



**The Eye of Horus - Beginners' Corner 3 - with David Ogden.** Today our column aiming to give newcomers to Egypt collecting an insight into its wide-ranging philatelic history looks at a troubled corner of the world where Egypt and Israel have taken reluctant turns in providing postal services

**Palestine overprints:** You may have seen Egyptian stamps with an overprint reading Palestine in English and Arabic. Some of them in colours varying from the Egyptian originals, they were issued by Egypt for use in the Gaza Strip from 1948 and were available in Cairo as well as Gaza to assist collectors and dealers.

The Gaza Strip, known simply as Gaza, is bordered by Egypt and Israel; it is the smaller of two territories, the other being the West Bank, comprising the State of Palestine. Inhabited mainly by Palestinian refugees and their families, Gaza is one of the world's most densely populated areas. The territory has been under Israeli occupation since 1967.

Boundaries were established while Gaza was controlled by Egypt at the conclusion of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, and it became a refuge for Palestinians who fled or were expelled at that time. Egypt provided stamps for Gaza – SG catalogues list 180 of them - between 1948 and 1967. Postal services were set up and some Palestine-overprinted stamps released by May 1948.



At first Egypt issued definitives, with airmail stamps featuring King Farouk, and an express stamp, picturing a motorcycle postman. The early stamps overprinted Egyptian definitives of June 1948, both ordinary and airmail, with two types of overprint, narrow and wide.



After the Egyptian republic was proclaimed in 1953 these stamps were released with Farouk's portrait obliterated with horizontal bars. The republican definitive series of 1953-56 was also released with a Palestine overprint. During the 1950s Egypt used the Gaza Strip for guerilla activity against Israel. In the 1956 Suez crisis British, French and Israeli forces were victorious but were compelled by the US and Russia to withdraw from Egyptian territory. Egypt released a 1957 10 millièmes stamp to celebrate their reoccupation of the Gaza Strip proclaiming "Gaza part of Arab nation". The same stamp was issued in the Gaza Strip in new colours with the usual overprint.

The last stamp released by Egypt in Gaza was the 10 millièmes issue in honour of Labour Day in May 1967. Its use was short lived as Israel reoccupied Gaza in June that year. During the 1967 Six-Day War Israel captured and occupied the Gaza Strip, initiating its decades-long military occupation of the Palestinian territories. Stamps of Israel were then used in the area.

After the 1994 Cairo Peace Agreement the Palestinian Authority was allowed limited self-rule and took control of Gaza post offices. Its first stamps, in August 1994, were intended for use only between Gaza and Jericho. But the Authority also took control of post offices in the West Bank in November 1995 and stamps may now be used on mail to Israel and internationally.

● **Online resources.** Trouble identifying your stamp? Try one of these invaluable and easy to use assets: **Stamp Identifier App:** uses image recognition to show country/year details from your photograph. Download it from Google Play or the App Store. **Stamp World:** "the most complete catalogue in the world" with Egypt stamp catalogues. Or try **Colnect**, which illustrates every Egypt stamp issued.