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AN OUTLINE OF EGYPTIAN POSTAL HISTORY WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE EARLIEST TIMES

By E. F. HURT.

The following notes will, I think, not only be of general interest to collectors of Egypt and students of its postal services, but might also be incorporated as an opening chapter to the proposed Handbook to be published by The Egypt Study Circle.

I have commenced this article under the heading TURKEY because the posts of the Arab civilisation are bound up with what was then known as TURKEY and for a long time EGYPT formed part of the Turkish Empire. There is also a parallel to be drawn between the posts of TURKEY proper and those of EGYPT.

In the same way, I have incorporated notes on the Persian Postal Services because these posts extended into EGYPT. In fact, in writing of the early services of EGYPT, it is essential to regard that country as only a part of a much larger whole taking in parts of ASIA MINOR and even of EUROPE.

T U R K E Y

An interesting feature of the earliest posts in the Near East concerns the period when Arab civilisation flourished there. At this time, regular communications were kept up between the principal towns by means of pigeons which carried messages in relays. This service extended right into SYRIA and even EGYPT. The Sultans of Cairo had much to do in fostering this form of service, but the pigeon service gradually fell into disuse and disappeared almost

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entirely by the seventeenth century following the over-running and destruction of the Arab sovereignties of Bagdad and Cairo and Damascus by the Turks.

There is much reference to these pigeon posts in Arab contemporary writings and KHALIL DHAHERI, who lived in the middle of the fifteenth century and who was Vizir to the Sultan of Cairo and wrote a political and geographical history of the MAMELUK EMPIRE, gives many interesting details.

In Chapter IX of this book there is an account headed: "Pigeon Lofts established for Messenger Pigeons" and some of the information given follows:-

> "The Lofts were in towers erected in various parts of the Empire, such towers having for their main object the keeping of order and watch against enemies. The first pigeon service started in Mosul and the Calife of Egypt established further such posts there which later became the principal seat of administration of these services. Considerable funds were set on one side from the public revenues for the upkeep of the pigeon lofts and their keepers".

(For further information, see "ASIA MINOR & EGYPT under the MAMELUKES" later).

Other post routes served by camels, horses or mail coaches in the Turkish Empire were those between Constantinople and Bucarest; into Wallachia to Giurgevo; from Constantinople to Belgrade.

ASIA MINOR, PERSIA, ARABIA & EGYPT

In order to follow the early posts of the countries now comprised under the above heading we shall have to consider different periods during which EGYPT, for example, was a separate entity, as under the Pharaohs and when, at a later date, it only formed part of the whole, as during the Empire of the Mamelukes.

EGYPT UNDER THE PHARAOHS

It is known that the Pharaohs had considerable commercial relations with foreign neighbours and, for this and political reasons, much official correspondence was maintained.

The earliest known document which makes any mention of Posts is a letter from a father to his son during the XII Dynasty (2000 B.C.) in which he writes of "the post leaving for abroad".

But the cuneiform tablets found at El Amara were discovered to consist of diplomatic correspondence which had been removed from Thebes by Amenophis IV when, in B.C. 1364, he moved his capital to El Amara. These tablets actually

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comprise letters that had passed between Amenophis III and IV during the years 1405 and 1352 B.C., and the rulers of the Tittites, Babylonia, Cyprus, Cilicia, etc. While those early posts were reserved exclusively for Royal and Court correspondence and were taken by what we should call "King's Messengers", the rich public were employing slaves for their own personal correspondence and, there is no doubt, the poorer people were getting their messages conveyed by the same couriers.

PERSIA

The Persians had had regular postal services from the time of Cyrus the Great, in the fifth century B.C. Cyrus conquered Babylon, Media, Assyria, Arabia and Asia Minor, and in each of these lands was responsible for the introduction of the Postal system. The Persians entered and conquered EGYPT and again left traces of their postal services there in the sixth century B.C.

EGYPT UNDER THE PTOLEMIES

The Persian Postal service established in EGYPT was very carefully copied by the Ptolomies and attained a state of great efficiency, rapidity and safety. A document found at El-Hibeh is of the third century B.C.,consisting as it does of the postal register of the Egyptian Postmaster at Fayoum, throws considerable light on the wonderfully organised service. Fayoum handled the correspondence between UPPER EGYPT and the Court and vice versa and this document records the hour of arrival and dispatch of all letters with even the names of the couriers themselves. It shows that there were two "mails" in each direction daily and that the time taken for a letter to Alexandria was only four days.

A second document of the same period explains that the postmaster was in charge of 44 couriers, a camel courier for parcels and a police agent, who was presumably to guard the camel mail, and that this service was supplementary to the one mentioned in the previous paragraph. The "Royal" post was an express courier but this latter proves the existence of a second courier service for the use of the local functionaries for their correspondence.

At this same time, it appears that the public were using a river boat service on the Nile which, at least when going up stream, was a far slower method.

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EGYPT AFTER THE ROMAN CONQUEST

The Romans are known not to have interfered to any great extent with the existing organisation or administration as they found them, in the interior of EGYPT, but they did to some extent, extend and improve on the postal services. During this period camels were largely used.

The Roman "CURSUS PUBLICUS" was carried on horseback or by horse cart which worked on a series of relay stations called "MUTATIONES".

It was during the reign of DIOCLETIAN, at the end of the third century A.D. under the administration of MAXIMIAN that these postal services reached the height of their perfection due to the appointment of "CURIOSI CURSIS PUBLICI" or supervisors (the literal translation seems to imply "nosy parkers") whose duty it was to overlook the local postmasters at the relay stations.

EGYPT IN THE BYZANTINE PERIOD

The Byzantine period introduced the"CURSUS VELOX"or Express Post for state purposes and the "CURSUS CLABULARIS" for a slower parcel post.

Under the Emperor JUSTINIAN (reigned 527 to 565) horses were done away with and from now on the Roman posts declined as far as the Government were concerned but they were revived by the landed proprietors as a fast post for their own private correspondence. In this connection an interesting document exists, dated 550 A.D., which is an agreement whereby a certain Aurelius Sirinous agrees, under certain terms and for a certain payment in gold, wine and wheat yearly, to organise the necessary relay stations, provide horses for a "rapid" post and to carry letters for a certain Valerius Sirinous.

THE ARAB POSTS OF THE EAST - (Palestine, Irak & Egypt) -

The Arab postal system was founded in 679 by the Calife Moawia. He copied the lines of the Greek and Persian posts and at first undoubtedly used Greek and Persian agents.

From the early days of the Califate there was close working between the Arab Postal system and that of the Persians themselves, whose postal services had first been introduced, as we have already stated, by the Great CYRUS.

While the Arab system made use of the routes of the Persians in what is now IRAQ, they also used those of the Romans in EGYPT and, further, built new and good post roads in ARABIA.

EGYPT was, of course, a province of the Califate.

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The seat of the Arab system was at Omra - 3 days from Mecca. From Bagdad itself radiated six great postal routes on which were situated at one time no less than 959 relay stations, each four parasangs (or one day) apart.

There were again two services - the fast one for which horses were employed and a slower one which was served by camels and messengers on foot. But the fast service was in every way equal to the "CURSUS VELOX" of Byzantine times.

The main Arab postal routes covered the land from NUBIA in the South, passing through Assouan, the junction for a service from Suakin down on the Red Sea, and Cairo to Gaza in PALESTINE. From Cairo radiations went west while from Gaza there were connections all over ARABIA and into PERSIA.

EGYPT UNDER THE ARABS

As far as EGYPT was concerned the Arab postal routes were as follows:-

From Cairo to Kouss via Assiut.
to Alexandria via Galiub.
to Damieta via Bilbeis.
to Alexandria via Damanhour.

From Kouss into NUBIA via Assouan. (This was a dromedary post.) - to Suakin via Assouan.

From Damieta to Gaza via El Ariche.

THE MAMELUKE EMPIRE

In LOWER EGYPT and SYRIA, the Califate posts were replaced under the Mamelukes by a new courier service. At first this was purely a foot service,but later camels were added for the heavier and bulkier mail while, in 1260, 77 horses were used throughout.

The postal services at this period extended from the Mediterranean to the Desert of Arabia, South to the source of the Nile and up to the Banks of the Euphrates. There were two great junctions at Cairo and Damascus.

From Cairo ran the routes (i) a relay service following the Nile to UPPER EGYPT. (ii) a route to Damieta and, (iii) another to Alexandria.

From Damascus, the routes were by Gaza and Nablus to Aleppo on the coast and up to the Banks of the Euphrates.

The caravan route from Bagdad to Palmyra was joined at Hems by a relay from the Euphrates.

Other services ran to Ghasoulah, Tripoli (Tarabolos): from Damascus to Acre (Akker): from Saida to Beyrouth: Damascus to Karak on the Dead Sea following the route to Mecca; and from Karak via Hebron to Gaza.

This system used much shorter relay stages than formerly which made for greater speed.

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The Mamelukes introduced for the first time in this part of the world two great innovations: the use of some form of uniform for their couriers and the pigeon post.

Probably for the first time, postal messengers carried some kind of uniform, though it consisted only of a yellow silk scarf bearing a large silver plaque, on one side of which was the Confession of Faith from the Koran and, on the other, the name and title of the ruling Sultan.

We have already made some brief mention of pigeon post under "TURKEY" but it is now opportune to give more details of this great advance which, with the exception of the Mamelukes, had not been used on so organised a scale,although both Greeks and Romans are known to have employed pigeons from ship to shore in 43 B.C. and the Chinese had pigeon posts in 673 A.D.

The Introduction of a pigeon messenger service, carried out by relays of pigeons had been organised in ARABIA in the 8th century, but in the 12th century, it was introduced into EGYPT also under the organisation of the Sultan NUREDDIN of Aleppo in 1146.

Pigeon Lofts were established every seven miles for the use of the ordinary pigeon messenger service and each loft was of course kept constantly supplied, by means of a mule service, with pigeons of the neighbouring lofts so that fresh relays in either direction were always ready for use. The pigeons of this service were not the highly bred racers which were so much prized - in fact such were not necessary for such short stages - and they were always blue. The pigeon posts covered many routes:-

Cairo to Alexandria and Damietta and UPPER EGYPT.
Cairo to Damascus, Gaza and Jerusalem.
Damascus to Biredjek on the Euphrates, to Baalbek, and to the ports of Saida, Beirut and Tripoli.
Biredjek to Kaisarick.
Rahba to Aleppo.
Gaza to Karak on the Dead Sea.

In other words the land was covered from NUBIA to MESOPOTAMIA.

Thus, a letter from Damascus to Alexandria was relayed no less than thirteen times, at Sanamein, Tafas, Beisans, Djinia, Nablis, Jerusalem, Gaza,Warradah, Al Arisch, Katia, Salahia, Bibeis, and Cairo and took 13 hours.

Apart from the normal pigeon services there were also express services, for which alone the true racing pigeon was employed, called "HAWADI" or Express Pigeons, between Cairo and Damascus.

These pigeon-services were under the Chancellor who was the Master of the Posts.

All pigeons so used were marked with a branding iron on beak and feet.

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Very strict regulations were framed in regard to the actual messages both with regard to the use of special paper and the actual writing. This latter had to be "telegraphic". All symbolic language, flowery speech, or invocations, were forbidden as also were all titles in the address. The messages were attached to the tail feathers or fastened under the wing.

With such a vast network of pigeon relays it will be realised that the number of pigeons kept was enormous, more especially as, to ensure more certain delivery of a message, it was customary to send it in duplicate by two separate pigeons. It is estimated that in 1288 there were no fewer than 1900 pigeons in the lofts at Cairo alone.

The pigeon post ceased when the Turkish invasion took place in 1402, the invader destroying the lofts.

EGYPT - 19TH CENTURY -

From now on there is little known of the posts in ARABIA, PALESTINE and EGYPT, and there is little evidence that any regular services were organised again until the beginning of the 19th century, when the great MOHAMED ALY laid himself out to organise a fresh and up to date courier service. MOHAMED ALY dates from 1805 to 1848.

The relay stations were now set two hours distant from one another and posts left daily for places in LOWER EGYPT. For MIDDLE EGYPT, the service was weekly, but only once a month for the South.

With the conquest of the SUDAN in 1821, the service was extended to KHARTOUM.

These services were not, however, for public use. The private individual could, however, always approach the Postmaster and make a very reasonable bargain for the use of a special messenger when he had need to dispatch correspondence. It was not till a much later date that a regular service was extended to the public.

An interesting period in the posts of EGYPT opens up when, in 1842, MERATTI commenced to organise a service for correspondence overseas using the foreign consular services as a part of his scheme. In 1847, he opened his Posta Europea for internal service.

On the death of MERATTI, the Posta Europea passed into the hands of his nephew, TINO CHINI, who took a partner GIACOMO MUZZI of BOLOGNA, who was later to become the first postmaster of modern EGYPT. By 1854, the Posta Europea was replacing the Government services and the latter even closed down all their offices in LOWER EGYPT.

In 1862, the handling of the Government mails was passed to the Posta Europea and these were carried free in return for the free use of the Government railways for the carriage of the mail of the Posta Europea itself.

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The first handstruck postal markings of EGYPT are those of the Posta Europea.

In 1862, the Posta Europea was granted a monopoly of the posts of EGYPT for 10 years but, in 1865, the Egyptian Government bought out this private post for the sum of 950,000 francs.

FOREIGN POSTS IN EGYPT

While it was as early as 1783 that RUSSIA had opened post offices in certain parts of the Turkish Empire, of which EGYPT formed a part, it was not until 1867 that she opened an office in Alexandria. Before this, however, other foreign powers had opened offices in EGYPT. GREAT BRITAIN in 1831, AUSTRIA in 1838, GREECE in 1859, and ITALY in 1866.

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MARKET JOTTINGS by Dr. W. Byam.

Harmer Rooke on Feb.24th 1940 sold twenty-one lots of EGYPT at what seemed to me encouraging prices.

1866. 5 P.T. a mint horizontal strip of three, imperforate vertically: £22. This was slightly off centre. The rest of the issue in mint or unused condition averaged one third catalogue.

1867. 5 para. block of 12; 10 para. Stone A, block of 12m 20 para, blue green; block of 6: all mint, together fetched £9.10.0. having been valued by the auctioneer at £3.10.0. Even so, these blocks went cheaply.

1872. stamps mint or unused averaged half catalogue.

1874. 2½ P.T. mint block of 9, perf. 12½, with centre stamp inverted went for £9.10.0. which is well over half catalogue.

1874. 1 P.T. mint tête-bêche pair, perf. 13¼ x 12½, slightly off centre was valued at £3. I put in an open bid, as this is one of the few Egyptian items I do not possess, but the piece was sold to someone else for £3.10.0.

2 P.T. with the same perf., in a fine mint block of four containing the tête-bêche variety went for: £10.10.0.

On March 28th. 1940 a Postal History Auction was somewhat disappointing. 88 Egyptian lots were listed, but seven were not offered, as the auctioneers had reason to doubt the genuineness of the postal markings. The poor prices realised for some of the rarer pieces probably reflected the doubts shared by many collectors as to what are and are not genuine specimens of Egyptian stamps used abroad. ./.

I may mention:-

ALEXANDRETTA. on 2½ P.T. perf. 12½ x 13¼ dated 15th. Feb. 1872: £1.17.6. This is a very rare marking.

DARDANELLES. three copies averaged 14/- each.

GEDDA. three stamps of the 1867 and 1872 issues went for a total of 17/-.

RODI. on 20 para of 1874 perf. 13¼ x 12½ fetched 22/-.

An entire letter with the Alexandrian Dalla Stazione mark in 1872 went for £2. though valued by the auctioneer at 15/-. More often stamps went at nearer half the valuation figure.

CANAL DE SUEZ. Chantier VI and Kil.83, brought 35/- each. I am not aware of any specimen of this sort on a cover and one wonders what such a treasure would be worth.

Two postcards with the Heliopolis Aerodrome cancellation of 13th February 1910 went for £2. each. As neither was a flown item, the price seems difficult to justify and when a similar card sold by H.R. HARMER on June 3rd. brought £3.12.6. I began to realise that Air Mail must be considered a class apart.

Contrast the last item with a combination cover bearing GB 2d 1858 plate 14 and 1870 ½d. plate 6, cancelled G 0 6 of BEYROUT, and three French stamps bearing the large 5080 of the French P.O. at Alexandria which sold for: £3.10.0. instead of the £6. estimated by the auctioneer, and you see how fashion rather than true philatelic interest influences the market.

Most of the Italian covers fetched about £2. each, but there were no particularly interesting items.

The 1881 2 lire Estero was offered with an obviously forged cancellation. Collectors should know that this Italian stamp was never issued for use.

On June 3rd. 1940 H.R. HARMER offered 70 Egyptian lots of considerable interest, though no big prices were realised. Ten guineas was the top figure, and was the amount paid for a mint block of 50 of the 1874 2 P.T. yellow, perf. 13¼ x 12½, with full margins and the tête-bêche pair. It is interesting to note that this is the same sum as was paid for the block of four on 24th February of this year at HARMER ROCKE's sale.

1866. 5 para in a mint block of four, off centre: £4.
5 para, with watermark upright, unused and with a small tear, remained unsold. This is one of the rarest Egyptian varieties. I possess only one copy, and I know only two others. ZEHERI lists it at £3. or six times as much as the stamp with the inverted watermark.

10 para. perf. 12½ x 15, unused: £6.15.0. (ZEHERI £15. at anything under £10. this stamp is very cheap.

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1. P.T. a mint block of four: £3. and another:£3.10.-
10 P.T. on cover, off centre and rather grubby but rare: £5.12.6.

1867. the set of three essays by Skipper & East: £7.5.0.
20 para. pale blue-green, mint block of ten:£2.15.0.
5 P.T. four single unused copies, one of each of the die varieties: £6.6.0.

1874. perf. 12½, 2½ p.t. deep violet, a mint horizontal tête-bêche pair: £4.12.6. The same stamp in the pale violet shade in a mint block of 90, with full margins on three sides and including the tête-bêche pair: £12.
5 P.T. a superb used block of four: £2.5.0.
Perf. 13 1/8 x 12½ 2 P.T. a used vertical pair, imperf. between: £4.12.6. A variety hitherto unknown to me.

1875. 5 para. pale brown, used vertical strip of three, imperf. horizontally and including a tête-bêche pair: £5.15.0.

1879. 5 P.T. blue green, a used block of twelve: 22/-.

1914. complete set imperf. and watermarked, in blocks of four: £10. These imperf. varieties were produced to order and were never issued; they should be regarded as proofs.

1922. Crown Overprints. We now come to one of the anomalies of the sale. A single mint copy of the 50millièmes with inverted overprint fetched £5. while a used copy went for £3. the latter is the typograph which was genuinely issued and used and of which about 15 copies are on record, a really good thing. The mint stamps are all lithographed, of which a whole pane was produced intentionally and never issued to the post office. £2. would be a fair price for a single copy.
100 millièmes with double overprint, mint: £4.10.0.

1923-24. HARRISON perf. essays of 10 and 15 millièmes on the watermarked paper: £4.

Postage Dues 1884. imperf. plate proofs, in black, of the five values in blocks of four: £6.6.0.

1886. similar blocks of four of all values: £6.10.0. I consider these were two good buys, the second lot was valued by the auctioneer at £10. Both lots went to U.S.A.

Postmarks Eight stamps used at Smyrna: 32/-
Ten stamps used at Cavalla, Dardanelles, Tenedos, Chios, Massawa, etc.: £3.12.6.
Alessandria d'Egitto on Sardinia 10c brown and ITALY 1862 40c. rose, as separate stamps: £2.12.6. which seems a high price, as only a portion of the marking

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appeared on each stamp.

You can see that the stamps in this auction were from the collection of an enthusiast.

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STUDY I. EGYPTIAN POST OFFICES ABROAD

M. Jean BOULAD has sent us the following interesting information obtained from the original Post Office Notices & Letters exhibited in the FOUAD 1st POSTAL MUSEUM in CAIRO.

Notice of the Postal Administration of 30th May, 1865.

A Post Office was opened at CONSTANTINOPLE for the reception and dispatch of correspondence exchanged with EGYPT (GEDDA and other principal ports of the RED SEA.)

The mails will be sent by ships of the AZIZIE COMPANY that make a regular service between the ports of CONSTANTINOPLE and ALEXANDRIA (GEDDA and the principal calling stations on the RED SEA).

A notice will be fixed outside the door of the Post Office indicating the day and hour of departure, and the rates and conditions of franking correspondence.

Notice of the Postal Administration of 31st May, 1865.

The sea port correspondence exchanged between SUEZ and GEDDA, CONSTANTINOPLE and ALEXANDRIA, is charged 1 P.T. for ordinary letters, and 5 paras for post-cards and journals, and 1 P.T. for samples.

The correspondence of CONSTANTINOPLE and GEDDA for the interior of EGYPT and vice versa, will be charged in addition to the maritime rates the internal territorial tax at present in use.

Registered letters will be charged above the franking rates a fixed duty of 2 P.T.

The franking of letters is obligatory.

The departure of the ALEXANDRIA boat for CONSTANTINOPLE will take place every Tuesday at 3 p.m. and from SUEZ for GEDDA every Thursday at 9 a.m.

The boats officiating on the ALEXANDRIA CONSTANTINOPLE line call between the two extreme ports at SMYRNA, SALONICA, the DARDANELLES and GALLIPOLI.

(The originals of these Notices are in Italian).

Supplementary to the Official Notices.

In a letter of MUZZI BEY to the Minister of Finance, dated 17 Gamad Tani 1283 (1866) transmitting an account of receipts and expenses of the postal boats of the RED SEA, the dates of opening of the agencies of DJEDDAH, SMYRNA and CONSTANTINOPLE are given as follows:-

CONSTANTINOPLE	9th May, 1865.
SMYRNA	14th November 1865.
DJEDDAH	8th June, 1865.

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(This letter is in Arabic and is exhibited in the FOUAD 1st. Museum in CAIRO).

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EGYPTIAN OFFICES ABROAD. Notes & Queries by E.F. Hurt.

The following notes and queries are based on Tables I and II given as a supplement to "L'Orient Philatélique" for March, 1939 in connection with the Interim Rep. of the Circle on Study I. Will the Keeper of the Record and Mr. Charles FOX please check and use as required.

Re. Table I.

RHODES. Rodi. (a) I wish to record a cover dated (pmk. type III. 3) 6-7-79. This is the latest date as yet recorded for this office.

(b) I should like to query the previous latest recorded date in the above table i.e. 15-2-79 as it has generally been held that the Egyptian P.O. at RHODES was only opened during the summer months when the Khedive was in residence there and during which period only the Egyptian mail boats called. Is the above "February" date on cover or only on a detached copy of the stamp and has the postmark been checked?

DJEDDAH I wish to record a cover dated 9.3.67. (pmk. Type I.1 (spelling GEDDA) as the earliest recorded dated for this office.

Re. Table II.

RHODES. Rodi. Please record the first noted use of the 20 paras 1872 (Alex. printing). This is on cover in pair, the cover being addressed to the Greek Consulate at TANTA and dated: 6-7-79. pmk. type III.3.

SMYRNA. I wish to record the following stamps used at this office:-

(a) 1867. 1 P.T. On cover (pmk. Type I.1.) used locally.

(b) 1872. 20 paras. On cover (pmk. Type III.2.)

(c) 1872. 1 P.T. On cover (pmk. Type III.2.)

DJEDDAH I wish to record the first noted use of the 2 P.T. 1866. On cover dated: 9-3-67. with pmk. type I.1. (spelling GEDDA).

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FRENCH TRANSIT MARKS. V. SUEZ. by Lieut. Col. G.R. Worthington Wilmer, D.S.C.

These marks were applied at MARSEILLES, and covers bear stamps from INDIA, STRAITS SETTLEMENTS, AUSTRALIA (via COLOMBO), MAURITIUS, REUNION, COCHINCHINA, etc.

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There are two forms of this mark: Octagonal and Circular. (O. & C.)

OCTAGONAL

There are two types of the Octagonal. O. Type 1 and O. Type II.

O. Type I appears in RED, whereas O. Type II appears in BLUE. The dimensions are 21-21½ mm. across two parallel sides, with an inner circle of 12-12½ mm. diameter. Above and below are certain abbreviations, see later, and within the circle is the date in sloping Serif capitals.

O. Type I-1.		Earliest Date.	Latest Date.
COL.F.V.SUEZ.PAQ.F./	1 MARS 1.	15 JUN. 61.	13.JUL.74.
	/2 MARS 2.	?	
	/3 MARS 3.	4 NOV. 65.	
	/AMB MARS 2.	JUN. 66.	
O. Type I-11.			
COL.FR.V.SUEZ/P.F.AMB.MAR.			14.NOV.71.
O. Type I-111.			
POS.AN.V.SUEZ.PAQ.F./	I MARS 1.	3.FEB.76.	
	/2 MARS 2.	4.JUN. 66.	
O. Type I-IV.			
POS.AN.V.SUEZ./P.F.AMB.MARS.		24 OCT. 67.	

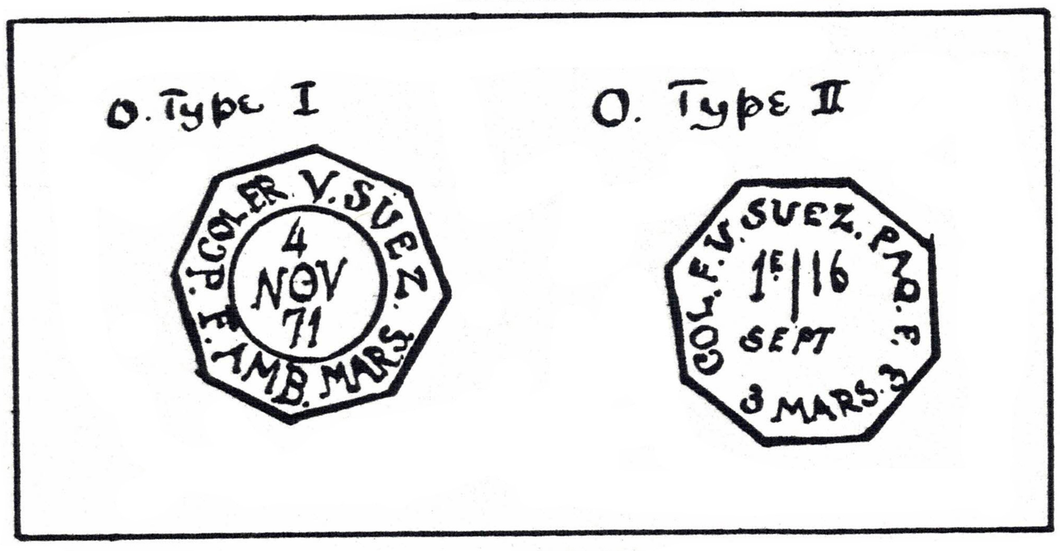
Octagonal Type II, appears in BLUE, has the same dimensions as O. Type I, but has NO Inner circle and the date in the centre reads:-

×17	I E/16	
MARS	SEPT	See Illustrations.

O. Type II-1.

COL.F.V.SUEZ.PAQ.F./3 MARS 3.

Dates seen. 17 Mar. 68... 27 Sept. 69 ... I E 16.Sept.



CIRCULAR TYPES. (C).

There is only one type of this circular mark as far as I know and it is always in RED, only one example of this type in BLUE so far has come to hand, this was probably an error.

The Mark is the usual French one of two plain circles. Inner Diameter 12-12.5 mm. Outer Diameter 21-21.5 mm.

		Earliest Date.	Latest Date.
C. Type I-1.			
POSS.ANG.V.SUEZ/	MARSEILLE.	20 JAN. 61.	16 OCT. 88.
/A	MARSEILLE.A.	14 OCT. 64.	18 AUG. 65.
/A	MARSEILLE.B.	21 AUG. 60.	25 MAR. 67.
/A.	MARSEILLE.D.	27 DEC. 61.	4 MAY. 66.
/ALEXANDRIE.			30 DEC. 72.
C. Type I-11.			
POS.AN.V.SUEZ/F.AN.A.MARS.*		15 JUL. 69.	4 MAR. 71.
C. Type I-111.			
COLONIES.FRA.V.SUEZ./	I.	31 AUG. 58.	
/2.		15 JUN. 55.	19 Pct. 55.
/3.		18 MAY. 54.	
C. Type I-IV.			
COL.FRA./V.SUEZ.AMB.	A.	12 AUG. 58.	
	B.	?	
	C.	14 OCT. 57.	8 SEPT.62.
	D.	20 MAY. 60.	
	E.	11 FEB. 56.	12 OCT. 58.
	F.	26 MAR. 58.	5 DEC. 63.

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(see continuation on Page 14a)

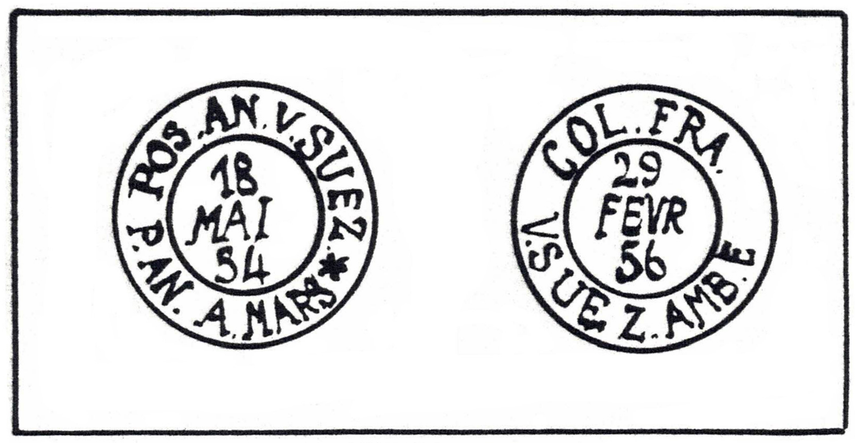
EGYPT ESSAYS. An Interesting Discovery. by E.F. Hurt.

Readers will recollect the Essay made by PENASSON in 1871 for the "Sphinx & Pyramid" type stamps, with blank top and bottom labels (Zeheri type 20).

It is of course realised that this essay was made from a block of four different types of which the chief distinguishing features are as follows:-

Type I. The upper outline of the head of the sphinx is very wide and "flat" and the outline of the headdress almost touches the central vertical of the pyramid. The needle at left has a "lopsided" point. Apex of pyramid ends between two horizontal lines of background.

Type II. The upper outline of the head is narrow and rounded. Headdress nearly touches the pyramid vertical. Needle point is central. Sphinx has a deformed mouth. There is no stop after the "P" of Penasson's initials at foot of needle. Apex of pyramid ends on a horizontal line. ./.



60.

C Type 1 -2. C Type1-4.

	Earliest Date.	LatestDate.
C. Type 1-V.		
Col.FR.V. SUEZ./ALEXANDRIA		18 Nov 77.
C. Type 1-Vl.		
PAYS.ETR.V.SUEZ./MARSEILLE.	27 Mar 67.	
/AMB.A.	17 Sept 57	25 Apr 59.
/AMB.B.	11 Jun 57.	12 Feb 58.
/AMB.C		4 Mch 60.
/AMB.D.		13 Jun 58.
/AMB.E.	?	
/AMB.F.	?	
/AMB.G.	30 Jul 57.	12 Jul 58.
/AMB.H.	7 AUG 58.	25 Apr 60.
C. Type 1-Vll.		
Pays.Etr./ V.SUEZ.AMB.	16 Feb 60.	2 Feb 66.
C. Type 1-Vlll.		
Pays.Etr.V.SUEZ.A.V./*	28 Nov 57.	
C. Type 1-lX.		
PAQ.AN.V.SUEZ/AMB.MARS 2.	23 Dec 64.	30 Apr 66.
C. Type 1-X.		
AUSTRALIE.V.SUEZ/AMB.A.	3 Feb 59.	
C. Type 1-Xl.		
AUSTRALIE/V.SUEZ.AMB.	29 Jun 58.	14 May 64.

Two different types on the same cover.

C.Type 1-1 and Type C.1-111.	4 Jun 66.
C.Type 1-1V and Type C. 1-1V.	3 Feb 76.
Earliest date of all types	18 May 42.
Latest date of all types	18 Nov 77.

Type III. Upper outline of head is broad and only slightly rounded and the headdress again nearly coincides with central pyramid line. There is a "hare lip" effect to left side of mouth. The pyramid has a tiny vertical "flagstaff" just offset to right of apex. Top of needle is regular.

Type IV. Top of head is broad and flat but the vertical headdress line is a long way from the central pyramid line. The mouth is merely a wide, shapeless gash.

The above essays are fairly common, known in many colours, but to date have only been found on white paper without gum.

I have, however, just acquired a set of these essays which are reputed to be the originals from the archives. There are several points of interest. First they are very finely printed and they are all on either azure or rose coloured glossy paper (coloured throughout) and this paper has the thick crackled gum associated with the contemporary stamps of the period.

As evidence that these have probably never been in a collection is the fact that each one has apparently been mounted by a minute spot of gum in the centre of the back of each, a method commonly employed in official records in the early days.

As a matter of interest, I give particulars of these essays, of which there are ten in all, herewith:-

Type I. Olive on rose; mauve on rose; carmine red on rose.
II. Olive on azure; purple on azure; red on azure.
III. Green on rose; brown on rose; red on azure.
IV. Brown on azure.

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WHAT IS IT ? By E.F. Hurt.

On page 465 of the March 1939 issue of the "Orient Philatélique" is an illustration of a I P.T. rose Egypt of the 1879 issue, from the collection of Mr. E.A. KEHR, which shows a large "3" as surcharge and also obliterating bars in the four corners. This was illustrated with a query from Mr. KEHR who states that the postmark on this copy is clearly over the surcharge.

By some oversight, possibly due to the sticking together of the pages of the "Orient Philatélique", it is only now that I have noticed this query for the first time. Apparently, however, though over twelve months have passed, no one has put forward any suggestion or made any remarks on the subject. I am, however, extremely interested as I also

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obtained a used copy of the same surcharge on the I P.T. rose some two years ago. My copy had the surcharge more centrally placed than Mr. KEHR's, so that the pairs of short diagonal obliterating bars actually fall on the four corners of the stamp.

When I first found my copy I not only felt that it was of some importance but probably genuine, if little known - a very transient provisional. I pointed out the similarity of the type and setting of this surcharge - particularly of the obliterating bars - to that of the 20 paras provisional of Feb.1884

I remember at the same time bringing my copy to the notice of members of the EGYPT STUDY CIRCLE, both here and abroad, among whom it raised neither enthusiasm, nor comment.

Perhaps, EGYPT is a country of such antiquity that we collectors of its stamps unconsciously feel that any "new thing" admitted by us tends to place us in the category of the "Atenians of the Bible" and that, therefore, such cannot come within the range of possibility.

But here is copy No.2. of this same surcharge. Perhaps if and when a third copy turns up, some interest will be taken or perhaps someone will come forward with some explanation or at least consider the matter worthy of investigation.

Meanwhile, I consider the surcharge genuine even if it may only have been of very transient use or perhaps even an essay. There is every possibility that the surcharging was actually considered a necessity pending the issue of the necessary 3 mils.value 1888. After all, before the latter date, there was neither a 2, 3 or 4 paras value and recently I have shown that just before the change of currency and issue of the lower values rendered necessary by the change in postal rates, DE LA RUE had actually produced a surcharged essay for 2 paras.

Let us hope, however, that when any definite information as to this "3" surcharge comes to hand, or when someone discovers one on cover, they will not at once rush into print claiming to be the discoverer of a new variety.

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EXHIBIT OF EGYPT AND THE SUEZ CANAL
At The
STAMP CENTENARY EXHIBITION, LANCASTER HOUSE,
May, 6th. - 14th. 1940.

By A.S. Mackenzie-Low.

Dr. W. BYAM was requested by Sir John WILSON to loan 21 sheets from his collection of EGYPT. Not wishing to take all the credit for himself, he very generously asked a few members of The Study Cricle to collaborate with him.

Owing to the short time available (three days from the time the invitation was received to the time the Exhibition Catalogue description had to be sent in), it was impossible to undertake the preparation of a combined Exhibit by The Egypt Study Circle.

At Dr. BYAM's request, A.S. Mackenzie-Low undertook the arrangement of this Exhibit and the following members contributed:-

D E S C R I P T I O N

POSTA EUROPEA SERVICE. First type of frank on cover from Cairo dated 1847. (A.S. Mackenzie-Low)

ESSAYS FOR A PROPOSED ISSUE OF STAMPS FOR THE POSTA EUROPEA about 1860 of the values of 10, 20, and 30 paras. and I P.T. Only specimens known. (A.S. Mackenzie-Low)

WAGHORN SERVICE. Cachet inscribed "Care of Mr. Waghorn, Suez" and French and British markings dated 1838. A fine cover. (Col.G.R.Worthington-Wilmer

EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT SERVICE. Seal frank from ASSIUT dated 1862. cover. (Dr. W. Byam)

EGYPT. FIRST ISSUE. Complete set unused, and cover with the I P.T. value used on day of issue. (A.S. Mackenzie-Low)

1866. 2 P.T. Bisected. On part cover from CAIRO to ITALY with Italian stamps to pay postage to its destination from ALEXANDRIA. (Dr. W. Byam)

THE VARIOUS DESIGNS OF THE GENERAL ISSUES FROM 1867 to 1940.
2 pages (A.S. Mackenzie-Low)

THE VARIOUS DESIGNS OF THE COMMEMORATIVE ISSUES.
2 pages (A.S. Mackenzie-Low)

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AUSTRIAN P.O. IN EGYPT. Five different types of ALEXANDRIA postal markings, and one of PORT SAID all on Austrian stamps. 1865, cover franked in CAIRO with the Egyptian Government circular marking, 8 Oct. 65, and at ALEXANDRIA with 15 Soldi Austrain Italy, and bearing the Austrian P.O. make type III.I. (F.S. Mumford)

BRITISH P.O. ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT. Two fine covers MANSURA to ENGLAND, and PORT SAID to MALTA franked with Egyptian stamps, and British stamps cancelled B.O.I. (Dr. W. Byam)

FRENCH P.O. IN EGYPT. Cover from CAIRO to FRANCE bearing 40 c. France 1862-70 with the obliterator 5116 (Cairo) and date stamp 18-4-68.
(A.S. Mackenzie-Low)

ITALIAN P.O. ALEXANDRIA. Cover franked with Italian Estero, and British stamp Alexandria July 1875.
(Dr. W. Byam)

RUSSIAN P.O. ALEXANDRIA. 20 K stamps of Russian Levant 1866/67 pair on piece, and single specimen on cover from ALEXANDRIA to BEYROUT, all bearing the Russian postmark "PORT ALEXANDRIA". The dates on postmarks a re 1866, 1887 and 13-3-68.
(William C. Hinde)

EGYPTIAN P.O. ABROAD. RHODES. EGYPT 1874 20 para, a pair of I P.T. on front of cover, postmark RODI 27 JUNE 77. Type III-3.

METELINO, EGYPT 1872 I P.T. postmark METELINO 30 JULY 1872. Type III-1 on cover backstamped CONSTANTINOPLE 11 AUG. 1872. (Capt. G.L. Hearn)

LETTER FROM LORD KITCHENER TO SLATIN PACHA'S SISTER enclosing letter from her brother and informing her that SLATIN PACHA is well, but cannot escape at present From Government House, SUAKIN. 29.10.1887.
(Dr. W. Byam)

ENVELOPE THAT CONTAINED SLATIN PACHA'S LETTER stamped by KITCHENER, and forwarded by him to VIENNA. The cover is franked with Egyptian stamp, and postmarked: Suakin. (Dr. W. Byam)

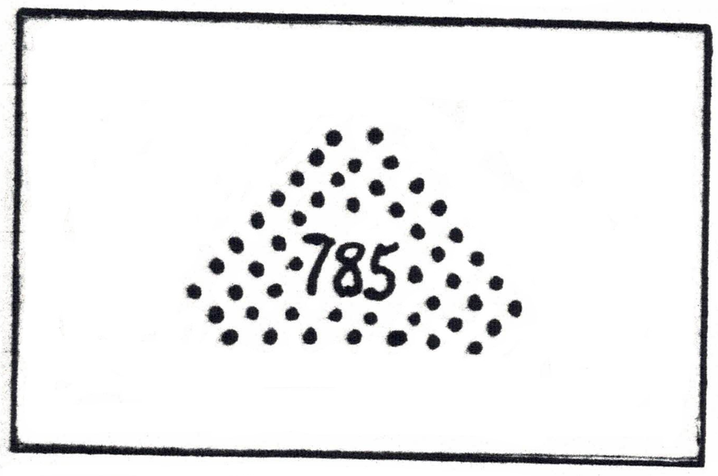
SUEZ CANAL. The genuine stamps showing the four types of the 1c. 5c., and 40c., and three specimens of the 29c., one, used, described and illustrated.
(Col.G.R. Worthington-Wilmer

THE FORGERIES OF SAME. Specimens of the 10 different types.
(Col.G.R. Worthington-Wilmer)

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RUSSIAN P.O. IN EGYPT.

We give below a photograph of a tracing made by Mr. Hinde of the "785" marking mentioned on page 3 of the Q.C. for March 1940.



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"SUEZ-SERVIZIO ITALIANO DEL MARE ROSSO" MARKING.

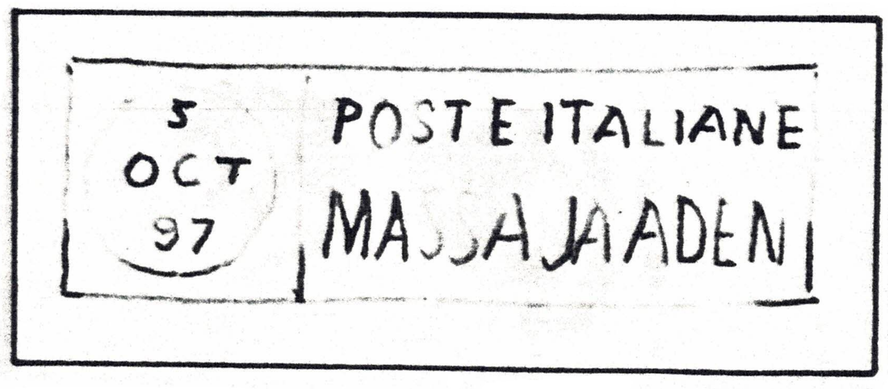
From E.F. Hurt.

On page 12 of the Quaterly Circular No. 7, Dr. Byam illustrates for information a "Suez-Servizio Italiano-del Rosso" marking.

While I cannot say at what date this type of marking first came into use, it was used in connection with the Italian colony in ERITREA and was for the Italian Mail Boat running from MASSAOUA to ADEN and SUEZ.

I have seen this type in 1889, and have been informed that it came into use in 1886. These "MARE ROSSO" (Red Sea) types of Italian dated markings, as illustrated by Dr. Byam bore only the name of one port, e.g. MASSAUA or SUEZ.

At a later date - 1897 - during the first Italian Abyssinian Campaign, a second type was also put into use. This latter omits the words "MARE ROSSO" but gives the two extreme ports of the particular service - the new type being as illustrated herewith:-



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(This is actual size: traced)

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Of this later type, I have only seen one for the service "ADEN MASSAUA" and that in the reverse direction "MASSAUA ADEN" but it is probable that markings for "SUEZ MASSAUA" might also exist.

As far as the actual mail boat service in the RED SEA was concerned,my notes show that from the beginning of 1886 a service was established between MASSAUA and ASSAB only and that this was extended later. There is no certainty as to the length of time in which this RED SEA Service was continued. From Italian sources I was told that it probably closed down in 1897 but I have seen markings in both directions of the ADEN MASSAUA service as late as October, 1898. It is stated that only two mail boats were on this service, the "ARABIA" and "UMBERTO I" and that both these boats ran from GENOA, first to MASSAUA and later to ADEN. It is therefore, probable that these markings, both the earlier and later types of which are known to have been used on these boats, were only for mail posted on board or picked up at SUEZ and ADEN, where, of course, there was no Italian Post Office.

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From M. Jean BOULAD.

Quarterly Circular No. 7. Query page 12. The marking shown on the photograph reads: "SUEZ-SERVIZIO-ITALIANO DEL MAR ROSSO".

In an article published in "L'Echo de la Timbrologie", No. 835, 845, 847, 854, 858, 859, 860, and 862 of 1930 and 1931, by M. BERNARDELLI and entitled "Les Oblitérations du Royaume d'Italie", the author says about the above mentioned marking, the reproduction of which is dated 24 DIC 89.

"SUEZ ne devait être qu'une simple agence postale qui fonctionnait comme bureau de passe pour les correspondances de ou pour l'ITALIE confiées aux paquebots postaux Italiens de la MER ROUGE."

Translation (F.S. Mumford)

SUEZ must have been a mere postal agency serving as a Transit Office for correspondence from or for ITALY entrusted to the Italian Mail Boats of the RED SEA.

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PHILATELIC INDEX OF EGYPT

It is regretted that, owing to War conditions at BEXHILL-on-Sea, Mr. A.S. Mackenzie-Low has had to place his stamps and most of his records in safe keeping: He is, therefore, unable to contribute an instalment in this issue.

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CHANGES OF ADDRESS

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