

The
Quarterly Circular
of
THE
EGYPT



STUDY CIRCLE

June Quarter 2022 – Vol XXIV No 10 – Whole Series No 281 – Pages 219-242

CONTENTS

Officers / Schedule 219-220, Meeting reports 220-221, Members' Changes 241

ARTICLES

Egypt's postal expansion into Africa	Mahmoud Ramadan	pp.221-230
Star and Crescent (Type X) postmarks update	Mike Murphy	pp.231-232
1872 1 Piastre, classification of flaws: Part 1	Ramez Atiya	pp.233-239
Student fee revenues at Upper Egypt universities	Vahe Varjabedian	pp.240-241
New Issues test for perforator	Mike Murphy	pp.242-iii
ESC to take part in worldwide displays		p.iii
Giza enigma: does anyone have an answer?	John Davis	p.iv





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Meetings Programme 2022

[See also pages 220 and iii](#)

Sat 2 July 2pm	Victory Services Club	Club Competition plus 'More TPOs'	Sami Sadek
Wed 28 Sept to Sat 1 Oct	Autumn Stampex	ESC members' exhibits around general theme 'Africa'	All members
Sat 1 Oct 2-4pm	Autumn Stampex	ESC meeting and postal auction 65	All members
Thurs 17 Nov 1-5pm	Royal Philatelic Society London	Major ESC presentation marking 100 years since Tutankhamun's discovery	Contact Jon Aitchison for details

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Facebook

How to take part in 2022 meetings

Sat 2 July 2022, 2pm	Annual competition plus “More T.P.O.s and some rare routes”, presented by Sami Sadek. At the Victory Services Club, Marble Arch. Displays on transport welcome.
Wed 28 Sept – Sat 1 Oct 2022	ESC exhibiting at Autumn Stampex. The exhibition subject is “Africa” and we hope to have a strong turnout of exhibits from the Circle. You can book your space at £25 per frame on the Stampex website or contact Jon Aitchison for more details at britishlocals@gmail.com.
Sat 1 October 2022, 2pm-4pm	Autumn Stampex meeting at the Business Design Centre. Room and postal auction. “Ten sheets” informal display.
Thurs 17 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 - on any subject, but we need only one display on each subject. Please contact our Chairman, Jon Aitchison, at britishlocals@gmail.com to reserve a display space. An ESC dinner at a nearby restaurant will follow the display. We hope to welcome several overseas members to this event.

Report of the meeting, May 7 2022 at the Royal Philatelic Society

Perhaps it was the brilliant sunshine after a chilly couple of weeks, perhaps the grandstanding football on TV. Whatever the reason, it was a rather disappointing turnout of only a couple of dozen members of both societies for the joint meeting with the Cinderella Stamp Club at the Royal Philatelic Society London. But if numbers were few, enthusiasm was massive, and a series of displays kept us all occupied, amused and fascinated. ESC members present were Jon Aitchison, Mike Murphy, John Clarke, David Sutton. Apologies were received from John Davis, Sami Sadek, Brian Sedgley, Paul Green.

As Vice-Chairman of the Cinderella group and organiser of the meeting, Jon Aitchison was much to the fore, presenting three displays of outstanding Egyptian “back of the book” material. First up was his eight frames of “Officially Sealed” labels, ranging from early (mis)use of Interpostals to sealing damaged postal material, particularly on wreck mail, via the well-known resealing labels in English and French to today’s plastic sealing strips and the “Opened for Customs inspection” version.

A fascinating collection by Maggie Thompson, President of the Cinderella group, showed illustrated machine cancels from Germany – fittingly 100 years since they were accepted for international franking – with a bewildering display of advertising logos ranging from cooked meats to boots and shoes and heavy industrial machinery. On the maritime front, Bill Hedley showed page upon page of the Danube Steam Navigation Company, which was the world’s largest shipping company with more than 200 vessels in 1880..

Then it was back to Jon Aitchison, with a comprehensive collection and explanation of every one of the various Interpostal types, including examples of their various uses and proof sheets not only of local-office CDSs stamped on to Type X IPs but also conclusive evidence – contra to received wisdom - that IPs were printed in sheets of 60 (two panes of 30). Finally it was his turn again to exhibit another favourite – printed envelopes illustrated with advertising for the company sending the message. An amazing variety of sizes, shapes, colours, even to the same illustration recorded by different companies. All in all, a fascinating and wide-ranging meeting that deserved a better turnout. Those who missed it have only themselves to blame.

Report of joint meeting with the Sudan Study Group, Morley Hayes Hotel, nr Derby, March 18-22

A most enjoyable and productive weekend meeting was shared with our Sudan-collecting colleagues in charming and amenable surroundings, with remarkable material on display and excellent presentations by members of both societies. ESC members present were: John Davis (President), Jon Aitchison (Chairman), Mike Murphy (Secretary), Sami Sadek (Treasurer), Neil Hitchens (Webmaster/Deputy Chairman), Brian Sedgley (Committee), Ted Fraser-Smith, Laurence Kimpton, Mahmoud Ramadan (Egypt), Richard Wheatley. Guests: Rosemary Davis, Sarah Sedgley, Yvonne Wheatley.

The formula of standing displays ranged around the walls of the exhibiting area proved a winner, with two or three collections being shown silently at the same time as a main display went ahead in front of the audience. John Davis (Fuad 5m and postal stationery), Laurence Kimpton (air mails), Ted Fraser-Smith (new issues), Brian Sedgley (territorial POs), Sami Sadek (TPOs), Richard Wheatley (Simon Arzt), Mike Murphy (Rural Post and Palaces post) and Jon Aitchison all took advantage of the opportunities offered.

At the same time we were regaled with outstanding material from the Sudan side, with Richard Stock, Jacke Philips, Andy Neal, Paul Grigg, Gwynne Harries and Julie Anderson in particular displaying the close interrelation between the two nations before and around the turn of the century. Postal services crossed both countries with remarkable efficiency, even under wartime contingencies, and we were surprised by the strength and depth of the postal co-operation.

On the sidelines there was more informal discussion about a potential linking of the two societies, both of which are feeling the pinch of declining and ageing membership. There was agreement at the end, however, that links should remain no more than close while the effect of SSG's new Facebook page is studied.

Among those attending were several who were members of both societies, including Mahmoud Ramadan, who travelled from Egypt specifically for the meeting. He was understandably eager to display his early covers among the entries for the prestigious Norton Collier Prize – and was voted an overwhelming winner for a stupendous display. Happily he has given us permission to reproduce the exhibit in full. *See below.*



Photo Andy Neal

***Mahmoud Ramadan, right,
receives his award from Dr
Gwynne Harries, SSG President***

Here is an edited version of the display which won Mahmoud Ramadan the Norton Collier Prize, and the congratulations of all those present, at the Derby meeting. [See next pages.](#)

Egypt's postal expansion into Africa

Mahmoud Ramadan (ESC 358)

Two-minute introduction: This display is about pre- and post-opening of Egyptian territorial post offices in Africa, up to the 1880s. Egypt initiated its expansion southwards into Africa as early as 1820, during the reign of Mohamed Ali Pacha, with much wider expansions from the 1860s under Khedive Ismail. The areas occupied by Egypt during that period is found today in seven nations, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritria, Djibouti, Somaliland and the northern borders of Uganda. This era ended with the Mahdi's uprising in the early 1880s.

The earliest post offices were opened in November 1867 at Suakin and Massawa. In 1873 offices followed at Berber, Dongola, Khartoum, Wadi Halfa and supposedly at Kassala. Several others were opened later in the 1870s, but researchers agree about only a few of these. Several areas remain under research today, including "How were letters dispatched pre-post-offices?" and "How did letters sent from distant locations reach the nearest post offices?"

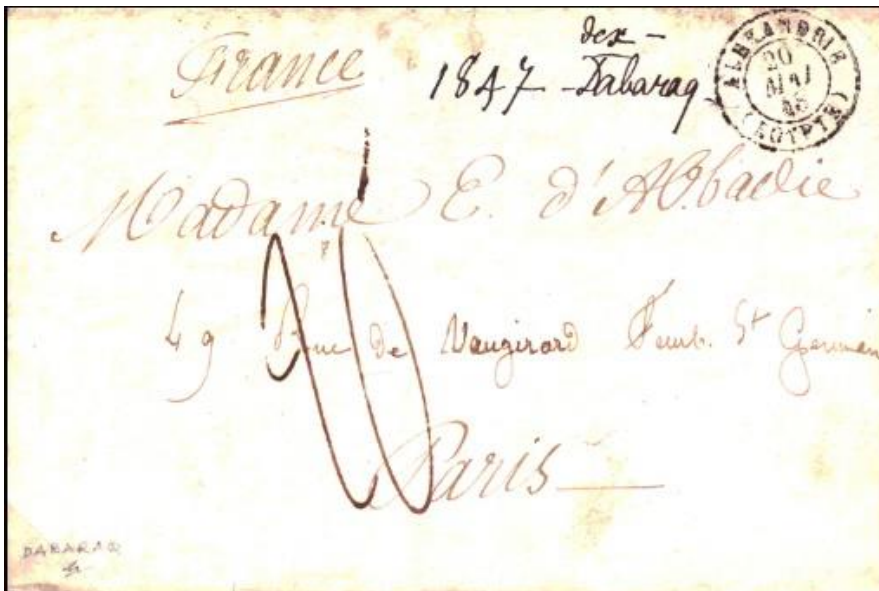
Egyptian postal expansion into territorial Africa – pre-post offices



**Adua (Adowa),
Tigre region of
Abyssinia,
southwest of
Massawa on the
Red Sea**



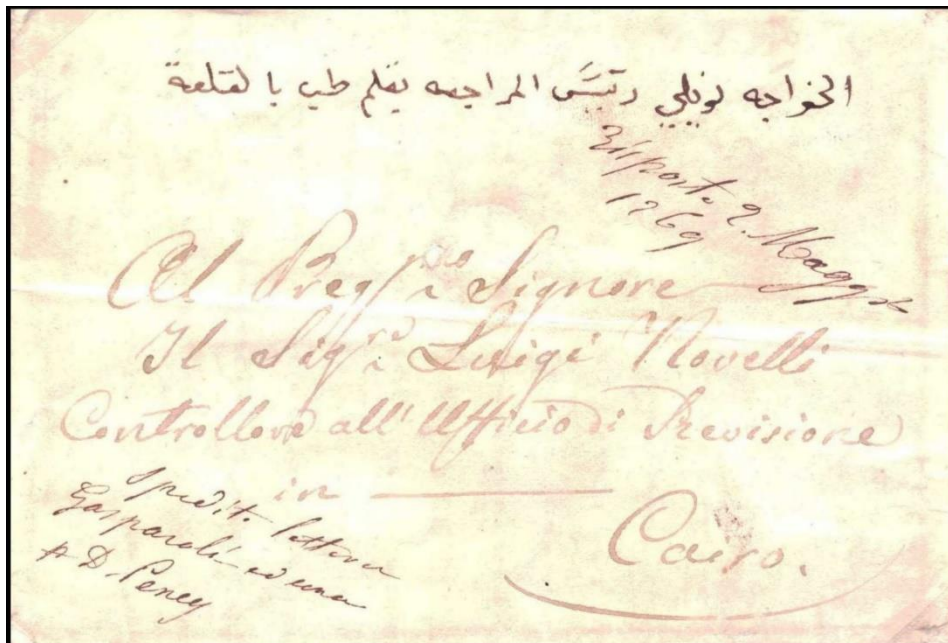
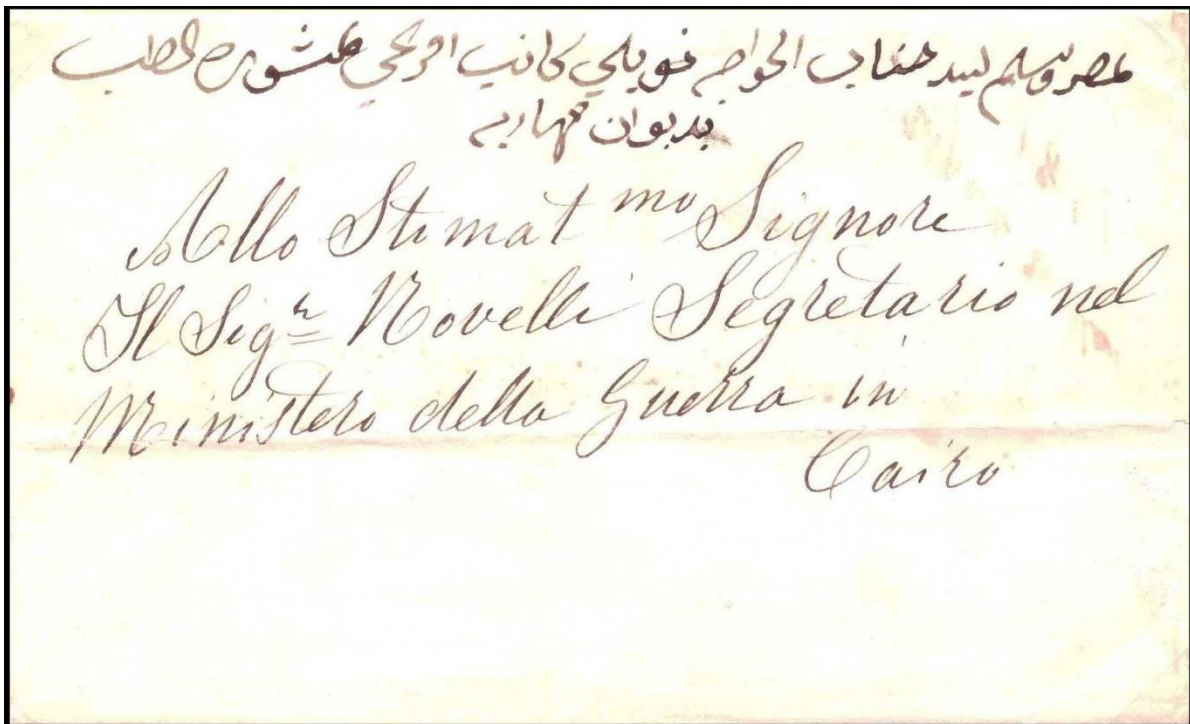
Adowa, Abyssinia, to Lyon, France, 7 April 1843, believed to be the third earliest letter from Ethiopia. Postmarked French PO Alexandrie / Egypte 17 August 1843 (four months 10 days travel), framed red Paquebots / de le Mediterranée, disinfection cachet Purifiée au Lazaret / Malte. Charged 24 decimes, due on delivery. Reverse – Marseille arrival 31 August 1843 and Lyon 2 September 1843. Based on four-month journey, this cover is thought to have travelled to Gedaref, Wad Medani, Khartoum, Berber, Abu Hamed, by camel to Korosko (Nubia), then Aswan, and by Nile to Alexandria. Or, remotely possible, camel to Massawa, Suez by sea, then Alexandria.



**Dabarraq / Dabarag /
Debark / Gondar, just north
of Lake Tana (Tsana). About
500km southeast of
Khartoum.**

Dabraaq (Dabarraq / Gondar) to Paris 1 December 1847, written by the Irish explorer and geologist Anthony Thomson d'Abbadie. Postmarked French PO Alexandrie / Egypte 20 May 1848 (five months 20 days travel), charged 20 decimes due on delivery. Reverse – Arrival Paris 31 May 1848. Travelled by river to Khartoum, Berber and Abu Hamed, then by camel to Korosko, and on to Aswan, and by Nile to Alexandria.

Egyptian postal expansion into territorial Africa – pre-post offices



Two Official entires sent to the same addressee in Cairo, the Italian Signor Novelly, who was one of the earliest staff of the Medical Division of the Egyptian Ministry of War. Above, sent from Obeid (Kordofan), dated 2 July 1851 (see *Biolato p.931*) and travelled by camel via Dongola to Halfa and Aswan. Below, sent from Cartum, 17 February 1853 (*Biolato p.933*), and travelled on the Nile through Berber to Abu Hamed, then by camel to Korosko and on to Aswan. Both were carried by the Mohamed Ali Post, as evidenced by the re-entry of the address in Arabic, as decreed by Mohamed Ali in 1830. Free of charge irrespective of weight or distance. The lower entire arrived on 25 1853 (1269 Hijri). No other postal makings.

Egyptian postal expansion into territorial Africa – pre-post offices



The Posta Europea Type VI
for Cairo. Used 1863-1865



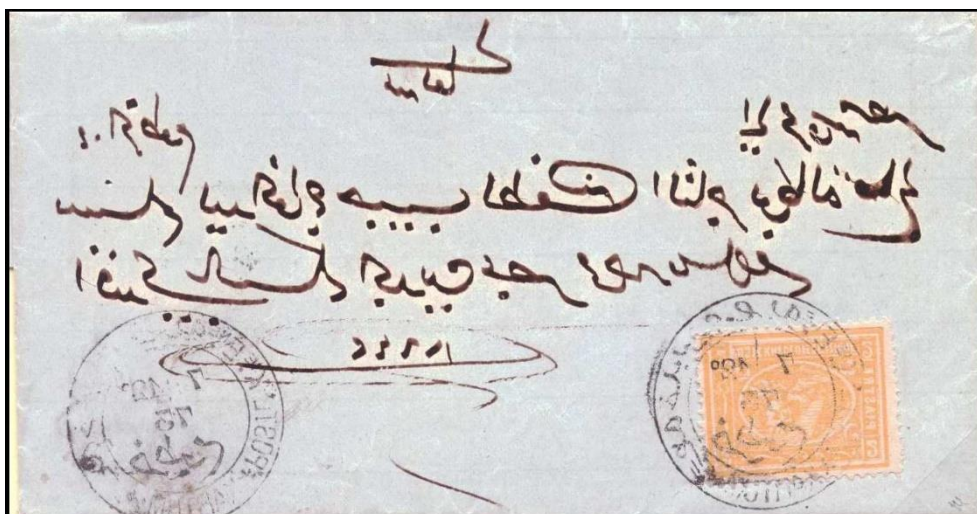
Austrian P.O. in Alexandria
(1845-1889).

The first circular type used.
Day / month only



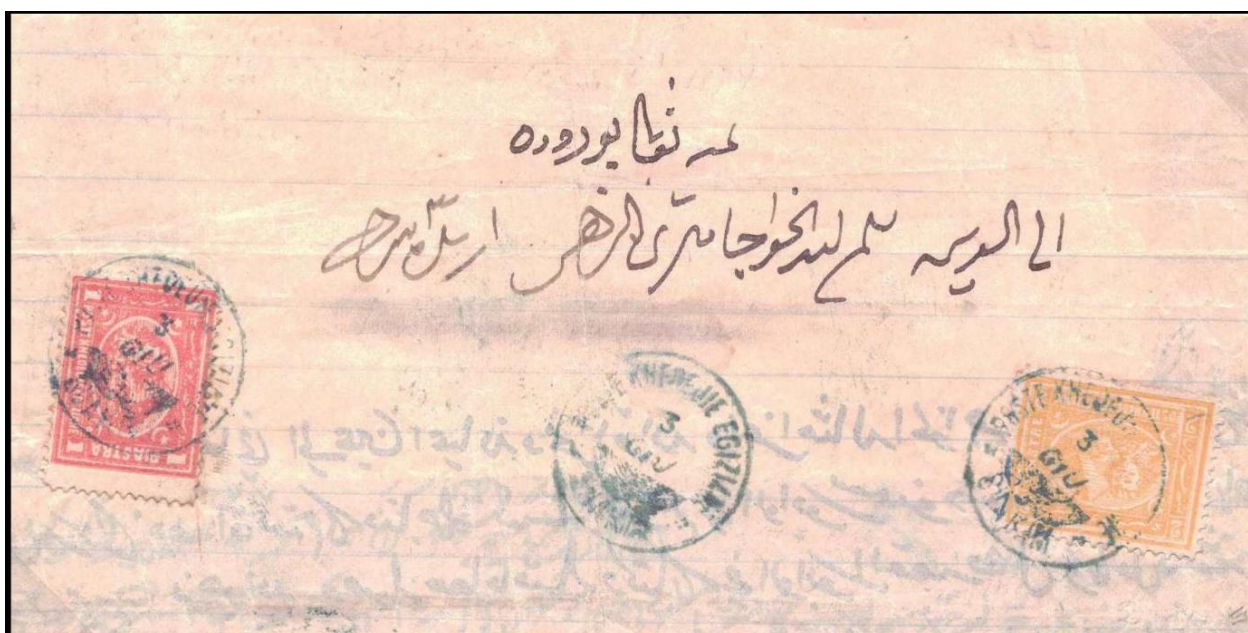
Khartoum to Vienna, 1863. Endorsed at the top “Chartum in Central Africa” and “via Trieste”. The earliest recorded stamped cover from Sudan, with Type VI Posta Europea Cairo of 17 September 1863 and Austrian PO Alexandrien 18/9. On the reverse, arrival mark Wieden in Wien 25/9. Addressed to Edouard Binder and most probably written by his brother Franz, who as Austrian Vice-Consul in Khartoum would have enjoyed free dispatch by the Mohamed Ali Post and would also have had accounts with both the Posta Europea and the Austrian consular post office. This cover travelled by Nile from Khartoum through Berber to Abu Hamed, then by camel to Korosko and on to Aswan. By Nile again to Cairo and the Posta Europea, and there delivered to the Austrian PO. Featured in Biolato p740 and several other publications.

Postal expansion - Egyptian territorial Africa



The earliest Khartoum cds. Used Oct 1873 to Nov 1874. Stagg Type 9, Smith Type IV-4

Khartoum to Cairo 7 12 1873. The Egyptian territorial PO in Khartoum was opened on 1 October 1873 and this cover was correctly franked with an 1872-issue 2-piastre adhesive, 1pi to Asyut, plus 1pi to Cairo. On the adhesive, a complete strike of the double ring bilingual Poste K^{ie}. E^{ne}. Kartum [Khedivie Egiziane], with an information strike alongside (*see right*). Reverse – transit mark of Siut 31 DIC 1873 and arrival Cairo 1 GEN 74 TIII. This cover was carried by the Mohamed Ali Post from Khartoum to the closest Egyptian PO at Asyut (Siut), and then re-entered the Khedivial postal system to Cairo, by rail. Only two entires recorded with this cancellation, of which this is the earlier.



Suakin to Suez 3 June 1874, cover front with part of the back lost. The Egyptian territorial PO in Suakin was opened in November 1867. Franked with 1872 issue 1pi (red) and 2pi (yellow) [maritime rates not confirmed]. Postmark Stagg Type 3 (he states p.11: “A seal type of canceller illustrated as figure 3 was used between the 3rd June and the 6th August of 1874 [later examples recorded]. Only one complete letter bearing this seal has so far been recorded.” Reverse – an indistinct part strike of Suez arrival postmark on part-back. Travelled by sea.



Stagg Type 3 Smith Type IV-1.1



1872 issue 1pi Cancelled 4 Dec

Postal expansion - Egyptian territorial Africa

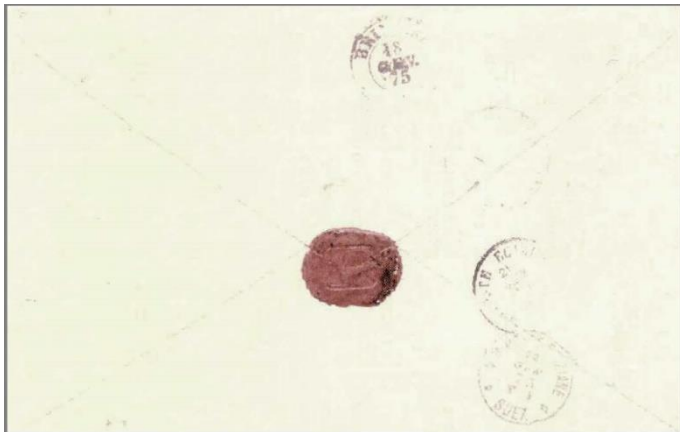
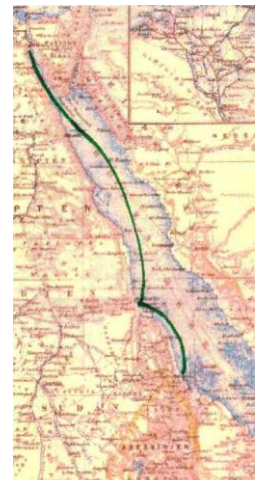


Illustration of the reverse

Suez

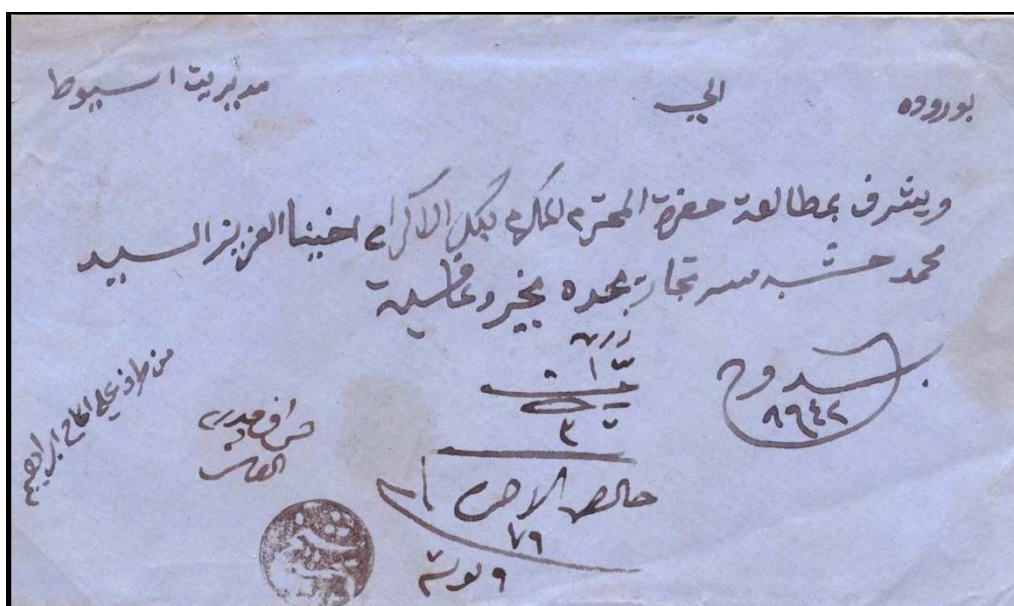
Suakim

Massawa



Brunswick to Suez to Suakim to Massawa, 14 January 1875. Originally addressed “Care of the Consulate of Germany, Suez, Mer Rouge,” it was endorsed Brindisi-Alexandria. Redirected on arrival in Suez to Mr Conti, Directeur de la Poste, Suakim, who redirected again, to Massawah. Franked by Germany 1872 Large Shield 1gr carmine and 2gr grey-ultramarine (Michel 19-20), worth 10+20pf in 1875, so underpaid by 35pf. The face has cds of Braunschweig 14 January 1875, framed Unzureichend / Frankiert with red crayon 30pf (next to stamps) and 10pf on left, Suez 23 GEN 75, Egyptian postage due marking 5pi 30pa, the shortfall of 2.5pi doubled to 5pi plus 30pa apparently to cover carriage from Suakim to Massawa. On the reverse, an indistinct transit mark on 17th, Brindisi 18 GEN 75, Alexandria 22 GEN 75, Suez 22 GEN 75. Alexandria to Suez via Cairo by train, then Red Sea voyages to Suakim and Massawa.

Postal expansion - Egyptian territorial Africa

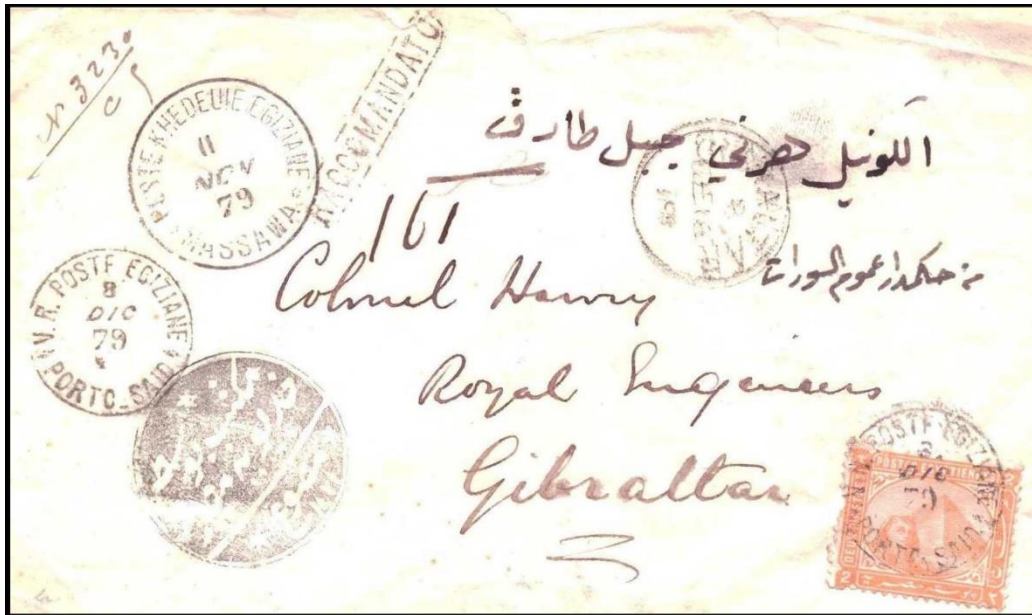


El Fasher (Darfur) to Asyut 13 June 1876, all-Arabic stampless letter. In the upper half of the face is the addressee and address. The ornamental design at right is a talismanic mark (seeking safe travel and arrival). In the lower centre is the Mohamed Aly Post (MAP) script. The weight is marked as 1.5 dirhems and rate 3 piastres, postage paid. Dated 6 Baounah 1876 (Coptic calendar). Arabic script reads El-Fasher Cashier and his negative seal name-cachet (Sheikh Mohamed), and at lower left is the name of the sender. The reverse has a Khartoum transit mark, Arabic date 20 Jun 76, and Asyut arrival 13 Jul 76. The normal rate for a 1.5 dirhem letter is 2 piastres (1pi to Khartoum, 1pi to Asyut). This letter is 1.5 dirhems and rated at 3 piastres. Travelled by camel to Khartoum, then via Berber, Abu Hamed, Korosko, on to Aswan, and by Nile to Asyut.



Khartoum to Cairo, redirected to London, 14 March 1877. Addressed to Edwin de Leon (former US Consul in Cairo) at Sheppard's Hotel, where it was readdressed to London. Franked 1874-75 issue 2 piastres (1pi to Asyut, 1pi to Cairo), cancelled by Arabic-dated Post Egiziane Hartum with information strike at the left. The reverse bears transit marks of Asyut 5 April 77, Cairo 6 April 77 and arrival London 14 April 77. Travelled by camel to the nearest Khedivial post office at Asyut, then on the Nile to Cairo.

Postal expansion - Egyptian territorial Africa



Massawa to Gibraltar, 11 November 1879. Addressed (in the hand of General Charles Gordon), to a colonel of the Royal Engineers. On the face, a large Massawa negative seal (denoting Official mail), plus Poste Khedivie Egiziane Massawa 11 Nov 79, with V.R.Poste Egiziane / Port Said 8 Dic 77, tying an 1879 issue 2pi (orange) with another strike at the left. Also a framed Raccomandato handstamp (earliest recorded from Massawa), along with a C.G. (Charles Gordon) registration 323. Arrival Gibraltar Dec 79. On the reverse, transit at Suez 25 Nov 79. Travelled via Red Sea from Massawa to Suez, then through Suez Canal to Port Said and on to Gibraltar. Posted free of charge inland only. Franked at Port Said.

Devra Tabor (Ethiopia) to Grenoble (France), 25 March 1880.

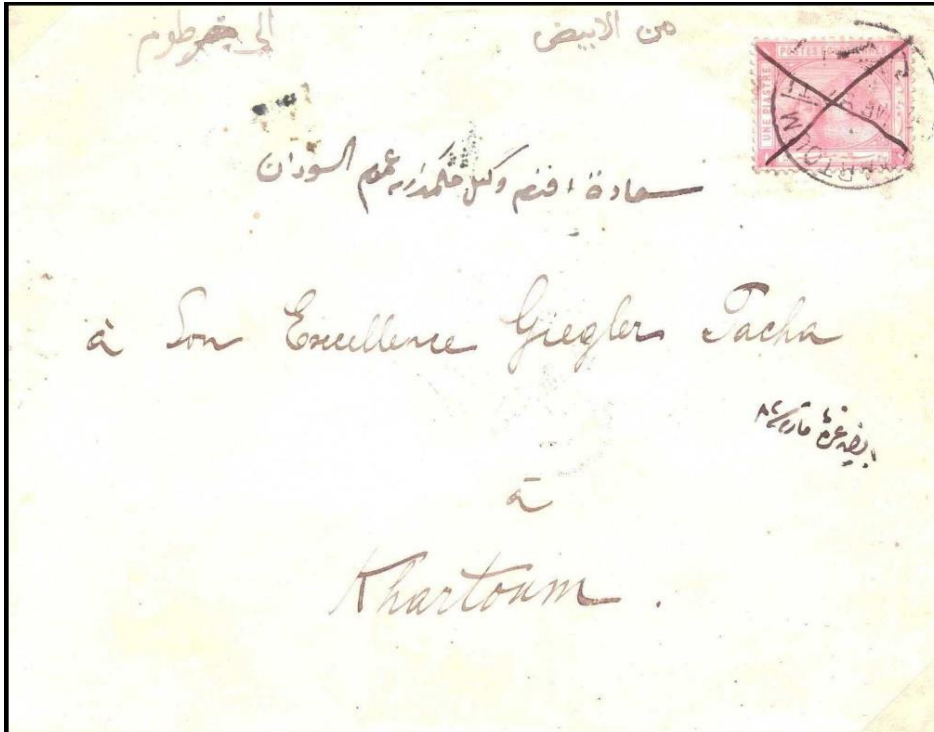
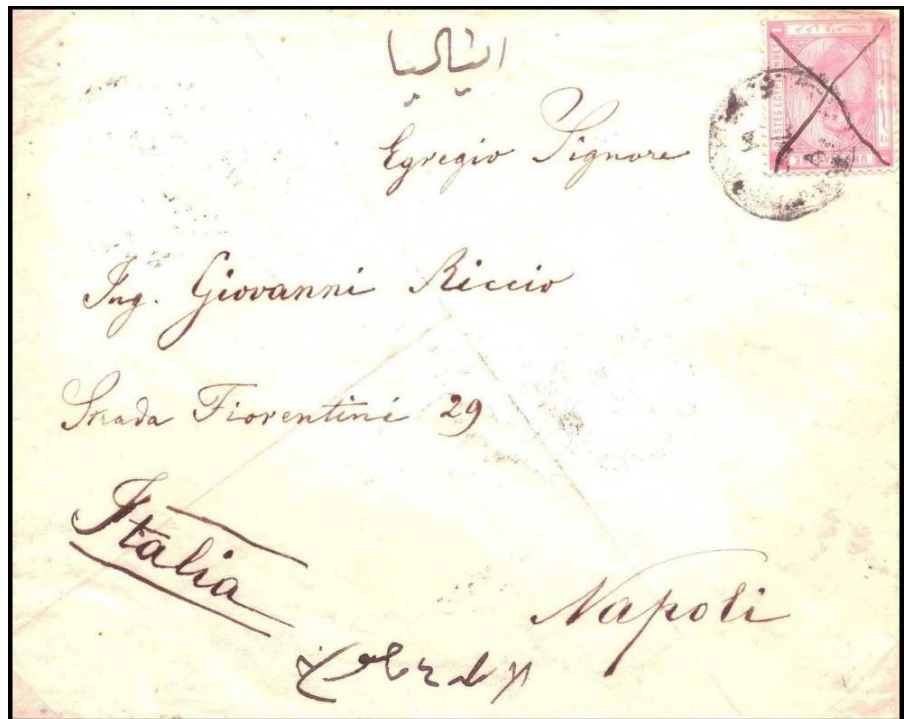
With copy of contents dated March 25. On the face, two small Arabic Mohamed Aly Post type negative seals, Arabic Poste Massawa 1282/3 (hijra year-made = 1865). MAP carried the letter from Devra Tabor, 50km east of Lake Tana, to Massawa. On the reverse, postmarks of Massawa 20 June 80, Suez 5 July 80, Alexandria 6 July 80, with transit mark at Macon au Montcenis



15 Jul 80 and arrival at Grenoble 15 Jul 80. Travelled on Red Sea steamer to Suez, then by train via Cairo to Alexandria. Thence to France.

Postal expansion - Egyptian territorial Africa

Obeid (Kordofan) to Naples, manuscript date (centre bottom) 4 May 1880. Franked 1879 issue 1 piastre rose. The Obeid PO opened in 1877 and closed 1882 (Stagg), and had stamps but did not receive a canceller until it closed, hence the manual diagonal cross in black ink. Carried on camel to Khartoum for distribution, where the Arabic cds (Stagg 10) dated Khartoum 19 May 1880 tied the adhesive. Reverse has a similar Khartoum cds for dispatch to Asyut (15 June 80 transit mark), then by train to Alexandria 17 June 80, and on to Brindisi 23 June 80 and arrival in Napoli 28 6 80.



Obeid (Kordofan) to Khartoum, manuscript date (below Pacha) Obeid 1 March 1882.

Sent to Giegler Pacha, Deputy Governor of Sudan at Khartoum, franked by an 1879 issue 1 piastre rose cancelled manually with black diagonal cross.

Carried to Khartoum by camel, and the adhesive tied by Stagg 11 Khartoum 6 March 82 on arrival. Reverse has similar cds 6 3 82 for delivery to Giegler Pacha.

Postal expansion - Egyptian territorial Africa



**The Zeila all-Arabic negative seal reading
Maktab Bosta Khedivie Masryeh / Zeil'a.
Egyptian Post Office / Zeila**



**Zeila port on the Indian Ocean, northwest
of Berbera, south of Bab el-Mandeb,
gate to the Red Sea**



Zeila (Somaliland) to Vienna, Indian postal stationery card used in Zeila (Zeyla). The Indian franking was not valid in Zeila, but the card enjoyed postal stationery status, and so was franked only 20pa to Egypt, paid by the 1879-issue 20 para blue. On the face, the stamp tied by the Zeila all-Arabic negative seal reading “Egyptian Khedivial Post Office / Zeila,” the sole recorded example of an entire with both an Egyptian stamp cancelled at Zeila and the Zeila seal.

There is a transit cds of Alexandrie / Arrivee 12 April 82 and arrival marking of Wien 23 4 82. On the reverse, transit cds of Suez 11 April 82, The message is dated “Zeila on Indischen Ocean, Marz 23.” This postcard travelled on the Red Sea to Suez, then by train via Cairo to Alexandria. Then probably via Trieste by train to Vienna, a journey of one month.

Star and Crescent (Type X) postmarks update

Mike Murphy (ESC 240)



**The three novel Star and Crescent postmarks revealed in the May Corinthila sale:
Halfayeh 6 FE 00, Nikhela 23 JUN 19, and the unique Sitris (1921)**

The remarkable and generous effort of Corinthila auctioneers in illustrating no fewer than 42 exhibit pages for Lot 441 in its end-of-May Sale 284 allowed a comprehensive updating of the popular Star and Crescent CDS types (*see next page*), since many of the scarcer types, including Kasr wel Sayad, Gafaria, Homran and Kosseir, were shown on cover in what was clearly a wonderful and wide-ranging collection.

But perhaps even more fascinating were three types not previously listed by the Circle, two of them, Nikhela and Sitris (which came together as Lot 392), were otherwise unrecorded, and the third, Halfayeh, was a stand-alone lot.



Earliest of the three is Halfayeh, dated 6 FE 00, on the face of a Soudan-overprint postal stationery cover (*above*) posted from just north of Khartoum to Surrey with a plethora of Camel postman stamps on the reverse. The postmark as struck shows no Arabic in the lower segment.

For the unlisted examples, Nikhela, in the district of Abu Tig, presents a variation on the recorded types, with Star and Crescent above the town name but in the lower segment of the CDS. Used on 23 JUN 19 (*left*) on a registered and censored cover to Cairo, it is franked 10 mills.

The remaining previously unrecorded CDS is that of Sitris (also Sentiris, Sentriss, east of Ashmun just north of Cairo), which presents as a completely unknown style of Star and Crescent usage. It is struck far from clearly on the reverse of a cover to Cairo, but well enough to be sure that it is unique, with a Star and Crescent facing inwards from left and right of the unfortunately illegible date bar (*right*). The cover was sent from a Rural station on 31 OC 21, collecting an Egyptian Railways Sorting Office CDS en route. Sitris may have been the Rural station's parent office.



With half a dozen outstanding postmarks offering new early or late dates in one collection, can members provide more evidence for the range of use?

ESC updated list of Type X (Star and Crescent) postmarks – June 2022				
	Early date	Late date	Smith scarcity	Notes
Type X-1	Egyptian, Star/Crescent below town name in upper half			
Abouyah	2 OC 85	15 AO 06	iv	
Barrage	22 FE 86	.. II 97	I	
Birket el Sab	2 ON 93	13 JL 07	III	ON = Nov?
Bir Chams	4 OC 84	3 AO 97	III	
Chibin el Kom	... AO 84	27 JA 90	III	
Damiette	.. JL 84	10 III 97	II	
Ebchaway	10 AO 84	6 FE 99	III	
Ebnoub	1 JL 92	1 MR 05	II	
Edfina	.. DE 85	.. 23 I 00	II	
Faraskour	.. SE 87	17 NO 02	II	
Gabal Zet*			V	on 1pi blue
Gabari	.. SE 8..		V	
Gafaria	(A)O 87	1 MR 13	III	
Homran	.. SE 87	.. SE 96	V	
Kasr wel Sayed	8 JL 86	18 SE 98	IV	
Kosseir	30 MR 88	24 SE 20	III	
Mahsama			V	on 5pi brown and 20pa rose
Mandarah	16 3 95	18 10 95	V	
(Omandaraho)	12 JU 96		V	rivets query
Melig	31 AV 86	24 SE 08	II	
Nekla	10 AO 84	1 OC 04	I	
Zefta	... SE 84	2 FE 95	i	
Type X-1.1	Egyptian, Star/Crescent below town/suburb name in upper segment			
Alexandrie / Minet el Bassal	10 MA 86	3 MR 90	II	
Alexandrie / Ras el Tin	.. E 84	3 VII 99	II	
Caire / Ghouria	30 MR 85	2 AV 90	II	
Type X-2	Egyptian, Star/Crescent below town name, no Arabic			
Mex / First	7 SE 8...			no Arabic
Type X-3	Egypt or Sudan, Star/Crescent above single town name in upper segment			
Assouan	29 OC 84	... NO 8...	IV	
Dongola	1 JA 85	8 JA 85	V	
Offices in Sudan				
Camp	17 JU 9...		V	on 5m rose
Dongola	15 JA 85	6 MA 85	IV	
Halfayeh		6 FE 00		3 recorded - Stagg
Korti	9 FE 85	29 MR 85	IV	
Tani	29 MR 95		V	
Laz...	10 OC 9...			photo only, on 5m Sudan forgery
Markings mentioned by collectors but not verified by Peter Smith, Tony Schmidt				
Kamoula	Mangabad	Mechta	Ramle / Moustafe	

NB, Types XI-1 and XI-2 not included here; they have stars but no crescent.

Original list prepared by Tony Schmidt (ESC 198), updating Peter Smith. Entries in red are Peter Heim's updates from QC 218; those in blue are eBay 300111381754 (2007); in green are Corinthila May 2022

* According to *Bulletin Hebdomadaire* No 25 of June 21, 1888 (item 3), Gabal-el-Zet office was opened in July 1886 and closed on June 15 1888.

1872 1 Piastre, Classification of Flaws: Part I

Ramez Atiya (ESC 246)

The 1872 1 piastre is one of the most puzzling of Egyptian philately. Its “flaws” are unlike those found on any value of any other issue. There has been much speculation about the origin of these flaws, but no satisfactory account has been provided. The postal administration records regarding production of the 1872 issue require interpretation. The problem has remained one of the major unsolved problems of Egyptian philately. The origin of these flaws must therefore be determined primarily by examining the stamps themselves and by an informed interpretation of the archival records. Our purpose here is twofold and presented in two papers. The first is to accurately describe and classify these flaws. The second is to determine how they arose. We will show that the printing surface was prepared by electrotyping, a new result, and that electrotyping accounts for the flaws.

We begin with the classification of the flaws, the key to determining how the 1 piastre was printed. An examination of a large stock of 1872 1 piastre stamps shows that *all belong to one of three types*, each type with a distinct feature absent from the others. This is not a minor point. Just as Second Issue stamps fall into *four lithographic types*, *the 1 piastre 1872 stamps fall into three typographic types* and they should be given the same attention in the catalogues (for example, *Nile Post* pp 91-96). This is an important new result in and of itself. It is also the key to any systematic understanding of the 1 piastre, its printing and its flaws. It also provides a structure for collecting the 1 piastre. The three types are distributed across the sheet in no apparent pattern.



Fig. 1 – Type 1 Dot in first A of PIASTRA (unlisted)

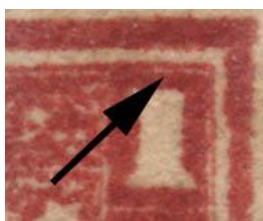


Fig. 2 – Variety 1a Dot in first A of PIASTRA, Intact inner



Fig. 3 – Group 1b Dot in first A of PIASTRA, indented inner

TYPE 1:

Type 1 stamps have a small red dot in the first A of PIASTRA (Figure 1). The variety is noted in Smith but is *unlisted* in the catalogues. It is the most complicated and puzzling of the three types, with three major subvarieties. Members of subgroup 1a (Figure 2) have an intact inner frameline above the top right hand value tablet. In subgroup 1b it is indented (Figure 3). The degree and shape of the indentation varies from one example to the next. It is not a single flaw but rather a group of distinct flaws found on different positions on the sheet. They must somehow be related in that they are all indentations of the thin inner frameline just above the value tablet.

The presence of flaws bearing a close resemblance to each other, but are nevertheless distinct flaws requiring a special classification. We will employ the term flaw group to distinguish these from the types. Different members of a flaw group all share a strong family resemblance but are not identical. In stamps of a given type, the determining flaw is identical on all examples.



a. b. c. d. e.

Fig. 4 - Examples of the "cracked 1" variety

A second flaw group within dotted A type is the "cracked 1" variety (NP D 17f, r). The variety shows a meandering line across the SE value tablet. The "crack" is described in the *Nile Post* as "varying in degrees of intensity" and in Smith as having "different degrees of development." These descriptions do not adequately capture the distinctly different appearance of the "crack" from one example to the next (*Figure 4*).

The variability ranges from a slight bulging on the central column of the "1" (*Figure 4e*) to a white line meandering across the tablet (*Figure 4c*), to coloured lines of varying intensity and shape crossing the "1" (*Figure 4 a-b*). I have identified more than fifteen distinct varieties. Five of these are shown in *Figure 4*. They can only come from different positions on the sheet.

The red lines (*Figure 4 a & b*) are the result of sharp meandering ridges running across the value tablet on the printing base and which print as the extraneous red line. The white lines are the result of irregular narrow valleys running across the value tablet below the printing surface. Each distinct pattern of ridges and valleys is unique to a single position of the printing surface. A summary of solutions regarding the origin of this variety can be found in Smith. None appears to be entirely satisfactory. We will propose later that these flaws are all the result of creasing, not cracking, and that the creasing can occur only if the 1 piastre was electrotyped.



Fig. 5 – Matched pair – Full stop after first P Typo (left), Litho (right) with "cracked 1" variety.

It might be suggested that the differences are the result of poor printing. However, an examination shows that the printed image is a faithful representation of the printing surface. For example, *Figure 5* shows a matched Typo/Litho pair. The two exhibit the same small flaws in great detail. Note the small white dot just after the “P” of PIASTRA. The flaws are not serendipitous. Examples of the “cracked tablet” with different appearances reflect actual differences on different sheet positions. How can such similar differences appear on different stereos?

TYPE 2



Fig. 6 - Type 2 Bar of color above NE tablet (unlisted)

Type 2 stamps all have a bar of color on the corner between the thin inner frameline and the outer frameline at the upper right-hand corner (*Figure 6*). The inner frameline is never indented. The variety occurs at many positions throughout the sheet. It is a true type since the variety is identical on all examples



TYPE 3



Fig. 7 – Type 3 stamps: no dot in A, no bar of colour in the upper left-hand corner.

Type 3 stamps are those that have neither the small red dot in A, nor the bar of colour in the upper left corner.

Type 3 has as a major subgroup of special interest, the “joined letters ‘KH’ and ‘VIE E’ in ‘KHEDEVIE EGIZIANE’” (NP D 17g/s). There is considerable variation from one example to the next (*Figure 8 a-c*). The “KH” are merged to varying degrees in different examples. Additionally, the “E E” between KHEDIVIE and EGIZIANE are almost completely separate and clear on some stamps (*Figure 8b*) and almost completely merged in others (*Figure 8 a&c*). Given the faithful representation of detail between printing surface and printed stamp, it seems unlikely that these are variants from the same sheet position. We propose that these examples come from different sheet positions. In other words, the variety is a flaw group and not a type. Like the “cracked 1” variety, these show a family resemblance but are nevertheless distinct. Although I have not seen one, Major MacArthur reported that some examples of this variety have an indented thin inner frameline. This would have established without question that they are not from the same sheet position.



Fig. 8a. Slightly merged KH



Fig. 8b. Merged KH, H clear, EE not connected



Fig. 8c. Merged KH, obliterated KH, joined EE

All this might seem like an obsessive attention to detail. However, these details are subtle clues leading to the origin of these flaws and finally to the solution of the problem: What method or process was used to produce the stereotypes for the printing plate of 1 piastre 1872?

In summary, all 1872 1 piastre stamps belong to one three types. Types 1 and 3 have subgroups whose members bear a strong family resemblance to each other but are nevertheless distinct and must be from different sheet positions. What process would lead to these families? We will show in Part II of this study that electrotyping provides the parentage required to produce a philatelic family of offspring that bear a strong resemblance to one another but are nevertheless distinct individuals.

Summary: Every 1872 1 piastre stamp falls into one of three mutually exclusive types:

- Type 1 – Dot in first A of PIASTRA,
 - Subgroups (flaw groups) of dot in A – not mutually exclusive:
 - Crease or “crack” across lower right value tablet (NP D 17f, r).
 - Intact or indented thin inner frameline above top right value tablet.
- Type 2 – Small bar of colour above the NE corner value tablet.

- Type 3 –No dot in A, no bar of colour between the inner frameline and the upper frameline above the top right-hand value tablet, no creasing or “crack” across SE tablet.
 - Subgroups (flaw groups): intact or indented inner frameline
 - Subgroup (flaw group): connected letters, intact or indented thin inner frameline (NP D 17g/s)

Constant flaws

In addition to the types and flaw groups, there are flaws that occur at only one position (for example. NP D17a-e). Some have been identified but no systematic research has been carried out since MacArthur’s monumental study. One such major unlisted constant flaw is shown below.



Fig. 9 – Blotted Star in Crescent (unlisted)

The origins of other flaws such as the “Blotted Star” shown in *Figure 9* must be consistent with the hypothesis that the 1 piastre was electrotyped. We will take up the issue in Part II when we deal with the printing method.

Having classified the flaws, we now turn our attention to determining the methods of printing.

THE PRINTING SURFACE

Both relief printing (typography) and lithography were employed in printing the 1872 1 piastre. We will concern ourselves only with the relief printed stamp since the lithographic stone was prepared by a single transfer from the typographic plate onto the lithographic stone. How the typographic plate was prepared has long been uncertain.

That relief printing was employed is evident from the characteristics of the stamps. In relief printing the ink is transferred onto the paper from the raised lines of the printing base (*Figure 10*). The inked raised lines of the printing base are impressed into the paper creating an inward depression on the inked side and a raised line on the back (*Figure 10: 4&5*). The distortion is easily seen on the back of the stamp when placed as an angle to a light. Secondly the ink tends to be squeezed outward, sometimes referred to as “squash.”

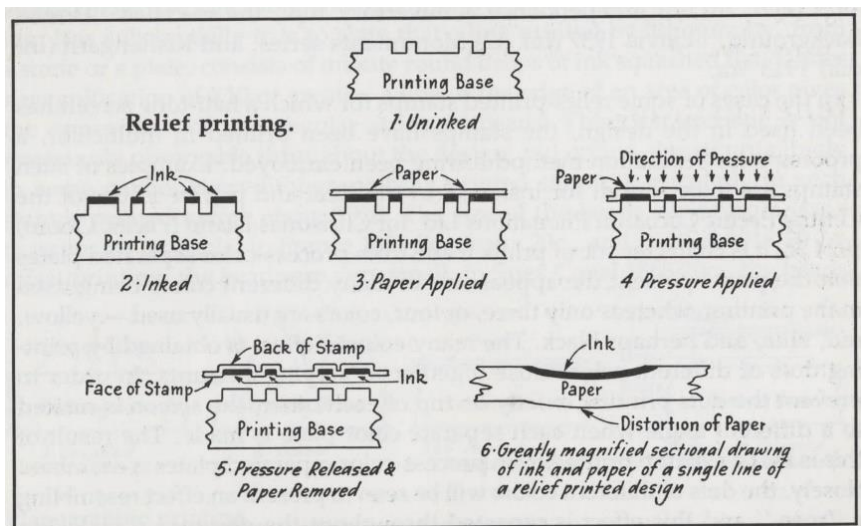


Fig. 10 - From LN Williams, Fundamentals of Philately – Relief Printing

Knowing that the 1 piastre is typographed is insufficient to diagnose the source of the observed flaws. We need to determine how these flaws came to be on the printing base in the first place. To determine this requires establishing how the printing base was prepared.

THE DIE

The first step is the preparation of the die. There is general agreement that a single die was engraved for the 1 piastre. The die may have been produced in two steps. It has been proposed that the outer part of the design was engraved in soft steel, leaving blank the oval for the central vignette. The vignette showing Sphinx and pyramid was engraved on a separate piece of steel, hardened and then impressed into the blank oval using a coining press or some similar device.

This would have been carried out to avoid the difficult task of removing the background material, leaving the raised lines (the cross-hatching) that would print in red as Sphinx and pyramids. It is, incidentally, the method used by De La Rue, as can be seen from the proof cards shown below.



Once the die is complete, the next task is to multiply the design. It is in the process of multiplying the design that the types and flaw groups make their appearance on the typographic printing plate. There are also the constant flaws appearing on individual sheet positions that must be accounted for, either in the process of multiplying the design or mechanical flaws during printing.

MULTIPLICATION OF THE DESIGN FROM THE DIE

Once the die is engraved, the next step is to multiply the design to produce the 200 for the full printing plate. Two methods would have been available to the printers in Boulac: stereotyping and electrotyping. We will evaluate each of their merits in explaining the observed flaws.

STEREOTYPING

In stereotyping, moulds are cast from the die. The moulds are then used to cast metal stereotypes which are then locked in a chase and form the printing plate. Two methods of preparing moulds would have been available to the printers: (x) Plaster moulds, and (y) Flong or *papier-mâché* moulds.

Stereotyping from Plaster of Paris moulds

In outline, the process is as follows: A plaster mould is cast from the die. A metal stereo is then cast from the plaster mould. 200 such stereotypes are required for the sheet. The stereotypes are then locked in a steel frame, the chase, which now constitutes the printing plate.

The casting of stereotypes is carried out in a special casting box. The plaster mould is placed in the box. Molten type metal is then poured on to the plaster cast. Once cool, the stereo and the plaster mould are separated. In the process, the fragile plaster mould is almost always damaged or broken so that it is rendered unusable. The process is repeated until sufficient stereotypes are cast - 200 for the 1872 issue. The stereotypes are then locked in a chase which serves as the rigid printing base.

It is intuitively clear and generally accepted that the process cannot lead to the large number of “cracked 1” varieties and group flaws. One might postulate that several dies were used, one for each of the three types with one having the “cracked 1”. However, if that were the case all stamps with “cracked 1” variety would be identical, without variation in shape or colour from one stamp to the next. This contradicts what we see. For these reasons, stereotyping was rejected by MacArthur and others.

Stereotyping from Flong moulds

The second candidate material used for stereotyping is *papier-mâché* or flong. Flong is made from layers of paper glued together with special paste. To produce the mould, damp flong is laid flat against the die and beaten with a brush with stiff bristles until the paper has fully penetrated into the recesses of the die. Once the flong is dry it is separated from the die and is ready to serve as a mould for casting stereos. In an alternate method, dry flong is pressed on to the die.



Quelle: Deutsche Fotothek

Fig. 11 - A sheet of flong being removed from a forme (Deutsche Fotothek)

The flong mould is then secured in a special casting box. Molten type metal is poured into the box and on to the flong mould. After cooling, the metal stereo is separated from the flong. Surprisingly, this does not damage the flong, which can be reused many times. The process is repeated until as many stereos as there are stamps on the sheet are cast. The stereos are then assembled in a chase which forms the printing plate.

The flong method of preparing the printing surface was proposed by Major MacArthur (*QC* Vol. 8 No. 9, 1972) and summarized in Smith. To account for the variations in the cracked-corner variety, MacArthur proposed that several flong moulds were prepared. The proposal was favourably reported by Smith: "He has concluded that a

small group of moulds (perhaps five) was ... made of flong. ... Deterioration of a mould as casting progressed provides a convincing explanation of the observations."

Given MacArthur's authority, it is necessary to show in some detail that the flong hypothesis is problematic. Let us assume that five flong moulds were prepared, two for Type 1 (dot in A with and without indented frameline), one for Type 2 (bar above NE value tablet), two for Type 3 (one with and one without indented frame line). That would explain why every stamp falls into one of three types.

Now we must explain subgroups. The cracked tablet variety is a subgroup of the "dot in A" type 1 consisting of at least 17 distinct varieties. Suppose that in separating die from flong the printer creased the corner tablet, creating a sharp ridge in the flong. The ridge on the flong would produce a narrow valley on the stereo, resulting in a white line (not a red one). Since the flong mould would be reused, assume that each casting produced a slightly different crease, explaining the great number of crease varieties.

Since however in addition to white there are red coloured "cracks" the flong must have creased in the opposite direction. Once the paper creases one way, it is difficult to see how the crease could reverse itself. Try it with a piece of paper. Perhaps there were two moulds, one for each type of creasing. However, why would they both have the same "dot in A" variety? Perhaps flong moulds were cast from the die with the offending particle still embedded in the die. That does not explain why the creasing did not occur with types 2 and 3; and we still have to account for the "connected "KH EE" subgroup of type 3. One might try to come up with other sequences to account for the flaws, say flaw groups. The reader is invited to try. With each attempt, the explanation becomes increasingly complicated and artificial.

It seems timely to apply Occam's razor to see if there is a simpler account that does not invoke so many special assumptions. Electrotyping presents us with such an alternative, the subject of Part II.

It should finally be noted that all of these flaws exist on the lithographed stamps. This demonstrates that a single transfer was made from the typographic plate to the lithographic stone.



**Matched pair – "Deformed Corner",
NP17a Typo
(METELINO pmk),
Litho (unlisted)**



Student fee revenues at Upper Egypt universities

Vahe Varjabedian (ESC 390)

In the last issue (*QC* 280, pp. 207-208) I made an initial presentation on the student revenues of the University of Minya, which has had Nefertiti-logo stamps since 2001. Today I present details of similar issues from some of the other educational establishments in Upper Egypt.

2. South Valley University, Qena. Founded in January 1995, this university has campuses in Qena and Hurghada. Two values and three issues have been recorded, from 2002 to 2007. The £E5 value was printed by the National Authority Press in blue on white matt or glossy paper (SV1-2), without watermark. The design has the university name acting as a cartouche containing an Ancient Egyptian statue and the “atom” symbol signifying “innovation”. With its inscription “Education Service” written in Arabic, it is known from certificates and receipts issued by the university. In 2008 the second design, with an £E10 value (SV3) and now on a bright pink ground bleeding to the perforations with the cartouche contents in full colour, it bears the date 2008. Again printed by the Postal Authority Press, on glossy paper without watermark, recorded 2009-2016.



3. Fayoum University. At 50pi, the fee for the first revenue stamp issued is low compared with some others. The university was established as an independent campus of Cairo University in 2005, and the first stamp (F1), printed by the Postal Authority Press on glossy paper without watermark, has “Certificate fee” inscribed in Arabic above a logo combining ancient and modern symbols. The background shades from light purple to white. Recorded on certificates from 2006 to 2009. From 2007 however, a new value (F2) is recorded, with an £E5 value, printed on glossy paper without watermark and a background shading through brown and white. Certificates and documents recorded to 2016.

4. Beni Suef University. Though the university was founded as a branch of Cairo University in 1976, it started to use its own revenues only in 2009 (after becoming independent in 2005), as stated on the stamp itself. It is another of low value, 50pi (BS1), printed in blue on buff by the Postal Authority Press on glossy paper without watermark and seen on certificates from 2010-2012. The central design symbolises humanities and social sciences. An £E5 value (BS2) in two shades of green, without watermark, has been recorded on certificates from 2010-2016.



5. Sohag University. Founded in 2006, the earliest revenue stamps are recorded 2008-2011. These are £E5 face value (S1), on matt paper without watermark in blue showing the double crown with the “atom” symbol and Arabic for Sohag University below. An £E2 value in green with the same design and paper was used on certificates and receipts from 2012-2014, but a new £E5 design (S3) has the lower half mainly clear apart from “Education Services” in Arabic with SOHAG in the top left corner of the design. Many blue shades are recorded 2012-2015, as also with the £E10 issue (S4) that is seen in various violet shades from 2010-2014.

6. Assiut University. Established in October 1957 as the first university in Upper Egypt, no fewer than six different revenue stamps have been recorded up to the present, all carrying the same basic design of the Sun's disk giving its many-handed blessings to the university whose name in Arabic is incorporated with the hands. £E1, printed in bright brown by the Postal Authority Press on glossy paper without watermark (A1). The only word in English is Egypt, and the lower part of the stamp reads in Arabic "Education Services Fund." Recorded 2000-2002.



This was followed by the £E5, precisely the same design and printing (A2), on matt and glossy paper in dull green without watermark, recorded 2002-2005. £E10, again the same design on matt and glossy paper without watermark (A3), with several shades recorded 2005-2008. The £E20 value has the same design again (A4), though with the Arabic inscriptions in slightly larger format, again printed on matt paper with no watermark, recorded in 2010-2014. And two more have come to light very recently, in the same basic design, the £E30 in blue (A5) on a certificate dated 8 October 2019 and the £E50 in orange (A6) on a final graduation certificate dated 11 November 2019.



These may have been printed before what seems to have been a change of thought in 2018 when a new £E20 stamp (A7) was issued in full colour, the yellow Aten disk shining out of a blue background. The wording below the logo changes too, to Higher Committee for Researches: Research Service Fund, but the basic formula was the same – matt paper, no watermark. This one is recorded 2018-2019, like the next, the top value £E50 (A8) suddenly exploding into full colour, with the Sun's golden disk shining down on a yellow ground. As normal, matt paper without watermark.

Please let me know if any member can give examples outside these dates, or of other designs.

Members' Changes

We are saddened indeed to have to record that **Keith Pogson (ESC 130)**, whose resignation on grounds of ill health we reported in *QC* 280, passed away in early March. Keith, who was a most welcoming and forthcoming character, was a stalwart of our Third Issue studies as well as being a mainstay for several years of our Auction team. We pass on our sincere condolences to his wife Kay and daughters Abigail and Felicity and their families.

New Members:

- ESC 748 **Dr Akthem Al-Manaseer**, 3821 Twin Falls Court, San Jose, California 95121-1277, USA
(Middle East, Egypt, Turkey)
- ESC 749 **Gary H Baker**, 55 Rogers Street # 406, Clearwater, Florida 33756, United States
(Egypt stamps to 1971, Interpostals, postal cards and stationery, censored covers)

Resigned: ESC 485 John P Hunt

Lapsed: ESC 732 Matt Whealton

New Issues test for perforator

Mike Murphy (ESC 240)



The miniature sheet and stamp issues for the World Youth Forum showing perforation intricacies and below, the first-day cover with January 10-13 commemorative handstamp

The Egyptian National Postal Authority, which flirted with diamond shaped stamps and even triangles in the early 1960s and was first to provide stamps with a star-shaped hole as a security measure (see *QC 275*, Dec 2020, pp. 76-78), has moved into fascinating new territory with the new issues marking the fourth edition of the World Youth Forum which took place in Sharm el-Sheikh from January 10-13.

Its commemorative stamps come in a single perforated sheet measuring 22x10.5cm. This giant sheet includes at left a 10cm square miniature sheet with QR code, and the rest of the sheet offers a total of four stamps. Each of the individual items has a face value of £E5.

At top right is a "normal" rectangular stamp, alongside an oval adhesive with perforations radiating to the four rectangular axes. Each of these stamps is 5.8x3.8cm, with two large (5.8cm square) stamps in the register below, one with a diamond-shaped central segment, the other circular, again with perforations radiating to all four rectangular margins.



**World Tourism Day
forecast a rise with
£E10 face value in
September 2021**

All of this is most unusual, innovative and attractive. In all of the unusual design shapes, however, the central vignette has no printed value or text, and it is clear that the whole stamp, including all peripheral sections designated by the perforations, is intended to complete the stamp itself. It would be interesting to learn whether a letter franked with the lower left section (that is, the one containing the face-value information) would carry an internal letter.

The whole sheet is presented as a first day cover (I am told that January 10 was the actual day of issue) on a large, colourful and beautifully printed Egypt Post folded card of 24.5x33.5cm with the commemorative handstamp using the conference dates of January 10-13. Although it is clear that this stamp issue is intended to appeal to youthful collectors, it is difficult to imagine how the FDC might be displayed: it would be a real struggle to make it fit within most collectors' A4 pages.

Continued on next page ...



ESC to take part in worldwide displays in autumn 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. Displays may be for any number of frames and can be either non-competitive (every entry receives a certificate) or judged, which will be win a medal. Frames are £25 each. All FIP classes are available and your exhibit can be on any subject related to Egypt or any other African county. Entries should be submitted at www.abps.org.uk.

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 by Howard Carter. The date of this event has been moved from an earlier announcement and is now on Thursday 17 November 2022. We hope that many of our members will want to take part. A colour booklet will be produced to 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 very much like to know who might be interested in taking part. Space permitting, there is no limit to the number of entries you can submit. Please email our Chairman, Jon Aitchison, at britishlocals@gmail.com advising him 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 enormously.

Please consider taking part in these important milestone Study Circle events. Thank you.

Continued from previous page....

As a matter of interest, it seems likely that this issue, with its very complicated perforations, was in fact printed sometime late in 2021, the clue being in the local-rate face value of £E5, which is now superseded. Egypt Post has a habit of introducing price increases without official notice at the start of the year, and indeed this year's Post Day issue (January 2) has a face value of £E10.

The 2021 issue marking World Tourism Day seems to have jumped the gun of the unheralded price increase by appearing on September 27 with a £E10 value, but since Post Day this year all regular stamps – Police Day (Jan 25), Independence Day (Mar 15), Armenian relations (Mar 22) - now bear the new face value of £E10.



Since Post Day this year all issues have been printed with £E10 face value - Police Day, Independence Day and celebration of Egyptian-Armenian relations

Giza enigma: does anyone have an answer?

John Davis (ESC 213)

Showing De La Rue postal stationery at our joint meeting with the Sudan Study Group, I displayed six covers and wondered if anyone could give me some answers as to what exactly was going on at Giza in or around the autumn of 1910.

To explain, each of the covers was the same five millièmes postal stationery envelope with carmine “stamp” embossed (Nile Post SEN 6), and each was registered with the addition of a five millièmes adhesive, also produced by De La Rue. They were sent variously from Edfou 19.VII.10, Balida 14.IX.10, Badrashen 18.IX.10 (Figure 1),



Fig. 1. Registered stationery from Badrashen with Giza Succursale arrival backstamps, September 1910

and Saff 1.XI.10, and all received an arrival backstamp of Giza Succursale, that is, Giza Branch.

Illustrated as Figure 2 are two further such registered postal stationery covers from Saff and Ausim, and I would ask all members the question I asked at the joint meeting; “What was going on at Giza in late 1910 to cause such letters to be sent?” and a follow-up query: “Does anyone have another?”

I am intrigued, but imagine it might be something to do with archaeology. Grateful for any answers please.

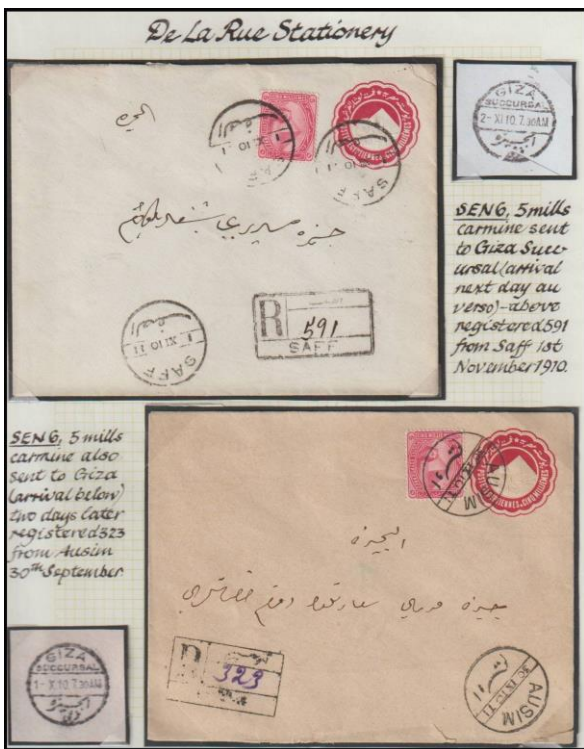


Fig. 2. Two further examples from Saff and Ausim with illustrations of the Giza Succursale backstamps

Editor’s apologies

Please forgive me: there were a couple of omissions in the list of award winners at London 2022, mainly because the event organisers hid them away out of sight online. We should have recorded:

- Hany Makram (ESC 449)**, Vermeil and 80 points for his book *Egypt First Day Cancellations*
- Richard Wheatley (ESC 168)**, Large Silver and 78 points for his book *The Simon Arzt Story*

And omissions too in the MacArthur Award Roll of Honour, where I always thought the award was inaugurated in 2000, but in fact it was 1998, so I failed to seek out the first two winners. They were:
 1999 - Edmund Hall (UK, ESC 239), *Station Postmarks* (QC 191, pp 86-95).
 2000 - Pierre Louis Grech (UK, ESC 266), *The Ramleh Electric Tramway* (QC 192, pp 102-117).

The omissions will be restored when eventually the Roll is placed permanently on the website.