

**Morning coffee with the postmaster provided an ideal opportunity to find new issues and varieties. The collection grew so large that family travellers had to carry it across the world as a legacy for the children**



### **Why I collect Egypt – Tammie Aaron-Barrada (ESC 643) – Pennsylvania, USA**

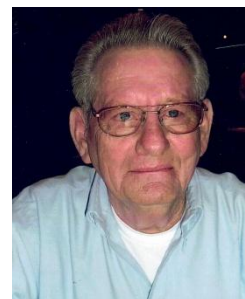
Mohamed Bahaa El Din Barrada (*right above*), who was born in Cairo in 1910, started collecting at nine years old, acquiring a wide-ranging world stamp collection. This comprised whole sheets, souvenir sheets, the Palace Collection, forgeries including Sharjah and Ras al Khaima “dune” stamps, first day covers, postal stationery and history, revenue stamps and overprints. Printing errors and production flaws intrigued him most, and his collection spread to stamps from various regions as well as postcards, movie star cards and coins.



Baha and his wife, Makarem Madkour, lived in Zamalek. He befriended the local postmaster and would go to the post office every morning to have his coffee and look over all the stamps. If he found an error on a sheet, he would buy all the sheets available that day



Ahmed Mohamed Barrada inherited his father's collection in 1994. He was told that it was recognised as the most extensive and said that because of its vast size he would take it to Sotheby's if ever there came a time to sell. Sadly, in 2001 Ahmed passed away, leaving his wife Tammie and their children Omar Ahmed Barrada, aged 3, and Laila Ahmad Barrada, just a year younger, to inherit the collection. Egypt being Egypt ... the water pipes in the apartment above ours sprang a leak and for several hours water poured into the room where the stamps were stored. Thankfully, not a single one



was damaged.

I tried to ship the collection out of Egypt in small batches via UPS, but the carrier opened the package and returned it, stating it was illegal to mail the collection: I was tagged a smuggler! To add a touch of humour, my brother was at the time Vice President of UPS. It took eight years of family and friends filling their suitcases with stamps to transfer the two rooms of stamps to the USA.

My father, Edward Thomas Aaron Jr (*right, below*), spent 13 years of his retirement identifying, dividing, valuing, documenting and organizing the stamps with notations on stock sheets (*see above for a few examples*). He passed away in December 2023, leaving a detailed collection for Omar and Laila.

Egypt is a biblical country with a golden history of tales and mystery wrapped up in gods and mythology. I shall never forget being completely awestruck the first time I saw the Pyramids. The sound and light show makes you fall in love with the Sphinx. the Grand Museum with King Tut and the mummies at the Civilisation Museum with the whole world of Ancient Egypt.



*Philatelic family:  
Makarem, Ahmed,  
Tammie, Omar  
and Laila*

Ever since he was young we nicknamed Omar “King Tut” since he was the child who ruled the nation just as he ruled our house. We learned to scuba dive in the Red Sea; the world's largest underwater national park, in Sharm el-Sheikh. Nothing compares to shopping at Khan el-Khalili (which I know better than most Egyptians).

Egypt is in my heart and now our blood. So, we honour the heritage and love the stamps collected there.

● We welcome all members' stories in making this column a regular feature of the QC