Hoff, who designed the Second Issue, and L. Barckhausen (misspelled in both the photograph and in *The Nile Post* – see final photo), who was its lithographer. The firm were also printers for the 1884 and 1886 postage dues. As we will show, the 1884 dues were printed on the same paper as the Second Issue, bearing the same pseudo-watermarks, and were almost certainly printed on unused paper originally intended for the Second Issue. The 1886 postage dues were printed from the same stones but on unwatermarked paper. It is likely that the stock of watermarked paper had run out.

THE PSEUDO-WATERMARKS

Each Second Issue sheet was impressed with 200 pseudo-watermarks. A detailed examination shows that there are ten types of pseudo-watermark. The ten types are arranged in blocks of 5 (horizontal) x 2 (vertical) as shown below. The block of ten types is then repeated 20 times = 2 (horizontal) x 10 (vertical) for the complete setting on the sheet.



Figure 2 - The ten types of pseudo-watermark





An examination of blocks of all values, including reconstructed sheets of the 5 para, the 1 and 2 piastre and blocks of the other values, shows the layout to be identical. Although the image above shows the ten types to be different, the differences can best be appreciated by examining the enlarged images below. With some practice, the differences become apparent and the type of pseudo-watermark on any stamp can be identified. The differences are most easily seen by examining the angles and shapes of the rays of the stars. These are enlarged to help distinguish among the types.





An examination of the pseudo-watermarks on multiples of all values shows the pseudo-watermark types and arrangement to be the same. The only difference is the pseudo-watermarks on the selvage, the subject which we now address.

FRANCOBOLLI. PIASTRE EGIZIANE 2.

	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
11	The Watermarks of Egypt's Second Issue by Peter R. Feltus								20
21	<p>As is well known, stamps of Egypt's 1867-1869 issue are watermarked; before they were printed, a star & crescent was impressed into each stamp, usually on the back (though the Zeheri lists only four values with the variety "wmk. impressed on face", all six exist with the variety, as well as the 1pt. & 2pt. imperf.).</p> <p>In addition to the wmk. on these stamps, the sheet selvages were wmkd. in the same manner. The 2 sides of each sheet were impressed with the wording "Amministrazione Delle V.R. Poste Egiziane", and the top & bottom with the word "Francobolli." and the value. In 1970 I was fortunate in having on loan the imperforate sheet of the 2pt. stamp which was in the King Farouk Collection. From it I made a tracing of the selvaige wmk. and from that, with a pen and "Letraset" instant lettering, I made an illustration which was photostatted and reduced and appears here. The typeface employed is only roughly similar to the one of the actual wmk., but the size and spacing are the same. The watermarks of the 1pt. and 5pt. sheets are the same, except for the numerals in the top-right and bottom-left corners. The para value sheets are the same at the sides, but the top and bottom inscriptions are less crowded; for example "Francobolli. Para 5."</p> <p>With this illustration, you can determine the sheet position of any Second Issue stamp or multiple that has selvaige attached.</p> <p>If plating these stamps interests you, we can collaborate; write me if you have any 10 para or 20 para or 1 pt. multiples I may borrow to photograph, or if you want photos to plate the 5 para, the 1pt. stone D, or the 2 pt.</p>								30
31									40
41									50
51									60
61									70
71									80
81									90
91									100
101									110
111									120
121	130								
131	140								
141	150								
151	160								
161	170								
171	180								
181	190								
	192	193	194	195	196	197	198	199	

AMMINISTRAZIONE DELLE V. R. POSTE EGIZIANE.

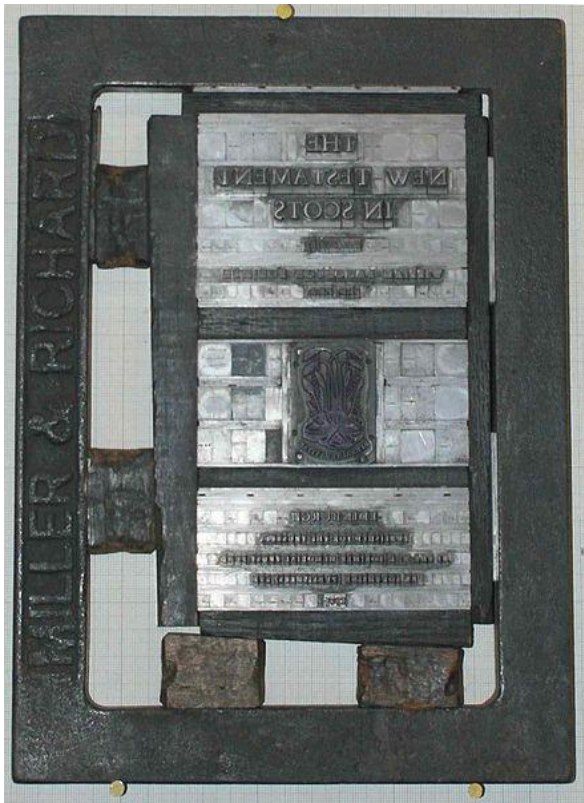
AMMINISTRAZIONE DELLE V. R. POSTE EGIZIANE.

FRANCOBOLLI. PIASTRE EGIZIANE 2.

In 1981, Peter Feltus purchased the full imperforate sheet of the 1867 2-piastre value at Robson Lowe's "Royal" Collection sale (lot 1154). He produced a sales announcement including the page shown above and described the pseudo-watermark on the selvages with notes on the watermarks specific to the 2 piastre. However, I was fortunate in having blocks with selvedge as well as loose selvedge from the 1 piastre value. An examination of selvedge from all values other than the 5 piastre proved that the general format was the same for all, the only difference being the inscription indicating the value on the panels at top and bottom of the sheet. The pseudo-watermarks are too faint to provide good images. It also turns out that the opposing panels are reversed but otherwise identical.

From the Feltus advertisement sheet, it is possible to determine the position of any block of any value with selvedge. Such blocks are scarce.

THE IMPRESSION PLATE



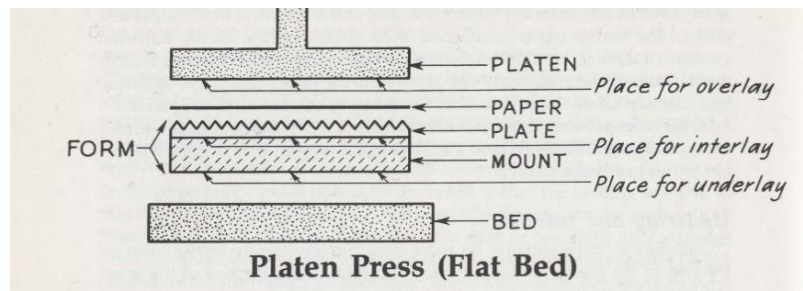
The production of an impression plate for the pseudo-watermark is actually simpler than the complex process required for producing conventionally watermarked paper. The process would probably have been as follows. Ten stars and crescents were first inscribed (*bas relief*) into some soft material, almost certainly a block of plaster of Paris. This explains the ten types, since each star and crescent would have been individually "carved" into the plaster. The plaster block then served as a mould from which to make a metal cast. The resulting ten types of crescents and stars, recessed on the plaster, would then be raised above the surface of the metal (*haut relief*). The first metal cast is referred to as the primary cast. The next step was to make multiple copies of the primary cast. Plaster casts in *bas relief* would then have been made from the metal cast. At least twenty plaster (or less likely flong) moulds would then have been made. From these twenty, metal casts would have been produced. Placed in an arrangement of 2 (horizontal) x 10 (vertical), these twenty individual casts would have formed the plate



Form showing the chase, printer's furniture and the quoin with key locking the form. Source: Wikiwand

required to impress the full 200 pseudo-watermarks into the paper. This would explain the repeated 2 x 10 pattern of pseudo-watermark observed on Second Issue sheets.

A similar process would have been adopted in the production of pseudo-watermark panels for the selvedge inscriptions. The inscription would have first been inscribed in plaster. A primary metal cast would then have been made and duplicated to create its companion for the opposing side. This explains why the inscriptions have opposite orientation on opposite sides of the sheet and why they are identical. The vertical panels are common to all values. The upper and lower panels indicating value would have been similarly made for each value.



From: L&N Williams, *Fundamentals of Philately*

The 20 central units with the stars and crescents, surrounded by the panels for the selvedge, would then have been arranged in a chase, a rectangular metal frame (shown above). Strips of metal or wood (printer's furniture) would then be placed to fill the empty space within the chase. Finally quoins (below) would lock the impression plate in place. The entire assembly or form would now have been rigid and ready for use. Note the convenience of the arrangement. The twenty metal casts required for the stars and crescents were reused for the production of the paper for all six values. All that would have been required was the removal of the upper and lower value panels and their replacement with those of another value. This is much simpler than having to produce a full plate for each value.

With the make ready work completed, the impression plate would then have been placed on a platen or flatbed press, perhaps the same press used to print the lithographic sheets. The platen would then be forced down, driving the raised lines of the pseudo-watermark plate into the paper.

WATERMARK VARIETIES

There are two watermark varieties: watermarked on face and inverted watermark. Normally watermarks appear on the back of the stamps, but all values are known with watermarks impressed into the face. If the watermarks were impressed before printing, it is easy to see how one side of the paper could be mistaken for the other. This supports the contention that the printing occurred on previously watermarked paper. Only two values are known with inverted watermarks, the 10 para of 1869 (very rare) and the 1 piastre of 1867.



Figure 3 - 1 piastre brown-lake proof – pseudo-watermarked (unlisted)

PROOFS, COLOR TRIALS AND PSEUDO-WATERMARKS

The Nile Post lists Second Issue colour trials. For the 1 piastre, it lists only imperforates (unwatermarked and impressed watermark on face). In fact, the 1 piastre brown-lake exists *perforated and pseudo-watermarked* as shown above. It needs be added to the listing. The stamp shown has a type 5 pseudo-watermark, showing that the plate used to impress the watermark was the same as that used on the final issued stamps. It is lithographic type II, perforated 15x12½.

In examining 11 copies of the 1 piastre proof, I have not seen an unwatermarked one, a listed variety in *The Nile Post*. On some stamps however, the pseudo-watermark is almost impossible to detect without a watermark detector. Because of the faint watermark, confirmation of the unwatermarked variety is required to place the variety on a firm footing.

1884 POSTAGE DUES



I/9	II/10
III/4	IV/5

Smith reports that the paper for the 1884 postage dues was supplied to Penasson by the “Economat”, the government bursary. He states that it was the remainder from the printing of the Second Issue. This is possible only because the values (10 pa, 20 pa, 1 pi, 2 pi, and 5 pi) correspond to those on the Second Issue so that the value panels required no modification. A new impression plate would not have been necessary. That the paper used was the remainder from the Second Issue is supported by typing the pseudo-watermarks. An examination of the 20 para block (*above*) shows the lithographic and pseudo-watermark types to be identical in type and position to those found on the Second Issue. An examination of blocks and multiples further supports this conclusion. The lithographic and pseudo-watermarked types are indicated on the table. That the upper and lower value panels are the same can be checked by the current holder of the upper half sheet of the 20 para and the corner block of 20 of the 10 pa (?) sold at the Robson Lowe *The “Royal” Collection of Egypt* in 1981. Both have selvedge.

The printing on to pre-watermarked paper strongly suggests that pseudo-watermarking preceded printing, an issue of some debate according to Smith. The existence of a stock of pseudo-watermarked paper on which the 1884 postage dues were printed shows with near certainty that the watermarking preceded the printing.

THE BARCKHAUSEN FORGERIES

Many years ago, I acquired a set of 1884 and 1886 forgeries from Peter Feltus who in turn had acquired them from Ibrahim Chaftar, who stated that these were produced by L. Barckhausen for the philatelic market of the 1890s. Because of their historical significance and since the 1884 forgeries are pseudo-watermarked, it is appropriate to include them here. The group includes the 1884 20 paras and 5 piastres as well as the 1886 2 mil and 1, 2 and 5 piastre in singles and blocks. The colors match quite closely those on the genuine stamps. Unlike the Second Issue stamps, which show four lithographic types, the stamps are all the same type. Therefore, no intermediate stone was employed. It appears that 100 individual transfers from stone or from a single metal die were made on to the printing stones.



Figure 4 - 5-piastre Barckhausen forgery



The watermark on the Barckhausen forgeries

Likewise, the watermarks are all identical. There is only one type. It resembles type 2, but close examination shows that it is not. Nor does it match any of the other types. Barckhausen must have therefore prepared a new watermark stereo. It is impossible to determine if a full plate of 100 was prepared or if the pseudo-watermarks were prepared and impressed singly or in some smaller multiple. The side panel reads AMMINISTRA, so that we know the position of the block to be 141-196.

Barckhausen was himself a collector, and philatelic covers addressed to himself and to others are known. These and other philatelic activities of Barckhausen make an interesting study. We conclude with an image of a cover sent by Barckhausen to himself.



Figure 5 - From Barckhausen to himself... with Alexandria Exposition cancel

Pyramids maxicard analytics

Sun-Yu Ng (ESC 689) *et al.*

In our last essay, “Cairo hotel maxicard analytics” (*QC* 278, pp.151-158), we examined Sphinx and Pyramids maxicards with Cairo postmarks, some of them associated with several Cairo hotels.

In this follow-up examination, we will focus on Sphinx and Pyramids maxicards with PYRAMIDS postal cancellations, some of which are associated with the Mena House Hotel, and let the analytics tell the story.

What began as a royal lodge beside the Pyramids became a second home for a wealthy English couple and in 1866 was transformed into a hotel – the only hotel with one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World as a neighbour.

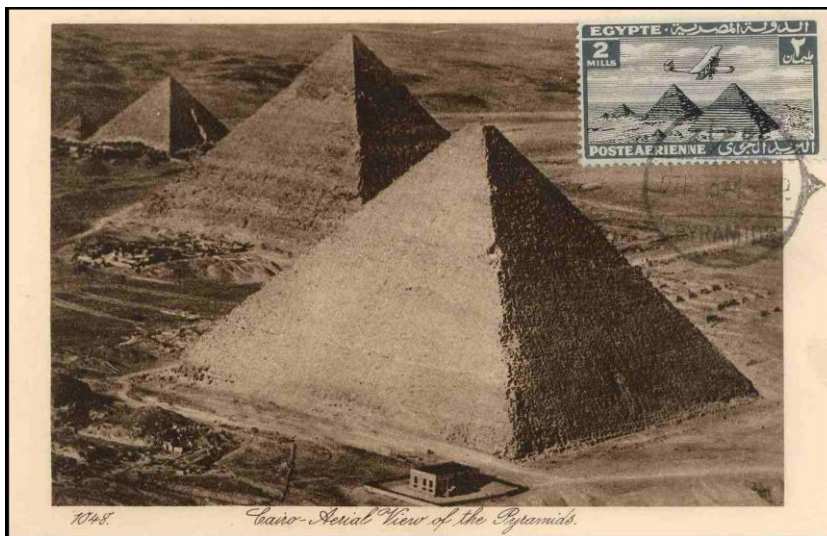


Fig. 1 - An example of the Egypt hotel family second generation maxicard with 2 mills stamp of the 1933 Poste Aérienne (Air Post) issue with aircraft over the Pyramids and P7 PYRAMIDS cancel dated February 27, 1937 on Lehnert and Landrock postcard 1048 showing Cairo - Aerial view of the Pyramids. Multiple identical maxicards were realized instead of several maxicards using different stamps, for instance, those with higher value (3 mills, etc).

Based on various *QC* articles authored by Egypt Study Circle members Vahe Varjabedian and Anton Jansen, supplemented by personal communications, a general working hypothesis for the various PYRAMIDS cancels between 1888 and 1909 can be summarised: P1, as designated by Vahe in *QC* 223 p.273 (originally recorded as December 1891 to March 1892 but perhaps now may be updated to March 1888 to March 1892), was used at the post office kiosk in front of the Sphinx in the village of Nazlet el-Samman (from *QC* 223 p.273), followed by HM1 as designated by Vahe in *QC* 223 p.273 (March 1892 to 1895) at a temporary post office inside the MENA HOUSE HOTEL (its location perhaps implied by the inscription Mena House).

This was then followed by P3 (March 1898 to 1909) used from a new post office across the road from the hotel, where the postmark PYRAMIDS CAIRO was used. During the 1895~1898 gap, mail from the hotel was carried directly to the Cairo Central Post Office.

We counted 65 examples in this data set, including all PYRAMIDS cancels before 1922 (the end of British rule in Egypt). Not included are seven or more P7 PYRAMIDS-cancelled maxicards, each with one of three stamps: 1914 four milliemmes Pyramids stamp (without the 1922 Crown overprint) on identical postcards of 1052 *Cairo - The Pyramids of Gizeh*; 1914 five milliemmes Sphinx stamp (without the Crown overprint) on identical postcards of 1168 *Cairo - The Excavated Sphinx*; 1933 Air Mail two milliemmes stamp with aircraft over the Pyramids on identical postcards of 1048 *Cairo - Aerial view of the Pyramids* (Figure 1). Multiple identical maxicards were created with these three concordant Lehnert and Landrock postcards.

These 65 examples are divided into six subsets. Not included in subset one are two P-3 postal cards: one with 1892 P1 cancel sent to Cairo; the other with 1892 P1 cancel sent on March 2 to Italy (in the collection of Anton Jansen). Also not included, in subset two, are three more P-3 postal cards, one with March 7, 1892 HM1 cancel sent to Germany (Anton Jansen collection); a second with 1893 HM1 cancel sent to Berlin; and the third with 1894 HM1 cancel.

The earliest recorded P1 cancel is dated March 1888. Sometime between the third and seventh of March, P1 was replaced by HM1, presumably when the post office kiosk in Nazlet el-Samman was moved to a temporary post office inside Mena House Hotel. Although I have not seen the 1892 P1 PYRAMIDS cancel (dated February 19) on ppc *Mena House Pyramids* of Alain Stragier (data without image compiled by Anton Jansen in *QC 213*, p.21), which is less likely to be a TCV (*timbre côté vue* in French, meaning that the stamp is on the picture side) than TCA (*timbre côté adress*, meaning that the stamp is on the address side), I have included it as the only example in subset one.

The second subset is the five known examples of Souvenir Mena House Hotel illustrated postal cards. These are quite similar to the first edition Hotel du Nil postal card issued 1892~1894, showing photo images of the Sphinx, Pyramids, Cairo and the Mena House Hotel, with one major difference: there is no stamp box on the picture side (*Figure 2*). The address is intended to be written on the other side even though there is plenty of space on the picture side for both stamp and message. As a result, all five - which were franked with five milliemmes or two plus three milliemmes Fourth Issue (De La Rue) stamps - were HM1 cancelled on the address side, and so are classified as TCA and not TCV.

The 1892 card has a short greeting but the other two have long messages, leaving no space for stamps on the picture side. Incidentally, only one of these five TCA was sent to France (one each to Ceylon, Paris, Italy, England and Germany). These Mena House Hotel cards cannot be classed as members of the first parental generation of the hotel family because only TCV can be a maxicard precursor, not TCA.

The third subset has two known examples, both in the 1895~1898 gap period when there is no PYRAMIDS cancel. First is a sixth Souvenir Mena House Hotel card posted to Munich on November 25, 1894 but with Cairo cancel instead of HM1, suggesting the possibility that the hotel post office may have been closed before that date. The other is the second edition (first edition being Souvenir Mena House Hotel cards of subset two) Mena House Hotel card issued before the return of the PYRAMIDS cancel as P3 (as designated by Vahe in *QC 223* p.273). It is seen in *Figure 3*, with a panoramic view of the Pyramids and the hotel occupying the top third of the picture side. This example was also sent to Munich, on December 4, 1896.

The fourth subset is the largest, with 34 known examples. The first two recorded P3 PYRAMIDS cancels, dated February 21 and 24, 1899, are both TCA sent to the same address in Austria (the latter is shown in *Figure 4*). Both are second edition Mena House Hotel postal cards without stamp box. Austrians and Germans, it seems, behave alike, without much appreciation of the aesthetics of image concordance that are obvious to French eyes. The sender wrote that he/she is leaving Mena House tomorrow (February 25) to check in to the Ghezireh Palace Hotel in Cairo. This is the fourth identification of the card's sender as a Mena House guest (other examples in messages dated 1894, 1903, and 1907).



Fig. 2 - A first edition Mena House Hotel illustrated postal card with 5 mills Fourth Issue stamp and HM1 PYRAMIDS cancel dated March 21, 1893 on the address side, sent from the hotel post office to Ravello in Italy. This TCA is in subset two. There are three more TCA on similar first edition Mena House cards with HM1 cancel dated between March 31, 1892 and April 9, 1894.

In 1901 two more TCA were sent to Ireland and Paris. Again the latter, like the 1900 TCV maxicard (see Figure 9 in *QC 278*, p.158), made a good postcard choice but missed the chance to create the first P3 TCV maxicard by writing too much on the picture side. Interestingly, the sender was not French; he wrote in English to a friend staying at a Paris hotel. Two more years would elapse before the first P3 PYRAMIDS TCV maxicard was created.

Finally, in 1903, the aforementioned first P3 TCV maxicard was sent to a female friend at the Savoy Hotel in Cairo by someone who had just arrived “safely” at the Mena House Hotel in advance of his/her luggage. From someone who appears to have been quite safety conscious, we would place our bet on this postcard having been given to the concierge for posting. For additional comments, please read Mike Murphy’s “Maxicard \$1,713 shock on eBay?” (*QC 245*, p.240).

The following year, 1904, two P3 PYRAMIDS-cancelled TCV maxicards were sent Poste Restante to Cairo on the same day (January 11). Most likely they were created by the same person who, with or without the help of the hotel concierge, may have been the addressee as well: Mr Marius Bengalis. Also for the first time, there is no message from the sender apart from date of posting and his first name. On the other hand, again on a single day, April 23, three P3 PYRAMIDS-cancelled TCA were sent to Cheshire in England.

Two P3 PYRAMIDS cancel TCV maxicards were sent to France in 1905, one of them perhaps by a guest at the Mena House because he/she chose a postcard very similar to the 1903 TCV maxicard (*Figure 5*).

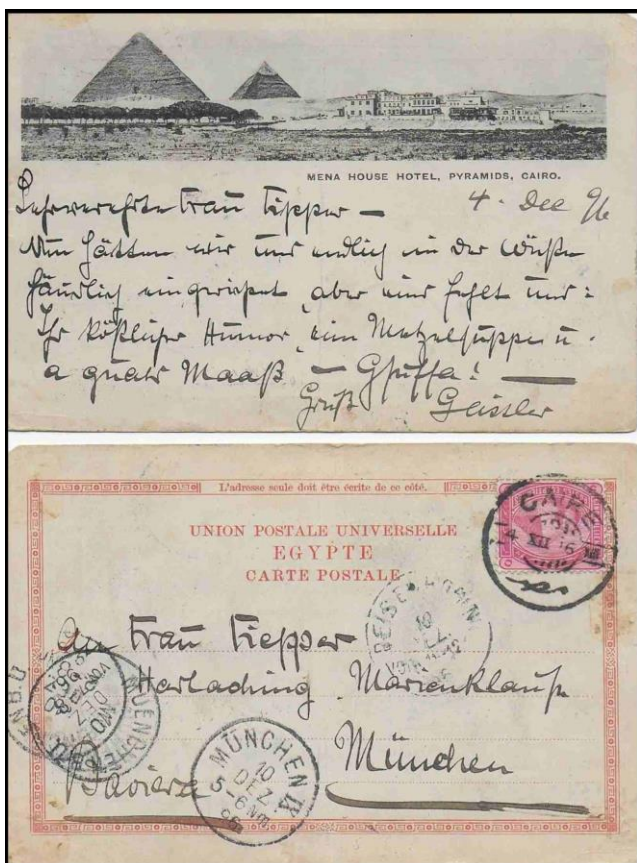


Fig. 3 - An example of the second edition Mena House Hotel card with 5 mills Fourth Issue stamp and CAIRE cancel dated December 4, 1896 on the address side, sent to Munich. This TCA is in subset three.



Fig. 4 - A second edition Mena House Hotel card with 5 mills Fourth Issue stamp and P3 PYRAMIDS cancel dated February 24, 1899 on the address side, sent from the Pyramids post office to Schloss Kormoran near Modrán bei Prag in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. This TCA is in subset four. Another TCA was sent to the same address on February 21.

In 1906 there are again more P3 PYRAMIDS-cancelled TCA (five) than TCV maxicards because one TCA pair was sent to Bucharest, Romania, on March 9 and another possible TCA pair showing the hotel was sent to Vienna on March 12 (date not clear on one cancel).

The year 1907 is the vintage year for P3 PYRAMIDS-cancelled TCV maxicards, not only in number - ten in total - but also in quality. The highly concordant Lichtenstern & Harari Nr 14 postcard (*Figure 6*), as my second favourite, was used three times. Lichtenstern & Harari Nr 1, another excellent choice, was used once. As expected, nine of the ten were sent to France, with the tenth unknown. As in 1904, three TCV cards were sent to Auxerre in France on March 18, two with identical address, and another three to Tarn in France on November 23, again with two sharing an address.

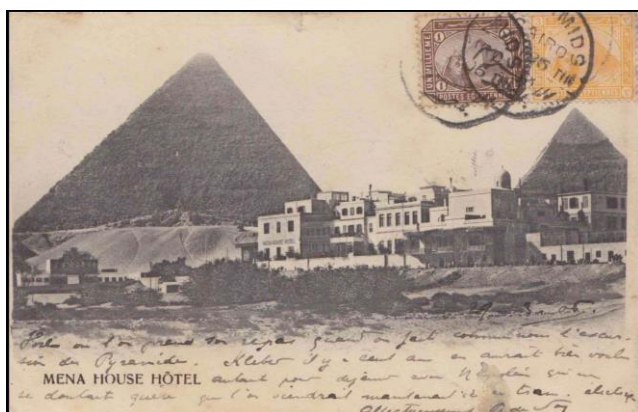
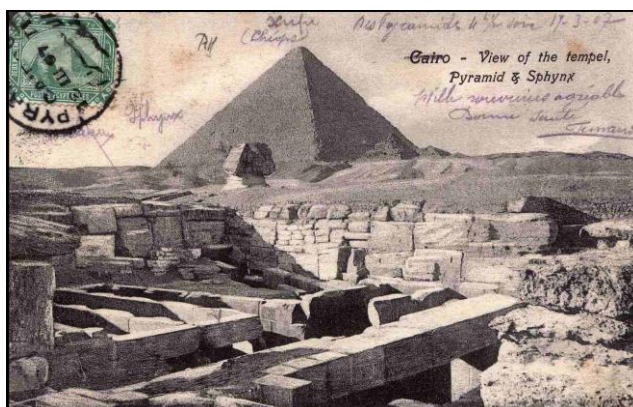


Fig. 5 - An example of the Egypt hotel family second generation early TCV maxicard with 1 and 3 mills Fourth Issue stamps and P3 PYRAMIDS cancel dated March 29, 1905 sent to Le Mans in France. This TCV is in subset four.

Fig. 6 - An Egypt hotel family second generation early TCV maxicard with 2 mills Fourth Issue stamp and P3 PYRAMIDS cancel dated March 18, 1907 sent from the Pyramids post office to Auxerre in France. Also sent to Auxerre on the same day are two more TCV, one with identical Lichtenstern & Harari Nr 14 postcard and one with Lichtenstern & Harari Nr 9. All three TCV maxicards are in subset four.



Finally, in 1909, another P3 PYRAMIDS cancel TCV maxicard pair was sent on January 24 to the same address in Gap, France.

The fifth subset from 1910 has four recorded examples. During this year the PYRAMIDS cancel was replaced by AHRAM (the Arabic word for pyramids). All four known examples are TCV and cancelled P4 (as designated by Vahe in *QC 223*, p.273) in February. Two cards show the Sphinx and the Great Pyramid and two do not show the Sphinx. Two TCV maxicards were sent to the same address in Paris (on February 18), one to Calvados, France, and one to San Francisco (*Figure 7*).

The sixth subset is the second largest with 19 known examples. The first three 1911 TCV maxicards with P6A PYRAMIDS cancel (as designated by Vahe in *QC 223*, p.273) were sent on January 27 to two addresses in France (one is shown in *Figure 8*), but handwriting differences suggest two different senders (one pair sent by the same person), perhaps posted on the same day by the hotel concierge. Apart from those without images, all subset postcards have divided backs and short messages.

The next three 1911 P6A PYRAMIDS-cancel TCV cards were sent on different days, two to France but the third is missing information.

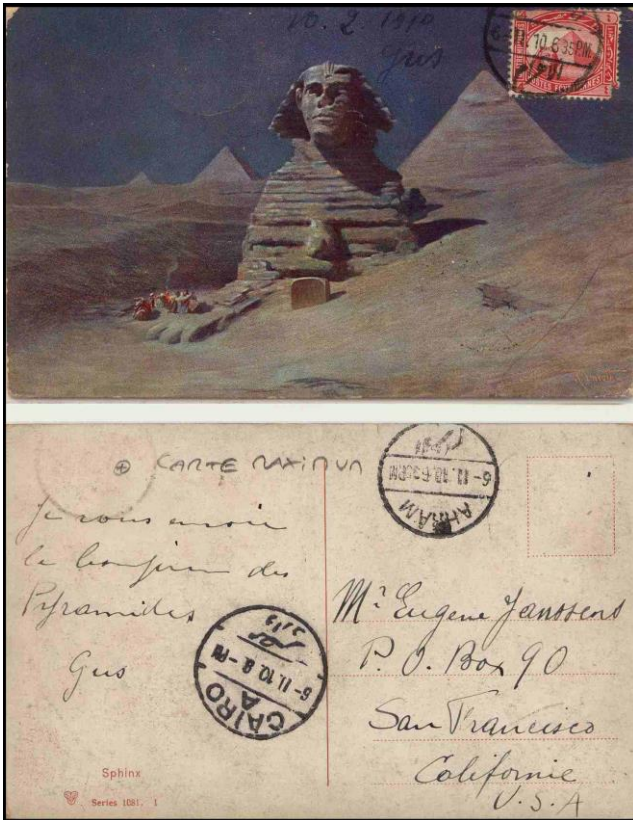


Fig. 7 - An example of the Egypt hotel family second generation early TCV maxicard with 4 mills Fourth Issue stamp and P4 AHRAM cancel dated February 6, 1910 sent from the Pyramids post office to San Francisco. The address side has an imprinted stamp box with no stamp being franked. This TCV is in subset five.

In 1912 the first three TCV maxicards with P6A PYRAMIDS cancel were sent on February 25 to two addresses in Paris. All three are edition LL and two of them identical. The final 1912 TCV maxicard was sent on December 20 to Sussex in England carrying Christmas and New Year greetings.

In the following year, the first three P6A PYRAMIDS TCV maxicards were sent on February 25, two of them to different addresses in Germany.

During World War I, the Mena House Hotel was requisitioned by Australian and New Zealand troops. Most of the correspondence was from soldiers and officers and the next P6A PYRAMIDS maxicard was sent to Australia in 1914, using the four-millimes Pyramids stamp of the Pictorial issues, the first maxicard using stamps from the newly issued set.

The next P6A cancel is again found on the 1914 four millimes Pyramids stamp to create in 1916 the first recorded TCV maxicard of the 1914~1922 Sultanate of Egypt (Figure 9).

Finally, the last recorded P6A cancel TCV maxicard was sent in 1920 to Paris, its use of another stamp of the 1914 issue, the five millimes Sphinx, indicating that the P6A PYRAMIDS cancel lasted beyond 1919 and that the transition to P6B (as designated by Vahe in QC 223, p.273) may have occurred in 1922.

The declaration of independence (February 28, 1922) ended the British protectorate. On March 15 the Sultan became King Fuad I (reigned 1922–36) of Egypt.

There is no seventh subset because there is no P6B PYRAMIDS cancel TCV maxicard or TCA before February 28, 1922. One possible explanation is that the cancel was initiated on or after that date. Not included in this subset is a P6B PYRAMIDS cancel on a 1922 Crown Overprint five millimes Sphinx stamp on TCA sent to Paris in 1923. It is not a TCV maxicard, but would still be invaluable as a rare P6B cancel, and hope remains for a P6B TCV maxicard to be found sometime in the future.

At this moment, our data set is incomplete. Our analytics approach has however yielded preliminary insights into a general picture of the Pyramids maxicards and its precursors. Before 1900, some six PYRAMIDS TCA cancels are recorded (four HM1 and two P3) and only one of them was sent to France. Between 1900 and 1922 there are at least 40 PYRAMIDS-cancelled TCV and 15 TCA.

Fifty of these 55 have known destination countries, with 30 (60 per cent) sent to France. Five went to Cairo (three are TCV but one is Savoy Hotel and two are Poste Restante), four to England (three are TCA), three TCA to Austria, two TCV to Germany in 1913, and two TCA to Romania. Of the 30 sent to France after 1900 we found 27 TCV and only three TCA. By contrast, for non-France destinations combined, we found 12 TCA and only eight TCV. Thus the French have a 77 per cent share of TCV versus 20 per cent of TCA. More interestingly, the TCV share for non-French increases with time, ie, 19 per cent for P3, 25 per cent for P4, and 27 per cent for P6A.

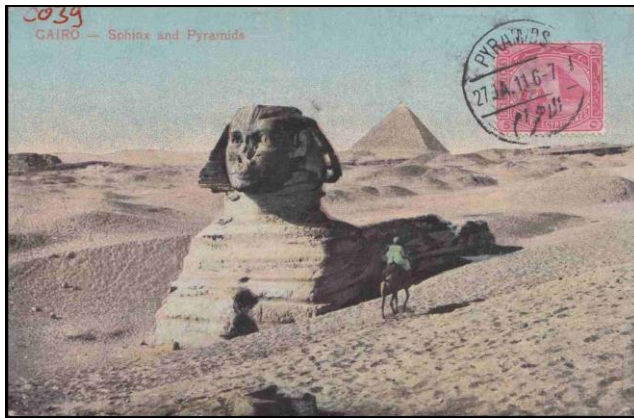


Fig. 8 - One of the two examples from the Egypt hotel family second generation early TCV maxicard with 5 mills Fourth Issue stamp and P6A PYRAMIDS cancel dated January 27, 1911 sent to the same person at Pont-à-Mousson in France. A third card was sent on the same day to Montélimar in France. These three TCV are in subset six.

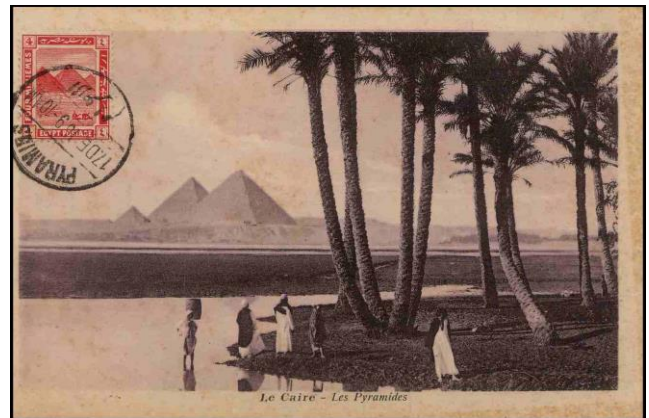


Fig. 9 - An Egypt hotel family second generation early TCV maxicard with 4 mills Pictorial stamp of 1914 and P6A PYRAMIDS cancel dated December 17, 1916 sent from the Pyramids post office to Caudéran in France. The address side has an imprinted stamp box with no stamp being franked. This TCV maxicard is in subset six.

In our last essay, “Cairo hotel maxicard analytics” (QC 278, pp.151-158), we presented Cairo hotel TVA (*timbre côté vue et adresse*, meaning that the stamp is on the same side as both picture and address) as first parental generation maxicard precursors which are imprinted stamp box dependent. These TVA precursors achieve image concordance by design and are sent to various countries by all nationalities.

By about the end of the 19th century we observed the emergence of second generation (or F1) TCV precursors. These are largely independent of the imprinted stamp box, being always absent on the picture side and occasionally present on the address side. In fact they are sender-dependent, or have become image concordant by choice, as if they have evolved by means of concordance selection (ie, the senders know what they are doing).

Support for the above hypothesis comes from multiple sources: first, Swiss hotel TCV precursors, in particular the Hotel Rigi-Kulm; second, various royal house coat of arms being displayed on palace gates, wall decorations, etc; third, the nexus of a monarch who is popular with both stamp and postcard collectors, availability of analogical stamp issues and postcard editions, and other reasons now lost to time. These three TCV datasets were used to demonstrate that more TCV were sent to France than any other country.

In addition to the above sources, now we can add this dataset from Egypt. The French connection to PYRAMIDS-cancel TCV confirms results from those three sources. In fact, despite their high price tags, association with the Mena House Hotel and thus considered as members of the hotel precursor family, PYRAMIDS cancel precursors would be the second hotel subfamily, second only to Hotel Rigi-Kulm.

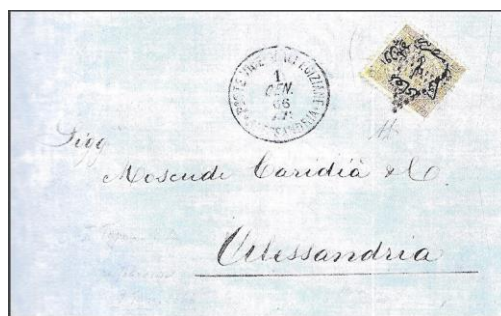
There are 13 Swiss hotel TCV precursors with a stamp box imprinted on the address side; 12 were sent from Switzerland to France. So French hotel guests ignored the imprinted stamp box in favor of pictorial concordance between hotel illustrations and stamp images. When we examined a similar number of 14 PYRAMIDS cancel TCV precursors with stamp box imprinted on the address side, only nine were sent from Egypt to France. The Swiss dataset is limited between 1903 and 1906 by new Helvetia and Tellknabe stamp issues but the PYRAMIDS dataset extends from 1904 to 1920 by including three TCV precursors franked with 1914 Pictorial stamps. Perhaps other nationalities followed the French lead as early as 1910 (sent to San Francisco) and 1913 (to Germany). One century and another generation later, maximaphily has become an international pursuit beyond the wildest imaginations of the French pioneers watching us from heaven.

Acknowledgments. I thank Chih-Ping Chu, George Constantourakis, Bento Dias, Amir Elmallah, Anton Jansen, Mike Murphy, Hani Sharestan, Alain Stragier, Lucien S. Toutounji, Vahe Varjabedian, Terry Watson, Richard Wheatley, and others for critical inputs and helpful peer reviews. Their contributions justify the use of “we” throughout this article.

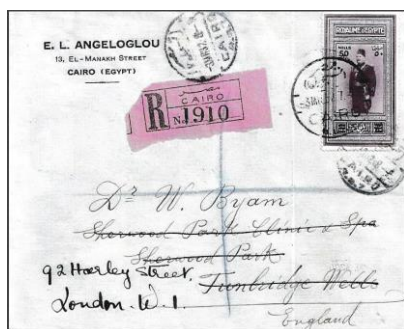
**Book review: *Handbook and Catalogue of Egypt First-day Cancellations 1866-1952*
by Hany H Makram (ESC 449)**

There is only one word to describe this new handbook and catalogue: stupendous. Vast in its concept, extensive in its reach, enormous in its presentation, breathtaking in its imaginative approach, this is the first attempt to present Egyptian first-day covers in their classical period, and it hits the mark every time.

With 3,500 covers recorded, and 1,500 of them illustrated, the book's 500 pages present a date-listed panoply of all issues from the very first in 1866 – yes, there is an FDC (right) with a retta cancelling the 10pa First Issue with a circular datestamp alongside clearly reading 1 GEN 66 – to the single stamp celebrating the birth of Crown Prince Ahmed on May 6, 1952.



All of Palestine, stamped Rafah 15 MA 48; and a royal FDC from Cairo dealer to ESC Chairman



Not only are the various categories – definitives, commemoratives, mini-sheets, airmails, express, Army Post, British Forces and Palestine – and their postmarks listed individually, but within those lists the covers recorded are presented in sub-categories of plain envelopes, illustrated, postal stationery... and where necessary, hotel covers (many special events took place in the major hotels).

Beyond even that fine-tuning, there is one more important sub-division, into covers “posted” and “unposted.” It is perhaps not surprising, given the major part played by stamp dealers and hotel concierges over the years, and before the Post Office produced its own printed FDCs in the early 1960s, that many of those listed never saw a postman’s sack. Those covers properly passing through the post are awarded a premium value.

Pricing in catalogues is always a difficulty, as the author acknowledges. He tries to resolve the problem by listing in US dollars, and basing his estimates on rarity (supply and demand) after consulting auction prices and with both collectors and dealers to be accurate as possible.

It is fascinating to follow through the early examples – among the definitives, no FDCs are recorded within the De La Rue issues until the 1914 Pictorials, which seem to have really spurred the market (though none are listed for the Harrisons or the Crown overprints). I am not

surprised to see no FDC for the First Portrait issue (1923-34), which seems to have trickled out gradually from London over the space of a year. But for commems there is an unending cornucopia of covers of all shapes, sizes and designs, and postmarks reflecting use in the smaller towns as well as the major events being celebrated. Truly a magnificent display.

If there is a niggle, it is that the printing of the dust-jacket doesn't seem quite to fit, and its illustrations are slightly distorted, resulting in oval datestamps; and on my copy there is a very faint vertical line, legacy of the printing process, down the centre of each page. But these cannot and must not deflect from a magnificent piece of work, a boon to all collectors of these fascinating covers.

Mike Murphy

***Handbook and Catalogue of Egypt First-day Cancellations 1866-1952*, by Hany H Makram. Hardback, 23x32cm, 508pp, available from the author (priority postage \$85) at makramhany@hotmail.com. ESC 10% off cover price.**

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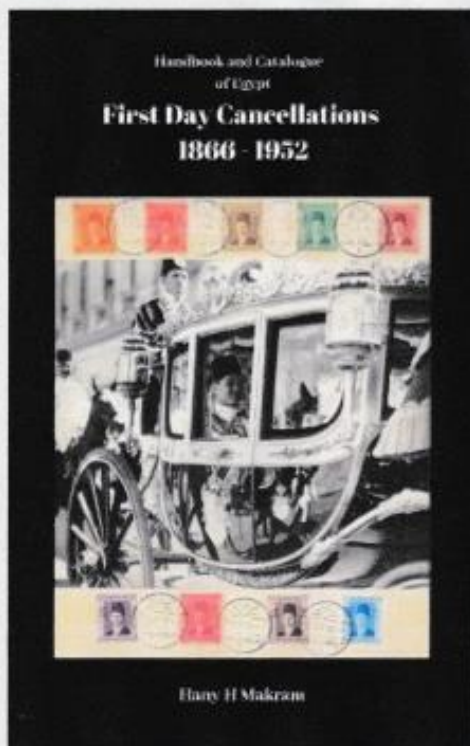
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