

Cover Census of the “British Army Post Office/Egypt” C.D.S.
Part 1 — The 1882 Egyptian Campaign

Richard S. Wilson (ESC 230)

The information for this cover census comes from the usual sources such as stamp exhibitions, dealer inventories and stock lists, auction catalogues, internet sources, John Firebrace’s Nineteenth Century Wars in Egypt and the Sudan, and my collection. I reviewed many of the important Egyptian stamp auctions for the past 40 years including the Byam, Danson, and Firebrace sales, among others. Peter Smith estimates that upwards of twenty covers exist from the Egyptian Campaign of 1882. This suggested that I ought to look further to see what more might be out there. My research has recorded 38 covers from this campaign with the BAPO/EGYPT date stamp and I am sure others remain unrecorded in collections, archives, and dusty attics and storage areas. For instance, the Sandbach correspondence came to light in 1988 with its wonderful selection of covers pertaining to the British military in Egypt from 1882 to 1898. I also record information on stamps found on piece and off cover with the BAPO postmark. I am sure that this is far from a complete stamp listing but it provides information about the dates of use of the circular date stamps.

The British Army Post Office Corps (a company of approximately 44 officers and men) arrived in Alexandria on August 21, 1882, opening an office in the Tribunal followed by a field post office in Ramleh. On the 23rd most of the company departed and on the 24th opened an office in Port Said. They continued down the Suez Canal arriving at Ismailia on August 26 where another office was opened. Subsequently mobile field post offices were established at Tel-el-Mahuta (August 27), Kassassin (September 3?), Tel-el-Kebir (September 14), and Cairo (September 16). Most of the corps left Egypt to return to England on October 7. Additional details may be found in references 2, 3, 4, and 5.

The table below summarizes the cover census data, the details of which are appended. .

	<u>Total</u>	<u>BAPO A</u>	<u>BAPO B</u>	<u>BAPO C</u>	<u>BAPO –</u>	<u>BAPO ? *</u>
Total #	38	4	16	2	15	1
EARLIEST Cover	AU 24 82	SP 15 82	26 AU 82	24 AU 82	SP 8 82	SP 3 82?
Stamp	AU 29 82	SP 4 82	AU 29 82	SP 14 82	SP 9	---
LATEST Cover	OC 4 82	OC 4 82	SP 24 82	SP 2 82	OC 4 82	SP 3 82?
Stamp	OC 5 82	SP 30 82	SP 25 82	SP 19 82	OC 5 82	---
OFFICERS' RATE	34	3	15	2	13	1
SOLDIERS' RATE	4	1	1	0	2	0
Stampless	11	0	7	0	4	0
Stamped-GB	18	4	8	1	5	0
Stamped-Egypt	4	0	0	1	2	1
Post cards-GB	1	0	1	0	0	0
Post cards-Egypt	3	1	0	0	2	0
Post cards-Indian	1	0	0	0	1	0
DESTINATION						
England	25	4	9	0	12	0
Scotland	7	0	4	0	3	0
Wales	3	0	3	0	0	0
Egypt	2	0	0	1	0	1
Switzerland	1	0	0	1	0	0
* Cover #8, code and date of c.d.s. not known.						

The earliest cover date is AU 24 82, and the latest OC 4 82, although there is a stamp with the OC 5 82 date. I did not come across any registered covers but Smith reports he knows of one registered letter with this date stamp. There are 34 covers to or from officers and others (10 stampless and 24 stamped) and only four with the soldiers’ concessionary rate (#6 and 37 are stampless and #20 and 30 have 1d. stamps). Covers with code letter “C” above the date are the scarcest with two known, followed by four with the “A” code, 15 with no code letter, and 16 covers with “B” code. The two incoming covers (#1 and 8) have the date stamp on the reverse side while the others (all outgoing) have the date stamp on the front.





Cover Census of the "British Army Post Office / Egypt" C.D.S. – 1882 War

Cover #	Date of BAPO Postmark	BAPO Postmark	Other Markings	Destination	Stamps	Comments	Source-Page
1	24 AU 82	BAPO C (on reverse of cover)	Abergele 17 AU 82 c.d.s. and 181 beehive cancel	Egypt	2 x 1d lilac and 1/2d. Green	Incoming cover from Abergele, North Wales to Lieut. Sandbach, R.E., A Troop, Royal Engineers, Field Force, Egypt. The BAPO/C datestamp is used as a transit/receiving mark on the reverse of the cover. The Army Post Office opened at Port Said on August 24. Dash instead of dot between POST OFFICE. Also, this is one of two covers where the day precedes the month.	e-Bay January 2003
2	26 AU 82	BAPO B	NW/T.P.O./M. b/s: RHYL C SP 5 82 and Abergele A SP 6 82.	Abergele, Wales	2½d. (plate 23)	Addressed to Henry R. Sandbach. Postmarked the day the British Army Post Office opened at Ismailia. Letter enclosed dated August 25. Dots between BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE. This is the other cover with the day proceeding the month	PC
3	AU 28 82	BAPO B	No other known markings	Lanark, Scotland	2½d. (plate 22) - marginal copy	Addressed to Lady Lockhart from Capt. S. MacDonald Lockhart, Life Guards. Originally endorsed "No stamps available" and "2½." Byam lot #890 and Firebrace lot #1105.	B-114, FA-7 & 24
4	SP 1 82	BAPO B	T and 2½d mark on front. B/s: Long Melford	Long Melford, England	stampless	Addressed to either Sir William or Lady Parker from their son Lt. Hyde Parker of the King's Liverpool Regiment serving with the Royal Irish Regiment. Endorsed "On Active Service. No Stamps Available." Lot #364	D-44
5	SP 2 82	BAPO B	T and 2½d mark on front.	Lanark, Scotland	stampless	Addressed to Lady Lockhart from Capt. S. MacDonald Lockhart, Life Guards. Endorsed "No stamps available." The Household Cavalry was at Mahsamah at this time. Lot #1106.	FA-6 & 24
6	SP 2 82	BAPO B	B/s: Kewes 14 SE 82. T marking and 1d. correctly charged	Lewes, England	stampless	Addressed to Mrs. Stevenson from Pte. George Stevenson, Army Hospital Corps, Ismailia. Authorized by David Pringle, Captain of Orderlies. Lot #1109	F-66, FA-35
7	SP 2 82	BAPO C	Front transit marking: Ismailia 5 SE 82. B/s: Brigade 13 SE 82	Brigue, Switzerland	1 piastre	Addressed to Mrs. Tyndall from Lt. Douglas J. Hamilton, Coldstream Guards. Lot #1108.	F-70, FA 34 & inside front cover
8	SP 3 82 ?	BAPO ? (on reverse of cover)	Ismailia c.d.s.	Ismailia forwarded to Kassassin	1 piastre	Posted at Alexandria, addressed to Mr. Spencer Carr c/o Sir Garnet Wolsey (sic). Stamp is cancelled with the Alexandria A duplex SEP 2. Code and date of BAPO c.d.s. is not known. Cover damaged on opening. Lot #362, no photo.	D-44

9	SP 4 82	BAPO B	B/s: Gosport 14 SE 82	Gosport, England	2½d. (plate 22)	Addressed to Mrs. Vincent Caillard from her husband, Lt. V. H. P. Caillard, RE. Byam lot # 889 and Firebrace lot #1110.	B-114, F-62, FA-35
10	SP 4 82	BAPO B	T and 2½d mark on front. B/s: Long Melford	Long Melford, England	stampless	Addressed to either Sir William or Lady Parker from their son Lt. Hyde Parker of the King's Liverpool Regiment serving with the Royal Irish Regiment. Endorsed "On Active Service. No Stamps Available." Lot #365	D-44
11	SP 5 82	BAPO B	Red London backstamp SP14 1882	London, England	2½d.	Four strikes of the BAPO c.d.s. on the front of the cover. Addressed to Mrs. North (?). Envelope flap has embossed red regimental coat-of-arms. Lot # 31826.	DF-253 & 257
12	SP 5 82	BAPO B	B/s: Greenock SP ? 82.	Colintraive, Scotland	3 x 1d.	Addressed to Col. Campbell from E. P. Campbell. Letter enclosed written at Ismailia on September 4. No dot between POST OFFICE.	PC
13	SP 5 82	BAPO B	T and 2½d. b/s: Blandford B SP 14 82	Blandford, Dorset, England.	stampless	Endorsed "From Egyptian Expedition." Addressed to Mrs. Harris.	RLB Lot# 26
14	SP 8 82	BAPO --	No other known markings	Colchester, England	20 paras postcard	Addressed to Mrs. Agnes Robertson from Kassassin. Message dated September 7 discusses "a brief engagement." Byam lot #893 and Firebrace lot # 1111..	B-114, FA-35 & 7
15	SP 10 82	BAPO --	T and 2½d mark. B/s: Long Melford	Long Melford, England	stampless	Addressed to either Sir William or Lady Parker from their son Lt. Hyde Parker of the King's Liverpool Regiment serving with the Royal Irish Regiment. Endorsed "On Active Service. No Stamps Available." Lot #370	D-45
16	SP 11 82	BAPO --	T and 2½d. E.C. B.C. SP 25 1882 b/s: F 10 London F.C. 25 SP 82 in red square, London E.C. 10 SP 25 82 P.	London, England	stampless	Addressed in pencil to J. R. Robinson, Manager, Daily News. Manuscript Brindisi. Cover has been disinfected as indicated by the chisel slit. No dot between BRITISH ARMY.	PC
17	SP 11 82	BAPO B	T and 2½d.	Lanark, Scotland	stampless	Endorsed No Stamps Available. The illustration only shows the front of the cover.	Smith, p.595
18	SP 13 82	BAPO --	No other known markings	Gosport, England	2½d. (plate 22)	OHMS (crossed out) blue envelope addressed to Mrs. Vincent Caillard from her husband, Lt. V. H. P. Caillard. Lot # 365	CV-50 & 2
19	SP 13 82	BAPO B	No other known markings	Canterbury, England	1d. Postcard	Written by General Gerald Graham, September 12, at Kassassin to his sister Mrs. Durant. Card has been disinfected as indicated by a chisel slit. No dot between POST OFFICE.	PC
20	SP 15 82	BAPO A	No other known markings	London, England	1d	Addressed to Messrs Cassell Potts, publishers from Gunner G. Hunter, 4/1, LDRA, and authorized by Major G Noyes, Ramleh Camp, Egypt. Byam lot #894 and Firebrace #1114.	FA-36 & 7

21	SP 15 82	BAPO B	T and 2½d.	Abergele, Wales	stampless	Addressed to H. R. Sandbach. OHMS (crossed out) cover to Wales, m/s "Active Service No Stamps Available" - b/s: Abergele SP 26 82. Vertical disinfection slit. Letter dated 9/16 (should be 14) at Tel-el-Kebir enclosed. Lt. Sandbach's engineers were on the British left near the 2nd. Division troops. No dot between POST OFFICE. Lot # 177.	P-12
22	SP 17 82	BAPO B	B/s: Long Melford 27 SO 82	Long Melford, England	2 x 1d. Plus ½d.	Addressed to Sir William Parker from Lt. Hyde Parker serving with the Royal Irish Fusiliers (1st Division). Danson lot #371 and Firetrace lot #1115.	D-44 & 45, F-63, FA-36 & 7.
23	SP 17 82	BAPO B	B/s: Bristol SP 27 82	Bristol, England	2½d. (plate 22)	Addressed to Mrs. Brackenbury by Captain J. W. Brackenbury, R.N., commander of H.M.S. Thalia stationed at Ismailia during this period. No dot between POST OFFICE. Lot #1408	RLI-57
24	SP 24 82	BAPO B	Canceling the stamp is the BA/E 13-bar obliterator.	Abergele, Wales	2½d. (plate 23)	Addressed to H. R. Sandbach from Lt. Arthur E. Sandbach. Letter enclosed written at Ismailia, September 23. No dot between POST OFFICE.	ESC
25	SP 25 82	BAPO --	B/s: Blandford B OC 9 82	Blandford, Dorset, England.	3 x 1d.	Cover is addressed to Mrs. Harris	PC
26	SP 25 82	BAPO --	b/s: Indian FIELD FORCE P. O. No. 2 EGYPT SEP 23 (backstamp of origin)	Edinburgh Scotland	2½d. (plate 23)	Addressed to 5 North Street, David Street, Edinburgh. Described in the Quarterly Circular # 86 but no other information is known.	QC#86
27	SP 26 82	BAPO A	B/s: London S.W. CS OC 3 82	London, England	2½d. (plate 22)	Addressed to L. T. d'Ezencourt	Phillips
28	SP 27 02	BAPO --	Gramond OC 9 82	Midlothian Scotland	Indian 1½ anna posts card	Addressed to Mrs. Craigie Halkett by her husband Lt. Duncan Craigie Halkett of the Seaforth Highlanders. Message dated September 22	C-62 Lot # 359
29	SP 28 82	BAPO A	Originating office mark on front. b/s: FPO EGYPT No. 2 SEP 26 (Cairo)	Weston-Super-Mare, England	20 paras postcard	Addressed to General James S. Rawlins from his son, Lt. George William Rawlins of the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment at Camp Abbassiah, Cairo. Lot #7929	CA-159 & plate 132.
30	SP 28 82	BAPO --	No other known markings	Glasgow, Scotland	1 d.	Addressed to Miss Sarah McKay from No. 109, Pte. Hugh McKay, countersigned by the Lt. Col. Of the Queens own Cameron Highlanders. Information from a photocopy made January 22, 1978 from James Bendon at the New York Postal History Show.	PHD

31	SP 29 82	BAPO --	No other known markings	London, England	20 paras postcard	Addressed to Mrs. Chalmers from Major Norman Chalmers, The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders. Lot #1112	F-68, FA-35 & 7
32	SP 29 82	BAPO --	B/s: Newport Mon: OC 9 82, Brecon OC 10 82	Newport, England	1d embossed, ½d. green and 1d. lilac	Addressed to Mrs. Lloyd Barrow from Surgeon-Major T. S. Lloyd Barrow. Forwarded from Newport to Brecon, Wales. Danson lot #374, Firebrace lot #1117.	D-46, F-64 & xii, FA-36 & 7
33	OC 1 82	BAPO --	B/s: London 9 OC 82, 2½ correctly charged but no T marking applied.	London, England	stampless	Addressed to Sir F. H. Doyle from Captain F. G. Doyle, Dragon Guards. Endorsed "Expeditionary Force, Egypt No Stamps." Lot #1118.	F-65, FA-36
34	OC 1 82	BAPO --	No other known markings	London, England	2½d.	Addressed to Mrs. Pollard	PHD
35	OC 2 82	BAPO --	B/s: Ryde B OC 11 82	Isle of Wight, England	4 x 10 paras	Addressed to Miss Cramer. Cover endorsed at lower left "Cairo 1 Oct 82 CPC" Lot # 1119	F-69, FA-37 & 7
36	OC 2 82	BAPO --	Front: Cairo 2 OC 82 T1. b/s: (##) FFPPO EGYPT No.2 OCT.1, (Cairo) Blackwater Hants ? ? 82 (faint), Farnborough Station A OCT 11 82	Farnborough, England	1 piastre rose	Addressed to Mrs. C. R. Pennington. Cover is from Major Charles Richard Pennington of the Bengal Staff Corps. Danson lot # 376 and Firebrace lot # 1091.	D-46, F-75, FA-6 & 32, QC#86
37	OC 4 82	BAPO --	No T marking but 1 in manuscript correctly charged.	London, England	stampless	Addressed to Mrs. McCarthy from Pte. J. McCarthy, King's Royal Rifle Corps. Authorized by Col. Ashburnham. Byam lot #894 and Firebrace lot #1120.	B-114, F-67, FA-37 & 36
38	OC 4 82	BAPO A	B/s: Long Melford.	Long Melford, England	2½d. (plate 22)	Addressed to either Sir William or Lady Parker from their son Lt. Hyde Parker of the King's Liverpool Regiment serving with the Royal Irish Regiment. Endorsed "On Active Service. No Stamps Available." Lot #375	D-46

	<p>BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE/EGYPT A Covers 20, 27, 29 and 38.</p> <p>The four covers are all addressed to England. Cover #20 is a soldier's letter with the 1d. rate. Covers # 27 and 38 bear the 2 1/2d. stamp and #29 is an Egyptian 20 paras postcard.</p>
	<p>BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE/EGYPT B Covers 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 19, 21, 22, 23, and 24.</p> <p>This date stamp was in use for about a month from the opening of the army post office in Ismailia on August 26, 1882 until at least September 25. Cover #2 has the date before the month while all of the other covers but one (#1) have the month before the day. Because of their contents or unit location a good number of the covers suggest that this was used at Ismailia. Both the latest cover, #24 dated SE 24 82, and the latest stamp (on piece) dated SE 25 82, are cancelled with the BA/E 13-bar obliterator.</p>
	<p>BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE/EGYPT C Covers 1 and 7.</p> <p>Cover 1 is incoming from Wales with the BAPO/C c.d.s. applied to the reverse side. It is dated 24 AU 82. It was most likely applied at Port Said, the main distributing office where the mailbags for the various units were made up and then sent to the front. Cover 7 is addressed to Switzerland and postage is paid with the 1 piastre rose Egyptian stamp.</p> <p>BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE/EGYPT (no code letter) Covers 14, 15, 16, 18, 25, 26, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, and 37.</p>
	<p>BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE/EGYPT (no code letter) Covers 14, 15, 16, 18, 25, 26, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, and 37.</p> <p>Covers 14, 15, 16 and 18 were probably postmarked at Kassassin and the later eleven covers postmarked at Cairo. There is a 12 day gap between the two offices, SP 13 82 for #18 and SP 25 82 for cover #25.</p>

I welcome any and all corrections and additions to the information in this article. I hope that this will lead to the revelation of new covers not heretofore reported. Scans or photocopies would be appreciated as well as other details that might not be apparent. I'll include such information in a revised version and will send each contributor or other interested collector a copy. You can reach me by postal mail or e-mail.

Richard S. Wilson — 53 Middle Patent Road — Bedford, New York 10506 —U.S.A.
 Tel: 914-234-7456 Fax: 914-234-7292 e-mail: dadu@optonline.net

Bibliography and references

1. Firebrace, John, *Nineteenth Century Wars in Egypt and the Sudan*, The Stuart Rossiter Trust Fund, Bristol and Cavendish Philatelic Auctions Ltd., Derby, Great Britain, 1997.
2. Goodrich, Lieutenant-Commander Caspar F., *United States Navy, Report of the British Naval and Military Operations in Egypt, 1882*, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1885. This was reprinted in *The Quarterly Circular* (The Egypt Study Circle), September Quarter 2002, Whole Series No. 202, Volume XVIII, No. 3, p. 66-67.
3. Proud, Edward B. ed., *History of the British Army Postal Service, Vol. 1, 1882-1902*, Proud-Bailey Co., Ltd., Heathfield, United Kingdom, 1982.
4. Smith, Peter A. S., *Egypt, Stamps & Postal History, A Philatelic Treatise*, James Bendon, Limassol Cyprus, 1999.
5. Web site of *The Postal and Courier Services* www.tafsc.com/PostalHistory.htm.

STAMPS OFF COVER or on PIECE			
DATE	BAPO	STAMP	COMMENTS
AU 29 82	BAPO B	Egypt 10 paras	<i>L'OP</i> July 1945, p. 309.
SP 4 82	BAPOA	2½ d. Plate 22	D-44, lot #366
SP 4 82	BAPO B	2½ d. CD/DC	Paul on piece
SP 6 82	BAPO A	SG 172-lilac	<i>L'OP</i> October 1947, p. 207
SP 8 82	BAPO A	SG 172-lilac	<i>L'OP</i> October 1947, p. 207
SP 8 82	BAPO B	2½ d. Plate 23	D-44, Lot #368
SP 8 82	BAPO A	2½ d. Plate 22	D-44, Lot #367
SP 9 82	No code letter	Egypt 10 paras	D-45, Lot #369
SP 10 82	No code letter	2½ d. Plate 22	PC
SP 13 82	B	2½ d.	CRL Lot 2531
SP 14 82	BAPO C	2½ d. Plate 21	<i>L'OP</i> October 1947, p. 207
SP 16 82	No code letter	Egypt 1 piastre	D-45, Lot #369. Day slug inverted.
SP 18 82	BAPO B	2½ d. Plate 22	D-44, lot #368
19 AU 82	BAPO C	2½ d. Plate 22	<i>L'OP</i> July 1945, p. 309. "Off cover" and day before month
19 AU 82	No code letter	Pair 2½ d. on piece	CRL Lot 2531
SP 22 82	BAPO B	2½ d. Plate 22	E-Bay, January 2003
SP 23 82	BAPO A	Egypt 1 piastre	D-45, Lot #369
SP 24 82	No code letter	2½ d. Plate 22	<i>L'OP</i> October 1947, p. 207
SP 25 82	BAPO B	2½ d. Plate 22	<i>L'OP</i> July 1945, p. 309. "On piece" with killer BA/E. D-45, lot #373
SP 25 82	No code letter	2½ d. Plate 22	D-44, lot #368. Included in this lot is another copy cancelled by the BA/E killer.
SP 29 82	No code letter	2½ d. Plate 22	PC
SP 29 82	No code letter	SG 166-1d. Venetian red	D-372
SP 30 82	BAPO A	SG 166-1d. Venetian red	E-Bay, December 2001, LR marginal black of 30
OC 2 82	No code letter	2½ d. Plate 23	PC
OC 2 82	No code letter	East India anna	D-46, lot #377
OC 4 82	No code letter	East India 2 annas	<i>L'OP</i> October 1947, p. 207
OC 5 82	No code letter	Indian 9 pies	<i>QC</i> 86, June 1973
OC 5 82	No code letter	2½ d. Plate 23	<i>L'OP</i> October 1947, p. 207
AU 29 - SP 20	BAPO B	2½ d. Plate 22	<i>L'OP</i> October 1947, p. 207
SP 2 - SP 11	BAPO C	2½ d. Plate 22	<i>L'OP</i> October 1947, p. 207
AU 28 - OC 1	all	Various	FA-32, Lot # 1094

SOURCES:

- B -- *Byam's Egypt*, October 24 & 25, 1961, Robson Lowe Ltd., London
C -- India Postal History The Dr. Soli F. Contractor Collection, December 16, 1999, Spink & Son Ltd., London
CA -- Corinthia Auktionen, 118th Auction Sale, October 23-29, 1999.
CRL -- Christies Robson Lowe, Zurich, November 1, 1984
CV -- Cavendish Philatelic Auctions, Ltd. Derby, England, Worldwide Auction, Sale # 633, December 7, 2002
D -- *The Col. J. R. Danson Collection of Egypt*, April 28, 1977, Robson Lowe International Ltd., Geneva
DF -- Austria, Levant, Greece & Middle East, December 4-7, 2002, David Feldman, SA., Geneva, Switzerland
ESC -- Egypt Study Circle web site, military section.
F -- *Nineteenth Century Wars in Egypt and Sudan*, John Firebrace, The Stuart Rossiter Trust Fund, Bristol, England, 1997
FA -- *The John Firebrace Collections of Military Postal History*, May 16, 2001, Cavendish Philatelic Auctions, Ltd., Derby England
P -- M. D. Piggan Postal Auction # 149, Feb. 6, 2002, Tansley, Derbyshire, England.
Paul -- Eric Paul Stamps List #49, internet search 28 July 2003.
PC -- Private Collection
PHD -- Information obtained from a postal history dealer, 1978.
Phillips -- Phillips Auctions, May 28, 1988.
QC -- *The Quarterly Circular, Egypt Study Circle*
RLB -- Robson Lowe, Bournemouth, auction of March 3, 1978.
RLI -- *The "Royal" Collection of Egypt*, Robson Lowe International, London, November 5, 1981.
Smith -- Smith, Peter A. S., *Egypt, Stamps & Postal History, A Philatelic Treatise*, James Bendon, Limassol, Cyprus, 1999.