

The Quarterly Circular of THE EGYPT STUDY CIRCLE



September Quarter 2019 – Vol XXIII No 11 – Whole Series No 270 – Pages 243-266

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Massawa, November 11, 1879: Cover, written in the hand of General Charles 'Chinese' Gordon, docketed at top 'No. 323, C.G.' in manuscript addressed to Colonel Harvey of the Royal Engineers, Gibraltar. Massawa 'Maktab Bosta Khedewiya Masriya' negative seal handstamp in black (Egyptian Khedevial Post Office) and 'Poste Khedevie Egiziane / Massawa' datestamps at left. Suez transit (Nov 25) and cover awaited forwarding and mailed with 1879 2pi. orange cancelled at Port Said (Dec 8). Rare.



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Meetings Programme for 2019

September 9-16	Gezira Club, Cairo	PSE 90th Anniversary	All members
Nov 7, 1pm	Royal's new premises	Egyptian Hotels	Richard Wheatley
Nov 9, all day	Victory Services Club	ESC Auction 59	All members
December 4-7	Monte Carlo, Monaco	Monacophil celebrates Egypt	Hany Salam plus
<i>Please note change of venue. For more detail and draft list of meetings in 2020, see next page</i>			

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Egypt Study Circle draft programme 2019–2020

2019

- **Thurs November 7, 1pm:** **Richard Wheatley** presents **Egypt Hotels** at the Royal Philatelic Society London. Display 1pm, PowerPoint presentation 5pm, at the new premises of the RPSL, 15 Abchurch Lane, City of London EC4N 7BW, close to Bank or Monument Underground and a great opportunity to look around. Please let Jon Aitchison know if you will attend (britishlocals@aol.com) and he will add you to the guest list.
- **Sat November 9, all day:** Massive room/postal auction, viewing 11am, sale 2pm. Victory Services Club.
- **Wed-Sat December 4-7:** Monacophil 2019 at Monte Carlo, Monaco, where the Egypt Study Circle led by **Hany Salam** will present the major display, 'The World of Egyptian Philately and Postal History during the Mohamed Ali Dynasty, 1798-1952'.
- **Friday November 29, 1pm:** Egypt Study Circle Monacophil lunch at Flashman Restaurant, Square Beaumarches, Monte Carlo (close to the Hermitage Hotel).

2020

- **Sat February 8, 2pm-4pm:** AGM at the King's Head pub, 13 Westmoreland Street, London W1G 8PJ, joint with the Sudan Study Group. Subject postcards: **Mike Murphy** will take the lead with The Denshaw Incident of 1906. Please bring something to show.
- **Spring 2020:** Club postal auction. More details soon.
- **Fri-Sun April 3-5:** Joint weekend meeting with the Sudan Study Group at the Morley Hayes Hotel, Derby. Everyone welcome, especially spouses and day visitors. Approximate cost £105 pppn, d,b&b in a single room or £75 in a double.
- **Wednesday May 5:** London 2020 International Exhibition. The Egypt Study Circle will have a table at the Society Promotion Day. Volunteers to help man the stand are needed.
- **Saturday May 9:** London 2020 International Exhibition. The Egypt Study Circle will have a meeting at the event from 12 noon until 2pm.
- **Sat July 18, 11am-4pm:** Joint meeting with the Cinderella Stamp Club at the new premises of the Royal Philatelic Society London, 15 Abchurch Lane, London EC4N 7BW. Subject 'Back of the book', including local stamps, advertising labels, poster stamps, event stamps, unofficial issues, GBLA, petrol and other rationing, telegrams, airgraphs, forgeries, revenues, ephemera, in fact anything that is not in the mainstream catalogues. It will be interesting to see what the Cinderella Stamp Club can show. The CSC will hold its AGM at lunchtime but we can have a leisurely lunch break.
- **Sat September 12, 2pm-4pm:** Stampex meeting on Sinai, from the Suez Canal to all points east. Stampex dates not yet confirmed, might be 19th.
- **Sat in November (7th or 14th?):** Venue to be confirmed. Subject: Maritime.



Medals from China: Congratulations are due to the following for their successes at the China 2019 World Stamp Exhibition in Wuhan in June: Sami Fereig (ESC 569), LV (85) for his three-volume *Postal History under the Muhammad Ali Dynasty*; Brian Callan (ESC 694), Graf Zeppelin DLZ 127 South America, LV (87); Ahmad Nabil, Farouk 'Civil' Portrait Issues, V (80), Mamdouh Mosley (non-member), Postal History 1700-1879, LV (85). And well done to three 16-18-year-olds from Egypt who competed strongly: Mariam Bayoumi, Abdelrahman Yasser and Abdella Ahmed Yousef ... hope for the future here!

Report of the Annual General Meeting, July 6

In the absence through illness of our Chairman, John Davis, and former Treasurer, Brian Sedgley, Jon Aitchison (Deputy Chairman) took the chair and Sami Sadek, the new Treasurer, detailed the 2018 Annual Report of his predecessor. The meeting, held in blazing sunshine at a new venue, the King's Head public house in Marylebone, took the opportunity of sending best wishes to John Davis on his 80th birthday.

Those PRESENT were Jon Aitchison (Deputy Chairman/Programme Secretary), Mike Murphy (Secretary), Sami Sadek (Treasurer), Neil Hitchens (Webmaster), Mike Bramwell, John Clarke, Cyril Defriez, Peter Grech. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: John Sears, John Davis, Brian Sedgley, Ibrahim Shoukry, Trent Ruebush, Tony Cakebread, Greg Todd, Tony Schmidt, Ted Fraser-Smith, Richard Wheatley, Aly Gabr, Adel Hannah, Amr el-Etreby, Ole-Fredrik Olsen, Roman Rimonis, Bill Barclay.

Minutes of the 2017 AGM were approved; no matters were arising.

Chairman: The Chairman reported on a fascinating and successful year in 2018, and, in looking forward to the rest of 2019, thanked the Programme Secretary for a magnificent effort in his first year, with meetings as far flung as Stockholm, Monaco, Cairo and Derby. He noted that the sale of Peter Andrews' material had been a great success, giving opportunities for members to buy outstanding items to the benefit of the family.

Secretary: The Secretary reported a net loss of six members over the year, giving a total now of 165, 25 of whom are choosing to read the QC online.

Votes for the MacArthur Award, intended to encourage members to write for the *QC*, had been depressingly few, and there was discussion about how to make voting more popular. The 2018 award, richly deserved for detailed research, was a runaway win for Ronny Van Pellecom and Alain Stragier with their continuing series on *Egypt's Railway Stations 1879-1914*.

Cairo exhibition

We learned only after the AGM that the venue for the September Cairo exhibition was to be moved from the Cairo Exhibition Centre to the Gezira Club itself. A full report on events will appear in the December issue.

The Secretary mentioned an informal request by a member who is about to publish a book on Egypt and its philately. The meeting reinforced its decision last year that we would follow in general the guidelines of the Stuart Rossiter Trust and that submissions based on the Trust's application form would be welcomed.

Accounts: The Treasurer's report, delivered in his absence, noted a year on year increase on the accumulated surplus of £3243, due largely to an increase in income of £3075, most stemming from the auction account (increase £4206). This was despite an apparent decrease in subscriptions income, which stemmed in fact from payments for 2017 having been received early. Members were again urged to take out a standing order for their subscription. Questions were raised about the value of the stamp collection and Circle Library, and it was resolved that after a reorganisation, realistic valuations be placed on both items for 2019. At the end of 2018 we had £22,866 in the bank, with the accumulated surplus standing at £27,352. The accounts (*see p.iv*) were approved and a Vote of Thanks (proposer Jon Aitchison, seconder Peter Grech) to our auditor, Stephen Bunce, was approved with acclamation. Members then elected Brian Sedgley (proposer Neil Hitchens, seconder Jon Aitchison) to the position of Life Member to mark 15 years' sterling work as Treasurer.

Auctions: The Secretary reported on the success of postal Auctions 57 (September 2017) and 58 (April 2018), both boosted by material from the families of Peter Andrews and Erik Menne Larsen. It is hoped that all remaining material from these sources will be cleared at an all-day auction in November, with material on display in the morning, the sale in the afternoon, and material won to be carried away.

Meetings: The Programme Secretary reported on plans for the visit to Cairo in early September, noting that application forms for those exhibiting were available from him or from the Secretary. There was much discussion about the experiment of trying a new venue, the King's Head public house, for this meeting, and members present felt that though the Victory Services Club was about to raise its hire charges once more (perhaps to more than £600) it remained comfortable and familiar.

To allow more time for comparative evaluations, meetings will be scheduled at the King's Head (costing only £25!), the VSC and perhaps other venues before any firm decision is made about any regular change of meeting place.

Great enthusiasm was reported by those who attended the joint meeting with the Sudan Study Group in April, and the Programme Secretary circulated a paper for consideration setting out possible scenarios for closer co-operation between the two societies, perhaps even to the point at some stage in the future of a merger. Discussion was thoughtful and considered, recognising that both groups were suffering from reduced and ageing memberships, and a consequent difficulty in finding volunteers to carry out the necessary Officers' tasks. It was decided that we should gradually explore the relationship with more joint meetings, with a view to closer ties but again – no firm decision to be taken until all aspects are fully considered.

Shepherd's Hotel stationery survey

The meeting responded with enthusiasm to an offer by a new member, William Barclay (ESC 723), to act as "collator" for a survey of stationery material associated with Shepherd's Hotel (ie, covers, envelopes, postcards, letterhead, etc.). We hope to establish a regular updating of such material, including images, on the website. Members who have such items are invited to send photographs or scans to Mr Barclay; due credit will be given for previously unknown items. Please send high quality scans (front and back) as well as information on dates and dimensions, preferably by email, to barclayphilatelics@gmail.com, with Shepherd's in the subject line and including the contributor's name, town and country in the text.

The Programme Secretary also reported on the successful ESC meeting at Stockholmia and gave details of Monacophil 2019 in the first week of December, at which Egypt, led by Hany Salam, will figure as the centrepiece. The ESC will hold a lunch on Friday November 29, and those wishing to visit Monaco for the grand exhibition should contact Jon Aitchison direct.

Editor: The Editor reported that four *QCs* had again been produced during the year, and thanked the MacArthur Award winners for helping to fill large parts of them with fascinating and useful surveys of the railway system and its postal markings. This series is not yet complete, and he hopes that members might continue to supply him with *Udata* as well as a number of short articles to expand the variety and wide range of published articles. A vote of thanks for Mike Murphy, for his work as Secretary, Editor and

Auctioneer, was proposed by Peter Grech and seconded by Sami Sadek.

Webmaster: The Webmaster noted that gradual changes were being introduced to the website's appearance to make it more "modern" but that the sheer weight of the material meant that this had to be a series of small changes, feeling our way as we go. He is keen to expand the content, and is willing to place online collections of stamps or postal history for all members to view: please contact him direct. Another positive move halted since Edmund Hall's demise has re-started, and more and more back-copy *QCs* are being posted on the site for all to see until the whole series is here. He and the editor appealed to members to contribute any information about Egypt and its philately to maintain newsy and current material on the site.

Librarian: The Librarian announced his disappointment that so few books had been borrowed from what he considered an outstanding library, to which Andrew McGregor's *A Military History of Modern Egypt from the Ottoman Conquest to the Ramadan War* and Part II of John Davis' own book on the *Concession Period* had recently been added.. After discussion, it was agreed that more effort would be made to publicise an up to date Library List on the website and to encourage members to borrow, perhaps by the Circle funding postage of books going overseas. This will be given more thought.

Election of Officers: No elections were necessary. Next year's AGM: Saturday February 8, King's Head pub, Marylebone, 2-4pm

There then followed a quite astonishing display by Sami Sadek, representing Part Two of his Egyptian TPOs series, on the eastern Delta. He amazed those present with his ability to detail, for the first time using railway timetables in association with the TPO markings, virtually every step of the way, and every minute of the journey, for covers addressed within and without Egypt.

Developing Peter Smith's *The Travelling Post Offices of Egypt*, he has been able to add many many new CDS markings to the original list, and to realise once more just how efficient the Egyptian railways were in the 1890s.

Using the timetables he has been able to discover that there was not one but two rail lines heading out to Damietta, one, the State Railway, on the western side of the Nile, and a second, narrow gauge light railway for the Lower Egypt Rail Society (CFBE), on the eastern side. And tiny Fariskur, on the Nile, had a station each side of the river to cater for the two systems...

Another cover, from Mansura to Palestine, took an enormously circuitous route back to Cairo, then Ismailia and Qantara when it could have been carried by boat from Manzala to Port Said and on its way ... but investigation showed that the roundabout route was the norm. Why? More investigation might find out...

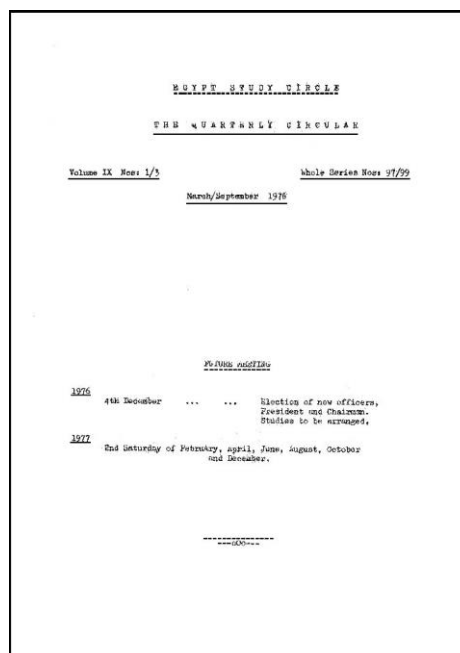
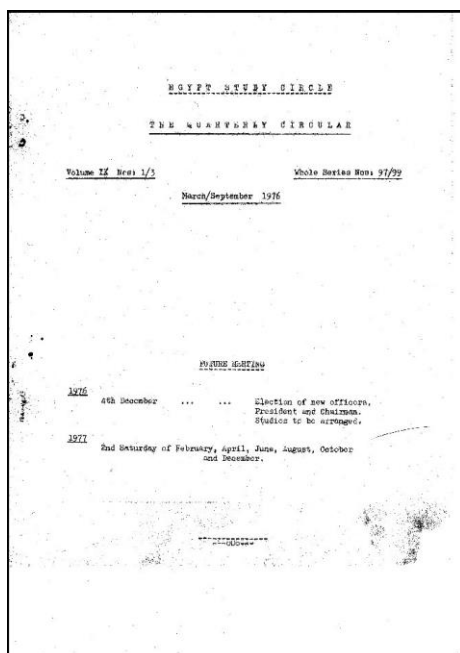
His work on these lines, on the Fayoum area with its myriad narrow-gauge lines, and on Shallal-Halfa, amazed those present, and happily will be presented in article form in forthcoming QCs. In the meantime, anyone who has access to any rail timetable of any period, pleased do not hesitate to let Sami have a copy. His work thrives on them. (*See page 248 and following for more detail*)

Digitising past QCs – an update

The past few months have been usefully spent evaluating, testing and assessing a series of freely available programmes to try to find the best approach to digitising and disseminating past QCs not yet available in the website.

Regular users of the members-only section (for those who have forgotten the password, access is very easily activated – simply email me) will notice the recent uploading of issues 105,102, 100/101, 97/99 and 94, which were issued between 1975 and 1978.

Even those copies with substantial damaged from rusty staples, water or simply the disintegration of pages through the growing fragility of the paper used 40-plus years ago have all been successfully resurrected and new life has been breathed into these previously unavailable issues. The differences can best be seen in comparing “Before and After” of one of the front pages, below.



Further issues will now be cleaned, digitised and added to the members section of the site to enable current members to read and enjoy the scholarship of members past.

Neil Hitchens, Webmaster

TPOs and timetables: Secrets revealed

Sami Sadek (ESC 559)

Travelling post offices are mobile post offices in which mail is received and sorted during the journey. The world's first TPO service opened on 6 January 1838 in an experimental horse-drawn sorting carriage between Birmingham and Liverpool. The earliest documented TPO in Egypt, between Cairo and Alexandria, followed in 1875. The service was carried out primarily in dedicated railway mails carriages; occasionally it employed steamers on river and canal routes.

Structure and description of TPO cancellations: The majority of TPO cancellations bear the names of two cities – the termini of the journey – in Arabic and English (a few have three town names and occasionally one town only). Early on, the CDS carried no train numbers, but instead a “T” followed by a Roman numeral indicating the shift number was placed after the date. In the early 1900s train number gradually replaced shift indicators. In fact, however, all train timetables dating back to the start of the railway system carried actual train numbers for reference (as confirmed by the author in the Egyptian Railway Museum archives).

Old system: Pre-train number
Shift indicator T II



Current system: Train number
T16 as in 1920 timetable

TPO journey
indicator



A consistent feature of all Egyptian train numbers (as demonstrated in the sample page at the right) is that odd numbered trains indicate a journey in one direction, while the even numbers are the return journey.

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Ligne de Mansourah à Mehallet Ingag.

STATIONS	9	11	STATIONS	10	12
Mansourah dép.	Matin 9.—	Soir 2.50	Mehallet Ingag dép.	Matin 5.15	Soir 3.4
Godeida "	9.21	3.11	Néghir "	5.31	3.20
Mit-Aly "	9.29	3.21	Kafr Abou-Nasser "	5.39	3.28
Halte de Khaligue "	9.38	3.32	Dekernès { arr.	6.—	3.49
Tanah { arr.	9.47	3.42	Mit-Farès { arr.	6.8	3.58
Halte de Mit-Mahmoud { dép.	9.55	3.50	Mit-Farès { dép.	6.25	4.15
Mit-Farès { arr.	10.3	4.4	Halte de Mit-Mahmoud { dép.	6.28	4.18
Halte de Mit-Mahmoud { arr.	10.10	4.11	Halte de Mit-Mahmoud { arr.	6.35	4.25
Dekernès { dép.	10.12	4.17	Tanah { arr.	6.44	4.34
Dekernès { arr.	10.29	4.34	Tanah { dép.	6.51	4.41
Kafr-Abou Nasser { dép.	10.39	4.49	Halte de Khaligue "	7.2	4.51
Néghir "	11.2	5.12	Mit-Aly "	7.14	5.2
Mehallet Ingag arr.	11.24	5.34	Godeida "	7.32	5.11
			Mansourah arr.	7.51	5.30

Ligne de Mansourah à Damiette.

STATIONS	13	15	STATIONS	14	16
Mansourah dép.	Matin 6.20	Soir 4.48	Damiette dép.	Matin 5.—	Soir 12.30
Khyaria "	6.34	5.2	El-Enanieh "	5.15	12.45
Baramoun { arr.	6.46	5.14	Horani "	5.31	1.1
Badaway { dép.	6.48	5.16	Faraskour { arr.	5.43	1.13
Taranis "	7.2	5.30	Faraskour { dép.	5.49	1.24
Mehallet Ingag { arr.	7.11	5.39	Kafr-el-Arab "	6.—	1.35
Mehallet Ingag { dép.	7.18	5.46	Charabasse "	6.8	1.49
Boussate "	7.28	5.56	Barachieh "	6.14	1.49
Cherimssah "	7.30	6.7	Dakahlia "	6.20	1.56
Mit-el-Kholi Abdillah (Zarka) { arr.	7.48	6.16	Serow { arr.	6.27	2.3
Serow { dép.	7.55	6.23	Mit-el-Kholi Abdillah (Zarka) { dép.	6.29	2.6
Dakahlia "	8.3	6.31	Mit-el-Kholi Abdillah (Zarka) { arr.	6.43	2.20
Barachieh "	8.20	6.47	Cherimssah { dép.	6.57	2.31
Charabasse "	8.29	6.56	Cherimssah "	7.5	2.39
Kafr-el-Arab "	8.35	7.2	Boussate "	7.14	2.48
Faraskour { arr.	8.41	7.8	Mehallet Ingag { arr.	7.23	2.57
Horani "	8.47	7.14	Mehallet Ingag { dép.	7.33	3.7
El-Enanieh "	8.56	7.23	Taranis "	7.40	3.14
Damiette arr.	9.6	7.30	Badaway "	7.49	3.23
	9.20	7.44	Baramoun { dép.	8.—	3.34
	9.34	7.58	Baramoun { arr.	8.3	3.37
	9.46	8.10	Khyaria "	8.17	3.51
			Mansourah arr.	8.29	4.3

CHEMINS DE FER DE LA BASSE-EGYPTE.

Background: Recent issues of the *QC*, with their infinite detail on the railways of Egypt supplied by Ronny van Pellecom and Alain Stragier, have reinforced the magisterial work by Peter Smith on *The Travelling Post Offices of Egypt*. I have now embarked on a comprehensive reworking of the Smith book, taking into account what he did not have to hand, that is, the railway timetables, which allow an infinitely detailed examination of the journey undertaken by each and every piece of correspondence that travelled by rail. After the early years, all TPO handstamps carry a train number: only recently has their significance been recognised.

The first concept of a railway in Egypt was intended to develop a link between Alexandria and Suez, thus bypassing the long sea journey around the Cape of Good Hope. Mohammed Ali was first approached in 1834 but the project never came to fruition. He was succeeded by his son, Abbas Helmi I, who signed the first contract with Robert Stephenson in 1851.

The first railway line was inaugurated in 1854 between Alexandria and Kafr-El-Zayat on the Rosetta branch of the Nile; it reached Cairo in 1856, making the Egyptian railway system the first in Africa and one of the oldest in the world. The system was gradually extended and branches added to eventually cover all of Egypt in an extensive and complex system encompassing standard-gauge lines and rural narrow gauge systems.

Rail services were used for mail from the outset; the first record of dedicated railway mail coaches, however, was in 1875 with the first documented travelling post office cancellation between Cairo and Alexandria.

Chemins de Fer de la Basse-Egypte light railway system and TPOs

Implementation of the TPO: Up to the present TPOs have been studied primarily with a view to describing the routes used and cancellation types and varieties. There is however an extra dimension, namely the actual journey of the letter. Utilising Egyptian railway timetables and time stamps on the cancellations in conjunction with train departure and arrival times, a comprehensive understanding of the letter's travels from departure to delivery, or to onward transmission overseas, can be ascertained in detail in a very large number of covers.

The narrow gauge railway system of the “Société des Chemins de Fer de la Basse-Egypte” (CFBE) will be employed in this article to illustrate the close integration of the TPO lines and the train timetables, using several examples. To illustrate some of the new discoveries coming out of this study, I shall describe the covers in detail and demonstrate what a truly up to date exploration can reveal. Please bear in mind that when this article refers to a “new” CDS, it is comparing material newly discovered since both the Peter Smith book and the recently reconstituted and much larger list recorded on the ESC website.

Development of the CFBE: The society signed a concession in 1895 with the Ministry of Public Works for a one-metre wide light railway built on the Belgian agricultural railway model. Baron Edouard Empain (*right*, the builder of Heliopolis) and George de La Hault were signatories for the company. Its area encompassed a region northeast of the Dumiat (Damietta) branch of the Nile (see map next page), between the river and Lake Manzala.

Light railway companies such as the CFBE were initiated to utilise multiple short stops serving rural communities, which were primarily agricultural. Before this advance, such small farming areas were relatively inaccessible as the road transportation system was still in its infancy.

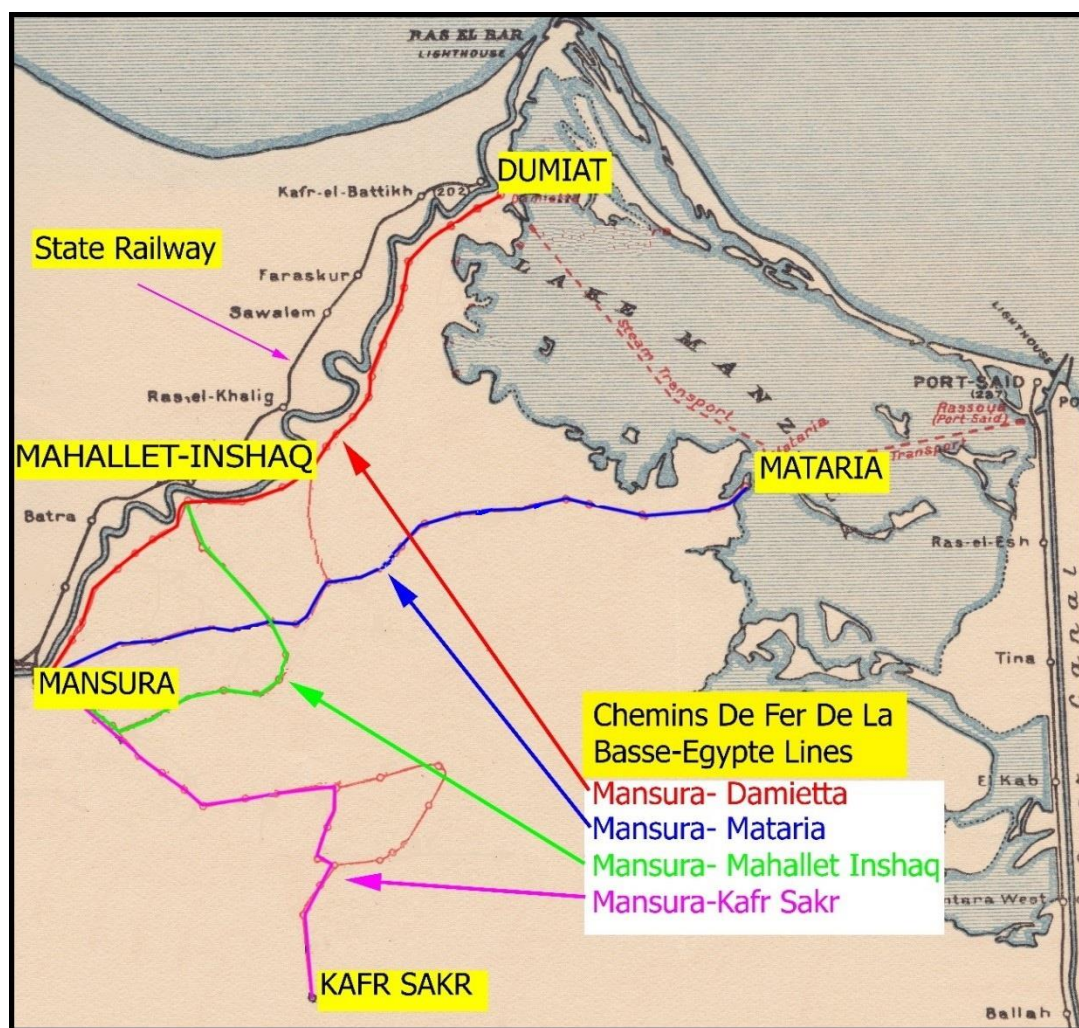


The first line to be built was Mansura-Mataria and its extensions, and then connecting onwards to Port Said via the Lake Manzala steamer. A second concession in 1912 extended the provincial lines to the Sharqia, Daqahlia and Damietta governorates. The concession ended with the gradual state takeover after the 1952 revolution. The final incorporation into the Egyptian railway system took place in March 1968.

CFBE railway and TPO lines: The Chemin de Fer de la Basse-Egypte rail system involved four distinct lines that are associated with five distinct TPO cancellations [NB, in these listings the lettering seen on the TPO handstamps will be used rather than any modern (or old) interpretation]:

1. Mansura-Mataria, line and TPO.
2. Mansura-Mahallet Inshaq, line and TPO
3. Mansura-Kafr Saqr, line with two TPO cancellations
Mansura-Kafr Saqr
K Saqr-Sadaqa
4. Mansura-Dumiat, line and TPO (east of the Nile)

The Mansura-Dumiat TPO line was originally classified by Smith (1985) as a state railway, based on the assumption that it was part of the Cairo-Tanta-Mansura-Dumiat State rail line that runs to the west of the Nile. Once the TPO Mansura-Dumiat cancellations were closely examined, however, and compared with the train timetables, the CDS train numbers on the handstamps were revealed to be clearly associated with the CFBE line to the east of the river Nile rather than with the State system.

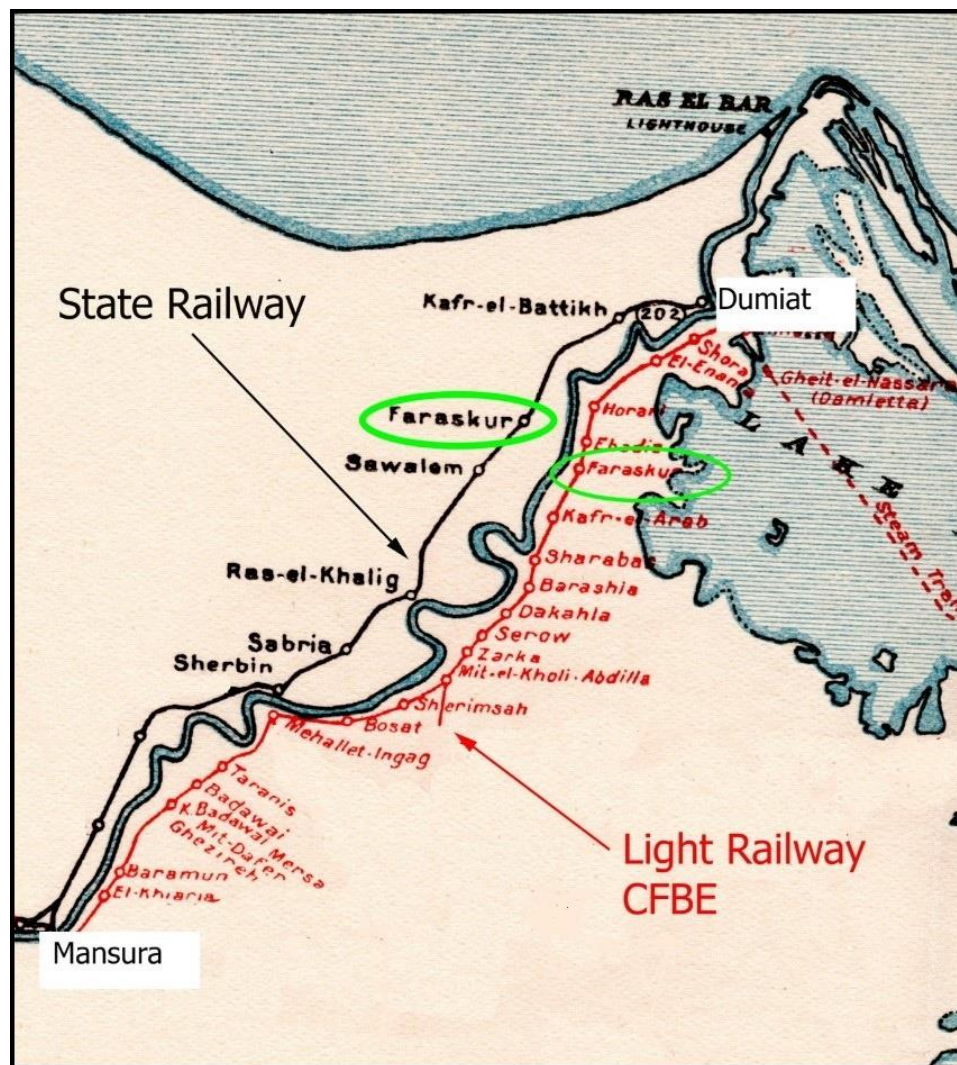


Map of eastern Delta (CFBE) railway lines and TPO routes (modified from Weiner)

General note on spelling: This is a TPO minefield! TPOs often vary considerably in the way European versions of town names are presented. As a rule, in maps and text I have used the spelling from Smith's book to maintain consistency. The CDS spelling is as shown. Sometimes the old maps have alternative spellings. Examples include Faraskur / Fariskur and Inshaq / Ingag.

Rail lines and TPO from Dumiat: There are two possible train routes leaving Dumiat. The first is the State railway, which uses the common state railway TPO route DUMIAT-TANTA. The second is the CFBE light railway to the east of the Nile, which uses the much less common MANSURA-DUMIAT TPO.

The railway timetables clearly differentiate between the two lines. The clue is in the train number that follows the date on the CDS. For example CFBE train numbers are 13,14,15 16 (see scan of page from 1920 timetable above) . State railway train numbers, on the other hand, are totally different and are part of the Dumiat-Mansura-Tanta line. Examples are 47, 49, one way from Tanta, and 48,50, the return journey from Dumiat.



Map illustrating the two railway paths between Mansura and Dumiat, the light railway east of the Nile in red and the State railway west of the Nile in black.

Note that Faraskur has stations on both systems.

A new TPO route: A new TPO marking, not previously described or published, has been discovered related to the State railway line: DUMIAT-FARISKUR as a direct result of this study.

The new marking, a variant on Smith's Type 7A3.7, is dated 20 JA 51 T56, and differs from the recorded type in having the Arabic word *saayra* (travelling) incorporated before the indication of the two town names.

This unexplained and unusual TPO is all the more unexpected because its two town parameters appear to stand outside the journey carried out by the Express-rated cover (see map next page). It did indeed originate on the DUMIAT-FARISKUR line, but was posted at Samanoud, south of Fariskur. It would have been more logical to use the common DUMIAT-TANTA State railway TPO service, which stops at Samanoud.



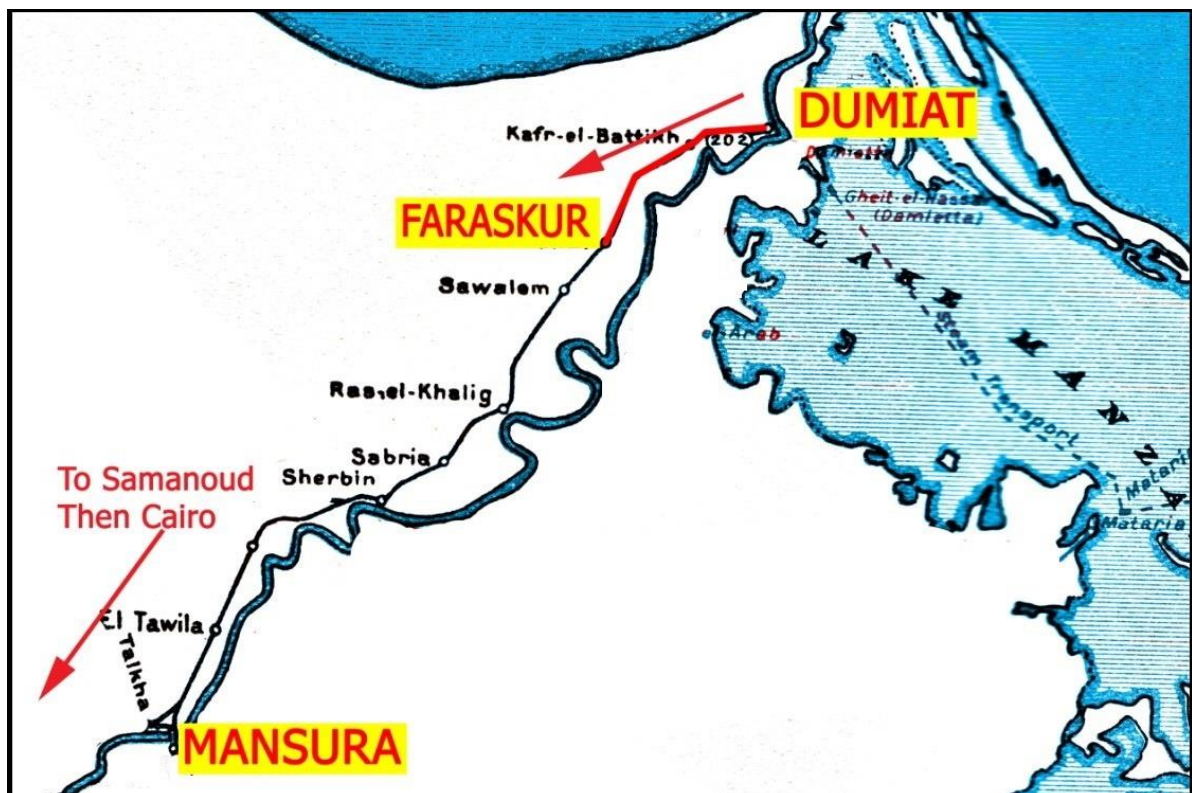
New undocumented CDS
of TPO route Type 7A3.7
with "saayrah" before Arabic
town names



Cover from Samanoud (detail taken from Arabic return address) to Cairo, with TPO as primary
cancellation, arriving next day. Franked with 4x10 mills Farouk stamps for Express letter rate

• Route Comment

Samanoud is south of Mansura and is NOT part of the Mansura-Dumiat CFBE TPO route but on the main State railway line from Dumiat to Cairo. According to the railways timetable State railway train 56 leaves Dumiat at 15:30, picks up mail at Samanoud at 18:08 and arrives in Cairo at 22:10. The Cairo arrival postmark on the reverse is timed at 7-8am the following day.



How train numbers define the actual journey:

It may seem odd to have different railway lines, State railway and light railway, on each side of the river, and then to find a single cover bearing an example of TPO handstamps from both routes, but that is just what appears on the folded and unsealed note below:



This simple folded sheet carrying a request for sick leave was mailed from Mansura to Fariskur and franked with a De La Rue 2 mills Pictorial as unsealed. It arrived in Fariskur four days later.



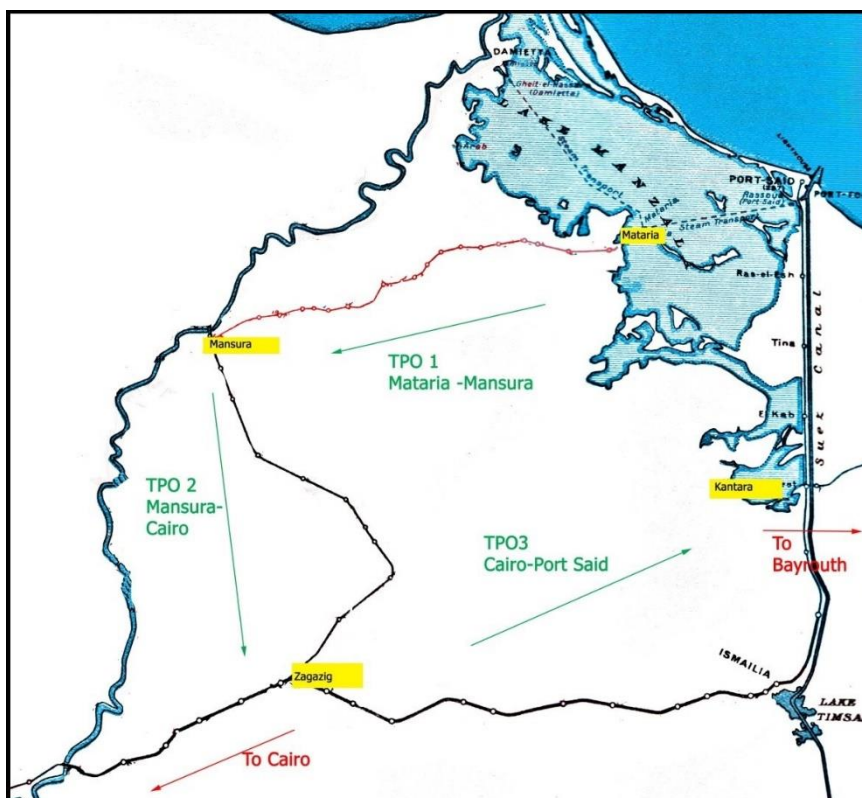
The CDS is TPO Type 6A2, used by the CFBE light railway

• Route Comment

1. Cancelled at Mansura 11 October 1921.
2. State railway TPO Dumiat-Tanta T56 top right (poor strike but undoubted). Train 56 leaves Mansura at 7:50pm, arriving Shirbin 8:24 pm (transit CDS, reason not clear, perhaps change of train?). Arrived at Fariskur 9:02pm and stamped 15 OC 21 10:15 pm
3. Light railway TPO Mansura-Dumiat dated 16 OC 21 T16, this is the RETURN JOURNEY from Dumiat to Mansura after the note had received its response.

Complex journey really necessary?: This cover below, sent from Mataria to Beirut on 22 April 1937, seems to have taken the longest possible journey. Using three days and a total of three TPO routes, it headed first west, then south and finally east, when a much shorter journey using a steamer across Lake Manzala to Port Said and then by sea to Lebanon, would have seemed the obvious way to go. Unless there was a problem with the Manzala steamer at that time? If any member can help with details please let me know.





• **Route Comment** (see map above):

1. 4x5 mills Fuad stamps (20m, correct rate) date stamped Mataria / Dakahlia 22 AP 37 12:30 pm
2. TPO Mansura-Mataria T110, departs Mataria 13:10, arrives Mansura 16:20.
3. TPO Mansura-Cairo - The next day (23rd) T202 departs Mansura 5:10am and transits at Zagazig at 6:50am where the cover transfers to:
4. TPO Cairo-Port-Said T07, departs Zagazig 8:22am, arriving at Kantara 10:32 where the letter joins the cross-Sinai train, eventually arriving in Beyrouth the following day.

This is a long, circuitous and complex route. A simpler alternative would be to have taken the Manzala lake steamer to Port Said (there were three daily sailings), and then onwards via seagoing vessel to Beirut. Perhaps the weather precluded sailing on that day?




*The cover started its
rail journey on train 110
on the Mansura-Mataria
TPO line*

Palestine Railways

RAPID AND COMFORTABLE
TRAVELLING FACILITIES TO
ALL PARTS OF PALESTINE
WITH CONNECTIONS TO:
EGYPT, SYRIA, TRANSJORDANIA

Equipped with modern Passenger Coaches,
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Luxurious Tourist Trains specially arranged.



Train leaving Haifa for Egypt.

REGULAR DAILY SERVICE TO AND FROM EGYPT AND THE SUDAN.
DIRECT AND QUICKEST ROUTE TO DAMASCUS, BEYROUT, BAALBEK,
ALEPPO, AND TRANSJORDANIA, FOR AMMAN AND PETRA.

Sleeping and Dining Car Service on all Main Line Trains.

For all Particulars (Time Tables, Rates, etc.) apply to:
Superintendent of the Line, HAIFA STATION,
or to the leading Tourist Agencies.

Egypt 1922

The onward rail journey from the Suez Canal at Kantara would have been the Kantara-Haifa Palestine Railways line, crossing Sinai, and eventually proceeding to Beirut.

Letter using only a small section of TPO line

TPOs show a multitude of applications and variations when the letter journey is considered in conjunction with the train lines. Some possible variations of the letter's journey are:

1. Uses the whole span of the train line. (e.g. Mataria-Mansura, or Mansura-Dumiat))
2. Uses one section of the line encompassing only one of the handstamp termini (e.g. Dumiat-Fariskur).
3. Uses an intermediate section only (see below)

The following is an example of only a single small section of the TPO route being used on the train line using the CDS Mansura-Mahallet Inshaq. The letter as posted from El Fouadia on 16 September 1939 to Cairo and travelled via two TPO routes, Mansura-Mahallet Ingag (for Inshaq, NB this common spelling variation) and Cairo TPO 24 Type 5C1. Franked with 5 mills Boy King stamp on reverse paying local rate. Same day arrival.

Cairo TPO 24 is an example of the enigmatic "Single town TPOs", which are a subject of a separate study. In this case, 24 represents the state railway number from Alexandria to Cairo

• Route Comment

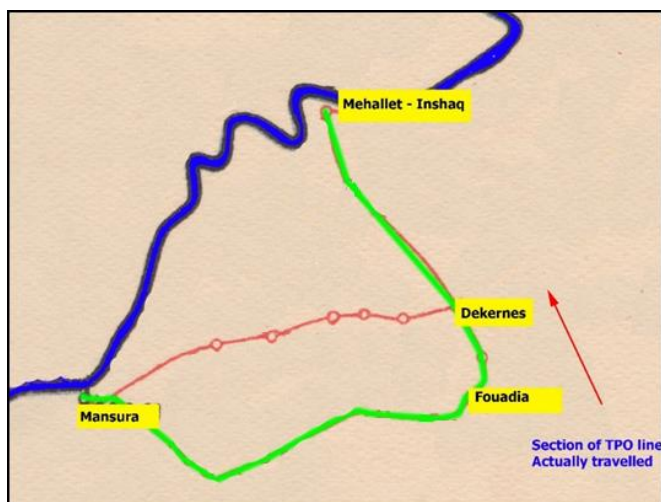
Letter posted at 8-9am at El Fouadia, which is a stop on the TPO line. CFBE train 221 departs 8:07 am, arriving Dekernes at 8:20 and the cover is cancelled at 8:30am. There is a cancellation information gap in the letter journey. It is assumed that the letter would have then transferred, probably via Tanta, to the Alexandria-Cairo line (Cairo TPO 24), arriving at 7pm on the day it was posted.



*Mansura-Mahallet Ingag
TPO CDS, Type 7A3.5,
used by CFBE*



*Cairo TPO 24 CDS,
Type 5C1, used by
State railway*



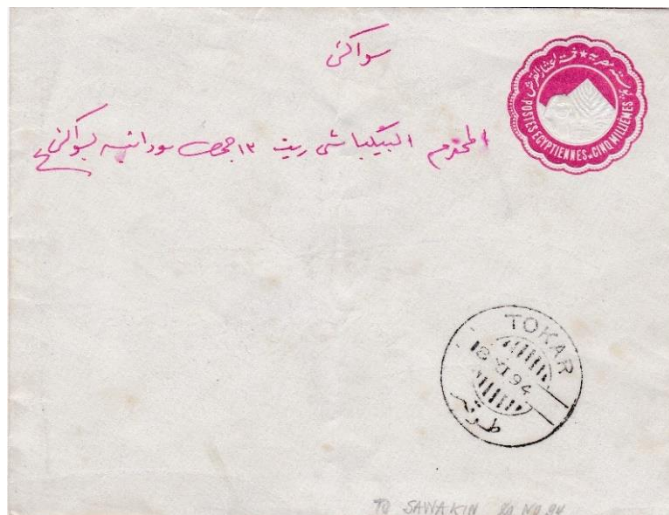
Map illustrating the Mansura-Mahallet Inshaq TPO route (green) with the actual distance and direction travelled (Fouadia to Dekernes) shown by the red arrow

Red line from Dekernes to Mansura is part of the CFBE network, reflecting the letter's probable onward journey to Mansura.

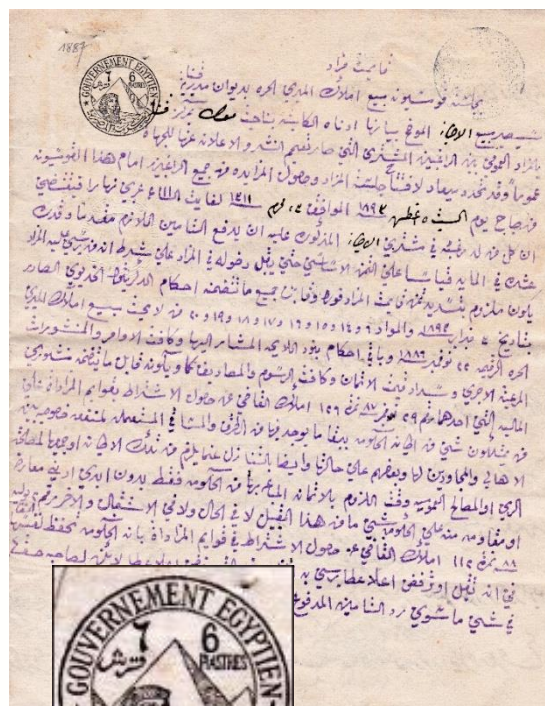
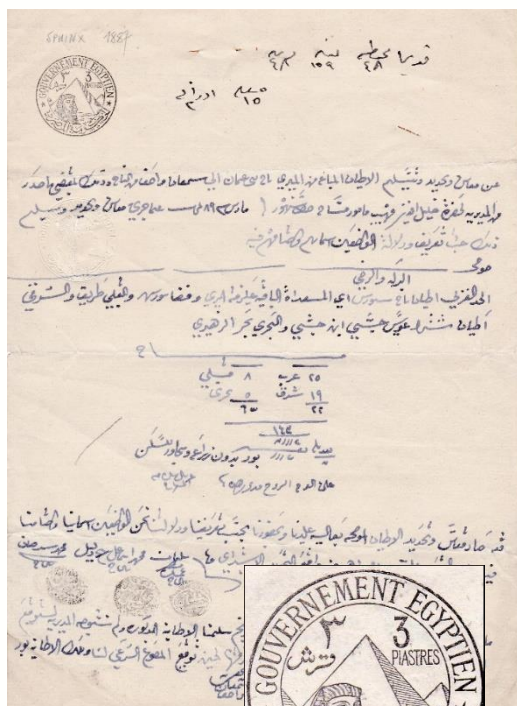
Updata: Responses from our members

As Editor I am always delighted to receive feedback on recent issues, and all the more so when the information fed back is of new discoveries, new dates or indeed any “updata” on what has gone before. For this reason I must apologise to our newly restored member Alain Stragier (ESC 241), whose offering were forced out of the last issue by the awards ceremony at Stockholmia. I am delighted to publish his notes today, and look forward to many more in the future. Please do not hesitate to follow his good example.

Tokar again (Alain Stragier): In *QC* 267 (December 2018) Brian Sedgley introduced a newly discovered postal stationery cover postmarked Tokar, describing it as only the third recorded – and the earliest. But Alain Stragier illustrates here another, with the wry comment that it confirms – if confirmation is necessary – that one should never say, or even think, “unique”. His example, Arabic-addressed to Sawakin and dated 18 XI 94, is another 5m postal stationery cover, this time with the vignette not cancelled. A fine Sawakin arrival marking of November 20 behind.

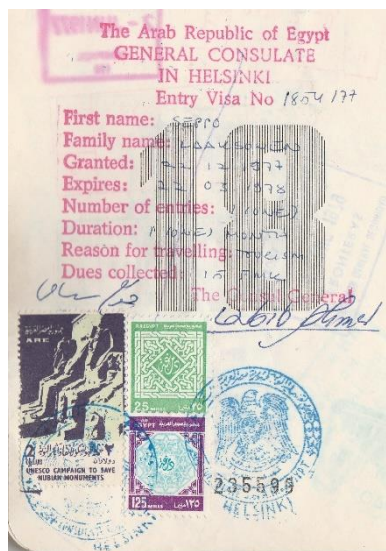


Fiscal papers (Alain Stragier): From the same issue Bill Johns illustrated a fascinating piece of official government stamped paper telling a story of life with the Khedivial Paquebots service. Alain Stragier sends four papers in excellent and complete condition, two of them (*below left*) similar to that in the *QC* and face-valued at 3 piastres whereas the Feltus catalogue lists only a square cutout; and two more (*right*) with a 6-piastre value that Feltus failed to mention. All four have the Sphinx/Pyramids vignette, and although Feltus lists several watermark dates for the previous issue (Pyramids alone), his dates start only in 1890. All four of Stragier’s examples have an 1887 watermark. Surely there is more to come from this area of research.



Consular Revenues (Seppo Laaksonen, ESC 223):

Following up on Vahe Varjabedian's article in *QC* 269, our man in the far north notes that usages of consular revenues on full documents are not very often found, especially from an "unusual" source like Finland, so he sends a couple of examples of his own. Scan 1 (left) is from his first visit to Egypt in 1978, the entry visa issued by the ARE General Consul in Helsinki on December 22 1977 and bearing two fiscals, of 25 and 125 mills, with a special \$US2 stamp to help Unesco save the Monuments of Nubia [Vahe wrote on this topic in *QC* 261].

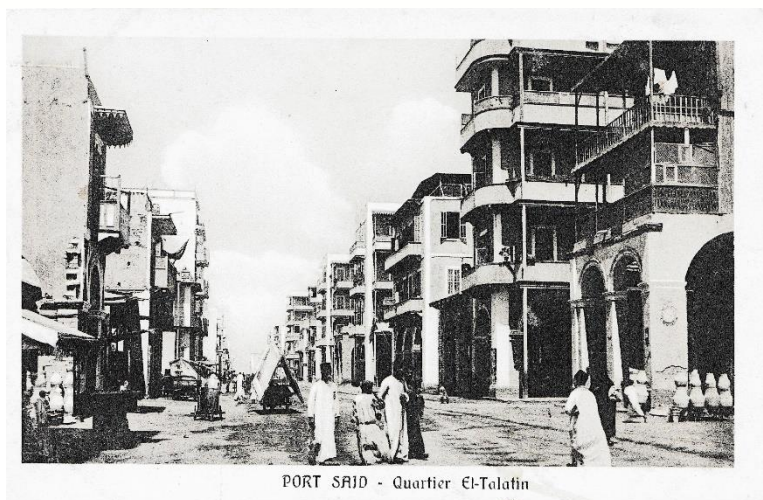


The price of the visa was 15 Finnmarks, equivalent today to €2.50. Scan 2 (right) is from 2001, the entry visa issued at Cairo airport carrying the £E5 Building Fund fiscal and the £E27.20 Renaissance Statue single-entry tourist visa fiscal. Cairo airport arrival and departure stamps are on the same page.



Consular Revenues (Mike Murphy, ESC 240): Inspired by Seppo's example, I have looked out my own cancelled passports, covering 18 visits from London since 1978, and find that, along with a mass of general revenues, I have Nubian Monuments Type 2 for 1976 and 1978, Type 3 for 1984-89, the £E1 ½ Building Fund mentioned by Feltus for 1984, The Sphinx type £E1 green 1987, £E2 orange 1984-87 and £E5 blue for 1985, all outside Vahe's dates. And there are new dates for Renaissance Statue stamps: £E10.50 red 1991, £E27.20 orange 1996-98, £E27.20 brown 1997-2006 (and none of them from Jeddah or Kuwait). Examples of new stamps or dates would be welcomed.

Hai-el-Arab (Mike Murphy): With its multiple names, the Port Said "native quarter" (or Hai el-Arab, Quartier Arabe, or Qism Tani/Sani) has long intrigued me, and Pierre Grech's article in *QC* 269 provided a comprehensive and excellently research overview that sent me searching for long-overlooked material – and finding a couple of interesting updates. First is a new postmark not included by Pierre: reading Hai el Arab / Port-Said / Cash, it is dated 6 VII 16, and is the first and only Cash marking recorded for the local post office, with R-for-registration markings noted only from 1923.



PORT SAID - Quartier El-Talatin

The other update is a mint postcard

printed by The Cairo Postcard Trust, Serie 545, and clearly labelled Port Said – Quartier El-Talatin. Perhaps my Arabic is mistaken (it often is), but my reading is "Thirtieth District" – what could it mean? Is it a printing error for Quartier Tani? Or were there at some time 30 districts in the port city (seems unlikely)? Any explanation for this card would be gratefully received.

Remarkable 1943 postal rates Airgraph

Greg Todd (ESC 585)

Members will be well aware of the great esteem in which founder members Jean Boulad d'Humières (ESC 16) and A.S. Mackenzie Low (ESC 2) are still held by the Circle. I recently came across, through the good offices of Nigel Gooch FRPSL, a remarkable wartime Airgraph from one to the other, dated August 19 1943, with Jean Boulad writing in French from Ismailia to Bexhill on sea in Sussex, and informing Mackenzie Low of the new increases in postal rates applicable from July 13 1943.

In the second of two sheets in which he details philatelic and postal information from Egypt, he reports:

SERVICE INTERNATIONAL (13 July 1943):

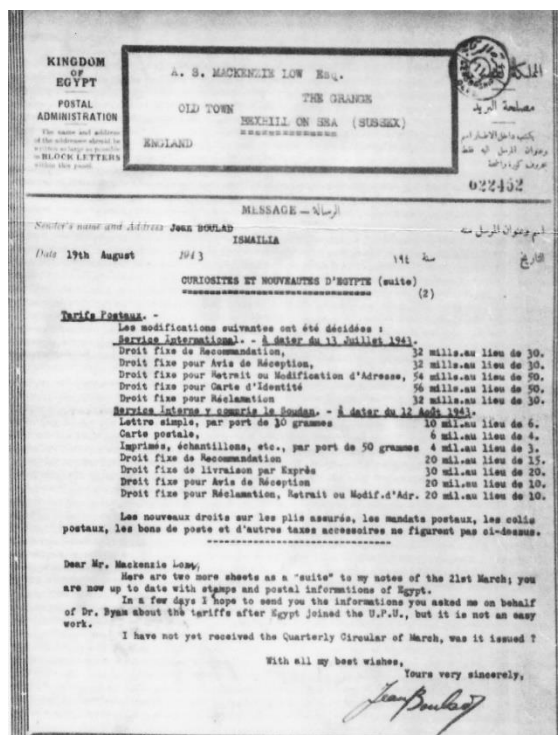
Registration / Recommendation - 30 millièmes raised to 32m.

Advice of Reception / Avis de Réception (AR) - 30 millièmes raised to 32m.

Change of Address / Retrait ou Modification d'Adresse - 50 millièmes raised to 54m.

Identity Card / Carte d'Identité - 50 millièmes raised to 56m.

Claim Form / Réclamation - 30 millièmes raised to 32m.



Sadly, this was just one of two Airgraphs sent by Jean Boulad. On page 545 of *Egypt: Stamps and Postal History*, Peter Smith does not record the increases in Overseas Registration rising to 32m (he states a date of 1950) or the Advice of Reception to 32m, stating “25m.?”. It is also helpful to note that sometime between August 15 1940 and July 13 1943 the AR fee had been raised from 25 to 30 millièmes. It should be pointed out that the “Change of Address” fee included forwarding of mail from the previous address.

SERVICE INTERNE INCL. SUDAN.

Letter under 30 grams - 6 millièmes raised to 10m.

Postcard / Carte Postale - 4 millièmes raised to 6m.

Samples, Printed Matter / Imprimés, échantillons under 50 grams - 3 millièmes raised to 4m.

Registration / Recommendation - 15 millièmes raised to 20m.

Express / Exprès - 20 millièmes raised to 30m.

Advice of Reception / Avis de Réception (AR) - 10 millièmes raised to 20m.

Change of Address / Retrait ou Modification d'Adresse - 10 millièmes raised to 20m.

Most of the internal rates for Egypt and Sudan are recorded in their entirety by Peter Smith on p.545 of *Egypt: Stamps and Postal History* and correctly dated there as August 12 1943. However, he is seemingly erroneous in the ‘Prints’ and ‘Samples’ columns, where he shows the increases as occurring in 1941, albeit with a question mark. I feel this Airgraph confirms that the increase was actually enforced from August 12 1943.

This is not a period I collect and thus others will have to continue this exploration – however, Jean Boulad was “on the spot” and very unlikely to have been incorrect, especially as he was writing a week after the internal rates had been increased. The Airgraph is a delightful insight into philately overpowering wartime conditions (it is censored at top right), and my thanks again go to Nigel Gooch FRPSL for having given it to me at Midpex recently. If only he had also found the previous Airgraph (March 21) sent by Jean Boulad to his ESC colleague!

Eagle eye 1: First Issue forgery

David Feldman, and the world of Egyptian philately, have good cause to be thankful to **Joe Chalhoub** (ESC 385) and our former member **Hany Haddad**, of New Jersey, who pointed out to the august auction house that an 1866 10pi block of four offered in their June auction was “too good to be true”.

Described as one of the most important items in Egyptian philately, the block (*see right*) was listed as “dark blue (SG.6 = Scott 7) unused block of four unmounted mint perf.12½ watermark reversed (Balian wmlb) with original gum , fresh & v.fine for the exceptional exhibition showpiece. One of the two recorded block of fours this block of four was not recorded before”. Price? 5,000 euro.

Joe Chalhoub, proud owner of the “other” block, contacted Feldmans immediately and the item was swiftly withdrawn. When Haddad asked for clarification of when the block had been discovered the auctioneers to their credit responded: “We took lot 60012 in good faith from the vendor and in the rush to produce the catalogues didn't look to closely at it. Unfortunately, we've now realised that it is a forgery and it has been withdrawn from the sale.” So more haste less speed.... Hany, meanwhile, hopes to see his old friends in Monaco, and wonders whether the consignor of this forgery might agree to sell it to the ESC?



Eagle eye 2: Official overprint without watermark

Socratis Sigalas (ESC 483) writes from Athens about a new discovery: I have recently obtained an extraordinary block of ten De La Rue Official OHHS 5 millièmes on unwatermarked paper. This variety is previously unrecorded so I would like to share the information with fellow collectors. The block has been given a certificate by our member **Greg Todd**, AEIP, FRPSL (ESC 585) in the following terms:

EGYPT, 1907 (February 1): Official OHHS 5m rose-carmine on chalk-surfaced **unwatermarked** paper, De La Rue typographed bilingual overprint in black, Nile Post O5 var, SG 076 var, an unused block of ten, 5 x 2, of good colour but one minor spot of aging on two perforations, with variety “No Watermark” in lieu of wide Crescent and Star watermark, large part or predominantly unmounted og. A previously unrecorded variety: there are one or two elements of watermark ‘bits’ in the paper (not thins) seen with the eye and in benzine. The normal, un-overprinted stamp is also unrecorded without watermark.



“I have examined this multiple and, in my opinion, it is genuine in all respects.”

Saint-Exupéry in Egypt

Pierre Louis Grech (ESC 266)



The French pilot and author Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (Saint-Ex), born 29 June 1900 at Lyon, was a legend of the 20th century. Having learnt how to fly in the military, he obtained his civilian license in 1926 and joined the Latécoère aircraft company's mail airline (renamed Aéropostale the next year). Assigned to the Toulouse-Casablanca air route, and later to Casablanca-Dakar, in 1927 he was appointed station manager at Cap Juby, in Morocco. For 18 months he improved relations with the local Moorish tribes and came to the assistance of pilots stranded in the desert. (This period was the source of his first book, *Cap Juby*). It is there that he was joined by Jean Mermoz and Henri Guillaumet, both renowned pioneer French aviators.

In 1929 they were sent to South America to contribute to the development of the Aéropostale and establish air mail routes. Named chief pilot of Aeroposta Argentina, Saint-Ex wrote *Courrier Sud*, followed a year later by another classic, *Vol de Nuit* (all these have been translated into English and numerous other languages). Sadly, on 7 December 1936, Mermoz and five crew members flying across the South Atlantic from Dakar (Senegal) to Natal (Brazil), on board the Laté 300 "Croix du Sud", were lost without trace, most probably due to mechanical failure. (Last message: "We are switching off the rear left engine...").

In 1932 the Aéropostale mail service, victim of politics and financial fraud, was wound up and merged with Air France. Saint-Ex in 1933 rejoined Latécoère, which still manufactured aircraft, as a test pilot. He was sent on long distance raids to South East Asia, and in 1935 on promotional tours around the Mediterranean (including stops at Cairo and Alexandria). Later that year he would come back to Egypt under different circumstances. Disaster would strike on 29 December 1935 during a Paris-Saïgon raid.



France commemorated its famous aviators: Yvert Air 21 (1948); Yt. Air 44 (1970); Yt. 337 (1937)

On 2 January 1936, there was a banquet at Shepherds Hotel for the closure of the International Congress of Surgery which had been held in Cairo. As the revellers left at midnight they saw a man collapsed on the steps of the nearby Hotel Continental, demanding a room. It was Saint-Ex! He had been missing for the previous five days and was frantically being searched for between the Nile and the Euphrates. He was considered lost in the Arabian desert, somewhere between Cairo and the Red Sea. In fact, he had taken off from Benghazi on Sunday 29 at 23.00 hours, and crashed four hours later into the top of a high plateau in the Libyan desert. Everything in the flight had been fine, but being in very thick cloud cover Saint-Ex decided to come down below the ceiling, trying to spot the lights of the Nile Delta towns to aid his navigation. In total darkness he had struck the top of that high plateau, wrecking his Caudron Simoun, only the tail of the plane remaining intact. They were lucky to survive the crash. But for three days Saint-Exupéry and his companion Prévot, wandered in the desert, burnt by the sun, tortured by thirst and on the edge of madness, they collapsed.

But how did he turn up at the Hotel Continental, in decent clothes and even freshly shaved? A French engineer, Emile Raccaud, director of a factory at Wadi Natroun, west of the Delta, entered the scene at the Hotel Continental at that point and explained. He it was who had driven Saint-Ex and his mechanic back to Cairo. By chance they had been found by some of the engineer's Bedouin workers, about 30 kilometres from the factory. While two of them carefully resuscitated the two survivors, a third rode his camel at a gallop to the home of the Raccauds, with a note from Saint-Ex. The engineer being away in Alexandria till the evening, Mrs Raccaud sent out their car to pick up the two Frenchmen. They were able to wash and restore themselves, coming back to life before Mr Raccaud, having returned, drove them to Cairo.

From the Continental, Saint-Ex had a long phone conversation with his wife Consuelo in Paris. The next day his survival and recovery were announced in newspapers worldwide: Saint-Ex, lost and found! The following day, he left Cairo in Mr Raccaud's car to go and see the wreckage of his aeroplane (and delete the "final messages" written on the plane's crumpled fuselage, when both thought they would perish!). Saint-Ex stayed with that family one week while the plane's engine was removed and then shipped back with him to France from Alexandria. That was the end of his Egyptian adventure. He was never to visit Egypt again!

In 1939 he was drafted into the French Air Force, with the rank of captain in a reconnaissance unit. Various flights over Germany before his squadron of Farman F-222 withdrew to Algeria as the Nazi troops advanced. After the fall of France, he was demobbed on 31 July 1940. Following a spell in Algeria he decided to exile himself to the USA to drum up support for America's entrance into the war. On his way there, in December 1940, at Lisbon, he learnt of the death of his old companion Guillaumet, shot down over the Mediterranean.



New York, January 1941, Saint-Ex received the National Book Award for the American version of his *Terre des Hommes*. While in that country he continued writing, producing *Pilote de Guerre* in 1942, and in 1943 the classic *Le Petit Prince*. This wonderful slim volume, which he also illustrated, became one of the world's best-known and best loved children's books. After the Allied liberation of North Africa (Operation Torch), Saint-Ex was allowed to join a fighting unit in spite of his age, sponsored by US General Doolittle. Based in Morocco, then Tunisia, then Alghero, Sardinia. Photographic missions over Southern France, and northern Italy, still in German hands. Relocated to Corsica. On 31 July 1944 at 08-45, flying a twin-prop Lockheed Lightning P-38, Saint-Ex took off from Borgo-Poretta, near Bastia, for an observation mission over Savoie and the Rhône Valley. At 10 o'clock German radars spotted his plane over Grenoble, flying towards Toulon. After which Saint-Ex then vanished, and for 54 years his fate remained a mystery as he entered into legend!

On 7 September 1998 a fisherman named Bianco dredged up in his nets some metal scraps off Marseille. Among them, covered with incrustations, was a broken silver bracelet bearing the names of Saint-Ex and his wife. This led to various searches in the area and in 2000 a diver called Luc Vanrell located the probable remains of the aircraft. There followed many months of legal wrangling with the children of Saint-Ex's sister and other authorities, and extensive work in searching documentation to ascertain that it was indeed the right aircraft. In 2004, 60 years after he first went missing, it was finally confirmed that it was Saint-Ex's plane. One result of this research is that it led to identification of the man who killed Saint-Exupéry. Horst Ripper, formerly corporal in the Luftwaffe, shunned publicity, but confirmed that on 31 July 1944, about 11-00, his Messerschmitt Bf 109 shot down a Lightning P-38 off Marseille. It was the only P-38 in that zone that day!



For the 50th anniversary of Saint-Ex's disappearance in 1994 a 5F Aerogram and a 50F banknote were produced

Hall Caine in Egypt

Richard Wheatley (ESC 168)

One of the most popular of Edwardian romantic novelists was Thomas Hall Caine. Little is heard of his works these days, yet the Isle of Man post office last year issued a set of six stamps featuring six of his books that had been made into films.

Hall, as he preferred to be called, also involved himself in politics: he travelled a lot and lectured widely. He made what have been called “research trips” to Egypt in 1907, 08 and 09, staying at the Semiramis Hotel in Cairo and the Savoy Hotel in Aswan.

THE FILM ADAPTATIONS OF
HALL CAINE
ISSUE DATE 14TH FEBRUARY 2018

SPRING STAMPEX
Come and visit us at Stand 134!

SET OF SIX STAMPS MINT WE31 - £5.52

Isle of Man Post Office is pleased to present six show-stopping stamps inspired by the popular Edwardian tales of one of the Isle of Man's most illustrious and colourful characters, Hall Caine.

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The background to these “research trips” was the Denshawai Incident, in which local pigeon farmers and British soldiers came into conflict. A soldier and a farmer were killed, resulting in four farmers being hanged, others jailed with hard labour and lashings. This heavy-handed reaction developed into a turning point in evoking Egyptian nationalism. Hall was a sympathiser and wrote about the cause in his 1909 publication *The White Prophet*. George Bernard Shaw saw things the other way. The incident led directly to the resignation of the Earl of Cromer, the British Consul-General, but the British were to stay in Egypt for another 49 years!

I am able to illustrate two very neat covers connected to the writer and his Egyptian travels. Below (*left*), is a Thomas Cook & Son printed envelope intended to await the arrival of Hall Caine at the Semiramis Hotel, Cairo, franked at the local letter rate of 3 mills with a TC & S perfin. It was posted on 5 February 1908, but he failed to arrive and after three weeks it was forwarded on February 26 to the Savoy, Aswan. Now it was no longer a local letter, so a 2 mills Due was applied, making up the 5 mills inland letter rate and tied by the Savoy Hotel cds on February 27.

On 15 February 1908 the second letter (*right*) was posted at Ramsey on the Isle of Man, where incidentally the first airport was named after Hall Caine. It arrived at the Semiramis on February 24, and was re-addressed, in the same blue-pencil handwriting as the last, to the Savoy in Aswan, arriving next day.



Simon Arzt air crash cover

Alaa M. Massoud (ESC 561)



The face and reverse of the cover involved in the 1937 Phaleron Bay tragedy en route from Alexandria to Dorchester

I am delighted to have been able to acquire recently a great new member to join my interesting exhibition collection on the postal history of the Simon Arzt store in Port Said (1890-1954). It is a cover issued at the Simon Arzt post office, with the adhesives cancelled by the most famous of the Suez Canal area handstamps on September 28 1937. Perhaps surprisingly, since it is registered, its cancellation is the normal PORT-SAID / SIMON ARZT (example below) rather than the Caisse version, which normally dealt with all registered material.



The stamps, on both sides of the envelope, form a philatelic combination of the 1 millièrme to 10 millièmes of the 1933 Air Mail set, totalling 55 millièmes to cover postage and registered airmail to Dorchester in Dorset, UK. The cover, with a brown wax seal behind, was also provided with a black on red mute Registration label, handstamped number 5127, which covered a blue Air Mail sticker/.

The envelope was intended to be flown on the recently opened the service of Short "Empire" class flying boats via Athens, Brindisi, Rome, Marseilles (overnight stop), and on to Hythe, near Southampton, a service provided since January 1937 by Imperial Airways for the India, Iraq and Egypt mails into Europe.

The flying boat *Courtier* (registration G-ADVC), passed by Alexandria on September 28 and picked up the mails. Unfortunately its journey was not to take it all the way to the UK. The inexperienced pilot, Captain E Poole, crashed in Phaleron Bay, the harbour of ancient Athens. The aircraft broke up on hitting the water and swiftly sank.



The flying boat Courtier, which broke up and sank on crash-landing in Phaleron Bay

ACCIDENT DETAILS	
Date:	October 01, 1937
Time:	?
Location:	Phaleron Bay, Greece
Operator:	Imperial Airways
Flight #:	?
Route:	Alexandria, Egypt - Athens, Greece
AC Type:	Short Empire flying boat
Registration:	G-ADVC
cn / In:	S-820
Aboard:	14 (passengers:9 crew:5)
Fatalities:	2 (passengers:2 crew:0)
Ground:	0
Summary:	Crashed as it landed in Phaleron Bay. Two passengers drowned. Poor visibility was blamed for the accident.

The original Accident Report (*see left*) said that two of the 14 people on board (nine passengers and five crew) were drowned, but the final official report names three fatalities, including a Greek and an American and Wing Commander Wilfred Reginald Dyke Acland, DFC AFC. One crew member was uninjured. Captain Poole later told a Greek inquiry that he had been deceived by a light fog over the

glassy surface of the sea, shimmering in the sunlight, and misjudged the height at which he was flying. The accident led to the British Air Ministry demanding the compulsory provision of lap-straps in all passenger-carrying aircraft.

Much of the mail was recovered from the crashed seaplane, and by some miracle all the adhesives from this cover, together with the registration label, remained attached rather than being washed off. The cover was given a prominent violet boxed DAMAGED BY / SEA WATER / IN AIRPLANE / ACCIDENT handstamp (*see right*) on the reverse. The letter was re-issued (by KLM?, top right on front of cover) on October 2 for its UK destination via flight FI 9215 from Phaleron and finally delivered only seven days after the tragedy of the crash in Athens.



Among the markings are Port-Said / Simon Arzt 27 SE 37, Alexandria Registered (poor strike on the reverse, 28 SE 37), received on 07 OCT 37 by REGISTERED / DORSET violet oval cachet, then finally a REGISTERED / DORCHESTER black oval on 08 OC 1937. Truly a cover with a remarkable history.

- Engineer Alaa M Massoud is President of the Alexandria Philatelic Society

Hai-El-Arab, Port-Saïd - Revisited

QC 269 (2019 June Quarter) contained an article by Pierre Louis Grech about Hai-El-Arab, the native quarter of Port-Saïd. Due to a glitch in transcription, the illustrations at the foot of page 228 were severely reduced in size. As they are significant, they are reproduced here, in their clear original dimensions.

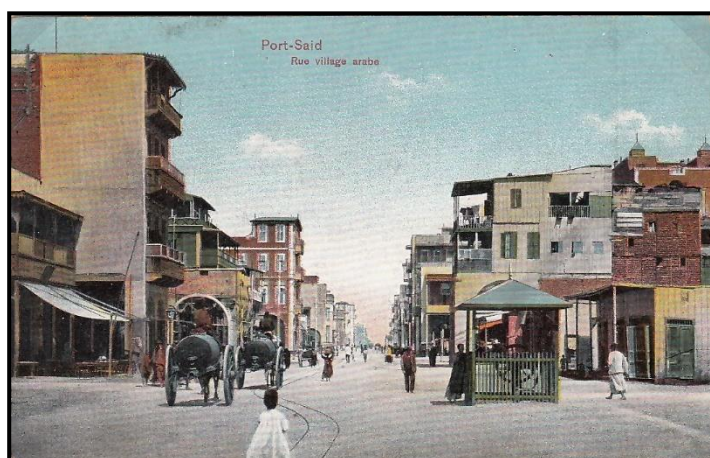
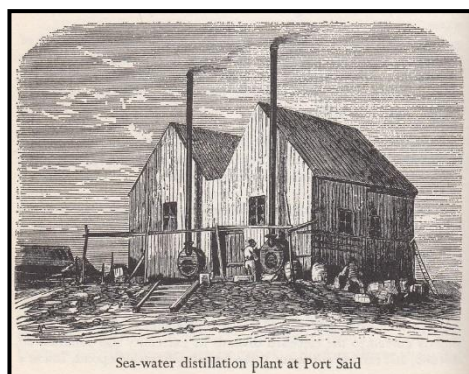


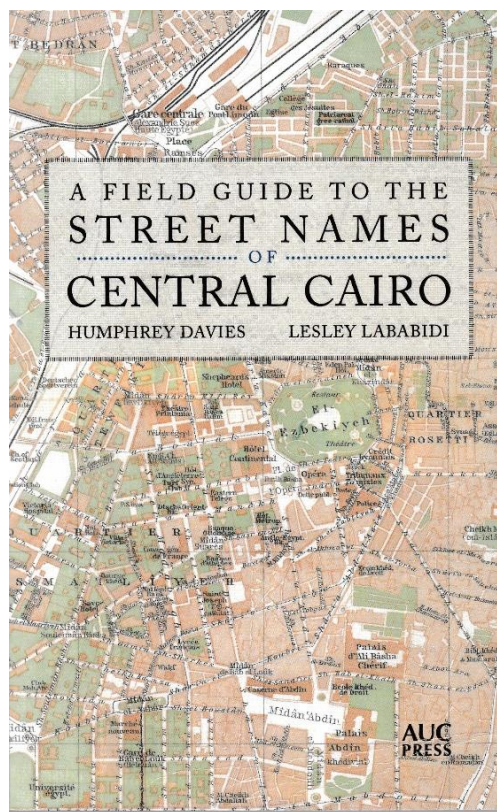
Fig. 5 - Left: The seawater distillation units. Coal fired, it took 1kg of coal to make 5 litres of water.
Right: A convoy of water cisterns, pulled by mules, supplying water to the native quarter, c.1900.

Book Review: Street Names of Central Cairo

Have you ever wondered why you might have two covers addressed to the same person or company, one of them to 141 Sharia Fuad el-Awwal, the second just a few years later, to 141 Sharia July 26th? Cairo's apparently constantly changing names of streets, squares and bridges have long intrigued me and I have often considered trying to write a guide to the changes down the years. Now I don't have to – at least, not for the central part of Cairo (downtown) and Gezira. It has just been published by the American University Press .. and I'm glad that I don't need to do the work any more.

The writers, Humphrey Davies, a leading Arabic translator, and Lesley Lababidi, author of several excellent guides on how to live in Cairo, have spent literally years walking around and being driven around the centre, listening to the locals' stories of how and when the names were changed as the city and the country reimagined its past.

They call their slim volume a “field guide” rather than a guide book, because it lists 607 current and 377 former names, in alphabetical order by the name known today, then developing backwards in time with comprehensive details of the changes and a staggering index to help the reader. The aim of the work is prodigious, its realisation an astonishing wealth of information – and a “must” for anyone interested in the postal history, or indeed history in general, of Cairo.



For instance, to develop the first example, today's 26th July Street has been so-called only since 1954, celebrating Farouk's overthrow by the Free Officers; from 1926 to 1954 it was named for King Fuad; from at least 1874 to 1926 it was Sharia Bulaq, leading to the former port of Cairo, and from 1913 to 1926 the portion on Gezira was known as Sharia Sherkuh (now Sharia Zamalek), named for a vizier of Egypt who died in 1169. Who would have known it?

As another example, Sharia Gumhouriya (Republic Street) was another 1954 change, combining four streets into one direct route from Abdin Palace to Midan Ramses. Before that, since 1933, it was Sharia Ibrahim, and before that a succession of names – Sharia Abdin, Sharia Qawala, Midan el Ubera, Sharia Kamel, Sharia Nubar, Sharia Qantaret el Dikka, Share Bab el-Hadid. Each one's history is painstakingly detailed. My one caveat with the text would be the strikingly unfamiliar transliteration of the Arabic, which the authors admit would make Arabists wince. I'm no Arabist, but yes...

The book has no images beyond maps of the area covered. It is an absolutely fascinating listing instead. For illustrations to go with the detail, read Lababidi's *Cairo Street Stories* or better still Samir Rifaat's charming and evocative *Cairo, the glory years*, which gathers together his entertaining short pieces from *The Cairo Times* and elsewhere.

Mike Murphy, Editor

• *A Field Guide to the Street Names of Central Cairo*, by Humphrey Davies and Lesley Lababidi, soft back, 13x20.5cm, 246pp, American University in Cairo Press, 2018.

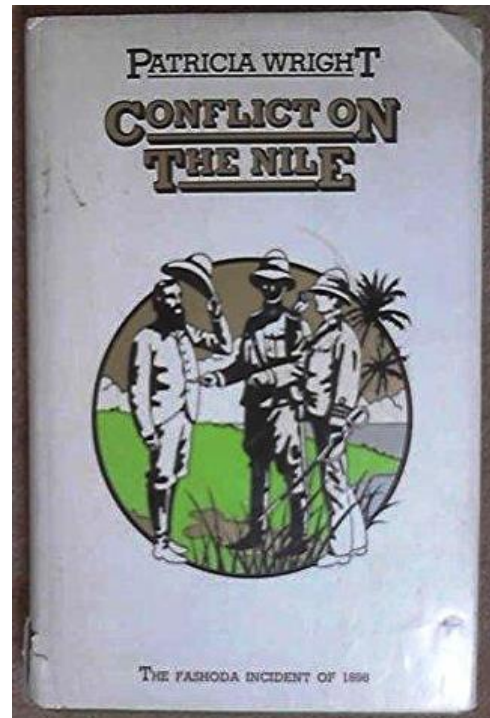
A plea from the Editor: You have heard it before, but oft repetition makes it no less true: The Circle is enormously indebted to those who write articles for it. But the cupboard is very close indeed to bare. Please make no mistake – anything that you would care to pen, so long as it is associated with Egyptian philately, will be seriously considered for a QC spot. We need articles. Of any length. Urgently.

Book Review - Conflict on the Nile: The Fashoda Incident of 1898

This book, first published by Heinemann in 1972, I came across purely by chance and, being only vaguely aware of the incident itself, I borrowed it from the local university library.

The author, completely unknown to me, is an extremely good historian and the book itself is readable, at least for those who may be interested. Much of the action takes place in what is now South Sudan while the politics take place mostly in the European capitals of Great Britain, France, Germany and Russia, at a time when colonialism was rife particularly in Africa with Great Britain and France already sharing large swathes of the continent, with Germany and Italy having been unified within only the previous forty years, and with Belgium also anxious to join in the “fun” of creating colonies.

Having trained as a chartered surveyor and chartered land agent, Patricia Wright spent most of her career in the administration of landed estates. She studied at home and obtained a first class honours external degree in history from the University of London in 1965. With the oh so complicated political shenanigans, with alliances switching from side to side in the quest for more colonies, this work explains in detail much of the reasoning behind the actions of the leaders of the countries concerned.



A broad outline of Egypt's history in the early and middle nineteenth century provides a useful background to collecting postal history of the period - it is the only history book I know that mentions Thomas Waghorn. Meanwhile slave-trading is rife in Sudan with the Mahdi in control of much of the territory and the loss of “Chinese” Gordon; this eventually leads to the Battle of Omdurman near Khartoum and Kitchener becomes Sirdar (ie, governor) of Sudan. Egypt had always had ambitions in Sudan and Anglo-Egyptian joint-rule in a condominium was destined to make life even more contentious when Sudan wanted self-rule in the 1950s.

Describing how the French in particular tried to link their territories in West Africa with the upper reaches of the Nile, the author gives great detail of the long treks undertaken by these intrepid French explorers, with Senegalese tribesmen as escort. They journeyed with a mandate from their government to “plant the tricolour on the banks of the Nile” and finally succeeded in creating Fort St Louis at Fashoda. En route they had the heartbreak of having to dismantle the small steamship *Faidherbe* to move it from one sandy riverbed to another, then reconstruct it, and finally have to abandon it in the upper reaches of the River Sobat.

All is discussed in much detail, including the diplomatically handled meeting between their leader, Marchand, and Kitchener, who arrived with instructions to remove the French. Kitchener planted the Egyptian flag beside the tricolour, and allowed the French an escort to Cairo.

British prime ministers from Gladstone to Salisbury, French leaders from Gambetta to Clemenceau, with the major scandal of the Dreyfus affair going on in France at the same time, interference with the Caisse de la Dette from Germany and Russia after Egypt's 1882 bankruptcy through to the appointment of Sir Evelyn Baring (later Lord Cromer)... all are examined from an expert historical point of view.

We do not have a copy of this book in the Library but it is one that we should have to fully understand some of these events. Should anyone find a copy it would make a popular read for us all. **John Davis, Librarian**

**EGYPT STUDY CIRCLE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT (GENERAL ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018**

	2017		2018
INCOME			
Subscriptions	3,982.62		2,752.30
Auction account	2,358.09		6,564.00
Donations	40.00		92.60
Advertisements	<u>200.00</u>		<u>247.60</u>
	6,580.71		9,656.60
EXPENDITURE			
Meeting room hire	765.60		996.00
Cost of Quarterly Circular	2,894.90		2,698.95
Website costs	140.25		143.86
Officers' stationery, phone etc	223.14		81.74
Insurance	151.84		152.84
ABPS subscription	<u>65.00</u>		<u>0.00</u>
	<u>4,240.73</u>		<u>4,073.39</u>
Surplus for the year	2,339.98		5,583.11
Surplus as at 1 January 2018	19,429.76		21,769.74
Surplus at 31 December 2018	<u>21,769.74</u>		<u>27,352.85</u>

BALANCE SHEET (GENERAL ACCOUNT) AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2018

	2017		2018
ASSETS			
Stamp collection at			
catalogue valuation	5,251.00		5,251.00
Circle Library & records	-		-
2019 room hire prepaid	900.00		0.00
Cash at bank on			
current account	<u>16,583.58</u>		<u>22,866.86</u>
	22,734.58		28,117.86
LIABILITIES			
Members' subs 2018	964.84		765.01
	<u>964.84</u>		<u>765.01</u>
	<u>£21,769.74</u>		<u>£27,352.85</u>
Representing			
Accumulated surplus	<u>£21,769.74</u>		<u>£27,352.85</u>

I have prepared the Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet from the records and explanations provided to me and confirm that they are in accordance therewith.

(signed) S W Bunce, Chartered Accountant, 22 February 2019

Study Circle membership - Still a bargain at only £20 (or even less)!

Never mind Christmas or New Year... this is MUCH more important! Yes, it's a recurring theme, and in all honesty we would rather not have to use the pages of the QC to remind members to pay the £20 annual subscription. But a small number of Committee members (Treasurer Sami Sadek, North America Agent Trenton Ruebush and Secretary Mike Murphy) have each year to spend a great deal of time and effort in chasing members who have overlooked paying by the due date. Please remember ... the due date for 2020 is

January 1 2020

Please make a note, and ensure that payment is made. Members are given a little leeway, but if your subscription is not received by the Annual General Meeting (February 8) your membership will be terminated: no more QCs, no website access. If you live in the UK or have an English bank account **PLEASE create a standing order** so that the bank does the work for you. That saves us much time and effort. And avoids memberships being lost by accident. And remember: if you download the magazine from the net you don't even have to pay £20.

For those who choose to subscribe in US dollars or euros, here is a quick reminder of the amounts, after taking into account the madness that is Brexit:

If you pay in ...	GBP	EUR	USD
For a printed QC please pay	20	22	25
To read it online please pay	15	16	18

If paying by PayPal (to egyptstudycircle@hotmail.com) please add £1 / €1 / \$2 to cover their charges. You can also pay to Trent Ruebush, Dr Ibrahim Shoukry in Egypt or Tony Cakebread in Australasia – or by cheque drawn on a British bank to Sami Sadek (**NOTE**: no longer Brian Sedgley). All addresses are on the first page of every QC.

Please do your best to keep up to date. It is a sad and unnecessary task having to write people off; much better that we all pay up on time.

MacArthur Award

It is a great disappointment that the number of members voting for the annual MacArthur Award is dropping year on year. The award is intended to encourage members to write for the QC, to share their discoveries and knowledge, and to help us to produce a bright and useful magazine – and to add prestige to the writers in acknowledgment of their efforts.

This year we will help members make the voting easier, by nominating what we consider the three best articles from 2019. You might choose one of these, or any other article you consider useful and entertaining. Perhaps you might add a vote to your PayPal subscription note. Or drop an email to egyptstudycircle@hotmail.com. Whichever method you use, please vote to encourage excellence in the QC.