

THE EGYPTIAN WAR OF 1882 — ARABI REBELLION

In 1882 Great Britain sent its Mediterranean fleet to Alexandria attempting to exert a calming influence during the political crisis under the virtual dictator of Egypt, Colonel Arabi Pasha, the War Minister. However, rioting erupted, Europeans were killed, and the Egyptians continued to fortify their defenses around the city in defiance of British demands. Ignoring an ultimatum to surrender the area forts, the fleet bombarded Alexandria on July 11th and the city was occupied a few days later. By the end of July additional British troops arrived and in mid-August they moved to the Suez Canal and occupied Ismailia. The forces advanced taking Kassassin on August 26th. The battle of Tel-el-Kebir took place on September 13th. And Cairo secured the next day. Arabi fled but was captured on the 17th. Tried and sent into exile. This campaign was the first for the newly formed Army Postal Corps which arrived on August 21. Egyptian civilian postal facilities were also used.

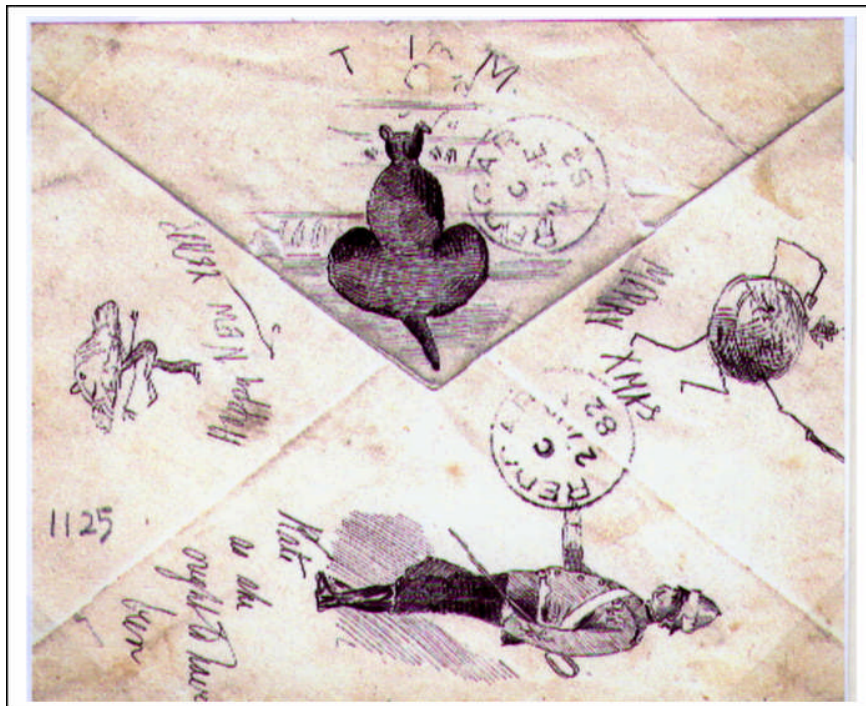
Among the interesting items are: letter from an Egyptian officer to Colonel Arabi commenting on the activities of the British fleet off Alexandria; a cover written by a naval officer from Alexandria on July 20; the earliest known use of the British Army Post Office Egypt circular date stamp on August 24, 1882 at Port Said; a cover with the BAPO/C c.d.s. of 26 AU 82, the day the British Army Post Office opened at Ismailia; □ one of two known British postcards from the campaign, □ the only recorded cover with the BA/E duplex, and □ the latest known date of use for the BAPO datestamp (on one of two known registered covers). The sub-section of the Indian Army forces includes: □ one of the two known Indian post cards cancelled with the Indian Field Force postmark, □ the four known outgoing covers with Indian postage stamps including the only one with all three Field Force P.O. markings, and □ the only recorded incoming cover from India.



A hand-drawn cover from London to Redcar, December 27, 1882, wishing Mrs. Brown a Happy New Year. The right side shows the *Flight of Arabi* and *Sir Gamet Wolseley*, General Commanding-in-Chief of the 1882 Invasion. At the left is a *Wandering Egyptian*.

THE EGYPTIAN WAR OF 1882

ARABI REBELLION



Copy of the reverse of the title page cover showing a British officer, among other drawings.

CIVILIAN MAIL

ARABI REBELLION 1882

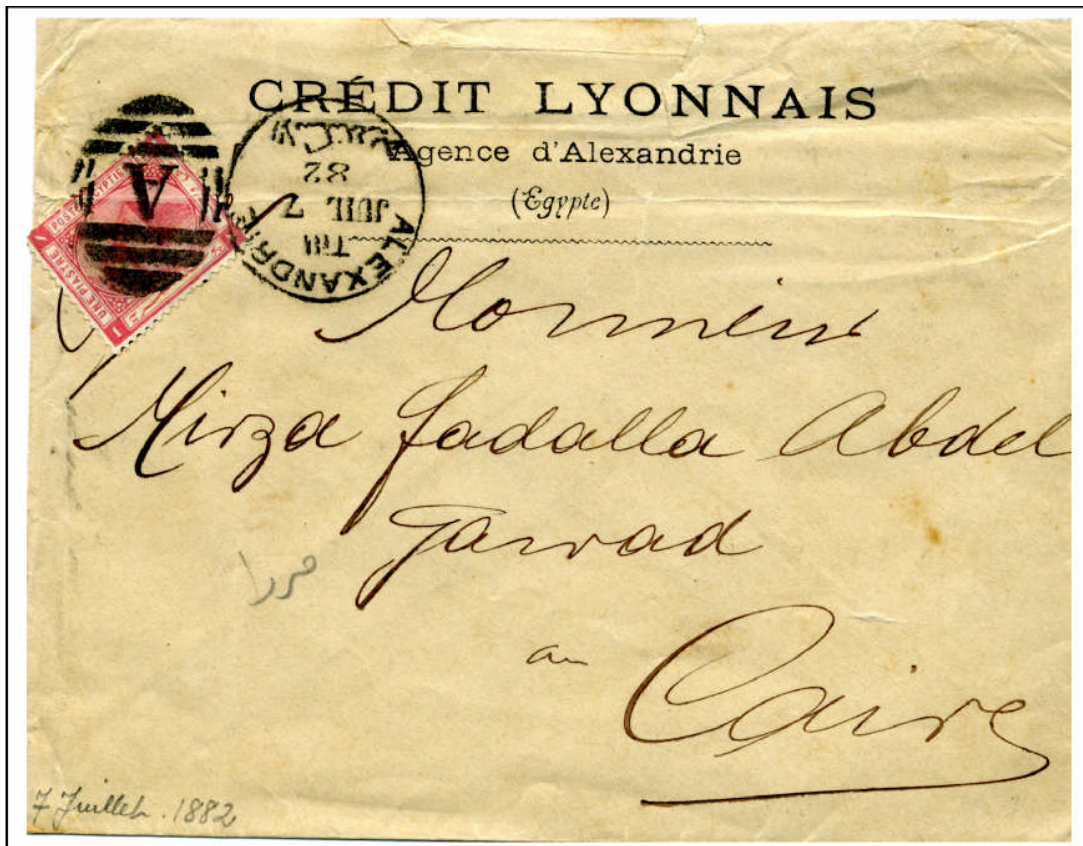
1 Piastre Letter Rate

ALEXANDRIA TO CAIRO

7 JULY, 1882

Civilian letter posted 7 July 1882 from Alexandria to Cairo where it arrived the same day. It is backstamped **CAIRE 7 JL 82 ARRIVEÉ**. This was four days prior to the bombardment by the British fleet of the forts around Alexandria harbor.

On
5th



July
the

British fleet commander, Vice Admiral, Sir Frederick B. P. Seymour sent the following telegram to the Admiralty in London

Shall demand from military governor, to-morrow, cessation of all work on the batteries. As French

¹ appear indisposed to act, shall detain Penelope¹ here until result of demand is known.

On the 7th of July he decisively intimated that he should not hesitate to commence a bombardment of the forts if his request was not complied with.²

¹ An armored corvette completed in 1868. It fired 231 rounds in the bombardment and subsequently became the flagship in the Suez Canal.

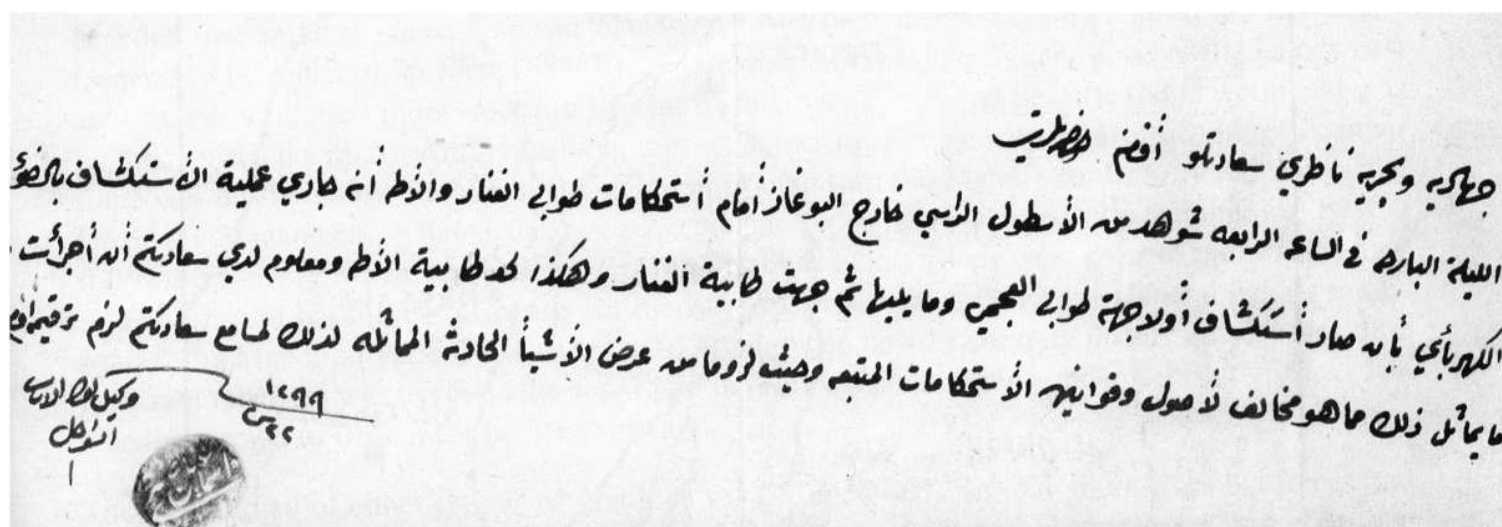
² Archer, Thomas, *The War in Egypt and the Soudan*, Blackie & Son, London, 1886, Vol. 1, p.266

THE EGYPTIAN ARMY

ARABI REBELLION 1882

9 July 1882 22 Sha'ban 1299

Original letter from an Egyptian officer addressed to Colonel Arabi, commander of the Egyptian Army stating that on the previous day men from the British fleet at anchor in Alexandria Bay had made an inspection of the shore with electric searchlights. This letter was found in the room that was occupied by Arabi Pasha on the night before the bombardment and was authenticated by Edward Thomas Rogers, Bey, H. M. Consul in Cairo. The British bombardment commenced at 7:00 am, Tuesday, July 11.



The translated letter reads as follows:¹

To My Most Magnificent Pasha and Majestic Superior,

Last night at four o'clock, the main fleet was observed outside the harbor near the Lighthouse and Al-Atam Forts carrying out an operation illuminated by electric light. Then it began to reconnoiter in the direction of the Al-Ajami and [unreadable] forts, then in the direction of the Lighthouse Fort and in like manner, Al-Atam Fort. And it is known to your Excellency that actions like these violate fundamental tactics of fortifications. Therefore it is necessary for me to submit these recent events and similar ones to your Excellency.

Signed/ Wakeel [the name is unreadable) 22 Sha'ban 1299

The official history of the campaign states:²

There is a quaint Report, which afterwards fell into our hands, from one of the Egyptian officers in charge of a battery, addressed to one of the superior officers of the army; in it the officer complains of the very improper conduct of the English fleet in that, whilst his men were at work in the battery at night, suddenly a blaze of electric light was thrown upon them so that what they were doing could be seen as if it were day—a proceeding which, as the officer avers, was distinctly discourteous on the part of the English.

¹ Thanks is given to the American Philatelic Society's Translation Service.

² Maurice, J. F., Colonel, Royal Artillery, *Military History of the Campaign of 1882 in Egypt*. Originally published in 1887 and reprinted by The London Stamp Exchange Ltd., London, page 10

THE EGYPTIAN ARMY

ARABI REBELLION 1882

Envelope in Which Was Kept the Military Dispatch Sent to Arabi Pasha.

The dispatch was found by a British officer in the room that was occupied by Arabi the night before the bombardment.
The flap has the following endorsement:

E.T.R.
Are the initials of the late
Edward Thomas Rogers (Bey)
Many years H. M. Consul
At Cairo
E.T.R.

Original letter from the officer
in command of the forts at
Alexandria addressed to Arabi
Pasha, complaining that the
officers on board the British fleet
were making use of the electric light.

*Found in the room occupied by Arabi
the night before the bombardment.*

ETR

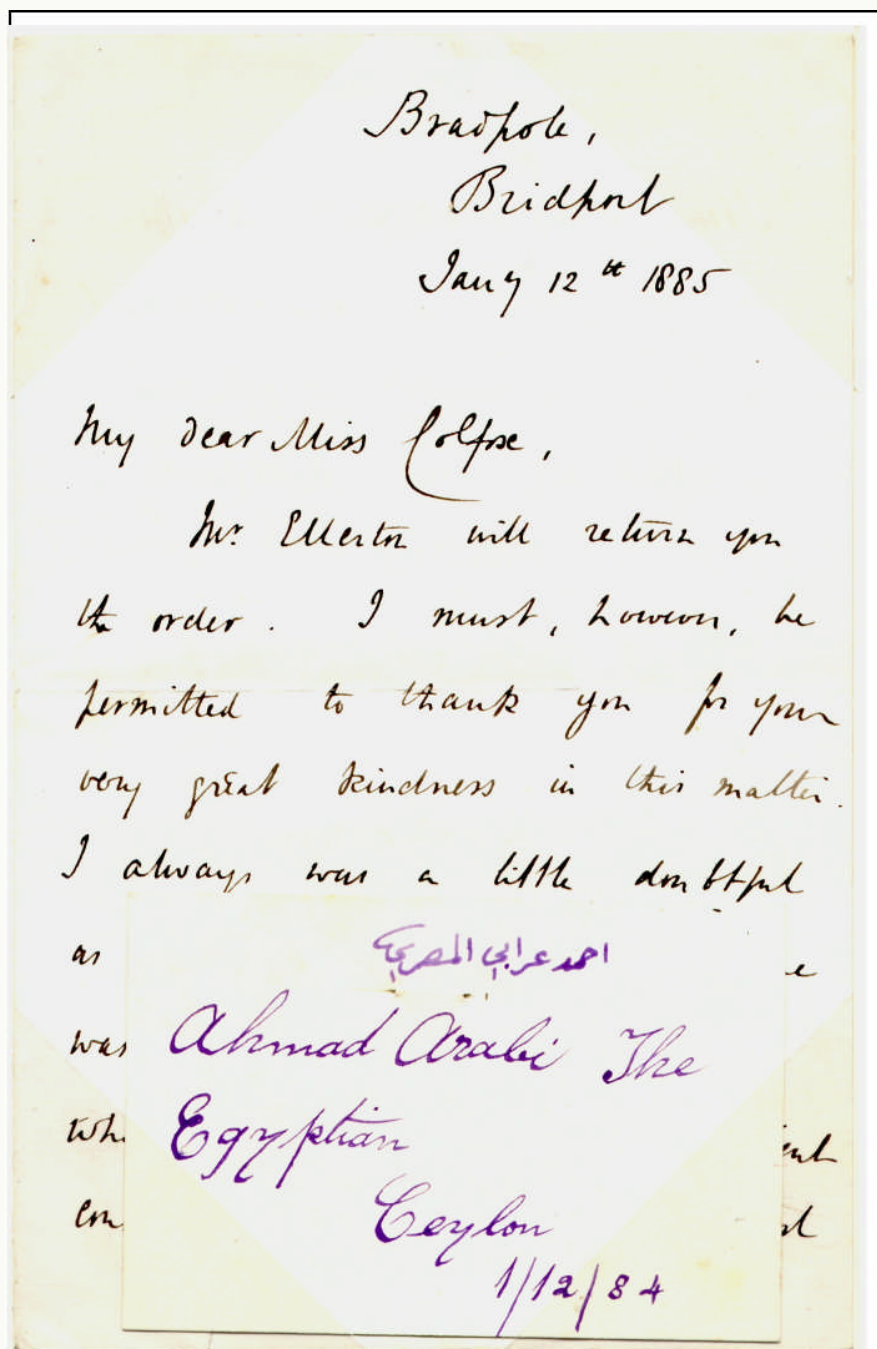
THE EGYPTIAN ARMY

ARABI REBELLION 1882

Ahmad Arabi, The Egyptian — 1841-1911

Arabi was a nationalist leader who became Egypt's Minister for War in February 1882. He resisted British demands to dismantle the forts in Alexandria harbor which led to the subsequent bombardment and invasion. Arabi was defeated at the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir on September 13, 1882. He surrendered to the British the next day and tried for treason on December 3rd. He was convicted and sentenced to death but the sentence was commuted to exile in Ceylon. In 1901 Arabi was allowed to return to Egypt where he died on cancer in 1911/

Arabi's autograph is accompanied by a letter from an A. M. Broadley to Miss Colfax. It concludes, *I send you Arabi's autograph & will do my best to make your Egyptian page unique.*



THE ROYAL NAVY

ARABI REBELLION 1882

2 1/2 d Officer's Letter

ALEXANDRIA TO ENGLAND

JULY 20, 1882

The cover, endorsed on the back "*Recd, T.W. July 26th. 1882. 19th Letter from dear H. Written July 20th Alexandria,*" has the Tunbridge Wells date stamp of July 26 82. The stamps were cancelled on arrival in London with **28** in a nine-bar oval. The cover, probably sent in the Naval Bag, is from Lieutenant Howard F. Hay, R.N., serving on the H. M. S. Northumberland. It is the third earliest recorded date from this campaign



On July 11th, the British fleet under the command of Admiral Sir Frederick Beauchamp Seymour, bombarded Alexandria. Over the next week sailors and marines occupied strategic locations in and around Alexandria. The Channel Squadron including the H. M. S. Northumberland joined the ships of Admiral Seymour off Alexandria on July 17, 1882.

THE ROYAL NAVY

ARABI REBELLION 1882

H. M. S. Northumberland

The fifth *Northumberland* was completed in 1868 as one of the first of a new steam 'Armoured Frigates' of the type pioneered by the *Warrior*. She carried 12 heavy guns on each broadside, displaced 10,800 tons and had a length of 400 feet. She served with the Channel Fleet from 1868 until 1890, being laid up in reserve at Devonport from 1891 to 1898. She was then towed to Chatham where she was commissioned as a stoker's training and depot ship. Renamed the *Acheron* in 1904, she remained in service until 1909, when she became a coal hulk. Finally, in 1927, she was sold and removed to Dakar.



Mr. R. ELLIS, Malta.

GUN-DECK, H.M.S. "NORTHUMBERLAND."

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CIVIL POST OFFICE

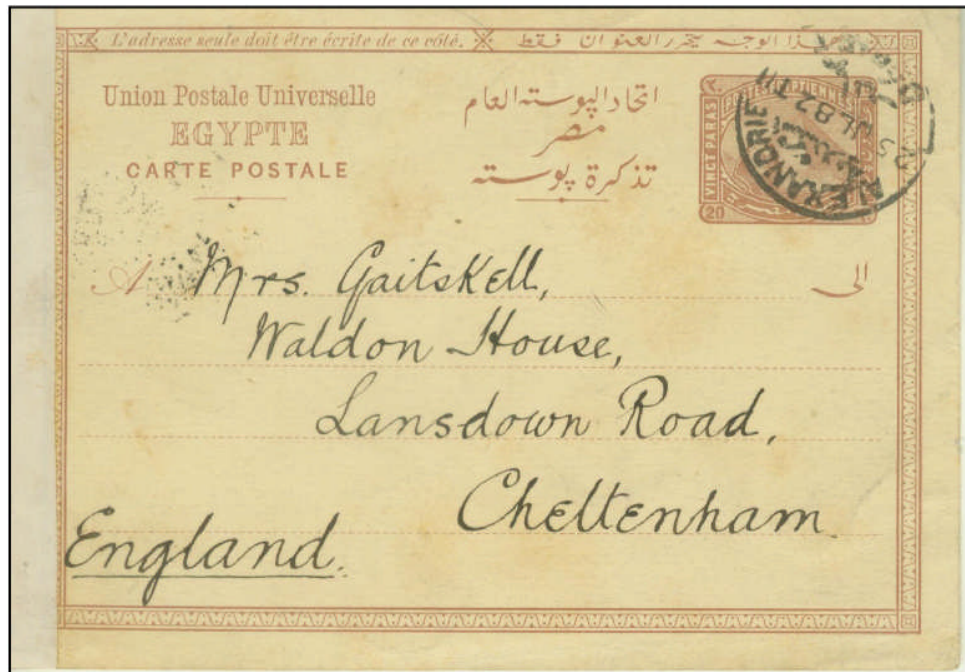
ARABI REBELLION 1882

20 PARAS POST CARD FROM A ROYAL MARINE

ALEXANDRIA TO ENGLAND

25 JL 82

Egyptian post card written by Lieutenant Walter James Gaitskell, Royal Marine Artillery serving on board HMS Agincourt, to his mother. This may be the earliest known cover sent through the Egyptian post office by a member of the British forces.¹ Royal Marines were landed on July 13th and Gaitskell and 60 men under his command landed on July 18th.



The postcard written in a very small but fine hand, is headed *The Khedive's Palace – Ras-el-Tin*. 25th July 1882
It reads in part:

Have been landed a week today and am quartered here in the Harem which was. Am employed on Outpost and Picket duty to guard the Khedive and his Palace; it is not easy work for I never get a whole night in bed, and when I lie down for a few hours, I am eaten up by fleas, bugs, mosquitoes – it is perfectly maddening: we get up in the morning covered with huge red blotches, then by day the flies are most annoying. The more you try to drive them away the more they annoy you. Hope you got my last letter, and had not to pay for postage. I was unable to get any stamps....The Forts are a wonderful sight: the destruction caused by our shot and shell is something too frightful to imagine, while the Egyptian guns did very little damage to our ships, which they have been given to understand would sink directly they were hit. Don't forget to keep this postcard for me & also all other foreign stamps. We had a great scare last night: 2 guns were fired at 1am & 3am & this morning firing has been distinctly heard. Arabi is supposed to be very strongly entrenched with mortars [?] in front & on both flanks.

Walter James Gaitskell was commissioned a Lieutenant in the Royal Marine Artillery on 1 September 1876 and served in the Egyptian War of 1882, receiving the Egyptian Medal and the Khedive's Bronze Star.

¹ Firebrace states (page 50): As troops began to arrive they were able to use the facilities of the Egyptian civil post office, which was still working normally, and letters written during August are known from Alexandria, Port Said and Ismailia."

CIVIL POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

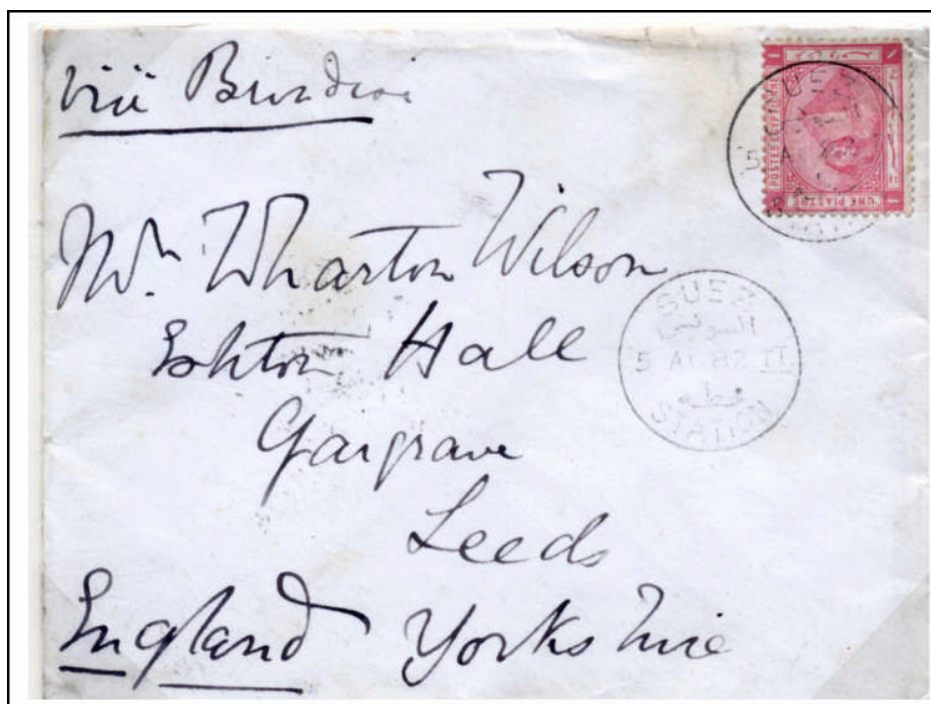
One Piastre Officer's Letter

SUEZSTATIONTOENGLAND

5 AU 82

British naval forces occupied Suez on August 2nd, 1882, but that didn't stop the civil post offices from operating. The Secretary of the General Post Office, London, telegraphed the British Postal Agent at Suez that "...it is not desirable to encroach upon the prerogatives of the Egyptian Post Office more than is actually necessary in the emergency.. . You must therefore confine yourself to the performance of the most elementary functions of a Post Officer, such as the reception of ordinary letters to England and enclosing them in a mail for London."¹

This cover is franked with the one piastre Egyptian stamp of the 4th issue paying the foreign letter rate. Postmarked **SUEZ STATION 5 AU 82**, it is backstamped **ALEXANDRIE ARRIVEE 9 AO 82**, **LEEDS 4 B 16 AU 82** and **GARGRAVEAU 1782**.



The cover is from Lieutenant Richard Henry Francis Wharton Wilson of the 10th Prince of Wales Own Royal Hussars returning to India from leave in England. Commissioned a 1st. Lieutenant on 26 July 1876, he was promoted to Captain on 1 March 1884, and to Major on 15 June 1885. He is to return to Egypt in the 1885 campaign.

¹For a detailed description of the postal-related events in Alexandria and Suez from June to August 1882, see Robert I. Johnson, *A BRITISH CAMPAIGN, The Bombardment of Alexandria, Egypt*, POSTAL HISTORY JOURNAL, October 1980, February 1981, June 11981.

EGYPT.

Postal Arrangements for British Forces.

FOR the convenience of Her Majesty's Forces serving in Egypt, the Postmaster-General has established an Army Post Office, which will undertake all duties connected with the receipt and despatch of Mails, the sale of Postage Stamps, and the issue and payment of Money Orders and Postal Orders.

Mails for the Forces in Egypt will be made up in London three times a week, viz. :—

On Monday Evenings.
On Wednesday Mornings.
On Friday Evenings.

The rates of Postage will be as follows :—

Letters - - - - -	2½d. per ½ oz.
Post Cards - - - - -	1d. each.
Newspapers - - - - -	{ ½d. each not exceeding 2 oz. in weight, and ½d. for every additional 2 oz.
Printed Papers and Books - - - - -	½d. per 2 oz.

But, in exception to the above rate on letters, those addressed to or sent by Non-commissioned Officers, Soldiers, and Seamen in Her Majesty's Service, will be privileged to pass for a postage of one penny each, provided the letters do not exceed half an ounce in weight. To enjoy this privilege the senders must, in all cases, comply with the regulations specially applicable to such letters,—as detailed in the Post Office Guide.

Money Orders and Postal Orders will be issued at the same rates of commission as Inland Money Orders and Postal Orders.

By Command of the Postmaster General.

GENERAL POST OFFICE
11 August, 1882.

ARABI REBELLION 1882

Civilian's Post Card

SUEZ TO ENGLAND

AUGUST 21, 1882

There was some disruption in the Anglo-Egyptian mails but generally they got through. This twenty-paras post card dated August 21st did not go through the Egyptian post office but went via the British mail bag to London where the "10 in a diamond" within an oval of bars obliterator was applied.



The post card message reads:

Suez —21st

Detained owing to action at Ismailia – hope to go on home through Venice & St. Gothard tunnel. Will telegraph when you may expect me. Am very well. Have written to Lizzie from Aden & Suez. There is no danger in going through with the mails for we can fight.

E.E.A.

CIVIL POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

PORT SAID AND ISMAILIAH TO SWITZERLAND

23 AO 82 AND 22 AO 82

The Coldstream Guards reached Alexandria on August 12 and went into camp at Ramleh. Upon re-embarking they were at Port Said on Sunday, August 20 where the top cover was posted. The Guards reached Ismailia on August 21 and disembarked on August 22 where the bottom cover was posted. It appears that they made the same outgoing mail.

The top cover is backstamped *AMBULANT NO. 38 30 VIII 82* and *BRIGUE 31 VIII 82-8*. The lower cover is backstamped *PORT-SAID ARRIVEE 23 AO 82*, *AMBULANT NO. 38 30 VIII 82* and *BRIGUE 31 VIII 82-8*.



The covers are from Lieutenant Douglas James Hamilton, 2nd. Battalion Coldstream Guards, to his sister Louisa, the wife of a Professor John Tyndal. He was commissioned a 2nd. Lieutenant 14 January 1880, and a Lieutenant 1 July 1881. He was present at the engagement at Tel-el-Mahuta and at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir (Medal with Clasp and Khedive's Star). He served with the Guards 1st Battalion in the 1885 Suakin campaign and was present at the battles of Hasheen and Tofrek, and at the destruction of Temai (Clasp).

CIVIL POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

Stampless Officer's Letter

Endorsed:

*Active Service in Egypt**No Stamps Available*

ISMAILIAH TO ENGLAND

24 AO 82

British forces occupied Ismailia on August 20th. and the Army Post Office opened August 26th. This cover was posted in the civil post office during the interim period. Officers' letters were 2 1/2d. per half ounce. Even if sent unpaid the single rate was applicable, not the normal double postage due rate, as long as the cover was endorsed "*No Stamps Available*." The cover is backstamped *PORT-SAID ARRIVEE 25 AO 82* and *BOURNEMOUTH AU 31 82*. The handstruck 2 1/2 was applied on arrival at Plymouth.



This cover is thought to be from Lt. Colonel James Makgill Heriot Maitland, Royal Engineers to a family member. He served in China in 1857-59, and was present during the occupation of Canton and at the storming of Chek-Hung under Sir Charles Straubenze. Served on the attack on the Peiho Forts on the 25th June 1859 under Rear Admiral Hope, when he was in command of the Marksmen on board a division of Gun Boats during the naval action, and in charge of the ladder party when the assault was made over the mud (specially mentioned in dispatches "for gallantry, &c.," Medal). Served in the Egyptian war of 1882, and was present at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir (mentioned in dispatches, CB, Medal with Clasp, 3rd Class of the Medjidie, and Khedive's Star). Also served with the Nile Expedition in 1884-85 (Clasp).

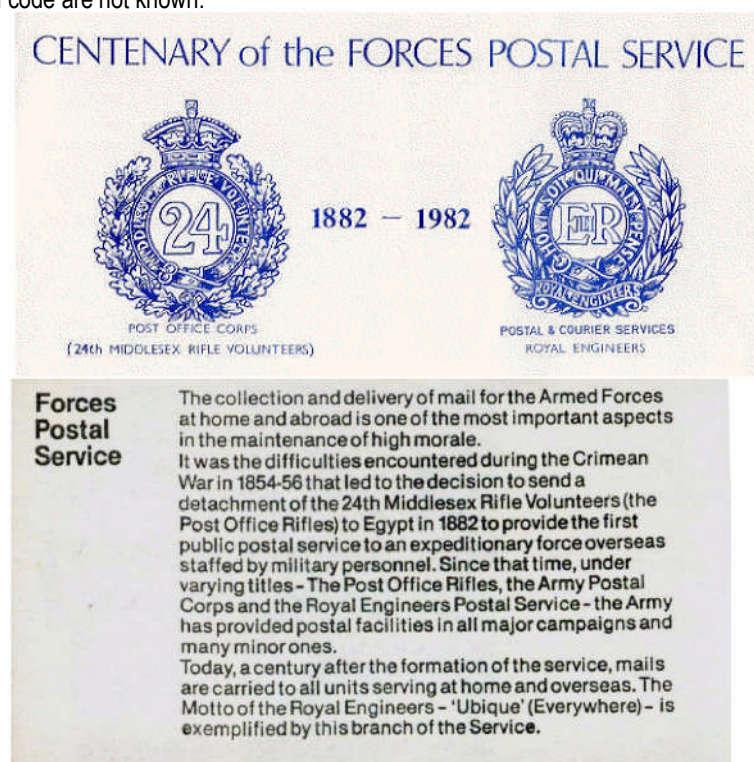
COVER CENSUS OF THE *BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE/EGYPT* C.D.S.*

(as of January 2006)

	Total	BAPO A	BAPO B	BAPO C	BAPO --	BAPO? **
Total #	54	5	22	4	21	2
EARLIEST Cover	24 AU 82	SP 1582	26 AU 82	24 AU 82	SP 8 82	SP 3 82?
LATEST Cover	OC 482	OC 482	SP 2482	SP 2 82	OC 582	SP 3 82?
OFFICERS' RATE	49	4	20	4	19	2
SOLDIERS' RATE	5	1	2	0	2	0
Stampless	15	0	9	1	4	1
Officers	12	0	7	1	3	1
Soldiers	3	0	2	0	1	
Stamped-GB	27	5	11	2	9	0
Stamped-Egypt	6	0	0	1	4	1
Post cards-GB	2	0	2	0	0	0
Post cards-Egypt	3	1	0	0	2	0
Post cards-Indian	1	0	0	0	1	0
DESTINATION						
England	37	4	14	2	16	1
Scotland	9	1	4	0	4	0
Wales	4	0	4	0	0	0
Egypt	2	0	0	1	0	1
Switzerland & other	2	0	0	1	1	0

* This table updates that which appeared in *Cover Census of the 'British Army Post Office/Egypt' C.D.S. The 1882 Egyptian Campaign*, The Quarterly Circular of the Egypt Study Circle, March Quarter 2004, pages 212-218.

** BAPO ? = date and code are not known.



Commemorative Post Office Booklet Issued 1982

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

21/2 d Incoming Letter

ABERGELE, NORTH WALES TO EGYPT

AU 24 82

Of the 54 recorded covers this one shows the earliest use of the *BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE* circular date stamp (code C) of *24 AU 82* at Port Said. This is also one of two recorded examples where the day precedes the month and is one of only two covers where the date stamp is used as a transit marking on the reverse of the cover.



The British Army Postal Corps first served in Egyptian Campaign of 1882. The Corps left England on August 8th, arriving in Alexandria on the 21st establishing its first Field Post Office at the Tribunal in Alexandria (APO 1) on the same day. Another Field Post Office at Ramleh (APO 2) was opened shortly afterwards and on August 24th, a main distributing office opened at Port Said (APO 3). The Base Post Office at Ismailia (APO 4) on Canal on the 26th, followed by APO 5 at Tel-el-Mahuta on the 27th. On September 3rd, APO 5 moved forward with the Headquarters of the First Division to Mahsameh and then to Kassassin. On September 10, APO 6 attached to Headquarters, Second Division, opened at Kassassin. After the battle of Tel-el-Kebir (September 13, 1882) APO 5 moved to the General Post Office in Cairo and APO 6 set up at the railway station in Tel-el-Kebir. It moved to Cairo on September 19th. The Corps left Egypt for home on October 7th, arriving at Portsmouth on the 23

Four main types of date stamps were issued — one without any code letter above the date (19 covers recorded), three others lettered A, B or C (5, 22, and 4 covers recorded, respectively), and two where the code is illegible. The normal date stamp has a dot between BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE but there are some minor flyspeck varieties such as missing dots. In the example above there is a dash instead of a dot between POST and OFFICE. Some of these may have been caused by uneven pressure being applied to the date stamp when canceling the stamps.

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

2 1/2 d Officer's Letter

EGYPT to ABERGELE, NORTH WALES

BAPO B 26 AU 82

The cover is cancelled with the *BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE* code *B* circular date stamp dated *26 AU 82*, the day the Army Postal Corps landed at Ismailia and set up operations in the public gardens. Note that the day precedes the month on this second of two recorded covers with this date variety. The cover is also marked with the British traveling post office hand stamp *N.W./T. P.O. /M.* It is backstamped *RHYL C SP 5 82* and *ABERGELE A SP 6 82*.



The enclosed letter from Lieutenant Arthur Edmund Sandbach to his father reads in part:

Transport Oxenholme, 100 miles W of Alexandria /10:30p.m., Friday 25 Aug/82

"... Tomorrow we shal know our final fate: probably Ismailia. ... We have al been sharpening our swords, browning our helmets & trying our revolvers since we left Malta "

A. E. Sandbach served in the Egyptian war of 1882, and was present at the battle of Tel-El-Kebir (Medal with Clasp, Khedive's Star). He also served in the Sudan campaign of 1885, and was present at the engagement at Thakool (Clasp).

Letter from A. E. Sandbach to his Father.

Transport or envelope -

100 miles NW of Alexandria.

10.30 pm. Friday 25 Aug 82.

My Dear Father.

The bustle and excitement, (I hope without confusion) of disembarkation will begin in a day or two.

We stayed in Malta 3 hrs on Tuesday: and I saw what I could of the place under the guidance of one of our officers, who was there for 2 years. We got plenty of grapes, figs, oranges on board.

The R. E. House where our unmarried officers sleep & breakfast has a most beautiful garden with fountain & grottoes. They mess with the R. A. at the R. A. R. E. mess in the finest mess quarters in Malta.

We sailed out of the harbour at 3.30 pm with orders for the Captain of the ship

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

Letter from A. E. Sandbach to his Father.

Transport Oxenholme

100 miles W of Alexandria

10:30 pm. Friday 25 Aug/82

My Dear Father –

The bustle and excitement (I hope without confusion) of disembarkation will begin in a day or two.

We stayed in Malta 3 hrs on Tuesday and I saw what I could of the place under the guidance of one of our officers who was there for 2 years. We got plenty of grapes, figs, oranges on board.

The R. E. House where our unmarried officers sleep & breakfast has a most beautiful garden with fountains & grottoes. They mess with the R.A. at the R.A. & R.E. mess in the finest mess quarters in Malta. We sailed out of the harbour at 3:30 pm with orders for the Captain of the ship to report to the Commanding Officer of the Squadron off Alexandria. Tomorrow we shall know our final fate: probably Ismailia.

We heard at Malta of the fighting that day with slight British loss & saw no particulars. We have all been sharpening our swords, browning our helmets & trying our revolvers since we left Malta.

I have been as well as possible so far & sleep on deck in my hammock regularly every night. We landed Porter at Malta to go to the hospital there, poor chap. It is a great [?] for him being just out of it so completely by such an unfortunate accident. The wind & sail struck also another & Whitenon too, but only on the legs. He will probably not join us again.

By the R.E. Journal, which will come regularly for me, you may see where I have been. Please keep them. I have them bound always. I wonder whether Martin has landed in Egypt or not. I saw Genl. McPherson had arrived at Suez with the Indian Division. On June 25 he was in Cashmere, so he must have hurried back very much if he is there now. If he is not there I confess I shall be a little disappointed.

Please let Margaret remember me to Alfred & Harriet when they are at Tyre.

Thank you all for letters at Malta. What a horrible loss poor Wm. Roberts will be.

Yr. Affecd son,

Arthur E. Sandbach.

I will forward my arrival later.

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

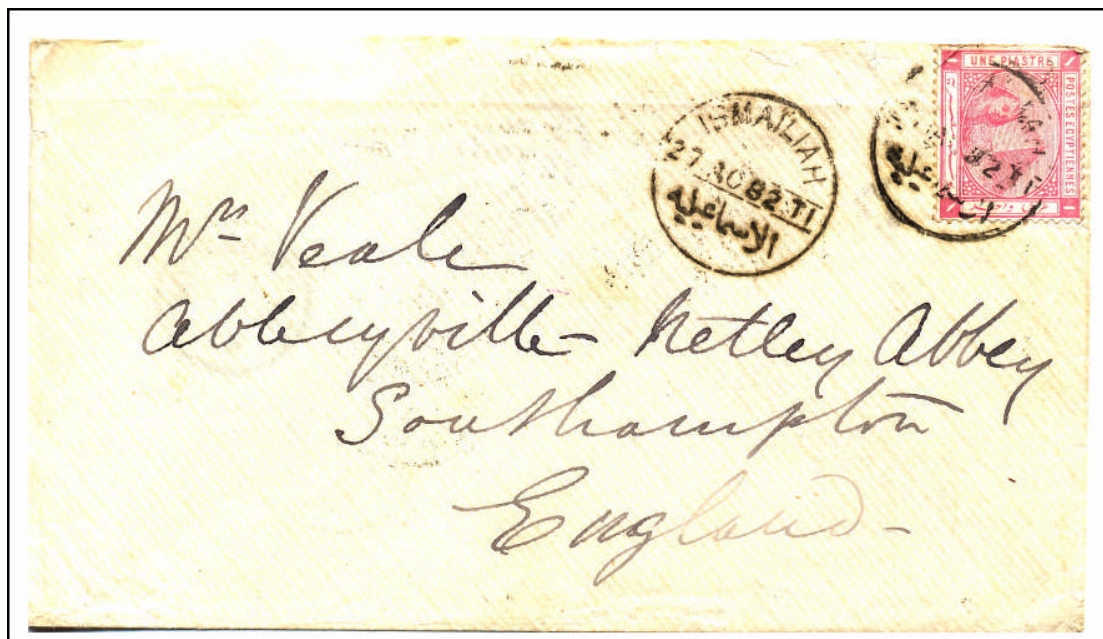
ARABI REBELLION 1882

One Piastre Officer's Letter

ISMAILIAH TO ENGLAND

27 AO 82

Even after the British Army Post Office opened at Ismailia on August 26th the civilian post office functioned. This cover, sent by Brigade Surgeon (acting as Lieutenant Colonel) Henry Richard Lobb Veale, is backstamped *PORT SAID ARRIVEE 28 AO 82, SOUTHAMPTON 1 P SP 6 82, and NETLEY ABBEY C SP 782.*



Brigade Surgeon Veale was commissioned an Assistant Surgeon on 14 August 1855; Surgeon on 26 February 1870; Surgeon Major on 1 March 1873; Brigade Surgeon 27 July 1881, and Honorary Deputy Surgeon General on 2 January 1883, when he retired. He served in the Indian Mutiny campaign, and was present at the relief of Lucknow by Lord Clyde where he was severely wounded (Medal with Clasp). He served in the Egyptian War of 1882 and was awarded the Medal and Khedive's Star.

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

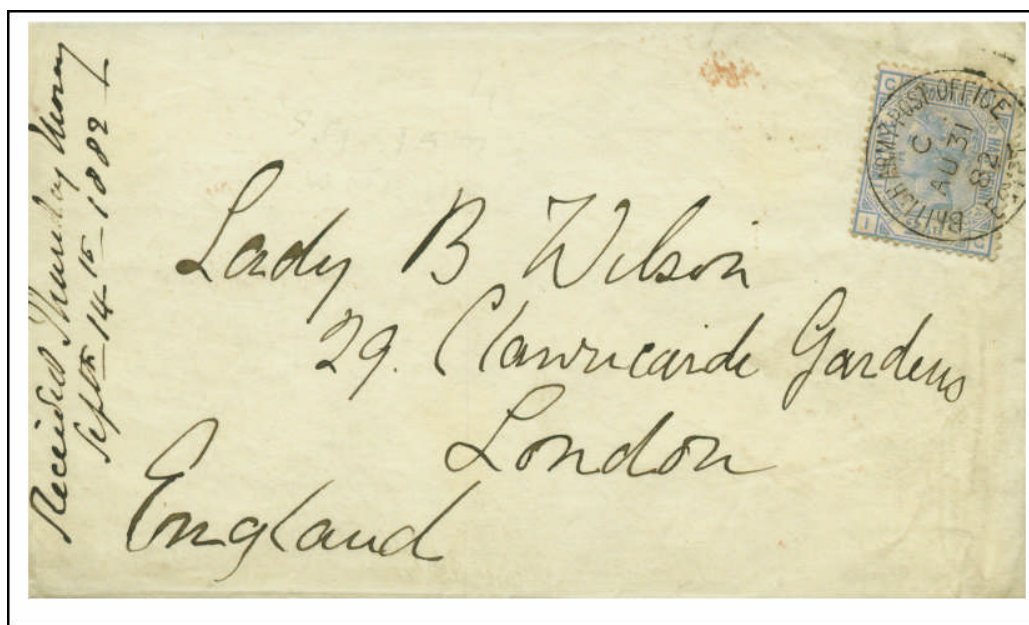
ARABI REBELLION 1882

21/2 d Officer's Letter

EGYPT TO LONDON

BAPO C AU 31 82

This cover went through Post Office at Tel-el Mahuta which opened August 27th and is backstamped with the red *PADDINGTON 7 SP 14/2 c.d.s.* The enclosed letter, written by Lieutenant B. R. Wilson from *Camp — TelesMahoutere* [sic.], describes the terrible heat, sand, flies and a couple of skirmishes. At this time letters traveled through Ismailia up the canal by postal launch to Port Said and then by mail steamer to Brindisi and on to England by rail and steamer.



Belford Randolph Wilson was commissioned a Lieutenant in the 19th. Hussars on 10 January 1874, and promoted to Captain on 11 June 1884. He served in the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, including the engagement at Zolobane Mountain and was awarded the Queen's South African War Medal with Clasp. He served with 4th. Dragoon Guards in the Egyptian War, and was present in the engagements at Tel-el-Mahuta, the two actions at Kassassin, and the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. He received the Egyptian Medal with Clasp, 5th Class of the Medjidie, and Khedive's Star. Sometime prior to the end of 1887 he transferred to the Reserve of Officers.

Letter from Lieutenant Belford Randolph Wilson to his Wife.

Camp - Yebes - Mahouta
August or September 1882

Dearest Puss,

at last I have time to
send you a line. You will see I had a
letter that we have lost count of time
the name of our Camp is spelt phonetically
but I dare say the papers will help you to make
it out. We landed at Ismaïliya about
a week ago on Thursday we were there
the whole day landing horses stores etc
& about 12 (midnight) got all on shore, our
horses fed & watered ammunition & a lot
of biscuit stored out & our horses saddled
at 2 o'clock we marched out went about 18
miles & found the Arabi army encamped at
a place called "Mensanah". Our batteries
took up position on a ridge about 2000
yds from & overlooking his Camp & across
the Canal. Many men were in rear
& we went at it hammer & tongs. My squadron
had a most memorable part in young Zellers
had to act as escort to a battery of guns which
meant that we had to sit still under fire
from the enemy's guns without a chance
of charging.

Letter from Lieutenant Belford Randolph Wilson to his Wife.

Camp — Teles-Mahoutere
August or September 1882

Dearest Pussy —

At last I have time to send you a line. You will see by head of letter that we have lost count of time. The name of our camp is spelt Nhonetically (?) but I dare say the papers will help you to make it out. We landed at Ismailia about a week ago on Thursday. We were the whole day landing horses stores etc. & about 12 midnight got all to shore. Our horses fed & watered ammunition and a ration of biscuit sowed out & our horses saddled at 2 o'clock we marched out went about 18 miles and found Arabi army encamped at a place called "Mensanah". Our artillery took up position on a ridge about 2000 yards from and overlooking his camp & opened fire. The cavalry remaining massed in rear & we went at it hammer & tongs. My squadron had a most unenviable part for young soldiers having to act as escort to a battery of guns which meant that we had to sit still under fire from the enemy's guns without a chance of charging & I felt anything but heroic as the shells came whistling & bursting about us. One shell burst about a dozen yards in front of my troop blowing a poor gunner off a gun bunker in front of us up into the air. The fragments of shell came over and through my troop but strange to say touched neither man nor horse but I must say I was glad when the guns limbered up and went off and we with them for the fire was getting very heavy & remarkably accurate. Arabi is said to have German gunners in his camp. Our return (?) first made the Egyptians shuttle out of their camp. Then a part of my regiment had the luck to charge them & they ran like tedshanks (?); we marched into our camp had about 5 of any of horse day men & horses thoroughly done up & we have lost some in (?). I keep my health in a wonderful way in spite of all. We have had many men knocked over by the sun & bad food, etc. We were told we should have a rough time & truly are all getting it as till today we have wanted the merest necessities of life our food being a handful of dry ship's biscuits & our drink water from the Canal polluted by dead Egyptians and a thousand other horrors. Sometimes a little tea & happy the man who can find an empty meat tin to boil it in. Today we have plenty of food & tents, up to the present time we have suffered actual starvation. I have had no shelter from the terrible heat & dust (we are in the desert, the sand being about six inches deep). I took off my clothes & boots today for the first time since landing. I had a wash but we sleep in our clothes ready to turn out at any moment & are quite callous to filth & dirt. My bed has never turned up & never will but it is no loss in a country like this & I pick the softest stones to lie on & my cloak does the rest. Don't send anything out to me as transport is the great difficulty here & you would only supply people who probably would have no need for it. Today the dams on the canal have all been cut & the rail is working as far as us at any rate so better times are coming I hope. I don't think we shall have any more fighting at present. As men & horses require water & food & even today has picked us as wonderfully being sheltered from the terrible heat & getting plenty of food.

The day before yesterday about 12 midday as we were about to eat what we call dinner "Boots & Saddles" sounded and off we went with empty stomachs to fight Arabi. We went about 6 miles but not seeing any signs we returned to camp about 6:30 & had not eaten our grub. When "Boots & Saddles" sounded again & off we went the sound of hearing fire going on some miles in front & we expected we were in for a big thing. We marched ten or so miles and halted on a big plain & dismounted the infantry piling arms. We could now hear the heavy guns (?) & there was a peculiar solemnity to look upon our troops, many asleep under the brilliant moonlight, all waiting for the order to advance. Gunners by their guns & cavalry being at their horses feet. We remained like this for some hours when some orderly galloped in from the front to say that the enemy had been beaten & were retreating having lost 11 guns to our services. Not being untired we march for camp which we reached about 3 in morning pretty well done up. Arabi is said to have retreated to an entrenched camp but as men & horses require rest it will be some days before we have more fighting.

Don't believe reports & even if names are mentioned in papers as killed & wounded. It was telegraphed home Major Denne of ours was killed whereas he was never even wounded. It must have been terrible for his poor wife. Don't expect to hear from me for a long time as today is an exceptional one. Tonight I take my turn at patrol duty with my troop. We march at 8, patrol several miles beyond the camp on look out for enemy & return at 8 tomorrow morning. The flies are a perfect curse. Got a letter of yours repeating Dillons, a wire yesterday & 1 paper (in post). No more now but love to Robert & family.

Yours affectionately,
BR Wilson.

OFFICIAL PAID

ARABI REBELLION 1882

Stampless Officer's Letter

EGYPT TO LONDON, ENGLAND

ABOUT SEPTEMBER 1, 1882

This cover was sent via the War Office rather than through the regular Army Post Office facilities or the Egyptian civilian post office. **On Her Majesty's Service** is crossed out and **Egypt Expeditionary Force** is written above it. There is no indication that a T marking or postage due amount has been applied as found on other stampless covers of the period. It is backstamped **LONDON S.W. N SP 6 82** and has the **LONDON L OFFICIAL PAID A 6 SP 82** applied on the front. It was received at the War Office at Horse Guards and signed for by *W. Macpherson* before being delivered. This is the only cover known to date with these markings.



The enclosed letter is quite illegible but one can make out a few words such as the salutation *Dearest Anna*. She was the widow of Arthur Herbert Somers-Cocks, CB, and the mother of Lieutenant Herbert Haldane Somers-Cocks. Lieutenant Somers-Cocks (1861-1894), educated at Royal Military College, Sandhurst, was commissioned Lieutenant in the 2nd Battalion of the Coldstream Guards on 16 October 1880 and made 1st. Lieutenant on 1 July 1881. He was present at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir and was awarded the Egyptian Medal with Clasp and the Khedive's Star. He was later a captain in the 4th Battalion of the Worcester Regiment but was invalided out with lung problems.

OFFICIAL PAID

ARABI REBELLION 1882

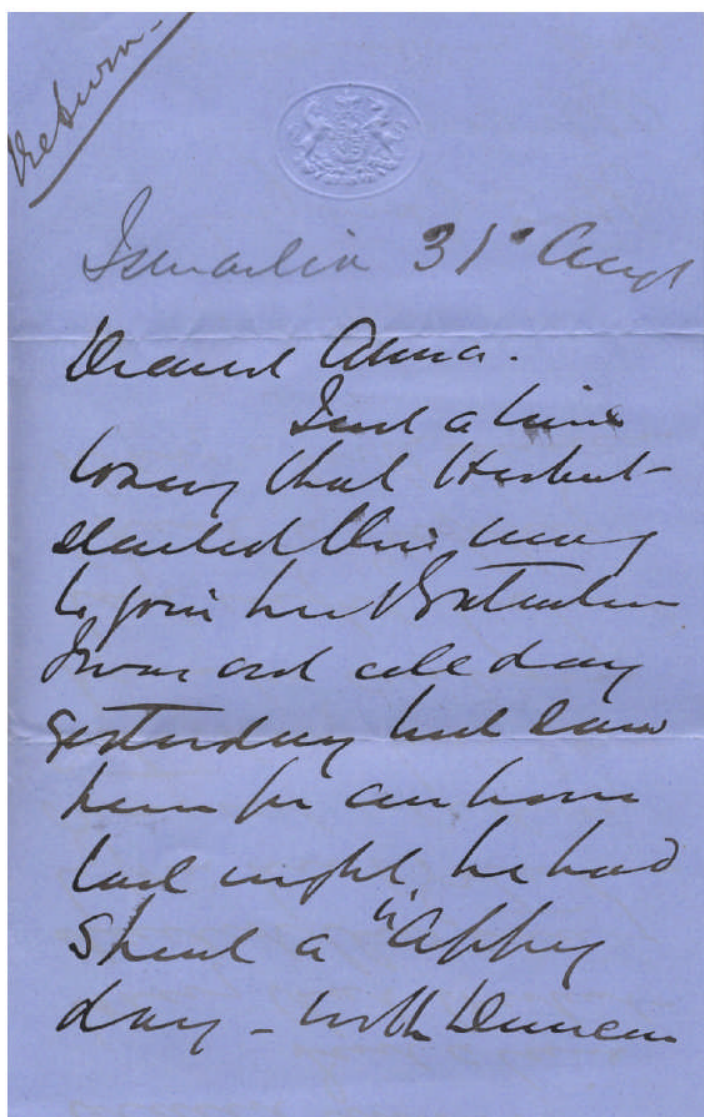
Letter to Mrs. Anna Marion Jessie Eckford Somers -Cocks, mother of Herbert Haldane Somers -Cocks,
possibly written by ? McPherson

This letter is quite illegible and the following is just a stab at trying to transcribe it.

Ismailia 31st. Aug

Dearest Anna.

Sent a line today that Herbert started this way to join but ... I was out all day
yesterday but saw him for an hour last night. He had ... a in Abbey day — with Duncan. He was
looking very well and was in e xcellent spirits. I hope ... in a few days If I can be ... of course try
hardoff on the Battalion in want of officers. Mrs. Greely ... band which Sir General is sending
....and hear if the ...from 5AM 'till 10PM.



Re sum -

Ismailia 31st Aug

Dearest Anna.

Sent a line
today that Herbert
started this way
to join him but
I was out all day
yesterday but saw
him for an hour
last night. He had
sent a "happy
day - with Duncan

¹ A search through *Hart's Annual Army List 1885* suggests that the writer may have been Lieutenant Duncan Haldane Macpherson of the 2nd Battalion of the Seaforth Highlanders.

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

2 1/2 d Officer's Letter

EGYPT TO COLINTRAIVE, ARGYLL, SCOTLAND

BAPO B SP 5 82

Officer's letter from Lieutenant Edward Parker Campbell to his father overpaid by 1/2d. with a pair and a single of the one penny stamps. The stamps are cancelled by the *BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE* code *B* c.d.s. The envelope is backstamped with the *GREENOCK SP ? 82* transit c.d.s.



E. P. Campbell was commissioned a Lieutenant in the Black Watch Regiment (Royal Highlanders) on 17 January 1872 and was promoted to Captain 4 December 1885. In the 1882 Egyptian war he was present with the 1st Battalion of the Black Watch at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir (Medal with Clasp, Khedive's Star)

The letter reads in part

Lake Timsa The Port of Ismailia September 4th. 1882

" We reached Port Said from Alexandria on the 1st and as you know by this time came on to Ismailia through the Canal on the same day and were anchored off the place ever since doing nothing. ... We leave tomorrow most likely and go up to join Sir G.W. at once 23 miles from here and then the whole Army will advance together. . . . "

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

Underpaid Officer's Letter

EGYPT TO LIVERPOOL

BAPOB SP 9 82

This officer's letter is underpaid by 1 1/2d but there are no markings to indicate that the shortage is due from the recipient. Apparently mistaken for a soldier's letter because of the 1d. stamp and what looks like a commanding officer's endorsement on the lower left, it lacks the required name, rank and/or unit of the sender at the top. The cover is backstamped *LIVERPOOL/U2/SP19/82*.



Octavius Rowe, Royal Artillery, was commissioned Lieutenant on 28 June 1875; Captain, 1 January 1884; Major, 30 November 1891; Lieutenant Colonel, 17 July 1901, and Colonel, 17 July 1904. He served in the Egyptian War of 1882 and received the Egyptian Medal and the Khedive's Star.

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

Stampless Officer's Letter

EGYPT TO LONDON

BAPO SP 11 82

Unpaid letter sent through the *BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE* (no code letter above date) via Brindisi. It is not endorsed *Active Service – No Stamps Available*", as an unpaid officer's letter should be. It may have been posted by a war correspondent traveling with the troops. However, it received the proper "T" marking and the handstruck 21/2 was applied. The cover has been disinfected as indicated by the chisel slit.



THE ROYAL NAVY

ARABI REBELLION 1882

Seaman's Letter

SUEZ TO BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND

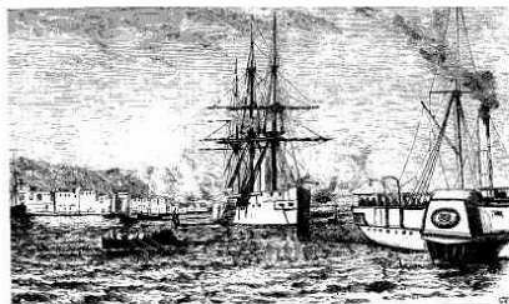
SP 13 82

Cover from Michael Sullivan, Skilled Carpenter's Mate serving on H. M. S. Euryalus, countersigned by a rubber stamped signature of Commander Ernest Neville Rolfe. The rate for soldiers and sailors was 1d. but in this case the letter was sent via a private ship and so an additional 1d. (captain's gratuity) was charged. The stamps were postmarked upon arrival in London with the No. 87 beehive duplex canceller at the Foreign Branch of the Chief Post Office.

Due to the war the overland route was deemed to be unsafe and the mails were transferred to the Brindisi steamer at Suez. The letter was placed in the Navy bag on the Pacific & Orient *Poonah*, which took the mails through the Suez Canal and directly to Brindisi on 11 September 1882. The mails arrived in London 13 September 1882.¹



H. M. S. Euryalus, the flagship of Rear Admiral Sir William N. W. Hewett, KCB, VC, Commander-in-Chief of the East Indies Squadron, served at Suez from July 29 to October 11, 1882. On August 2nd he occupied Suez with a force of Royal Marines. The Euryalus, a second class cruiser of 4,140 tons and 5,110 horsepower with 16 guns, was built in Chatham in 1877 and sold in 1897.



H. M. S. Euryalus

¹ See *The Michael Sullivan Correspondence 1874 & 1882 to 1885*, Ferald J. Elliott, RDP, FRPSNZ, a joint publication of the Forces Postal History Society and the Society of Postal Historians, 2007.

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

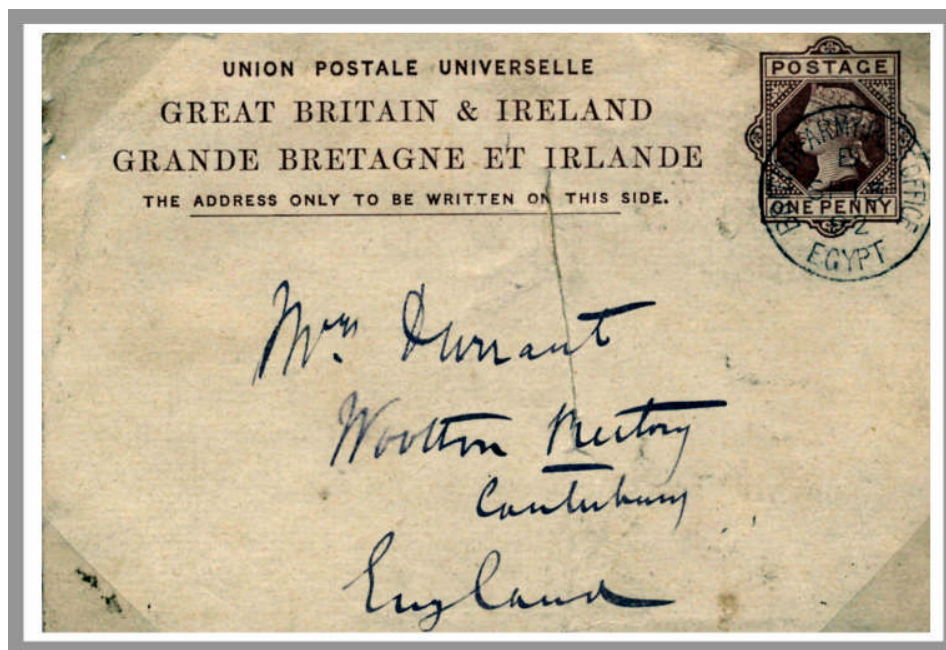
ARABI REBELLION 1882

1d. Post Card Rate

EGYPT TO CANTERBURY, ENGLAND

BAPO B SP 13 82

This post card was written by Major General Gerald Graham VC, commanding officer of the 2nd. Brigade 1st. Division to his sister in Canterbury. Cancelled with the *BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE* code *B* c.d.s. of September 13, 1882, it is one of only two known one penny post cards from the campaign. The card has a central tear, possibly a chisel disinfection slit.



The message on the card reads: *Kassassin Sept. 12th..*

My dear Sister, Thanks for your card. The cavalry action of the 28th [Battle of Kassassin] was perhaps more showy but our men deserved much credit for their long endurance when actually suffering from want of food. The 46th actually got nothing to eat til supper that night yet they responded gallantly when called on to advance. We have our most serious work before us now. I trust to get through with life & honour. Your affect Brother, GG.¹

Graham was commissioned in the Royal Engineers on June 19, 1850. During the Crimean War he was present at the battles of the Alma and Inkerman, and was awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions during the assault on the Redan at Sebastopol. Graham also served throughout the China War of 1860 and was wounded at the taking of the Taku Forts. He was present at the entry into Pekin. During the Egyptian War of 1882, Graham commanded a Brigade and fought in the battles at Kassassin and Tel-el-Kebir. He later commanded the expedition to Eastern Sudan in February 1884 and fought the battles of El-Teb and Tamai. He also commanded the expedition to Suakin in 1885. Lieutenant General Graham retired from the Army on 14 June 1890. On 10 March 1899 he was appointed Colonel-Commandant of the Corps of Royal Engineers. He died at Bideford in Devonshire on 17 December 1899.

¹This message is printed in *Life, Letters and Diaries of Lieut.-General Sir Gerald Graham, V.C., G.C.B., R.E.*, by Colonel R. H. Vetch, R.E., William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London, 1901, p. 245.

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

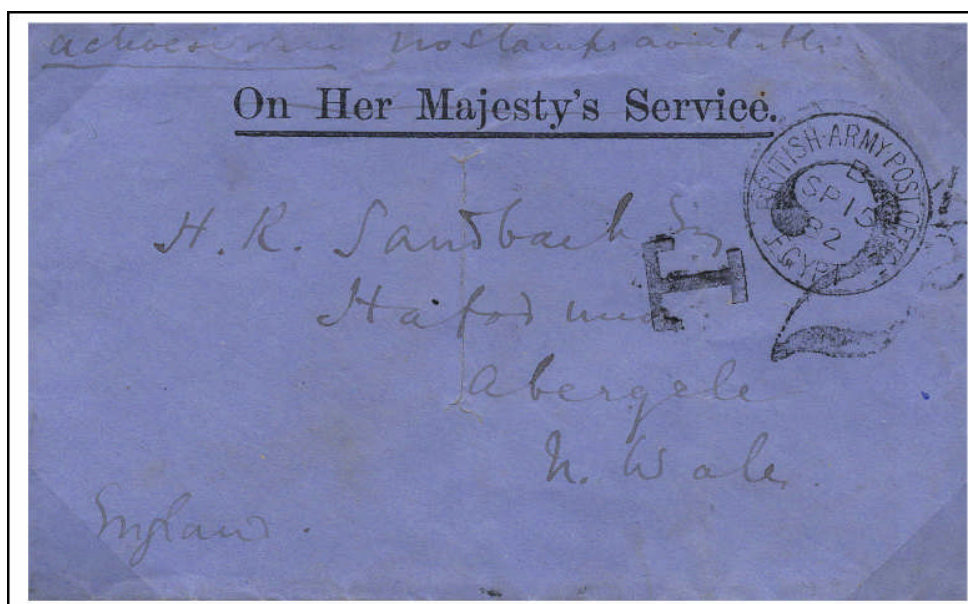
ARABI REBELLION 1882

Stampless Officer's Letter

EGYPT TO LONDON

BAPO B SP 15 82

Unpaid letter sent through the *BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE* with code letter *B* above date. It is endorsed "*Active Service – No Stamps Available*" and backstamped *ABERGELE A SP 25 82*. It received the proper "T" marking and the handstruck 21/2 was applied. The cover has been disinfected as indicated by the chisel slit.



The battle of Tel-el-Kebir occurred September 13th. The letter, written September 14th. from the battlefield, reads in part:

It was 5:10 am by my watch (twilight) when we saw the first shell of the enemy fired & the fight had been going on on our right for about 1/2 hour. Then flash after flash with our won guns firing away on our right about 4,000 or so of us & Gatlings of the Naval Brigade just in front of us. On we pushed as fast as possible afraid the enemy skedaddling away near the canal but not so on our extreme right & center (we were left). I hear they had real hard fighting to turn the Arab out of the trenches.

The nearest shell to me was about 30 yards & one pitched over the head of the men & burst on the opposite bank of the canal.

I thoroughly enjoyed my first battle. It was all over by 8. We were at breakfast at 9. In touring over the grounds afterwards one naturally felt sad to see so many poor wounded Arabs & pleading for water without being able to help them.

Letter from A. E. Sandbach to his Father
(written in pencil on a scrap of paper)

My dates are mixed¹

Tel-el-Kebir
Thursday Sept. 16/82

Sam's birthday

My Dear Father—

Wish Sam for me many happy returns of his birthday.

My last ?? from Mahuta. I left that on Monday 11th at 5 am part by water & partly road. Total party about 40 men from Kassassin where all the pontoon craft (except frame & about 20 men) were already in camp. On Tuesday morning we had there 22,000 men in camp with 30 days provisions so I hear including the 1st Div., Gen. Willis of 2 brigades (Guards & Graham) and 2nd Div. of 2 brigades of Highlanders and Indian brigade.

We worked all day getting our pontoon equipment over a lock ready for the advance. On Tuesday the 12th the army advanced. We had equipment for 4 complete bridges moving along the canal; part towing in rafts part by road or carriages.

We left camp at 12 from Kassassin, marched a mile to where our pontoons were and lay down until 2:30 when we moved off. We had troops of course in front and on both sides of us & naval boats with awnings to take the wounded down following us.

It was 5:10 am by my watch (twilight) when we saw the first shell of the enemy fired & the fight had been going on on our right for about ½ hour. Then flash after flash with our own guns firing away on our right about 4,000 or so of us & Gatlings of the Naval Brigade just in front of us. On we pushed as fast as possible afraid the enemy skedaddling away near the canal but not so on our extreme right & center (we were left). I hear they had real hard fighting to turn the Arab out of the trenches.

The nearest shell to me was about 30 yards & one pitched over the head of the men & burst on the opposite bank of the canal.

I thoroughly enjoyed my first battle. It was all over by 8. We were at breakfast at 9. In touring over the grounds afterwards one naturally felt sad to see so many poor wounded Arabs & pleading for water without being able to help them.

Events now are greatly uncertain. We expect ?? will be the order. V.

AES

¹ Thursday was September 14th, not the 16th. The cover is postmarked September 15th, thus his comment.

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

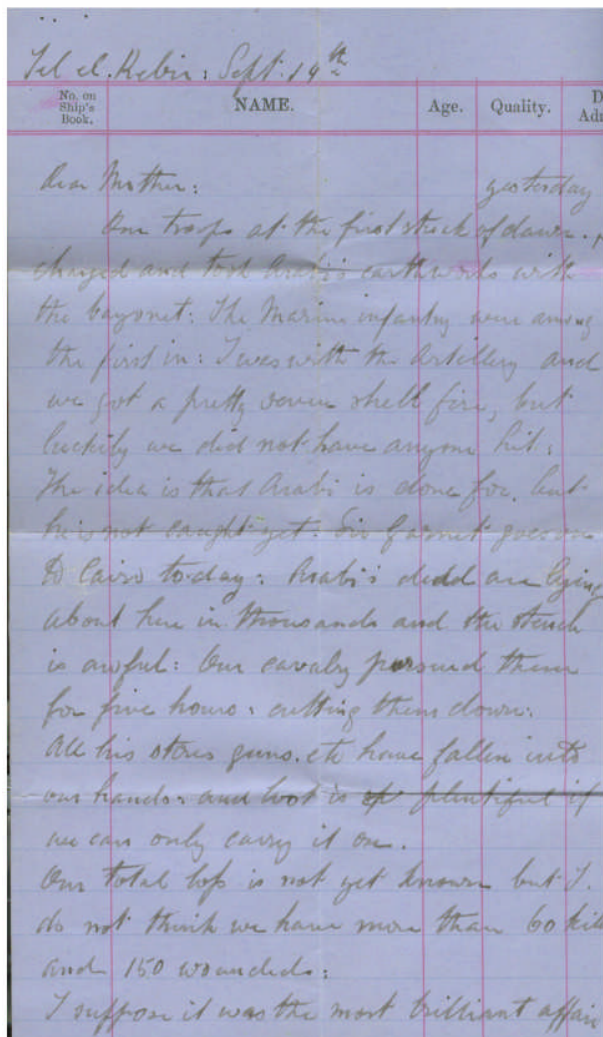
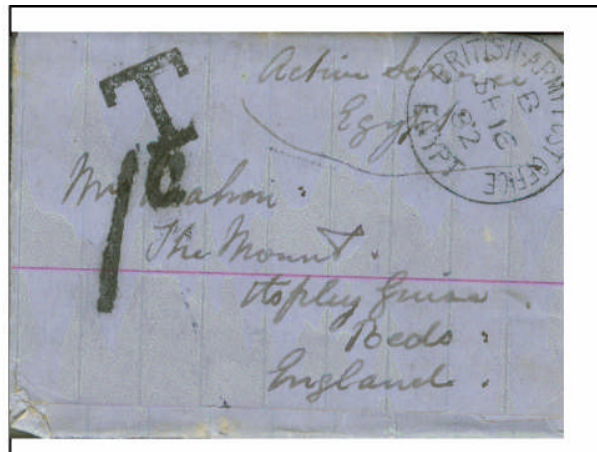
ARABI REBELLION 1882

Stampless Soldier's Letter

EGYPT TO ASPLEY GUISE, BEDFORDSHIRE

BAPO B SP 16 82

This small cover is one of the two known 1d. concession rate stampless soldier's letters with code B datestamp. While it is properly stamped with the T marking and the 1d. handstamp, the cover normally should have the name, rank, serial number and unit of the sender as well as the endorsement of the commanding officer. Considering the small size of the cover it was allowed though contrary to regulations. There is hardly any free space on the front for any further written endorsements. It is backstamped *WOBURN/A/SP 27/82*.



The letter enclosed was written on September 14th. by Royal Marine Edward L. Mahon to his mother. In it he comments on the previous day's battle saying "...it was the most brilliant affair that has taken place for years for infantry to attack earthworks with the bayonet." The survival of this cover is all the more extraordinary as it was delivered to Mrs. Mahon with a note from the India Office saying it had been picked up in the Canon Street Station on October 23rd.

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

Letter from Edward L. Mahon to his Mother
(Written on a piece from a Naval Ledger)

Tel-el-Kebir, Sept. 14th

Dear Mother:

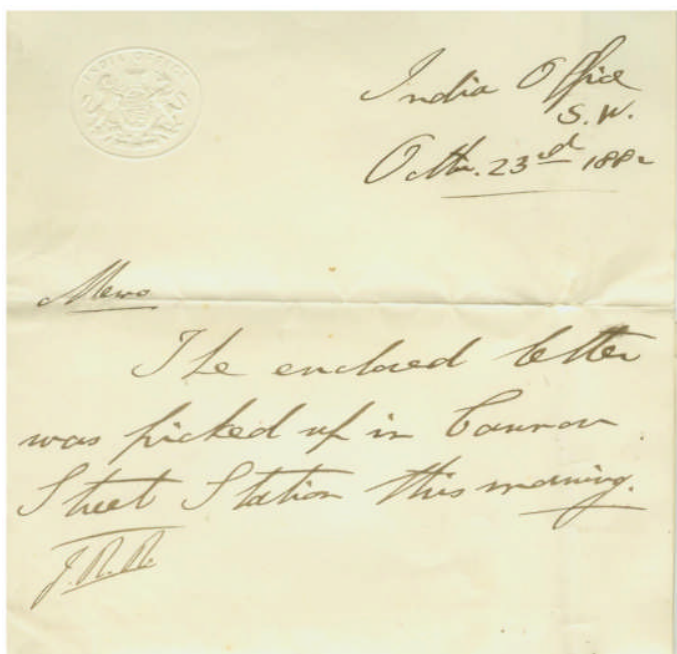
Our troops at the first streak of dawn yesterday charged and took Arabi's earthworks with the bayonet. The Marine infantry were among the first in: I was with the Artillery and we got a pretty severe shell fire but luckily we did not have anyone hit. The idea is that Arabi is done for but he is not caught yet. Sir Garnet [Wolseley] goes on to Cairo: Arab's dead are lying about here in thousands and the stench is awful. Our cavalry pursued them for five hours cutting them down. All his stores, guns etc have fallen into our hands and loot is plentiful if we can only carry it on.

Our total loss is not yet known but I do not think we have more than 60 killed and 150 wounded. I suppose it was the most brilliant affair that has taken place for years for infantry to attack earthworks with the bayonet. Our troops were forbidden to fire a shot till they closed in. I do not know what our movements will be now but I hope you will soon see us home as they are not likely not to leave the Marines here in occupation as they are nearly cleared out at home. I hope we shall go to Cairo in a day or two. We shift Camp almost immediately and I have no time for more. Polard is alright and charged through the earthworks with me, I hope he will get his promotion.

Yr. Affect. Son

Edward L. Mahon

Note Concerning How the Cover was Found (reduced to 75% of original size)



The other side of the note, written in pencil by Mrs. Mahon says,

With care — Edwards letter from Tel-el-Kebir.

Curious in more ways than one — lost & found & recd in due course.

L.L.M.

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

2 1/2 d Officer's Letter

EGYPT TO BRISTOL, ENGLAND

BAPO B SP 17 82

The stamp is cancelled by the *BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE* code *B c.d.s.* and the cover is backstamped *BRISTOL SP 2782*.



The cover is from John W. Brackenbury, C.M.G., R.N., to his wife in Bristol. Brackenbury was the captain of H.M.S. Thalia, a wooden screw corvette displacing 2,240 tons and launched in 1869.¹² At Ismailia it was used for the special needs in the disembarkation of the arriving troops.



¹ See Firebrace, *Nineteenth Century Wars*, page 78, for a companion cover.

² Lieutenant-Commander Caspar F. Goodrich, USN, *British Naval and Military Operations in Egypt 1882*, Navy Department, Government Printing Office, Washington, 1885, p.175.

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

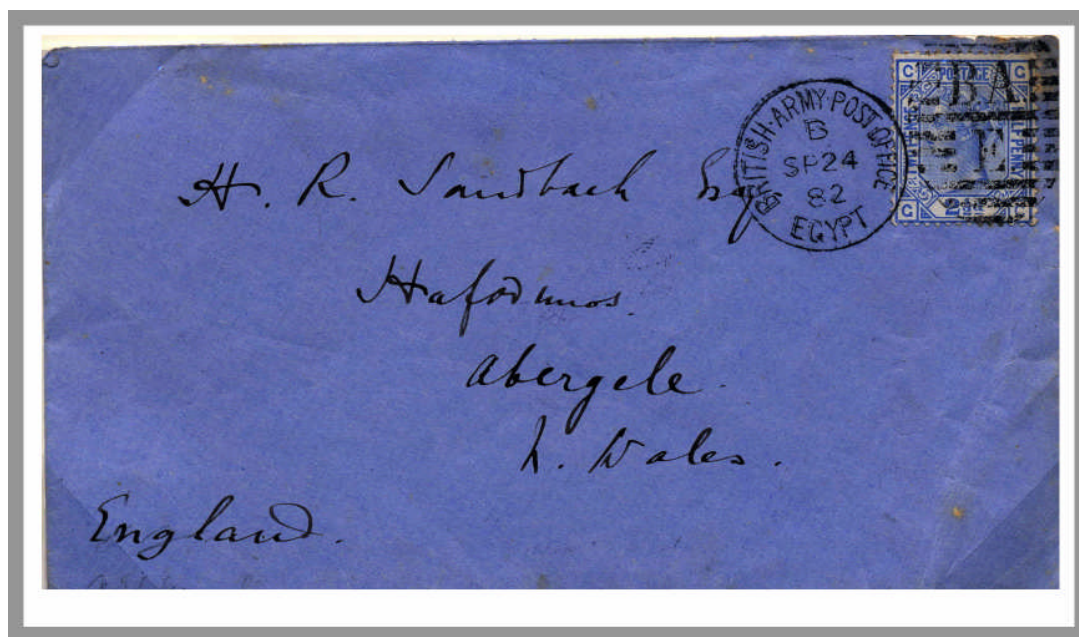
ARABI REBELLION 1882

2 1/2 d Officer's Letter

ISMAILIA, EGYPT TO WALES

BAPO B SP 24 82

21/2d. stamp cancelled by the 13-bar BA/E obliterator with the *BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE* code *B* c.d.s. of *SP 24 82* alongside. The cover has a partial backstamp of *OC 9 82*. While this BA/E marking is known on a loose stamp and two fragments, this is the only known cover bearing this obliterator.^{1 2 3 4}



[E]

The letter enclosed with the cover is dated Saturday, Sept. 23, 1882, at Ismailia. It is from A. E. Sandbach to his father and describes the battlefield at Tel-el-Kebir and recent troop activities. It says in part:

The camp there got more & more unhealthy every day, as the smells increased though they buried the dead as fast as possible, they were not buried deep enough. There having been a large camp of Arabs on the very same spot, of course, the air was not by any means pure. We arrived here on Wednesday. By this morning we have very nearly got every thing through the canal on its way to the ship. Last evening orders came from Cairo for a dismounted section of the troop to go to Cairo, that is of course that we may be presented at the forth coming show. Major Bond means to take up the right half troop. I believe - in which case James and I shall go with our men - the others will probably embark on board ship in a day or two. We are destined to return in the Oxenholme the horrid old ship. So don't expect us at home for at least a week after any ship which starts at the same time. If nothing more happens you may expect us home about the end of October.

¹ Smith, Peter A. S., *Egypt, Stamps & Postal History, A Philatelic Treatise, Chapter XXXI, Military Mail*, James Bendon, Limassol, Cyprus, 1999, p. 596.

² See Firebrace, p.50. See also Peter B. Boyden, *Tommy Atkins' Letters, The History of the British Army Postal Service From 1795*, National Army Museum, London, 1990, p. 21.

³ *The Col. J. R. Danson Collection of Egypt*, Robson Lowe International Ltd., Geneva, April 28, 1977, lot 373 has a photograph of a piece with the BA/E strike on a 21/2d. and the BAPO code B c.d.s. of SP 25 82.

⁴ See Richard S. Wilson, *The BA/E Obliterator of the British Army Postal Corps in the Egyptian War of 1882*, *The Collectors Club Philatelist*, November-December 2004, Vol. 83, No. 6

Letter from A. E. Sandbach to his Father.

Jerusalem.
Saturday. Sept 23
1882.

My Dear Father.

2 days to your birthday.

I wish you many happy returns.
My last scrap was written from Tel-el-Kibir
the day after the battle.

The Camp there got more ^{un-}healthy
every day, as the smells increased:
though they did bury the dead as fast as
possible, they were not buried deep enough,
^{there} having been a large camp of Arabs
on the very same spot, of course the air
was not by any means pure.

Troops moved on toward Cairo: we stayed
there a week: moved back to Kassassin
& then down here again to pack our boxes
& disappointed as we thought of not going
to Cairo.

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

Letter from A. E. Sandbach to his Father.

Ismailia

Saturday, Sept 23
1882

My Dear Father –

2 days to your birthday. I wish you many happy returns.

My last scrap was written from Tel-el-Kebir the day after the battle.¹

The camp there got more & more unhealthy every day, as the smells increased though they buried the dead as fast as possible, they were not buried deep enough. There having been a large camp of Arabs on the very same spot, of course, the air was not by any means pure.

Troops moved on towards Cairo, we stayed there a week & moved back to Kassassin² & then down here again to pack our stores [. . . ?] as we thought of not going to Cairo.

We arrived here on Wednesday. By this morning (Sat) we have very nearly got every thing through the canal on its way to the ship. Last evening orders came from Cairo for a dismounted section of the troop to go to Cairo, that is of course that we may be presented at the forth coming show.

Major Bond means to take up the right half troop. I believe - in which case James and I shall go with our men – the others will probably embark on board ship in a day or two. We are destined to return in the Oxenholme -horrid old ship. So don't expect us at home for at least a week after any ship which starts at the same time. If nothing more happens you may expect us home about the end of October.

I saw Johnny Rose at Tel-el-Kebir after the battle. He seems well enough. He was so done when they got up to the trenches that he fell into the ditch without attempting at first to cross it. I have heard of Jack Maxwell here too in the 42^d.³ He sprained his knee in the battle & came down to hospital. They are now packing every body off from Ismailia, sick are going home. Stores are going to Cairo. Ships are going round to Alexandria. Alexandria is now the base instead of Ismailia & nearly all the troops will embark there. This will save the dues, I believe 1/- per head paid on every man who passes up the Suez Canal.

I believe Sir Garnet ⁴& his staff are living in Cairo as the guests of the Khedive. Our men have orders to smash all Egyptian rifles & bury or sink them. The 60 guns taken at Tel-el-Kebir are parked in a square here. Ammunition is also being seized. It looks as if the Khedive was not going to be allowed to keep a standing army.⁵ There is to be a great march past at Cairo of all the troops next week we hear.⁶

I am bringing home a few things to distribute. Perhaps I may get more in Cairo, only there it will be a case of buying. A white ivory which I got at Tel-el-Kebir, which my servant has hidden down the country fetched 2 £ here. Better than nothing.

I have written so try & console Martin, poor chap. I wish he had been here. He must be home by Xmas.

[?] all [con]

A. E. Sandbach.

¹ The battle occurred September 13th.

² Site of battle fought August 28th.

³ The Black Watch Regiment

⁴ Lieutenant-General Sir Garnet Wolseley, GCB, GCMG, General Commanding-in-Chief.

⁵ The Khedive dissolved his army soon after British troops entered Cairo. He appointed Sir Evelyn Wood, V.C., the commander of the new one.

⁶ The Grand review and March Past of British troops took place on September 30th.

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

2 1/2 d Officer's Letter

EGYPT to DORSET, ENGLAND

BAPO SP 25 82

Letter to England overpaid by 1/2d.. The stamps are cancelled by the *BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE* (no code letter above date) c.d.s. The envelope is backstamped *BLANDFORD B OC 9 82*.



EGYPT to LONDON, ENGLAND

BAPO A SP 26 82

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE code letter *A* c.d.s., backstamped *LONDON S.W. CS OC 3 82*.



BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

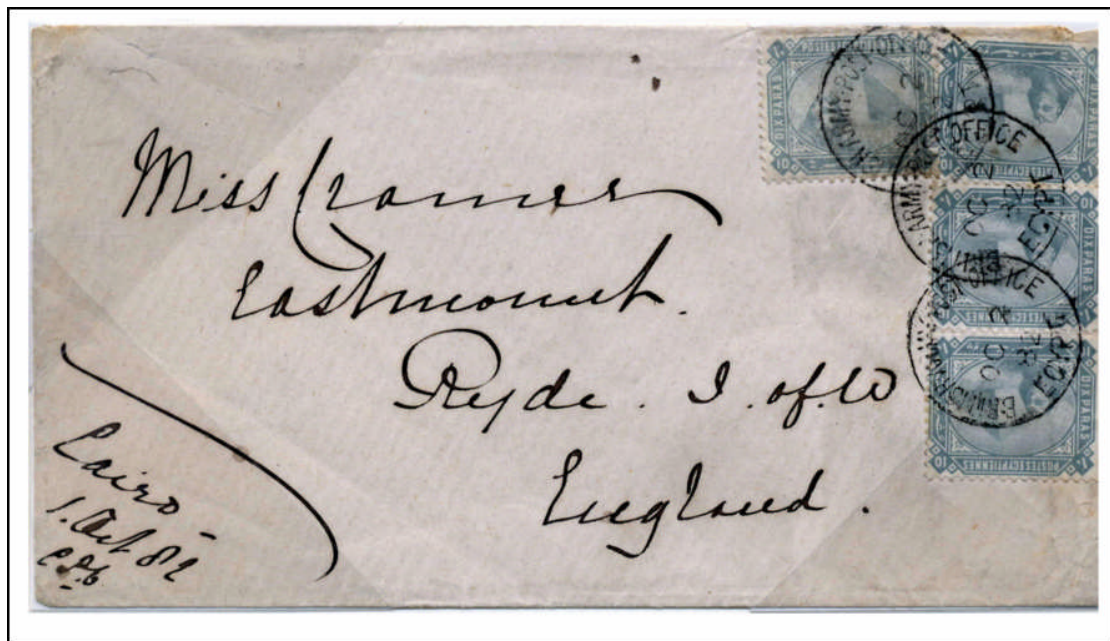
ARABI REBELLION 1882

One Piastre Officer's Letter

CAIRO TO RYDE, ISLE OF WIGHT, ENGLAND

BAPO OC 2 82

Officer's letter to England paid with four 20-paras stamps of the 4th issue a scarce frankin¹. The stamps are cancelled by the **BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE** (no code letter above date) c.d.s and the envelope is backstamped **RYDE B OC 11 82**. The cover is endorsed at the lower left, "**Cairo 1. Oct 82 CPC**".



Charles Pierson Cramer entered the The King's Royal Rifle (formerly the 60th. Rifles) through purchase of an Ensign's commission on 24 August 1858. A Lieutenant's commission was purchased on 21 April 1863 as was a Captaincy on 28 May 1870. He was promoted to Major on 1 July 1881, Brevet Lieutenant Colonel 18 November 1882, Lieutenant Colonel 4 November 1885, and Colonel on 18 November 1886. He became commander of the 1 Battalion on 1 July 1887.

Cramer served with the 3rd Battalion 60 Rifles in the Zulu war of 1879, and was present at the action of Gingindlovu and relief of Ekowe (Medal with Clasp). Served with the 3rd Battalion of The Kings Royal Rifle Corps in the Egyptian war of 1882, and was present in the engagement at Tel-el-Mahuta, in the action at Kassasin (9 September, and as Brigade Major of Ashburnham's Brigade at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir — horse shot (mentioned in dispatches, Brevet of Lt. Colonel, Medal with Clasp, 4th Class of the Osmanieh, and Khedive's Star).

¹ See Smith, p. 861.

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

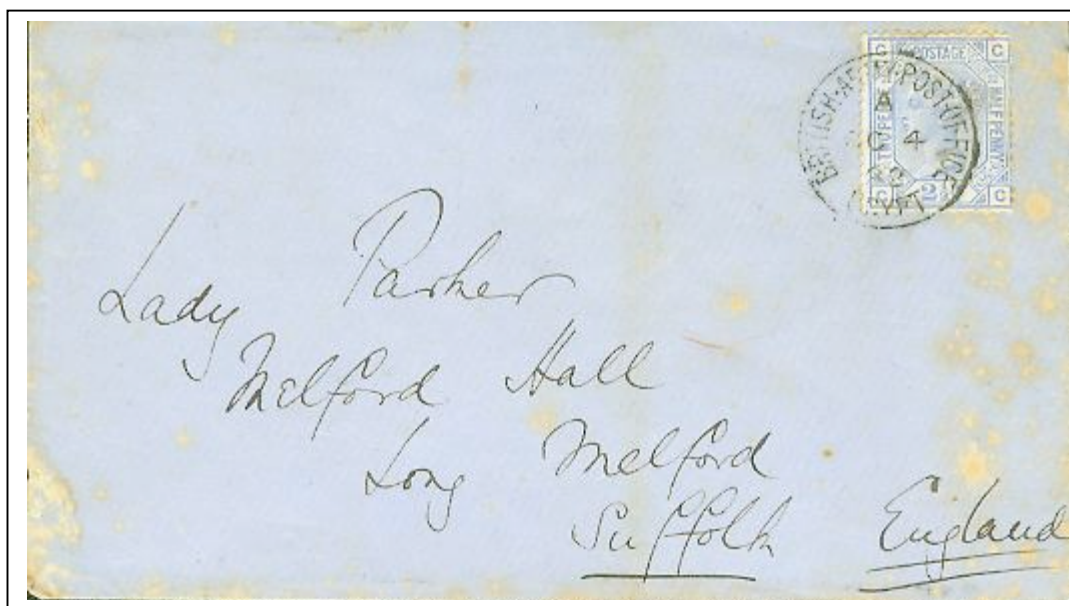
ARABI REBELLION 1882

2 ½ d Officer's Letter

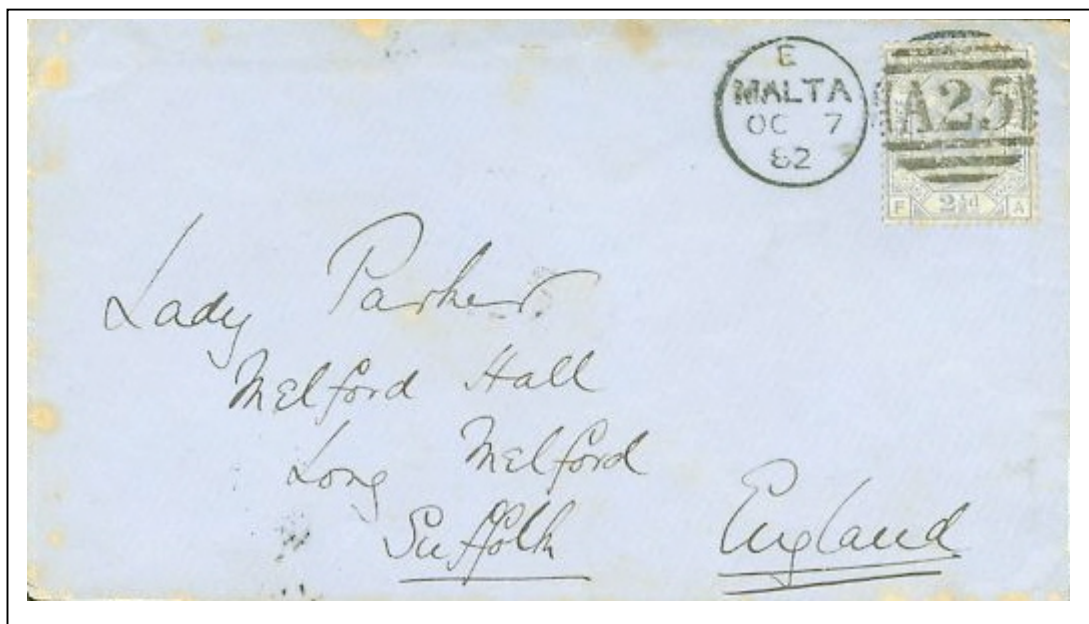
EGYPT TO SUFFOLK, ENGLAND

BAPO A OC 4 82

This cover is the latest known date for the BAPO code A date stamp. Sent by Lieutenant Hyde Parker (1861 – 1887) to his mother, it was posted from Alexandria just as he was embarking for England. The Alexandria and Ismailia Army Post Offices closed on or about October 9; three others closed on October 1 and A.P.O. 6 at Cairo on or after October 2. It is backstamped **SUDBURY A OC 16 82 SUFFOLK** and **LONG-MELFORD B OC 16 82**. Parker of the King's Liverpool Regiment served in Egypt with the 2nd battalion of the Royal Irish Regiment.



MALTA TO LONG MELFORD, ENGLAND



Parker mailed this letter home when the troopship made a stop at Malta. It is backstamped **LONG-MELFORD B OC 12 82**

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

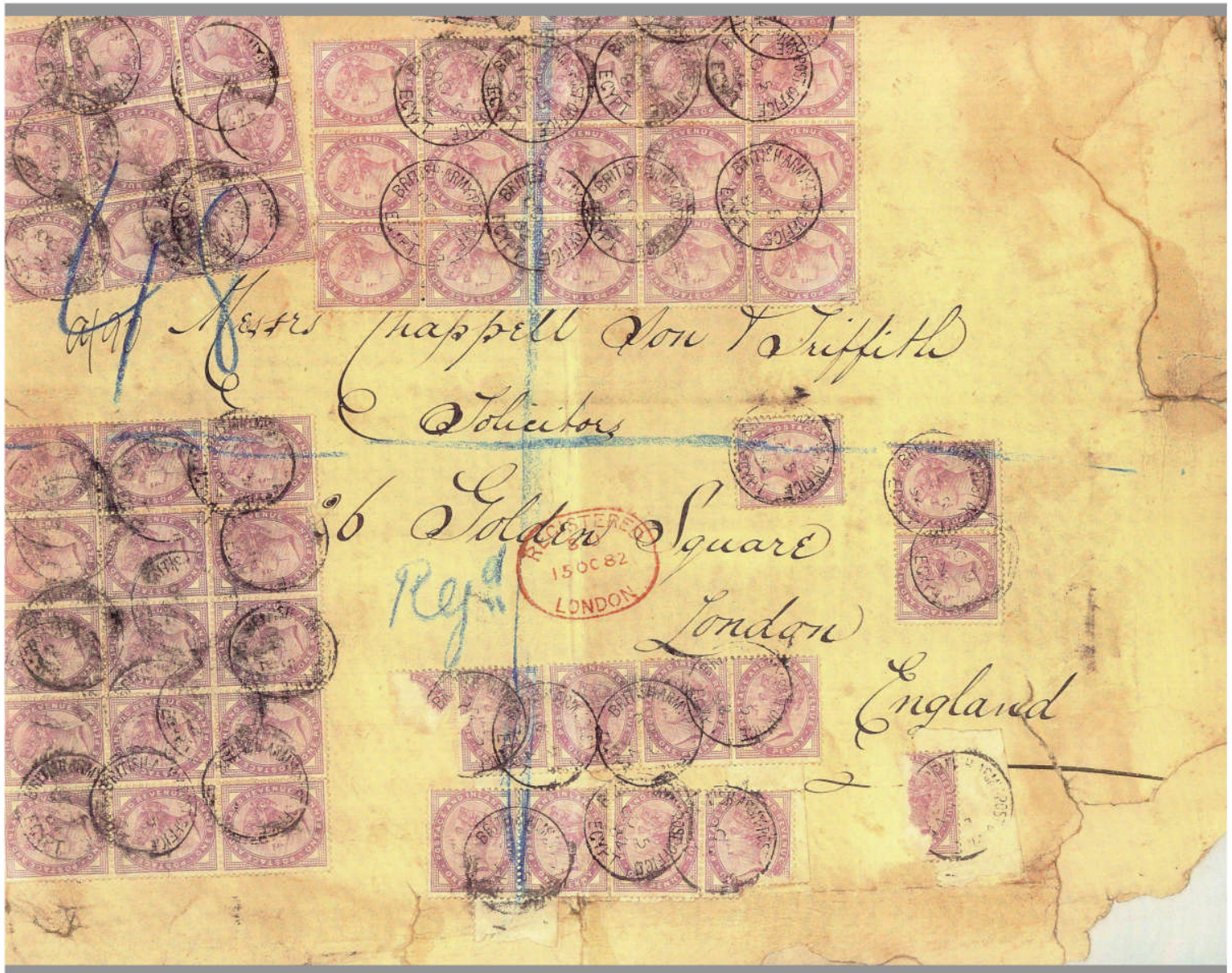
Registered Officer's Letter

ALEXANDRIA TO LONDON, ENGLAND

BAPO OC 5

82

This is one of only two recorded registered covers from the campaign and the latest known date of any of the BAPO datestamps. Posted at A.P.O. 1 in Alexandria which closed on or about October 9 (some say the 7th), it has the *ALEXANDRIE/6 OC 82/RECOMMANDES* transit and *REGISTERED/15 OC 82/LONDON* arrival datestamps. It is franked with 132 1d. stamps (including a block of 18, four blocks of 15, two blocks of 12, and one block of 9) making up the 11/- registry and postage fee comprised of 2d. for registration and 10/10d. for postage at 21/2 d. per half ounce (26 ounces). The stamps are cancelled by 93 strikes of the *BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE/OC 5/82/EGYPT* c.d.s.



Reduced to 75% of actual size

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

Registered Officer's Letter

ALEXANDRIA TO LONDON, ENGLAND

BAPO OC 5 82

Reverse side of Registered Cover.

Reduced to 66% of actual size.



BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

2 1/2 d Officer's Letter

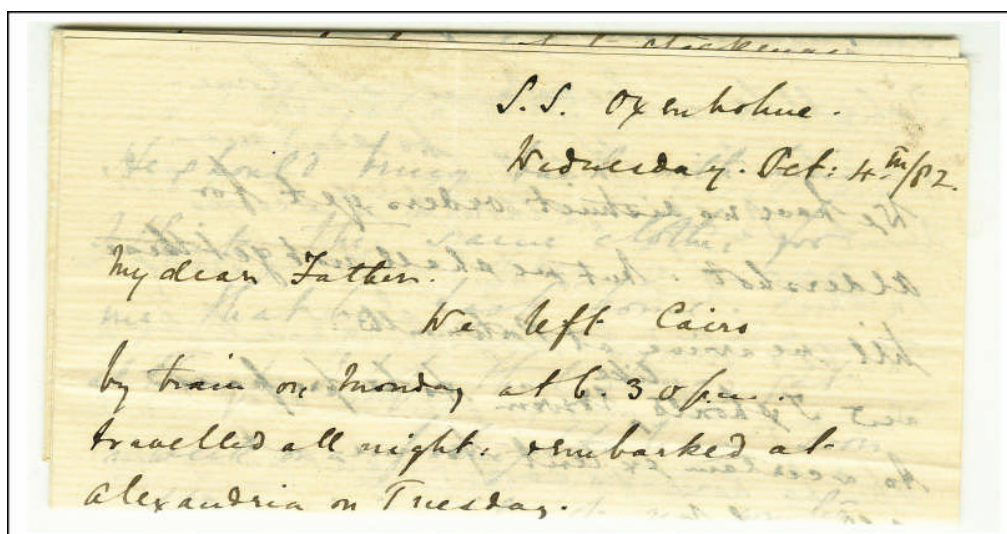
MALTA TO ABERGELE, NORTH WALES

MALTA OC 7 82

Cover from Arthur Sandbach to his father posted from Malta on his way back to England. His ship, the S.S. Oxenholm, also brought his Royal Engineers to Egypt in August. The 2 1/2 d. stamp is cancelled by the **E MALTA OC 7 82 — A25** duplex. The cover is backstamped **ABERGELE B OC 12 82**.



Letter from Arthur Sandbach to his father headed **S.S. Oxenholm/Wednesday. Oct. 4th/82**.



Letter from A. E. Sandbach to his Father.

S. S. Oxenholme

. Wednesday. Oct. 4th/82

My Dear Father –

We left Cairo by train on Monday at 6:30 pm, traveled all night, embarked at Alexandria on Tuesday. There were five of us in the carriage which was just one too many to be comfortable at night. We breakfasted at Abbat Hotel in Alexandria after sending the men on board and we had quite a refreshing luncheon at ½ past 12 at the Mahamet Ali Club of which all the officers of the Fleet & the Army are honorary members. Waiters with clean white stockings & grey livery: clean dinner service & it was refreshing even after Cairo hotels. Our orders are for Malta & Portsmouth. We expect to be at Malta about Saturday, 7th, and at Portsmouth about 19th or 20th. I would like to have Edwin again with me at Aldershot, if possible. We have no distinct orders yet for Aldershot but we shall not get these till we arrive at Portsmouth and I should like Edwin to be prepared to a certain extent for me at Aldershot.. So would you mind sending him off from home by the early train from Abergele on Thursday 19th. We cannot arrive before then & I will write to the Quarter mstr RE there from Malta to ask him to give me quarters in the same hut that I was in before.

I will arrange about my heavy baggage which was left at Chatham so that Edwin need not bother himself about that. He should bring back with him I think the same clothes for me that he took home although I hope that I may get a week or fortnight's leave soon after arriving, if not may winter 2 months.

Tell Edwin I shall ask the Q^{tr} Mst for the room in the same hut where I was opposite to mine occupied before by Lt. Holland & that Australian has written to John to come & take over his quarters in the same way.

I have not fired my gun once since I came out: too busy, so I hope to be at home when we shoot pheasants. If I see any chance of leave I shall have Free Lance at home & ask Sam Henry to send me Aunt Sally although it seems rather hard on him after having asked him to keep her & hunt her during the winter for me. That I should be home soon & want her again.

I see by one of your letters you gave Edwin 7/6. I shall give him 7/- a week and 10/- for board, he has quarters. Before I gave him 6/- a week only & I give him clothes besides. Don't you think that is enough? It is 18£ a year. Will you give him money for his journey to Aldershot? I got the maps some time ago at Mahuta, I think, but the Helas café is at Port Said, sent by P&O on Sept 5th. I have asked for it to be sent home.

The green house no doubt be a great addition. I hope the West Indies are doing well now. My debt to you for kit must cover nearly next 7 Allowance. I am afraid I expected to have been in Egypt then. Letters I have received are dated Aug 12, Aug 19, Aug 29, from Fairlie Sept 8, from Sam Sept 12. I wrote to Aunt Kate from Cairo as I thought a letter from the other end of the world wd interest her. I have not heard of her for an age.

We have left about 5 out of 200 men behind as sick & "C" Troop about the same number of sick. All the officers aboard ship are the same except for Porter and Godsal & Capt. Whitmore "C" Troop invalided home. Well, Godsal was really very bad, poor chap & just when he was very much wanted too. I think Sopley mentioned having seen that a pontoon bridge was thrown at Mahsamah Station over the canal. Godsal was in charge of that & working hard, ill the whole time when the doctor insisted on his going down into hospital. & then he went to the hills in CG... & then home.

I shall be much obliged if you will arrange all about Edwin for me. He ought to know his way about pretty well. We have one or two men on board sick but nothing serious now. Hippisley is the only officer ... he has by ... but we before will soon be all well again. I have nothing more to add.

Yr aff son

Arthur Edmund Sandbach

Is Sam going to London? Or what = when he comes back from the Highlands tell him Portal is in with Sir E. ... in Egypt. I only heard of him but twice met him in Cairo. Keep newspapers with any war news for me, especially, if possible, Graham's dispatch in Times Sept. 20th.

Saturday, Oct 7th 2 pm

Just entering Malta harbour. Probably shall not leave before Monday 9th. Hippisley is to be landed here, he is rather better.

AES



The 13th Bengal Lancers pursuing the enemy after the capture of Tel-el-Kebir, September 1 3th, 1882.
(from a sketch by Herbert Johnson)

INDIAN ARMY POST OFFICE

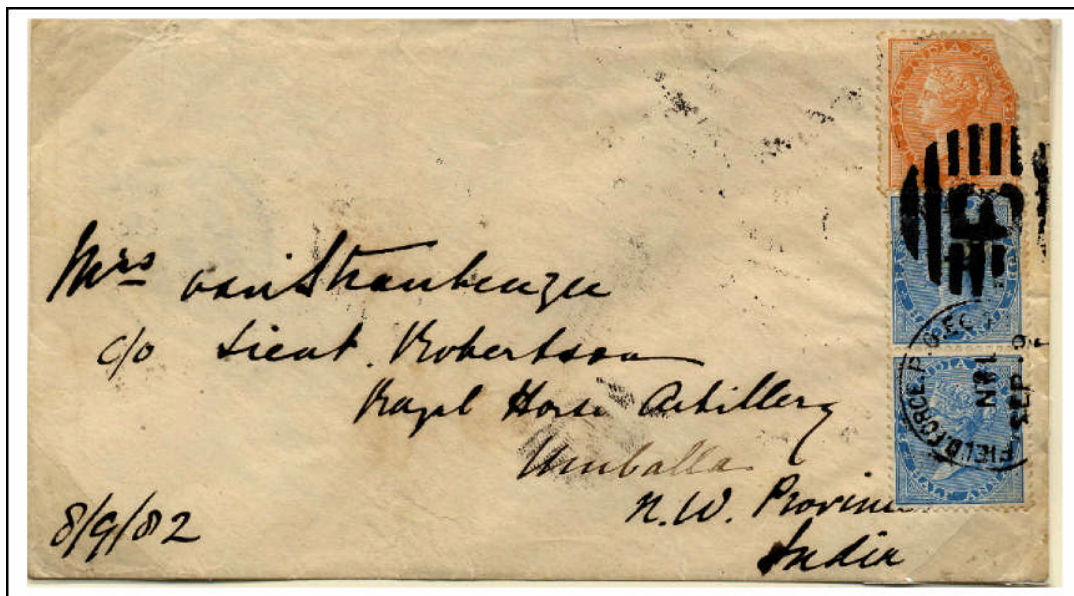
ARABI REBELLION 1882

3 Annas Officer's Letter

EGYPT TO UMBALLA, INDIA

SEP. 9, 1882

A single of the two annas stamp (damaged) and a pair of the half anna stamps of East India cancelled with the Bombay B in a circle of bars duplex obliterator and date stamp of *FIELD FORCE P.O. EGYPT No. 1 SEP 9*. The postmark was likely applied at Ismailia as suggested by Firebrace as the Indian artillery landed there at the end of August. This datestamp differs from the two other circular date stamps used by the Indian army postal service in that the No. 1 indicia of the duplex is centered in the lower half of the circle while the other two have the indicia in the upper half. The cover is backstamped *SEA POST OFFICE D SEP 14* and *FIRST DELY UMBALLA SEP 30*. This is the earliest of the four known outgoing covers from the campaign bearing Indian stamps.¹



The first of the Indian Contingent arrived at Suez about August 2nd. Most of the troops were concentrated around Ismailia by early September, taking part in the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir on September 13 before moving on to Cairo. They departed October 5th with the last leaving on October 27th. The Indian Army Postal Staff reached Suez on September 3rd and departed Egypt on October 31.

Lieutenant-Colonel Turner van Straubanzee, Royal Artillery, commanded the artillery of the Indian Contingent. He was present at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir (mentioned in dispatches, CB, Medal with Clasp, 3rd Class of the Medjidie, and Khedive's Star). Commissioned Lieutenant 20 April 1855; Captain, 12 February 1863; Major, 5 July 1872; Lieutenant Colonel 1 July 1881; Colonel, 1 July 1885, and Major General, 9 August 1895. Retired 18 September 1895.

¹ See Firebrace, pages 74 and 75; Smith, pages 596-597, and *The Quarterly Circular*, No. 86, June 1973, pages 23 and 24.

INDIAN ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

One and one half Annas Post Card

EGYPT TO SCOTLAND

FIELD FORCE P.O. EGYPT No. 2 SEP 16

Post card written from Zagazig on September 16, 1882. Indian troops went directly to Zagazig from the battle of Tel-el-Kebir on September 13th. The cover is postmarked *FIELD FORCE P.O. EGYPT No. 2 SEP 16* with an arrival c.d.s. of *GRAMOND BRIDGE SP 27 82*. Two Indian post cards have been recorded bearing Indian Field Force postmarks.¹



The message on the card reads as follows:

Zag-a-Zig. Egypt

16 Sept 1882

Came here after the fight on Wednesday—Al right.

Will write shortly.

D. Craig Halkett

Lieutenant Duncan Craigie Halwith served the 78th Highlanders in the Afghan war in 1880 (Medal). He also served with the 1st Battalion, Seaforth Highlanders, attached to the Indian contingent, at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. Born in 1857, he was commissioned a Lieutenant on 11 November 1877 and a Captain on 29 June 1887. Halkett died in India on March 9, 1889 while serving as a captain with the 2nd Battalion of the Seaforth Highlanders.

¹ See Smith, p.597

INDIAN ARMY POST OFFICE

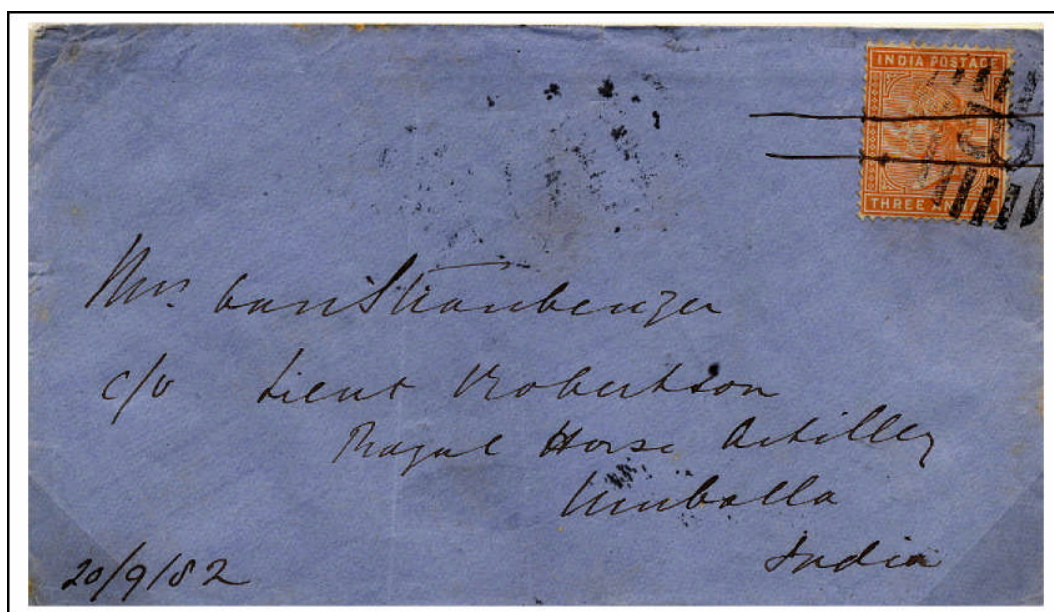
ARABI REBELLION 1882

3 Annas Officer's Letter

EGYPT TO UMBALLA, INDIA

SEP. 20, 1882

The three-anna Indian stamp is cancelled with the eight-bar Bombay B obliterator and tied with two manuscript canceling strokes. Probably posted in or around Cairo, it is backstamped **FIELD FORCE P.O. EGYPT No. 2 SEP 21**, **SEA POST OFFICE F SEP 23** and **DELY UMBALLA OCT 7**. The Field Force c.d.s. is believed to have been at Cairo at this time.



Backstamps (reduced)

INDIAN ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

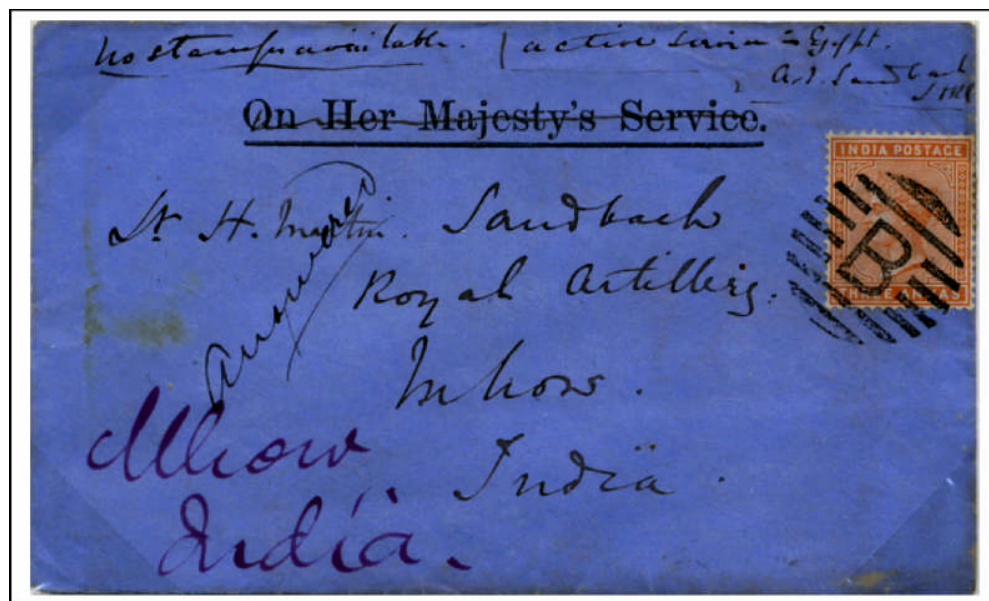
3 Annas Officer's Letter

EGYPT TO MHOW, INDIA

SEP. 23,

1882

Written by A. E Sandbach from Kassassin, 20th Wednesday, September, 1882, the cover is endorsed "*No stamps available | active service in Egypt, A. E. Sandbach. Lt RE*". He obviously meant British stamps as the cover bears Indian postage of three annas cancelled with the Bombay B in a circle of bars obliterator. The cover is backstamped *FIELD FORCE P.O. EGYPT No. 1 SEP 23* (believed to be at Suez) and bears the sea-sorting post office date stamp *SEA POST OFFICE F SEP 28*. The destination backstamp is *2 DELY MHOW OCT 14*. This is one of four covers from the campaign bearing Indian stamps.¹ The enclosed letter refers to the Duke of Teck who *is here nominally as chief of the Post Office Corps.*"



Backstamps (reduced)

¹ See Firebrace, pages 74 and 75. See also Smith, pages 596-597. See also *The Quarterly Circular*, No. 86, June 1973, pages 23 and 24.

Letter from A. E. Sandbach to his brother Lt. H. Martin Sandbach

Kassassim

Wednesday, Sept 20/82

My Dear Martin –

Exactly a week since the day of the battle which finished the Egyptian war. I returned from Tel-el-Kebir here 2 days ago to pack off our stores for Ismailia, which we left here & the left ½ troop have gone to Ismailia to haul in all surplus equipment into the ordnance store ready for embarkation for England. I cannot tell you how disappointed I have been not to see you here. I got your last long letter to me from Kashmere forwarded from Aldershot when we landed at Ismailia about 29th August.

General Pemberton with left ½ troop came on here to be attached to Graham's¹ brigade at once. I left with my section and came up half way to Mahuta on Sept. 2nd whilst Major Bond & Irvine [?] were still sorting or sending stores. From Saturday 2nd till after the battle our pontoons were the only boats with light enough draught to come all the way up this lock as the water has of course kept? so I was sent to Mahuta to look after our boats towing up the canal with stores. Going for?

By Tuesday morning the 12th however the whole pontoon troops stores & all were up here. Poor Godsul had just gone sick to Cyprus & Porter who came out from England with me was landed at Malta with a bad hand from a blow from a spear & has since died of concussion of the brain. He was awfully clever staff CoU [?] chap. I really believe that made his brain more sensitive when he got the blows in the Bay of Biscay.

At Mahuta as the Indian troops arrived in camp I used to go over & enquire if anything was known of you or your battery. I was so confident that you were here somewhere & did not like the possibility of missing you.

Lt. Cowan, R.A. was adjt of R.A. 2nd Div. addressed me, knew you of course. Poor chap he was wounded in the battle in the arm & left Allssoff [?] as Adj now in his place.

Dalbair R.A. was also wounded in the thigh. Well on the afternoon of Tues. 12th orders were given for a night march & attack by day break. Everything succeeded[?] It was entirely an infantry fight followed by cavalry pursuit. Sir Garnet² telegram, I hear, only mentions the 1st Bn. Royal Irish by name.³

Indian brigade under McPherson⁴ advanced on left bank of canal & the pontoon troops with material for four bridges were under his orders that day. One bridge on wheels & 3 bridges towed over in rafts.

Marines were on right bank of canal, then Highland brigade in the centre & 2nd Bde (Graham) on extreme right supported by Guards Bde. 60th. Rifles & 46th were in rear of centre. By day break our troops were within about 300 yds of the trenches with orders to advance without firing with fixed bayonets & take the trenches. Of course as soon as they were seen a withering fire was offered however with loss I think of 600 killed wounded. We got the trenches and cavalry pursued through Belbeis straight on to Cairo which surrendered at 10 hrs on Thursday 14th & Arabi too. McPherson's brigade was hardly trying at all as the enemy had no position on the left of the canal & went straight on to Zagazig.

Highland Bde followed by train in the afternoon & now almost all our troops except Graham's Bde left for the time at Tel-el-Kebir are in Cairo or on their way there. Sir Garnet means to have a great march pass there, I believe. We hope to go on as soon as all our stores are collected at Ismailia and then we expect all to go home.

I am awfully sorry you & h [?] have been so terribly[?]. I fully expected to see you here. However, I hope now you will look sharp[?] your jacket & be home by Xmas. I expect to be home by the end of October at any rate.

Arabi's camp at Tel-el-Kebir was full of good things. Nil[?] of course the headquarters staff have got most things. I picked up a few odds & ends just to take home, a sword bayonet or rifle. *The Duke of Teck told me in the headqtr tent he was awfully sore at losing a quantity of loot he had given a soldier charge of which he went to get more the fellow gave or sold it all away. He is here nominally as chief of the Post Office Corps.*

Spencer Chivers is Sir Garnet's ADC & Frank Chilsen is ADC to McPherson.

Your home is probably as late as mine. [Next three sentences are unclear.]

Address me if you wish here

A Troop Royal Engrs

British Army Corps

Egypt

Your aff brother

A. E. Sandbach.

I have been[?] –not one day with diarrhea- so far lucky.

¹ Major-General Gerald Graham, VC, CB, RE, commander of the Second Brigade.

² Lieutenant-General Sir Garnet Wolseley, GCB, GCMG, General Commanding-in-Chief.

³ 1st Battalion Royal Irish Fusiliers attached to 2nd Brigade.

⁴ Major-General Sir Herbert Macpherson, VC, KCB, BSc., commander of the Indian Contingent.

INDIAN ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

20 Para Post Card Rate

EGYPT TO ENGLAND

FIELD FORCE P.O. EGYPT No. 2 SEP 26

Cover to General James S. Rawlins, retired, from his son, Lt. George William Rawlins of the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment serving with the 20th Bengal Native Infantry. Posted in the Indian Army *FIELD FORCE P.O. EGYPT No. 2* on September 26th, it was then transferred to the British Army Field Post Office where the Egyptian stamp was cancelled *BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE A EGYPT SP 28 82*. This is possibly the only Egyptian postcard used in the campaign bearing both the Indian and British Army circular date stamps.



The message on the card reads:

Camp Abbassiah Cairo

My dear Father

I havn't time to write this morning. Isn't it a *puckka brendabres* sending us on so sharp.? I will write you a long letter next mail. I saw the Khedive arrive yesterday. This is a splendid place, such pretty country & good camping ground. I got 3 dear letters this morning from Grandmama.

Your affech son G.W.R.

George William Rawlins was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant on 22 January 1881 and became a Lieutenant on 1 July 1881. He received the Egypt Medal and the Khedive's Bronze Star.

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

One and one-half Anna Post Card

CAIRO, EGYPT TO SCOTLAND

BAPO SP 27 82

Not all mail with Indian postage went through the Indian Field Post Office. Smith states, "Indian stamps and postal cards were sometimes cancelled with the British APO date-stamp."¹ Here is such an item written from Cairo on September 22nd by Lt. Duncan Craigie Halkett of the Seaforth Highlanders. It is postmarked with the *BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE EGYPT SP 2782* c.d.s. (no code letter above the date) and the *GRAMOND OC 9 82* receiving mark.



The message is double-written and reads in part:

Cairo September 22, 1882

Left Zag-a-zig day before yesterday and came here by train. Got into Cairo in the evening and had a long wait in the station. The balance of the manuscript is extremely difficult to decipher.

¹ Smith, p. 597.

INDIAN ARMY POST OFFICE

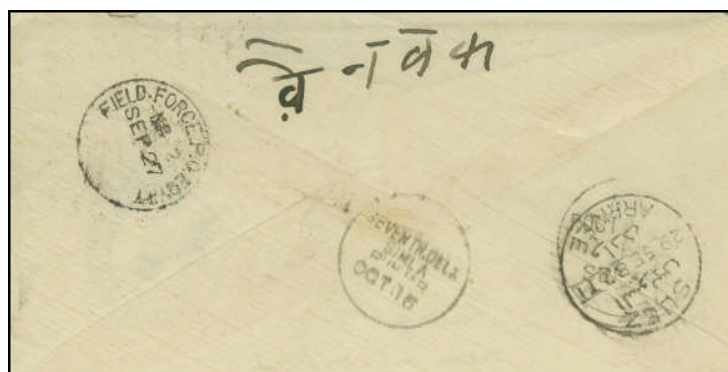
ARABI REBELLION 1882

One Piastre Officer's Letter

CAIRO TO SIMLA, PUNJAB, INDIA

27 SEP 82

The letter enclosed in this cover from Surgeon Charles William Owen (1855-c.1920) to his wife in Simla, Punjab, India, is dated Cairo, September 25th and 26th, 1882. Franked with the one piastre Egyptian stamp paying the foreign letter rate, it was posted in the Indian Army Post Office where it was backstamped **FIELD FORCE P.O. EGYPT No. 2 SEP 27**. It then was sent on to the civilian post office at Ismailia, which cancelled the Egyptian stamp. It also bears the **SUEZ ARRIVEE 29 SE 92** transit marking and the destination backstamp **SEVENTH.DEL. SIMLA, PUNJAB OCT 16**.



Reverse of cover reduced to 75%

Surgeon Owen, CIE (Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire) and CMG (Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George), was commissioned a Surgeon on 30 September 1876 and ranked as Captain six years later. He served in the Afghan war in 1879-80 and was present in the engagement at Charasiab on 6 October 1879 (mentioned in dispatches), and in the operations around Cabul in December 1879 — slightly wounded at the engagement at Chardeh Valley (mentioned in dispatches, CIE, Medal with two Clasps). Served in the Egyptian war of 1882, and was present at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir (Medal with Clasp, and Khedive's Star).

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

Letter from Charles William Owen to his wife, Mary Barry Owen — [10 pages]

*Zacharam Palace
Abbasiyeh —
Cairo
25th Sept 1882*

My own darling wife —

I have I am sorry to say been very very seedy for the last few days & I can only just sit up for a few minutes now as I am as weak as well can be but I wanted to try to get off a few lines by this mail which leaves the day after tomorrow, so I commence now and hope to add more later on. We left Zagazig on the 21st about 12 noon & reached here about 6:30 P.M. the same night, the train of course having broken down. — We had still to go on to Abassyeh some 4 miles further on but this would take some hours as the line was blocked so we all went off to Shepheard's Hotel to get some dinner, intending to return afterwards and go on by train. — We had a scramble of a dinner and were just going off when I heard Col. Browne RE, was very seedy, so off & went to get my medicines from the station, when I got there no train to be found & consequently no medicines. So I returned to the colonel whom I had put to bed and sent off to a chemist for what I wanted. I had to sit up all night with him & the next day came on here by carriage. I did my usual new time word and came into my rooms, a very good area of its period. One of the ordinary rooms of the Harem with a divan one side & carpeted but no furniture. I began to feel seedy & [?] was in for fever, I took off my things & put on my flannel suit & [formed?] in, well the fever went on & on & I do not remember anything till the next day, but it appear that *I had a go of heat apoplexy or sunstroke & was nearly out when they found me . However, to make a long story short, here I am awfully weak & shaken, in fact I have never felt so bad but still thank goodness I think I am well on the mend.*

My head goes round like a top & my toupee is like a brick [voila tout]. I see two letters have come one from my mother & 1 from yours. — Your mother wants you to go home & says that it is quite time you did & that she has had enough of your living in India etc. The mothers letters is a . . . [?] on the wickedness of the English people & a long zoom [?] about the pyramids being a witness of God knows what.

To-day all the troops turn out to . . . [?] the Khedive and on Friday the march past takes place.

The letter continues but the manuscript makes transcribing it quite difficult.

INDIAN ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

One Piastre Officer's Letter

EGYPT TO ENGLAND

FIELD FORCE P.O. EGYPT No. 2 — OCT 1

This cover from Major Charles Richard Pennington of the 13th Bengal Lancers was posted in Cairo at *FIELD*

FORCE P.O. EGYPT No. 2 OCT. It was forwarded to the *BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE EGYPT* (no code letter) *OC 2 82* (A.P.O. 6), then on to the Egyptian civilian post office where the *CAIRO 2 OC 82* c.d.s. was applied. The cover then went to England where it received the backstamp of *BLACKWATER A HANTS ? ? 82* and *FARNBOROUGH STATION A OC 11 82*. This is thought to be the only cover from the campaign with a combination of British Army, Indian Army, and Egyptian civil postal markings.



INDIAN ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

3 Annas Officer's Letter

EGYPT TO SIMLA, PUNJAB, INDIA

OCT. 5, 1882

This cover from Surgeon Major Charles W. Owen to his wife in Simla, Punjab, India, is franked with the three annas Indian stamp, the letter rate to India, and cancelled with the eight-bar Bombay B obliterator duplex with *FIELD FORCE P.O. EGYPT NO. 1* (the date is unclear). Backstamped *FIELD FORCE P.O. EGYPT No. 2 OCT 5* (the backstamp of origin at Cairo) and *FIELD FORCE P.O. EGYPT No. 1 OCT. 6* (transit mark applied at Suez), it also bears the sea-sorting post office c.d.s. *SEA POST OFFICE A 7 OCT.* Finally, it has the destination backstamp *SEVENTH.DEL. SIMLA, PUNJAB OCT 21*. Enclosed in the envelope is a sixteen page letter dated Cairo, September 30 through October 4, 1882. This is the latest known cover from the Indian contingent and the only one bearing all three Indian FFPO postal markings.



Backstamps (reduced)

BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

Letter from Charles William Owen to his wife, Mary Barry Owen — [16 pages]

*Zacharam Palace
Abbasiyeh —
Cairo
30th Sept 1882*

My own darling wife —

I have again been very seedy or I should have commenced a letter to you before. The fact is I have come to the conclusion that it is all ? of the liver. A couple of nights ago I was seized so violently with vomiting ? and pain that I thought I should have died. I have been ? ? ? and am fit for nothing. I am now like a skeleton & just crawl about. I can't eat sleep or do anything at all & the sooner I come back & let you nurse me the better. The Serapisi is off in a day or so but up to the present moment I have had no orders to go in her. I ? we shall not be able to leave Suez for another 3 weeks as our horses have to march to Suez which will take at least 10 days & they do not start before Wednesday next.

The General has not received any answer as yet about his leave and 'till he does he is not likely to settle about us. Col Browne & Nicholson & several others go in Serapis next week so you will no doubt see one or the other & I shall send a few ? with Nicholson most probably on Serapis.....

The letter continues on but the manuscript makes transcribing it quite difficult.

INDIAN ARMY POST OFFICE

ARABI REBELLION 1882

3 Annas Incoming Letter

MHOW, INDIA TO EGYPT

SEP.

18, 1882

Enclosed in the cover is a letter written by Lieutenant Henry Martin Sandbach, R.A., from Mhow, India, to his brother Lieutenant Arthur Edmund. Sandbach, R. E. The stamps are cancelled with a square of eight bars framing the letter "I" which stands for Indore, the headquarters of the Central India Postal District (Circle). Mhow is just a few miles southwest of Indore. The cover is backstamped *MHOW SEP 18, OUTW BOMBAY SEP 20, TOO LATE, SEA POST OFFICE D SEP 29* and *FIELD FORCE P.O. EGYPT No. 1 OCT 12* (applied at Suez) This is the only recorded incoming cover from India to the military forces in Egypt and the latest date recorded for any of the Indian postmarks.



H. M. Sandbach, appointed a Gentleman Cadet on 19 March 1875, was commissioned Lieutenant on 14 August 1876, Captain on 13 March 1885, and Major on 3 January 1894. He served in the Afghan war 1878-80, and was present in the engagement at Shekabad (mentioned in dispatches), in the operations around Cabul in December 1879, Charasiab on the 25th and in the engagement at April 1880 (Medal with Clasp). Served in the Soudan campaign in 1885, and was present in the engagement at Hasheen and at the destruction of Temai (Medal with Clasp, and Khedive's Star).

Letter from Henry Martin Sandbach, RA, to his brother Arthur Edmund Sandbach

17th September

Mhow.

My Dear Arthurr –

I congratulate you on your good luck – beating Arabi so easily. I suppose you were at Tel-el-Kebir and are now in Cairo. My only regret is that I am not there too. I fancy now you will soon be on your way home again. This has been one of the quickest wars on record. I wonder what we shall do with Egypt. I don't suppose Gladstone will annex any part of it but I think it very (silly) that we shall quarrel with Turkey, until we give up everything, and get no benefit at all from the war. You must have had a very hard month's work after landing. I have not seen the arrival of the "Oxenholme" in any of the papers yet though. Did you feel the heat ,much? I suppose you were all fitted out with veils and goggles as we see in the papers. The Life Guards do not seem suited for Egypt. There is nothing like the Indian Cavalry for the sort of work they have there. Here everything goes on the same as usual. I am just in the middle of my exam for promotion to Captain and finish tomorrow subjects (a) and (b). The remainder I cannot go in for just yet. Miss Lee, the daughter of the Confederate General Lee, is staying with the General here at present. She is traveling through India all by herself, and seems an intelligent ... person. I have had the offer of going to D/2 at Kirkee: Milner's Battery, he is a friend of Uncle Willie's. But as I am pretty well settled here now and must get my H. A. Jacket soon, I do not think it worth while moving for a short time. I should not be at all sorry to part from my present major, but otherwise I like the Battery very much. We have had a tremendous lot of rain lately, 10 inches in 24 hours, but now it is perfect weather and we have sone with the rains for the season. No more at present.

*Yr affate brother**H. Martin Sandbach*

REVIEW

BY

Her Majesty The Queen

OF THE

TROOPS RECENTLY RETURNED
FROM EGYPT.

NOVEMBER 18th 1882.

ORDER OF MARCH PAST.

Lieut.-General Sir G. J. WOLSELEY, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., and the Head-Quarter Staff of the Expeditionary Force.

Lieut.-General G. H. S. WILLIS, C.B., and Staff of the 1st Division.

Lieut.-General Sir E. B. HANLEY, K.C.M.G., C.B., and Staff of the 2nd Division.

Major-General Sir H. T. MACPHERSON, V.C., K.C.B., and Staff of Indian Contingent.

NAVAL BRIGADE.—Captain J. FELLOWES, R.N.

CAVALRY BRIGADE.—Major-General D. C. DRURY-LOWE, C.B.

N Battery A Brigade, R.H.A.—Lieut.-Col. G. W. BORRADAILE.

Combined Regiment of Household Cavalry—Colonel H. P. EWART,
2nd Life Guards.

4th Dragoon Guards—Lieut.-Col. T. B. SHAW-HELLIER.

ROYAL ARTILLERY.—Lieut.-Col. C. E. NAIRNE, R.H.A.

A Battery 1st Brigade, R.A.—Major P. T. H. TAYLOR, R.A.

D " 1st " —Major T. L. JONES, R.A.

F " 1st " —Lieut. H. H. CLARK, R.A.

J " 3rd " —Major L. F. PERRY, R.A.

No. 1 Battery 1st Brigade, London Division—Major F. E. B. LORAINÉ, R.A.

ROYAL MARINE ARTILLERY.—Lieut.-Col. H. B. TUSON, R.M.A.

ROYAL ENGINEERS.—Major W. SALMOND, R.E.

A Troop, Royal Engineers—Major R. J. BOND, R.E.

C " " —Major Sir A. MACWORTH, Bart., R.E.

Field Park, Royal Engineers—Captain C. A. ROCHFORD-BOYD, R.E.

8th Company, Royal Engineers—Captain S. SMITH, R.E.

24th " " —Captain C. de B. CAREY, R.E.

GUARDS BRIGADE.—H.R.H. A. W. P. A. Duke of CONNAUGHT AND STRATHEARN, K.G., &c.

2nd Bn. Grenadier Guards—Colonel P. SMITH.
 2nd „ Coldstream Guards—Colonel J. W. WIGRAM.
 1st „ Scots Guards—Colonel G. W. KNOX.

ROYAL MARINE LIGHT INFANTRY.—Lieut.-Col. F. G. LE GRAND, R.M.L.I.

INFANTRY BRIGADE.—Major-General Sir H. E. WOOD, V.C., G.C.M.G., K.C.B.

1st Bn. Manchester Regiment—Lieut.-Col. W. L. AUCHINLECK.
 1st „ Seaforth Highlanders—Lieut.-Col. C. M. STOCKWELL, C.B.
 2nd „ York and Lancaster Regiment—Lieut.-Col. J. M. SIMPSON.
 1st „ Royal Irish Fusiliers—Col. T. R. STEVENSON.

COMMISSARIAT AND TRANSPORT CORPS.—Assistant Commissary-General E. GRATTAN.

2nd Company Commissariat and
 Transport Corps—Captain H. THOMAS, D.A.C.G.
 7th „ —Captain J. D. COGHLAN, D.A.C.G.
 10th „ —Captain C. G. KNOCKER, D.A.C.G.
 15th „ —D.A.C.G. E. FRYER.
 17th „ —Captain F. F. JOHNSON, D.A.C.G.
 5th Auxiliary Transport Cadre—Capt. C. T. BARROW, Acting D.A.C.G.
 6th „ —Lt. E. M. S. CRABBE, Acting D.A.C.G.
 Commissariat Detachment—Lieut. G. FRENCH, Acting D.A.C.G.

ORDNANCE STORE CORPS.—Quarter-Master F. TIMS, Ordnance Store Department.

ARMY HOSPITAL CORPS.—Surgeon-Major J. WALKER.

ARMY SIGNALLING CORPS.—Lieut.-Col. F. C. KEYSER, Royal Fusiliers.

POST OFFICE CORPS.—Major G. C. STURGEON, 24th Middlesex R.V.C.

MILITARY MOUNTED POLICE.—Quarter-Master C. BROACKES.

DETACHMENT ROYAL MALTA FENCIBLE ARTILLERY.—Capt. A. PORTELLI.

PARADE STATE.

Corps.	Officers.	Warrant Officers.	N.C.O., Rank and File.	Names of Commanding Officers.
Naval Brigade	7	..	200	Captain J. Fellowes, R.N.
Household Cavalry	27	..	345	Colonel H. P. Ewart.
4th Dragoon Guards, ..	21	..	400	Lieut.-Col. T. B. Shaw-Hellier.
N Battery A Brigade, R.H.A.	4	..	58	Lieut.-Col. G. W. Borradaile.
A " 1st " R.A. ..	4	..	78	Major P. T. H. Taylor.
D " 1st " " ..	4	..	78	Major T. L. Jones.
F " 1st " " ..	2	..	103	Lieutenant H. H. Clark.
J " 3rd " " ..	3	..	78	Major L. F. Perry.
No. 1 Battery 1st Brigade, London Division, R.A. ..	2	..	115	Major F. E. B. Loraine.
Royal Marine Artillery ..	12	..	402	Lieut.-Col. H. B. Tuson.
A Troop, Royal Engineers ..	3	..	103	Major R. J. Bond.
C " " " ..	4	..	133	Major Sir A. Mackworth, Bart.
Field Park, Royal Engineers	1	..	23	Captain C. A. Rochfort-Boyd.
8th Company " "	4	..	90	Captain S. Smith.
24th " " "	4	..	103	Captain C. de B. Carey.
2nd Bn. Grenadier Guards ..	25	1	500	Colonel P. Smith.
2nd Bn. Coldstream Guards	25	1	500	Colonel G. J. Wigram.
1st Bn. Scots Guards ..	25	1	500	Colonel G. W. Knox.
Royal Marine Light Infantry	31	..	870	Lieut.-Col. F. G. LeGrand.
1st Bn. Manchester Regt. ..	18	1	500	Lieut.-Col. W. L. Auchinleck.
1st Bn. Seaforth Highlanders	24	1	450	Lieut.-Col. C. M. Stockwell, C.B.
2nd Bn. York and Lancaster Regt.	22	1	690	Lieut.-Col. J. M. Simpson.
1st Bn. Royal Irish Fusiliers	22	1	676	Col. T. R. Stevenson.
Commissariat and Transport Corps	18	18	474	Assist. Com.-Gen. E. Grattan.
Ordnance Store Corps ..	1	1	10	Quarter-Master F. Tims.
Army Hospital Corps ..	4	1	50	Surgeon-Major J. Walker.
Army Signalling Corps ..	4	..	37	Lieut.-Col. F. C. Keyser.
Mounted Police	1	..	29	Quarter-Master C. Broackes.
Post Office Corps	2	..	40	Major G. C. Sturgeon.
Royal Malta Fencible Artillery	1	..	4	Captain A. Portelli.
Det. Indian Contingent ..	13	..	19	Lieut.-Col. C. R. Pennington, 13th Bengal Cavalry.
Total	338	27	7,658	

G. J. WOLSELEY,
A.G.

MEMORANDUM.

**Review by Her Majesty the Queen, of the Troops returned
from Egypt, to be held on the 18th November 1882.**

1. The troops detailed to attend the Review will be drawn up in their allotted positions by 12 noon, as follows:—

Naval Brigade—in line, at open order, on the north side of the Horse Guards Parade, facing south.

Cavalry Brigade—in line, at open order, along the west side of the Horse Guards Parade, facing east, Household Cavalry on the right, 4th Dragoon Guards on the left. The bands of the Household Cavalry will be posted in rear of the left of the Cavalry Brigade.

The Battery Royal Horse Artillery and Field Batteries Royal Artillery will be drawn up in line at half interval on the north side of the Mall, near Buckingham Palace, facing south.

The Detachment of the Indian Contingent will be posted on the south side of the Horse Guards Parade, in front of the mortar. This Detachment will not march past.

The remainder of the troops will be drawn up in a double line along the south side of the Mall, from the left of the Cavalry Brigade to Buckingham Palace, facing north, in the following order from right to left:—

Royal Artillery (2 dismounted batteries).

Royal Marine Artillery.

Royal Engineers.

Guards Brigade.

Royal Marine Light Infantry.

Infantry Brigade.

Commissariat and Transport Corps.

Ordnance Store Corps.

Army Hospital Corps.

Army Signalling Corps.

Post Office Corps.

Military Mounted Police.

Detachment Royal Malta Fencible Artillery.

2. Left Half Battalions will be in rear of the Right Half Battalions—ranks at close order, with Officers and Colours in front; six paces interval between battalions and corps; bands in the intervals on the right of their battalions.

Two markers for each Corps should be on the ground by 11 a.m.

3. The troops will parade in Review Order, with cloaks or greatcoats, water bottles, haversacks, and leggings. Infantry and dismounted corps will carry the greatcoats "en banderole" over the right shoulder.

4. The Guards Brigade will assemble at Wellington Barracks under the command of Major-General His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught and Strathearn, K.G., &c., and will march thence in time to arrive, by 12 noon, at the east front of Buckingham Palace, where it will be drawn up in line of quarter columns within the railings to receive Her Majesty the Queen.

5. It will then march along the Mall to take up its position in the line, on the left of the Royal Engineers.

6. Lieut.-General Sir G. J. Wolseley, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., will be in command of the troops, and will meet Her Majesty at the gates of Buckingham Palace, accompanied by the Head-Quarter Staff of the Expeditionary Force, and by Lieut.-General G. H. S. Willis, C.B.; Lieut.-General Sir E. B. Hamley, K.C.M.G., C.B.; Major-General Sir H. T. Macpherson, V.C., K.C.B., and their respective Staffs.

7. The Queen will leave Buckingham Palace at 12:30 p.m. As Her Majesty drives along the line the Corps will "Present Arms" in succession, the bands playing "God Save the Queen." Each band will cease playing the moment the band next on its right commences.

8. The Battery of Royal Horse Artillery and Brigade of Field Batteries Royal Artillery, will move off along the Mall as soon as Her Majesty has passed, so as to be ready to march past, the former in front of the Household Cavalry, the latter after the Cavalry Brigade.

9. As soon as Her Majesty has arrived at the saluting flag the bands of the Household Cavalry will move out and take position in readiness to play for the March Past. This band will play during the March Past of the Staff, the Naval Brigade, and the Cavalry Brigade.

All other Brigades or Corps will be played past by their own bands. The band of the 1st Battalion Royal Irish Fusiliers will play during the March Past of all the Corps following that Battalion. Each band must cease playing the moment the last company has passed Her Majesty, and no two bands must on any account play at the same time.

10. The Queen's Escort will remain during the Review drawn up by the railings on the west side of the Horse Guards Parade.

11. The March Past will be in column of troops or companies, in quick time, by the right. The Brigade of Field Batteries will march past in column of batteries at close interval.

12. General and Staff Officers will take post, after marching past, close to the wall on the south side of the Horse Guards Parade, and will remain on the ground until the conclusion of the Review.

13. After marching past, each Corps will move along the east side of St. James' Park into the Birdcage Walk, maintaining as broad a front as possible until reaching the Wellington Barracks, when it will march in Column of Route by way of Buckingham Gate, Grosvenor Place, Hyde Park Corner, Piccadilly, St. James' Street, and Pall Mall to Trafalgar Square, whence it will proceed to its quarters or rendezvous.

14. All wheels or changes of formation after passing the Saluting Flag must be at the "Trot" or "Double;" and great care must be taken to avoid causing any check to the troops in rear.

15. Arrangements for keeping the ground will be made by the Major-General Commanding the Home District.

G. J. WOLSELEY,
A.G.

HORSE GUARDS,
WAR OFFICE,
15th November 1882.

From THE NEW YORK TIMES

THE RUINED EGYPTIAN CITY

THE DREADFUL SCENES ENACTED IN ALEXANDRIA.

**BRITISH ATTEMPTS TO RESTORE ORDER—THE
FLAMES STILL IN CONTROL—NO CERTAIN
NEWS ABOUT ARABI PASHA—ANXIETY
AT PORT SAID—ASSISTING THE KHEDIVE
TO RESUME CONTROL.**

LONDON, July 14.—The reports from Alexandria to-day confirm the news of the burning and sacking of the city and the brutal massacre of the Christians who were left within its walls, but they increase the magnitude of the wholesale slaughter and destruction of property far beyond the imperfect estimates of yesterday, which are now found to have been far too moderate. It is now believed that at least 2,000 Europeans were mutilated, murdered, and burned by the inhuman wretches that Arabi let loose upon the doomed city before his withdrawal, while the city itself is totally ruined. By Arabi's command, the prisoners who had been arrested for instigating and participating in the horrible riot of June 11 were turned loose from the jail, and they at once became the leaders of the lower class of Arabs and began the work of pillage and murder. They were joined in the terrible work by hundreds of Bedouins, who swarmed into the city, and few of the unfortunate foreigners escaped from their hands. As soon as a house had been plundered of whatever the thieves and murderers thought of value to themselves the torch was applied.

The houses from the Grand Square to the Custom-house have all been sacked, and a portion of the city is reported to be still in the hands of the Bedouins, Admiral Seymour not having a sufficiently large force of marines and sailors at his command to protect the entire town. There is scarcely a house in the Grand Square and other portions of the European quarter which is not either burning or already reduced to ashes. The Court-house of the International Tribunal and the Anglo-Egyptian Bank have thus far escaped, but the fire is raging all around them, and they are probably doomed. It is estimated that the fire to-day extended over two miles of streets, with a prospect of its spreading still further in the best quarter of the town. The streets are strewn with empty jewel cases and other débris of a similar nature, which were cast away by the Bedouins after appropriating their contents, but thus far very few dead bodies have been found. It is believed that most of the victims of the massacre were thrown into the flames and consumed, as many were while living, and probably the full number of the dead will never be accurately known. The English and French consulates were burned to the ground. More than a third of the entire city now appears to be on fire, and from the ships men can be seen running about with torches, completing the work of destruction, while explosions are occasionally heard from the direction of the burning streets. The entrance to the Ras-el-Tin Palace has been entirely destroyed. The courtyard and barracks are full of limbs and accoutrements. The base of the light-house is very badly damaged. A European municipal officer says that Arabi Pasha ordered the firing of the town, and the soldiers were the first to begin the plunder. Desertion from Arabi's army is rife.

Among the refugees — the women and children —

Among the refugees who escaped from the massacre by fighting the Bedouins all night, and were rescued yesterday morning by boats from the fleet, are 25 Frenchmen and several French ladies. They report that six persons were massacred in the French consulate before the torch was applied to the building, and the bodies were left to be reduced to ashes. The Egyptian Prefect of Police, who was appointed to succeed the Prefect who instigated the riot of June 11, is also one of the refugees. He says that he met a Pasha during his flight to the beach who told him that over 600 Egyptians were killed during the bombardment.

The firing heard in Alexandria yesterday was by the marines and sailors sent ashore by Admiral Seymour, and who were engaged in trying to disperse the plunderers with Gatling guns. The detachment first landed was too small to venture to approach the centre of the town, but it was soon reinforced by a larger body, and then the force pushed on toward the burning district. The water-works had been stopped by order of Arabi before he left the city, and the little body of naval troops was unable to get anything to drink. There was some sharp fighting for a time, and some of the Arabs who were sacking the town were killed. This morning the Arabs were still engaged in the work of plunder and incendiarism. Admiral Seymour intended to land a force to oppose them, but he was told by the refugees that a body of 9,000 Egyptians was intrenched just beyond the city ready to attack the British should they appear, and as at the time he could land only 300 men, he decided not to make the experiment. Orders were given to fire over the city to frighten the rioters, and this had some effect. During the morning 20 armed Europeans arrived at the beach, and were taken on board the Chiltern. They had barricaded themselves in some houses and escaped the general massacre, and this morning they walked boldly through the streets, the rioters apparently being too busy in pillaging to notice them. They said that with the exception of those engaged in the work of plunder the city is entirely deserted. Soon after their arrival a party of marines landed at Fort Gabari, and spiked 19 guns, which were in position. They found in the fort 15 Armstrong guns of the newest pattern, some of them disabled, and beneath one of them were seven dead bodies. The Monarch fired at and destroyed another battery while the marines were engaged in this work.

Admiral Seymour during the morning landed some field pieces with marines at the Ras-el-Tin fort. It was found that the Khédive's palace had been plundered before their arrival. The Admiral telegraphed at 10:40 A. M.: "I have occupied the Ras-el-Tin Palace with marines and spiked the guns in six batteries opposite. The city is still burning, but I am clearing the streets. The Khédive is safe in the palace, which is garrisoned by 700 marines." A body of 150 marines now holds the Arsenal gate. At the Custom-house gate there are 190 marines with a Gatling gun, who will remain all night. The marines had killed many looters. A crowd with a green flag passed down the principal street in the Arab quarter shouting. The Governor tells the people not to leave the city, but, being panic-stricken, they pay no heed to him. At 3 P. M. the Marine Artillery occupied Fort Napoleon, commanding the town. The yacht of the Khédive has been towed from her dock and is in readiness to receive him. Fort Marabout to-day hoisted the Egyptian colors, but lowered them again on the British squadron assembling round it. The fleet has been ordered to do no further damage unless it is provoked. The American squadron has returned to the inner harbor. At 5 o'clock this evening a detachment of marines marched through the town. Some of the plunderers, caught in *flagrante delicto*, were summarily shot.

The Khédive had a narrow escape from assassination at the hands of the Egyptian soldiers. After his palace had been surrounded, soldiers entered his apartment and announced that they had orders to kill him and to burn the palace. After long parleying their loyalty was bought by liberal provisions of money, and they escorted the Khédive to the British at Ras-el-Tin, but the escort was not allowed to enter the palace with him then. All the Ministers, except Arabi Pasha, presented themselves at the Ras-el-Tin Palace. A proclamation in Arabic is preparing in the Khédive's name calling on the people to maintain order and on the troops to disband. The Khédive, with Dervisch Pasha and some of the Ministers and the Khédive's harem, are now on board a vessel in the harbor. The marines who have been patrolling the town embarked in the Bittern this evening. A large party of British, assisted by men from neutral men-of-war, remain to keep order in the town to-night. Two Arab soldiers have been seized with plunder, and will be tried for pillaging. Several Arabs have also been arrested with a large quantity of loot in their possession. The Americans have landed 60 marines under

command of Capt. Cochrane. There are still some Egyptian Police on duty, helping to maintain order. The sailors now occupy all the gates. They have been ordered to disarm all soldiers and to shoot looters. The populace are being encouraged to return to their homes. The fire continues with unabated fury." All the Arabs are carrying white handkerchiefs on sticks, and are showing great anxiety to be thought friendly.

The safety of the Suez Canal is still a matter of great concern. A dispatch from Port Said dated 12:40 P. M. reports that entrance to the Suez Canal has been prohibited. The gun-boat Iris has arrived there, and lies with one broadside bearing on the town and the other upon an Egyptian corvette, commanded by one of Arabi Pasha's officers. There are 428 British subjects, 500 Egyptian soldiers, and 200 Police at Port Said. Rear-Admiral Hoskins has transferred his flag to the Penelope, and sailed for Port. Said. Mr. Henry Campbell Bannerman, Financial Secretary of the War Office, stated to-day that gun-boats had been ordered to accompany British merchant vessels through the Suez Canal if it was deemed necessary. The report that the steamer Glenlyon, from China, is aground in the Suez Canal and being plundered by Arabs is declared to be unfounded.

The movements of Arabi Pasha are still a matter of uncertainty. Sir Charles Dilke, Under Foreign Secretary, said to-day that Arabi Pasha fled from Alexandria in a boat by the canal, but that it is not known whither, and that it is understood that his troops are dispersing. Another report is that he is outside the town with a large force, and still another that he has only 4,000 troops, which are very much disorganized. Gen. Stone is with the Khédive. The General confirms the report that Arabi Pasha ordered the murder of the Khédive, and adds that Arabi ordered the sacking of the town before quitting it. All evidences prove the truth of the report that the Egyptian gunners were directed by French and Italian artillerists.

THE PREPARATIONS FOR WAR.

The preparations for war are going on in England on a large scale. The War Office has ordered a sufficient number of intrenching tools to be sent to Egypt for the use of the first body of English regulars that lands. A dispatch from Nicosia, Cyprus, announces that the Minotaur, Agincourt, and Northumberland have arrived at Limassol. The Minotaur, with a siege train and 20 guns, sailed for Egypt during the night. The troop ship Malabar has arrived at Gibraltar, and proceeded east with the Forty-sixth Regiment, and 450 of the Household Cavalry will leave England to-morrow week, but their destination is yet unknown. Gen. Sir Garnet Wolseley is expected at Port Saïd on Sunday, and if Arabi Pasha makes a stand at Rosetta or Damauhaur, Sir Garnet will proceed to Alexandria. He has been in consultation at the War Office to-day and is ready to proceed to the East at a moment's warning.

The *Times* this morning says: "By this last outrage Arabi Pasha has put himself outside the pale of humanity. He must be followed and his army dispersed. It is satisfactory to know that the British preparations are complete, and that we are ready to carry out the will of Europe if no other nation be found to do the work. Should the Porte still hold back, Lord Dufferin will state in the conference that England is prepared to undertake the task, but will welcome the co-operation of any other Government."

The committee of the French Chamber of Deputies is unanimously in favor of granting a naval credit, and it is announced semi-officially in Paris that the accord between England and France continues, and they are expected to come to a definite understanding in regard to Egypt. The German corvette *Nymphe* has been ordered to Egypt, and the Greek Government has expressed its readiness to join in intervention in Egypt with a corps of 7,000 men. A dispatch from Constantinople says that in last evening's meeting of the Council, Saïd Pasha, the Prime Minister, maintained that Arabi Pasha was a rebel, and must be treated as such. The Council broke up without adopting a definite resolution, but Saïd Pasha visited Lord Dufferin, and it is understood that upon the latter's statements the course of the Porte will depend. Musurus Pasha, the Turkish Ambassador here, has telegraphed to the Porte that Earl Granville has informed him that England is compelled to proceed vigorously against the Egyptian rebels, but that the sovereign rights of the Sultan will be in no way prejudiced thereby.

In the House of Commons this afternoon Mr. Gladstone stated that Consul Cartwright had telegraphed that the Khédive had secured the loyalty of the cavalry and infantry guards sent to watch him, and would summon the leading Pashas and endeavor to re-establish order in Alexandria. Mr. Gladstone said that Cherif Pasha is among those named as having been summoned by the Khédive.

LONDON, July 15.—A correspondent at Alexandria telegraphs: "The Khédive's coolness and courage never left him during the crisis. The sailors have arrested the further progress of the flames at the Harem Palace. Diplomats are trying to establish with the Khédive the semblance of a Ministry. The people cannot understand why the Americans, who can only muster a handful of marines, are invited to land men. An officer on shore has sent word to the ships that a hundred refugees on the Marina are clamoring for food. Biscuit is being sent them.

A correspondent on the Condor off Alexandria says women were seen firing houses with petroleum.

A dispatch from Constantinople says that the Council of Ministers at midnight decided that efforts should be made to effect an arrangement of the Egyptian question, and that if the efforts failed Turkish troops should be sent to Egypt. The Porte has received a telegram from Cairo stating that all is quiet there.

A correspondent on the Invincible telegraphs that all the ships have sent ashore every man that can be spared. The marines were landed at the request of the Khédive. Arabi Pasha sent away by railway women and children in thousands. All the able-bodied males were ordered to join the army.

War in Egypt

LONDON: SATURDAY JULY 29, 1882.

With anything but a light heart the Prime Minister on Monday night asked the House of Commons for a vote of credit to the extent of £2,300,000—£900,000 for the Army and £1,400,000 for the Navy—with a view, according to the circumlocutory phrase, to strengthen her Majesty's forces in the Mediterranean; in other words, to provide an efficient British army to vindicate the authority of the Khedive and to protect our national interests in Egypt against the rebellions Arabi Pasha, whom Sir Joseph Pease does not scruple to designate "one of the greatest scoundrels ever known." Mr. Gladstone's speech on the occasion was as sorrowful as it was solemn. A statesman, whose reputation mainly rests upon brilliant triumphs in the field of pacific progress and national development, had the mournful task of proposing to give effect to an act of foreign policy which, however inevitable, seems almost to savour of that spirit of adventure to which no one can be more averse. In this unhappy business, which the Government did not originate, they may or may not have committed serious mistakes. But few will deny that they have been driven along by the force of circumstances. They have drifted into war while breasting the current. The Premier thinks his estimate of £2,300,000 will cover the cost of suppressing anarchy in Egypt. If so, and should the campaign last only three months, it will be the cheapest expedition on a considerable scale to which this country has in modern times been committed; and we shall all be ready to pay with resignation, if not cheerfulness, the extra threepence of income tax which will be demanded for the last half of the present financial year. Mr. Gladstone does not gild the pill which he invites the British people to swallow.

In less than a fortnight, unless there should be a sudden turn of events, a considerable section of a well-appointed army of 25,000 men will have left our shores, and a large force of 7500 men will ere long be embarking at Bombay, to try conclusions with the Egyptian military usurper, and to occupy, for a time at least, the Delta of the Nile. The necessary preliminaries have been taken. On Tuesday a message from the Crown was read in both houses of Parliament announcing that as "a state of emergency" existed, it was her Majesty's intention to call out the Reserves. This step has already been taken, and it has also been notified to Parliament that Indian troops will be employed for military service in Egypt. Thus we are actually "in a state of war." That England undertakes this important enterprise unaided has its advantages and disadvantages. If the Porte alone had intervened, Egypt must have become a Turkish province—the seat of extinguishing industries and the patrimony of greedy pashas. France—"everything by turns, and nothing long"—has finally shrunk from joint action, but has consented to take the guardianship of the Suez Canal, which will entail no odium, little trouble, and less expense. In this case we shall be more coadjutors than allies, and it is easy to believe that many a volunteer French officer will assist Arabi to make a skilful defence, and prevent this country from easily reaping the fruits of a successful expedition. The Conference at Constantinople is not, indeed, formally dissolved, for at the eleventh hour it received a favourable reply to the Identical Note—that is, the Porte consents to send troops to Egypt, but has not accepted the essential conditions required by the Powers—another and transparent attempt to stave off the inevitable. But, however that that may be, England has received no "mandate" from the Conference. While Italy is boiling over with rage and jealousy at our intervention—though it has been invited to co-operate in this international work—the other Powers remain coldly neutral, giving what is called a "moral support," while the British Government are pulling the chestnuts out of the fire.

No Englishman doubts the ultimate issue of this unfortunate war. Sooner or later, Arabi and his undisciplined troops and scanty appliances will be overborne by the skilful generals, well-trained troops, and vast warlike resources of this country. Alexandria, the oldest port and second city of Egypt, is securely in our possession, forming an admirable basis of operations. Tewfik Pasha, the legal ruler of the country, is on our side—indeed, we are avowedly acting on his behalf—and probably the mass of native proprietors and holders of property are in sympathy with a Power that intervenes in the interests of peace and order, without which material progress and prosperity are impossible. Then, we are not proposing to conquer and occupy Egypt for our own benefit, but we are intervening, as Mr. Gladstone's says, "to put down anarchy, to promote a settlement based on international rights, to strengthen the Khedive, and to establish equal laws and popular rights." In undertaking this military enterprise we shall not, so far as at present appears, be hampered with uncertain and self-seeking allies, nor have we any reason to pay deference to the susceptibilities and ambition of a Sultan, who has largely helped to bring about the present complications, and is now making a last effort to aggravate them.

On the other hand, we have to deal with a bold, audacious, and unscrupulous enemy. All the inevitable delays of the last month have told immensely in his favour. Though Arabi's military prudence and skill have yet to be tested, his energy and resources are great. He has potent allies in the noble river, with which he can flood the country; in the trackless desert, to which he can retreat when in danger of being worsted; in the ignorant fanaticism of an Oriental population, which he has already fanned into a flame; and in a climate, the intolerable heat of which, at this season, might prove disastrous to all invading force. The rebel leader, who may possibly become, as he is already termed, "a national hero," may elect to remain in his fortified position at Kafri Douar, some fifteen miles from Alexandria, and flanked on either side by a lake; or he may have the temerity to assume the aggressive, and try to storm the heights of Ramleh, now occupied by our troops, before large British reinforcements can arrive. In either of these cases, the campaign would probably be short. The early defeat of Arabi would react with prodigious effect at Cairo, where he is distrusted by the most powerful Notables, and quickly undeceive his dupes throughout the country. But apparently he will make no permanent stand at Kafri Donar—the best of his infantry soldiers being concentrated at Rosetta. It is barely possible that Arabi may develop the qualities of a great military commander, which will indeed be needed if he is to hold his ground with undisciplined levies against a corps d'armee of British troops led by such accomplished strategists as Sir Garnet Wolseley, Sir John Adye, and Sir Edward Hamley.

Meanwhile the garrisons of Alexandria and Ramleh, about 6000 troops of all arms, supported by the ironclads, will stand on the defensive. The long delay in opening the campaign in Egypt is tantalising, and may be turned to good account by the rebels; but it is unavoidable. It is essential that there shall be no room for accidents, and that the force intended to crush Arabi should be overwhelming. Probably there will be further skirmishes on the outskirts of Alexandria, or even a further British advance with a view to remove the obstructions in the canal, from which is drawn the indispensable water supply of that city. At the same time, Sir Archibald Alison is not meditating an aggressive movement. In ten days or a fortnight the transports which are taking the various regiments to the Mediterranean will be arriving in Egypt. Several of them, conveying the Commissariat and Land Transport Corps, horses and stores have already left our shores, and the Brigade of Guards, commanded by the Duke of Connaught, who was to leave for the East to-day, will form a reserve force at Cyprus. Including the Indian contingent, not less than 34,000 are expected to take part in the land campaign; while some 8000 French Marines aided possibly by a small Italian force, will undertake the easy, comparatively cheap, and perhaps superfluous task of guarding the Suez Canal.

War in Egypt

(Part 2)

Though without the formality of a declaration of war, the British naval and military operations in Egypt have assumed the magnitude of a war more considerable than any we have waged, except in Asia, since the Russian War twenty-seven years ago. Thirty thousand of our best troops will presently be employed in the Delta of the Nile, and the utmost force of a squadron of ironclad ships has been applied to destroy the forts of Alexandria, with terrible incidental effects ruinous to that great commercial city. The cost of this war, though finished in a brief autumn campaign, will be reckoned by many millions sterling; but England can well afford to bear that and more, if the enterprise be just and needful both for the protection of her legitimate interests, and for the discharge of her international duties. If it be truly the case that instant forcible intervention, by the arms of Great Britain singly, in the dispute between the Khedive and the revolutionary faction in Egypt, was the only possible means of securing the free use of the Suez Canal, and the safety of European residents and their property in that country, it is right to go to war. The task of subduing the Egyptians, a nation that numbers one seventh the population of the United Kingdom, cannot demand an excessively great effort in itself; but it is a very serious consideration how we shall stand afterwards, with what political responsibilities to Egypt and its people, to the Khedive, to the Ottoman Empire, to the European Powers, and to the Mussulman community all through the Eastern world. The peculiar inconvenience and danger, as a matter of mere policy, besetting armed intervention in the domestic government of a foreign State, is that the military force which has been lent for temporary aid to the native ruler cannot easily be withdrawn so long as he remains unable to rely upon the support of his own subjects. French troops in 1849 were sent to restore the temporal government of the Pope in Rome; and, though it was certainly the wish of Napoleon III. to take them away, it proved impossible to remove them until 1870. On the other hand, we have but too much cause to fear that a very prolonged

British occupation of Egypt would finally bring upon us the hostility both of Mohammedan nations and of those which claim, equally with our own, a share of material interest and of political authority in the affairs of the Levant. There are other Mediterranean Powers to be consulted, however readily it be admitted that England has a paramount claim to defend her passage to India; and we trust that the first opportunity will be taken by our Government to renounce emphatically, by deeds as well as by words, all idea of keeping a permanent British garrison in any part of Egypt.

Source: The Illustrated London News, No.2258—Vol. LXXXI, Saturday, August 12, 1882, p.158

Source: The Illustrated London News, No.2256—Vol. LXXXI, Saturday, July 29, 1882, p.102

ARMY POST OFFICE CORPS

The Genesis - Middlesex Rifle Volunteers



A call for special constables to protect key installations, including post offices, was made in 1867 after the Fenian scare when the militant Fenian Brotherhood bombed various places in London and other cities in England. Some 1,600 members of the GPO were enrolled, and Major du Plat Taylor of the Civil Service Volunteers (Post Office Company) was given the task of instructing them in their duties. After the scare was over, these Special Constables approached du Plat Taylor asking that they be formed into a Post Office Volunteer Corps.

Their timing was fortuitous as it coincided with the army reforms instigated by the Secretary to State for War, Edward Cardwell (1813-86), whose aim was to improve efficiency and reduce costs. Part of the reforms included the re-organisation of the volunteers, thus the Special Constables got their wish and the 49th Middlesex Rifle Volunteers was raised, its recruits came from the Post Office, and they served in an infantry role. It was this unit that was to form the nucleus of what was to become the Army Post Office Corps. In 1880, the numerical order of the 49th Middlesex Rifle Volunteers was changed to the 24th Middlesex Rifle Volunteers.

1877 Postal (du Plat Taylor) Committee

The military postal experience of the Crimea and the lessons learnt from the Indian Army encouraged the British Army to seriously review the arrangements for the provision of a postal service to the troops in the field. There were two opinions; firstly, that the Army to run its own services as in the Peninsular War. Secondly, that civilians from the Post Office be responsible for the service as in the Crimean and Indian Army example.

The Secretary for War wrote to the Postmaster-General in 1876, with a proposal to form a force of volunteers to run the Army's postal services. The Postmaster-General put the proposal to the Commanding Officer of the 49th Middlesex Rifle Volunteers, Lieutenant Colonel du Plat Taylor, who was an ex-Private Secretary to the Postmaster-General. A committee was formed, with terms of reference "to consider the formation of a Corps for the performance of Postal Duties in the Field". It assembled at the War Office and the Committee consisted of: · Lieutenant Colonel du Plat Taylor, · Major CE Webber RE (a RE telegraphist, who had experience of working with the GPO), · Captain AC Hamilton RE (Secretary), · Major WF Butler RA (Deputy Assistant Quartermaster General), · Mr RS Culey (GPO) and · Henry Mellersh (an Assistance Army Postmaster during the Crimean War). The committee submitted its final report to both the War Office and Postmaster General on 28 February 1877. The report contained the following recommendations:

1. A corps should be organised in peace, made up often in the employment of the Post Office and be formed into a company within 49th Middlesex Rifle Volunteers.
2. In war, postal companies should provide post offices in the field.
3. An Army Postmaster who would receive his orders from the Chief of Staff or the officer in charge of communications would command the Post Office company.
4. Mails should be sorted into Regiments in London or at the Base of the operations.
5. Letters from England to Armies in the field should be charged such extra postage as would enable homeward letters to be forwarded free of charge.
6. A money order and register letter service should be provided.
7. The Army Service Corps should in all cases provide transport.

Nothing came of these recommendations and they were shelved until 1882, in spite of du Plat Taylor's efforts to resurrect the idea in 1879 when he brought to the attention of the War Office the poor mail arrangements reported in The Times during the second Afghan War (1878-80).

Formation of the Army Post Office Corps 1882

In 1881 a rebellion broke out in Egypt which threatened Britain's passage to India through Suez. In response an expeditionary force under Sir Garnet Wolseley was despatched to quell it. This gave Lieutenant Colonel du Plat Taylor the opportunity to raise the matter of the postal corps again and it was agreed that an Army Post Office Corps (APOC) should be formed. Queen Victoria issued a Royal Warrant to that effect in 22 July 1882. The recruits were drawn from the GPO employees serving with the 24th Middlesex (Post Office) Rifle Volunteers <http://www.tafsc.com/PostalHistory.htm> - TOP#TOP

EGYPT 1882 AND SUDAN 1885

On 8 August 1882 the new Corps under the command of Major Sturgeon (Army Postmaster) embarked aboard the Black Prince on its first overseas expedition, only 17 days after its formation, and landed at Alexandria on the 19 August.

Mails from Britain were despatched 3 times a week via the 'overland route' through France to Alexandria. The Army Post Offices offered a letter and parcel service and sold stamps and postal orders. In addition to the mail services, a free parcel service from the Naval docks at Deptford was also set up. These parcels travelled by Government store

ships and transports. This service was the forerunner of the Military Forwarding Office (MFO) service which still exists today.



Stationary Army Post Offices were established at Alexandria, Ramleh, Cairo, Port Said and Ismaila, while mobile Field Post Offices were attached to the divisional headquarters and moved when they moved. On 9th September, during the battle of Kassassin, the Army Post Office, under the charge of Sergeant FJ Inwood, attached to HQ 2 Division came under fire, but no one was injured. Private HF Yardley was mentioned

in despatches as was Corporal WT Marchant. Major Sturgeon reported to the General of Communications, as would his successors. He sent telegraph reports of troop movements to assist with the sorting of mail in London. This practice was to be continued and indeed is still done to this day, in particular, tracking the movements of HM ships.

The Expedition was a success. The unit received high praise from the Commander-in-Chief, who wrote: "The formation of a purely military postal department has been a tried for the first time in this war. It has been very successful... I have much pleasure in bringing to the notice of the Secretary of State the admirable manner in which the Post Office Corps discharged its duties in Egypt ...Their services have been so valuable that I hope a similar corps may be employed on any future occasion..."

That occasion came in 1885 when the Army Post Office Corps accompanied General Wolseley's expedition to relieve General Gordon in Khartoum.

Sudan Expedition and the Relief of General Gordon 1885

The Army Post Office Corps under the command of Major Sturgeon was despatched to Suakin in support of the expeditionary force raised to relieve General Gordon in Khartoum. They landed at Suakin on 27 March 1885 and established the Base Army Post Office there. Further Field Post Offices were opened at Quarantine Island, the railway terminus and one each with the Headquarters and 2nd Brigade.

The mails travelled the same routes as for the Egyptian Campaign of 1882. A daily mail service between Suakin, the Headquarters, Handub and Otao was arranged. Every morning a messenger travelled by train to Houdoub with the mail. The Director of Army Telegraphs for the Expedition was Major CE Webber RE, who had been an original member of du Plat Taylor's 1877 Committee.

The Field Post Offices offered letter and parcel services, sold stamps and postal orders. Major Sturgeon introduced the sale of embossed envelopes with a sheet of note paper at 1d or two at 1d. This was the first recorded time that stationery had been sold at Army Post Offices, and can be regarded as the forerunner to the Field Service Post Card (Army Form A2042) used in the First World War. This additional service produced a revenue of £ 60 7s 6d.

The mail service was again a success as testified by Lieutenant G Parry of 12 Company Commissariat and Transport Corps who recorded " I have never mentioned anything about our postal arrangements. We used to get our letters very regularly, considering all things, and though some necessarily never reached us, there was nothing to complain about. They only took ten days coming all the way from London, overland, via Brindisi, Alexandria, Cairo and Suez, where a steamer of one sort or another met the mails and ran then down to Suakin... When the detachment of the Post-office Volunteers arrived, everything was very well managed. .."

The Army Postal service closed on 30 May 1885 after which the Indian Field Post Office in Suakin served the remaining troops. The services of Army Post Office Corps was not called upon again until the Anglo-Boer War. Three years after the Army Post Office Corps' men returned to Great Britain, an Army Post Office Corps Field Manual (1888) was issued.

Source: adapted from the web site of The Postal and Courier Services (www.tafsc.com/PostalHistory.htm) July 28, 2003.

