THE RECONQUEST OF THE SUDAN — 1897 - 1898 NILE EXPEDITION

Construction of a railway between Wadi-Halfa and Abu Hamed began in January 1897. In late July, with the railway half completed, a force set out from Merowe on the Nile for Abu Hamed which fell on August 7th. The army continued up the Nile, taking Berber at month's end and soon reaching the confluence of the Nile and Atbara Rivers. On January 1, 1898, additional British reinforcements were requested. Railway construction continued, reaching Fort Atbara in July. The army awaited reinforcements and a rising Nile until mid-August when the move to Khartoum started. The armies reached Omdurman across the river from Khartoum on September 1st . At dawn the next day the battle began and by early afternoon the Anglo-Egyptian armies had triumphed and avenged Gordon.

This section includes: • postcard cancelled with the Egyptian Army oval date stamp at Abu Hamed; • a cover from the Nile Expeditionary Force at Berber to the Malakand Field Force in India; • a stampless cover postmarked Halfa 27 IV 98 damaged in a collision on the Nile a few days later; and • a soldier's letter with Travelling Post Office c.d.s. (May 1898).

WADI-HALFA CAMP, SUDAN to CAIRO **2 MR 97**

Egyptian Officer's Unpaid Letter — Endorsed: *Field Service Stamps Unobtainable*[1]

The regular postage rate was five milliemes for letters going to Egypt but the rate for enlisted personnel at the front was three milliemes. Endorsed in the upper right, the cover is backstamped with the circular date stamp. ***CAIRE 9 III 97.*** To the left of the c.d.s. are Arabic talismanic numerals ٨ ٦ ٤ ٢ —(8 6 4 2)— signifying that the sender hopes for safe delivery of the letter.

[1] Translation provided by the American Philatelic Society, September 2002.