Station Postmarks.

E. Hall (ESC 239)

Following the meeting in May I have redone the sheets containing the Station postmarks. They have been changed considerably by new information passed onto me by various members of the Circle. Some marks have been deleted, as I am not convinced they are different from ones already drawn and many added.

Although my name appears below the title this article is due to the many members who have generously lent me relevant covers from their collection or supplied me with photocopies and drawings. This has ranged in some cases from only a few notes and photocopies up to several sheets of drawings/ photocopies. However small each piece of information is it adds to the story and in most cases each member has a mark exclusive to him self. They therefore should be considered co-authors and include:-

R. Bertram, M. Bramwell, J.Chellingsworth, J. Davies, R. Dauwe, C.Defriez, D. Glyn-Jones, S. Horesh, M. Murphy, A.Ott, J. Sears, B.Sedgley, P.Smith, G. Todd & V. Varjabedian.

Could members check their collections and send me photocopies of any marks not recorded or appear to be a little different from those shown, particularly any places not yet recorded as having a station postmark. At this stage I have not given earliest and latest dates to which some members attach some importance, so if members could send me the dates of any of the marks shown I will draw up a table.

Peter Feltus in his publication of 1983 'Egyptian Postal Markings 1865—1879' gives dates for various places for the classic types many of which I do not have illustrations. Where relevant I have designated these simply as Sta. 3 to 7, these numberings are found in Peter Feltus's book and also in Peter Smith's book p505 and correspond to the first five illustrations shown here for Alexandria. This also applies to the St. types as in the fifth illustration for Alexandria and shown as Type IV-2.

Some will note I make no reference to 'types', I have simply tried to illustrate every postmark I have seen that is a station postmark, some members seem to attach great importance to 'typing'. At the May meeting I came armed with various arguments and proposals for 'typing' as given to me over the last few years but time did not permit for this. Inshallah. I have my own views on this which basically come done to why bother as once past the classic period there is hardly any repeatable patterns, each handstamp becoming a different type in its self. On the sheets at the May meeting I had ordered the illustrations by place and then roughly along the lines of the original study but here there is no purposeful order other then place. I rather like the suggestion of organizing them in date order.

The only article I can find on stations postmarks is from LOP Oct. 1957 p599 by Mazloum and only concerns itself with the Dalla Stazione hand stamps. The status of these station postmarks is Unresolved, Peter Smith in his book states these are from branch post offices at railway stations. However none are mentioned in the Postal Guides suggesting these where outside the normal postal system. Dalla Stazione means from the station so was this a mark used by railway staff who took in mail to hand onto the postal system by way of the TPOs? As later station marks are found with cash, registration etc. in them I would agree with Peter that these are branch or fully functioning post offices. Included are station postmarks from Boat and Coach stations

The illustrations are slightly reduced in size by approximately 10%. Again I have not quoted any ring size, another beloved feature of collectors. Where does one measurer the diameter outside edge to out side edge, middle of ring thickness to middle of ring thickness ? Measuring some strikes on the same cover can come up with different answers simply depending how much ink was on the first strike and how much was left on subsequent strikes. Was the cancel struck squarely or did it slide on being struck?

The illustrations have been drawn assuming the ring to be round and the center bars parallel this need not be the case. Where I have more then one strike and there is a consistent dent in the ring this has been shown. Likewise the thickness of the ring has been drawn the same for most postmarks with the exception of a few where there is little doubt that it appears to be thicker then normal. Most of the marks appear as 100% but this has been achieved with a little imaginative license assuming the letters are complete unless there is evidence to the contrary. If any doubt exist the drawing has been left incomplete.

The concept has been to illustrate every postmark and there has been several occasions when it has been difficult to determine if two strikes come from the same handstamp or one very similar. This is especially so when making up an illustration from two or more parts strikes. For instance Alexandria 21 & 22 I was convinced originally these were two separate handstamps the Arabic lettering, especially the 'K', being just slightly different. These small differences disappear on drawing as the errors introduced in making the illustrations can be greater then the differences. Also the very act of drawing can invent differences that do not exist.

Most of the drawings have been redone for this article because the previous ones, done by myself, had been done hurriedly for the May meeting and quit crude and noticeably different in the detail from their source. Due to time constraints this was not the case with most of the Cairo postmarks being left in their crude state.

DALLA STAZIONE "from the station" these where use prior to the introduction of postmarks containing the words meaning station.



The four recorded of Dalla Stazione the first one shown has been subscribed to Suez the second to Alexandria and Cairo. The other two are of unknown source. Cover illustrated is from Cairo to Samanud in 1872.





<u>Notes.</u> Alex. 10 & 11 are in the original Bloomfield drawings as being station postmarks because of the letters S. It could however only be designating counter S. Alex 21 & 22 I think are different handstamps. Alex 16 is one of the postmarks having serif letters.



<u>Notes.</u> Alex 27 to 30 are for the passenger terminal, for the western harbor, in Alexander port. Asyut 7 appeared to have an I between the S & Y can anybody confirm this. Note the treatment of the Arabic H in Benha pmks.



Notes. Cairo 22 the spelling in the postmark 'statian' is portrayed correctly. I have seen two examples of it.



Notes. Cairo 43 Midan el Tahrir—Liberation Square is the major bus terminal for buses to Alex.



Notes. Luqxor 4 & 6 have the letters U & Q transposed.



Notes.



Notes. Ramleh 11 is also an EMS mark.



Notes. Tanta 6 may not be a station pmk as other then the letter S there is no other indications to it being so.