

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT

1932-1936 The Postal Concession

SYNOPSIS

Purpose of Exhibit: This five-frame display presents an in-depth coverage of the eleven stamps used during this period with proofs, essays, and multiples. Major and minor varieties are described and the use and misuse of the stamps are shown through commercial, semi-philatelic, and philatelic covers.

Background: In 1931 the postal rate for sealed letters from Egypt to Great Britain was increased from ten to fifteen millimes. This increase met with strong objection by the British military affected. A special arrangement was made in 1932 between the Ministry of Communications and the British Army and Air Force whereby the postal department, upon being guaranteed £10,000 the first year and £6,000 in subsequent years, granted military personnel the privilege of sending letters at the old rate of one piastre per 20 grams. In addition, unsealed Christmas and New Year cards could be sent for three millimes. This concession applied only to regular letters from Egypt to the United Kingdom and the Irish Free State. Airmail; registered mail and parcels had to be posted through Egyptian postal facilities and postage paid with Egyptian stamps.

Special stamps (formerly called seals) were sold to the military personnel and certain conditions applied to their use. They had to be affixed to the back of envelopes and the letters posted in a British military post office, regimental or unit post box. The stamps were cancelled with a rhomboid or "retta" obliterator. Each cover had in the upper right corner a red double-circle EGYPT/POSTAGE PREPAID handstamp called a crown cancel or a numeral frank. A number in the center identified the military post office of origin. Covers were date-stamped on the front with the military post office c.d.s. After processing the mail was handed over to the Egyptian post office for forwarding in the normal manner. In the case of some of the smaller units the datestamp applied was the local Egyptian civil postmark. Covers bearing these stamps but posted in Egyptian civilian mailboxes were treated as unpaid and postage due was to be collected from the recipient. The stamps were sold in the Navy, Army, Air Force Institute (NAAFI) canteens only to military personnel and not to civilians. These were replaced in March 1936 by the ARMY POST issue of the Egyptian Postal Administration.

Egyptian postal authorities required the crown cancel handstamp. The designator numbers assigned by the Egyptian Ministry of Communications to the various British military post offices were 1 to 25 and allocated among the various military and air force bases. After the last valid date of use (15 March 1936) of the special concession stamps, the numeral franks and the retta obliterations were withdrawn and returned to the Egyptian Ministry of Communications in Cairo. The exception was Crown Cancel #7 that was reported lost on 6 March 1933.

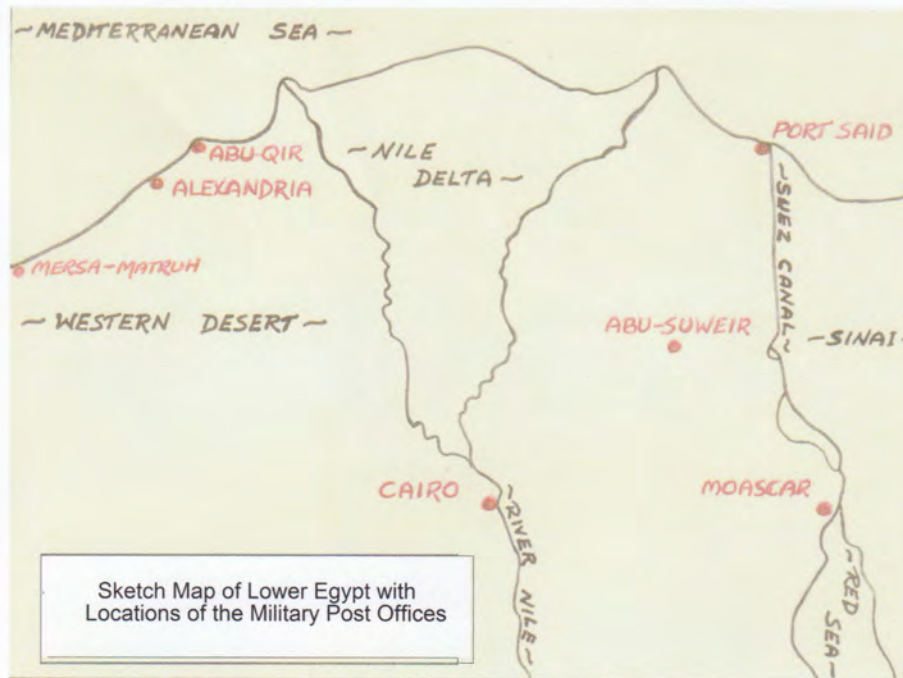
It should be noted that when these adhesives were first issued they were called seals due to the wording on the first two issues and the Christmas issues. Successive one-piastre issues had the wording *Letter Stamp*. For years philatelists used *seals, stamps and labels* interchangeably in exhibits and articles. Stanley Gibbons did not catalogue them until 1957. Nowadays philatelists believe the proper terminology is "stamps" when referring to these issues. Smith and Chaloub use the word stamps as they did proper postal service (although with restrictions) by the prepayment of postage for letters sent through the postal systems of three nations (Egypt, Great Britain and the Irish Free State).

Not all of the Crown Cancels were in use at the same time as some were held in reserve in case of loss or wear and tear. Also, not all of the military post offices were issued with named military post office (MPO) datestamps. The MPOs at Cairo and Moascar received datestamps from 1 November 1932, the first day of the postal concession period. The Alexandria MPO had a barrel-type datestamp since at least 1897 and also received the standard type MPO c.d.s. in November 1935. MPOs at Abu Qir, Abu Sueir and Port Said received datestamps on 1 March 1936 when the Army Post stamps were issued; the civil post offices processed the military mail. Mail from Ras-el-Tin and Mustapha Barracks (#15, 16, 17 and 18) also went through the Egyptian post office. Due to lack of space not all of the numeral franks are displayed.

What is Presented: This exhibit arranged in chronological order shows the special stamps (or seals). Among the items of interest is an imperforate proof sheet of 80 of the first issue of postal seals. Other imperforate proofs of the first issue are displayed. Of special note is a postal seal used on cover from very scarce Military Post Office #7 at Moascar. Many of the

stamps are shown in panes (Including a complete booklet of five panes), the way they were issued. There is an essay of the accepted and rejected stamp design for the 1932 XMAS SEAL (one of four known), an imperforate trial color proof block of four of the 1933 XMAS SEAL issue, a Harrison specimen for the 5th issue (one of four known), an uncut sheets of 39 (one stamp missing) of the 5th and 7th issues, and a recently discovered misplaced perforation variety on the 1935 XMAS SEAL. Several first day of issue covers are displayed including the scarce first and second day covers of the 1935 Jubilee stamp.

Knowledge of Subject: The exhibitor has been accumulating and researching this material for more than 30 years before forming an exhibit which was shown nationally receiving one gold with a special award and three vermeil medals plus two special awards. At the request of the author the exhibitor reviewed, edited and commented on the forthcoming book on this postal concession period (see Davis below).



Selected References:

Chaloub, Joseph, *The Nile Post Handbook and Catalogue of Egyptian Stamps*, Joseph Chaloub, Westmount, Quebec, Canada, 2003.

Davis, John. *The Postal Concession for British and Commonwealth Forces in Egypt 1932 – 1952*, Draft of book expected to be published in 2011-2012 by The Stuart Rossiter Trust Fund, London.

Egypt Study Circle web site, <http://www.egyptstudycircle.org.uk/> Various articles and exhibit displays.

Feltus, Peter, *British Forces in Egypt. The 1932 1 Piastre Red & Blue Postal Seal Imperforates*, The Quarterly Circular of the Egypt Study Circle, December 2000.

Hobbs, John E. O., *British Forces in Egypt Postal Service 1932-1940*, Second Edition, John E. O. Hobbs, Worthing, England, 1984.

Minett, Charles and Firebrace, John, *The Postal Concession Period for British and British Empire Forces in Egypt 1932 – 1941*, The Quarterly Circular of the Egypt Study Circle, Vol. V., Nos 5 & 6, 1960, pages 61 - 71.

Minett, Charles and Firebrace, John, *Circular Datestamps of the Military Post Offices During the Postal Concession Period (pre-censorship), 1932-1939.*, The Quarterly Circular of the Egypt Study Circle, Vol. V., Nos 7 & 8, 1960, pages 81 – 90.

Proud, Edward B., ed. *History of the British Army Postal Service, Vol. 1, 1882-1902*. Proud-Bailey Co. Ltd., Heathfield, East Sussex, United Kingdom, 1981 (?).

Smith, Peter A. S., *Egypt, Stamps and Postal History, A Philatelic Treatise*, James Bendom, Limassol, Cyprus, 1999.

Turton, G. D., *British Forces Concession Seals*, The Quarterly Circular of the Egypt Study Circle, June, 1970.

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT

1932-1936 The Postal Concession

PURPOSE OF EXHIBIT: This five-frame display presents an in-depth coverage of the eleven special stamps used during this postal concession period with proofs, essays, and multiples. Major and minor varieties are described and the use and misuse of the stamps are shown through commercial, semi-philatelic, and philatelic covers.

BACKGROUND: In 1931 the postal rate for sealed letters from Egypt to Great Britain was increased from ten to fifteen milliemmes. This increase met with strong objection by the British military affected. A special arrangement was made in 1932 with the Ministry of Communications and the British Army and Air Force whereby the postal department, upon being guaranteed a certain sum, granted military personnel the privilege of sending letters at the old rate of one piastre per 20 grams. In addition, unsealed Christmas and New Year cards could be sent for three milliemmes. This concession applied only to regular letters from Egypt to the United Kingdom and the Irish Free State. Airmail, registered mail and parcels had to posted through Egyptian postal facilities and postage paid with Egyptian stamps.

Special stamps (formerly called seals) were sold to the military personnel for the prepayment of postage and certain conditions applied to their use. They had to be affixed to the back of envelopes and the letters posted in a British military post office, regimental or unit post box. The stamps were cancelled with a rhomboid or "retta" obliterator. Each cover had in the upper right corner a red double-circle EGYPT/POSTAGE PREPAID handstamp called a crown cancel or a numeral frank. A number in the center identified the military post office of origin. Covers were date-stamped on the front with the military post office c.d.s. After processing the mail was handed over to the Egyptian post office for forwarding in the normal manner. In the case of some of the smaller units the datestamp applied was the local Egyptian civil postmark. Covers bearing these stamps but posted in Egyptian civilian mailboxes were treated as unpaid and postage due was to be collected from the recipient. The stamps were sold in the Navy, Army, Air Force Institute (NAAFI) canteens only to military personnel and not to civilians. These were replaced in March 1936 by the ARMY POST issue of the Egyptian Postal Administration.

EXHIBIT PLAN: This exhibit is arranged in chronological order of stamp issuance.

Frame 1:	First issue	Postal Seal
Frame 2:	Second issue	Christmas Seal
	Third Issue	Letter Seal
	Fourth Issue	Christmas Seal
Frame 3	Fifth Issue	Letter Stamp (carmine)
	Sixth Issue	Christmas Seal
	Seventh Issue	Letter Stamp (green)
Frame 4	Eighth Issue	Letter Stamp (carmine) 1 st and 2 nd printings
Frame 5	Ninth Issue	Jubilee Commemorative
	Tenth Issue	Christmas Seal 1 st and 2 nd printings
	Eleventh Issue	Provisional Christmas Overprint
	Official Notice	The end of the letter stamp

ITEMS OF INTEREST: Most items of interest are highlighted with a 6.0 point maroon frame. **Frame 1:** Imperforate proofs including a sheet of 80 and a postal seal used on cover from very scarce Military Post Office #7 at Moascar. **Frame 2:** An essay of the accepted and rejected stamp design for the 1932 XMAS SEAL (one of four known) and an imperforate trial color proof block of four of the 1933 XMAS SEAL issue. **Frame 3:** A Harrison specimen for the 5th issue (one of four known) and two uncut sheets of 39 stamps (one stamp is missing from each sheet) of the 5th and 7th issues. **Frame 4:** Cover posted to an unauthorized destination and an unusual use on a post card and a complete booklet five panes of the 8th issue, 2nd printing, unauthorized bisect on cover. **Frame 5:** Jubilee issue first and second day covers and a recently discovered misplaced perforation variety on the 1935 XMAS SEAL. Official notice of the end of the letter stamp and the introduction of the Army Post stamp.

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 – 36

First Issue — POSTAL SEAL

Date of Issue: November 1, 1932
Designer: Lt. Col. C. Fraser and Ivor Roberts
Printer: Typographed by Hanbury, Tomsett & Co., London
Value: 1 Piastre
Perforation: 11
Notes: 500,000 printed in sheets of 80. Each sheet was broken into four panes of twenty stamps and sold in booklets consisting of five panes or 100 stamps. Because of numerous flaws or "flyspecks" the stamps can be plated within a pane and larger multiples and full panes can be allocated on the full sheet of 80, i.e. pane 1, 2, 3 or 4.



Imperforate Frame Only
Positions 13 14, 17 and 18



Marginal Imperforated pair, positions 17 and 18



Position 20, Pane 4



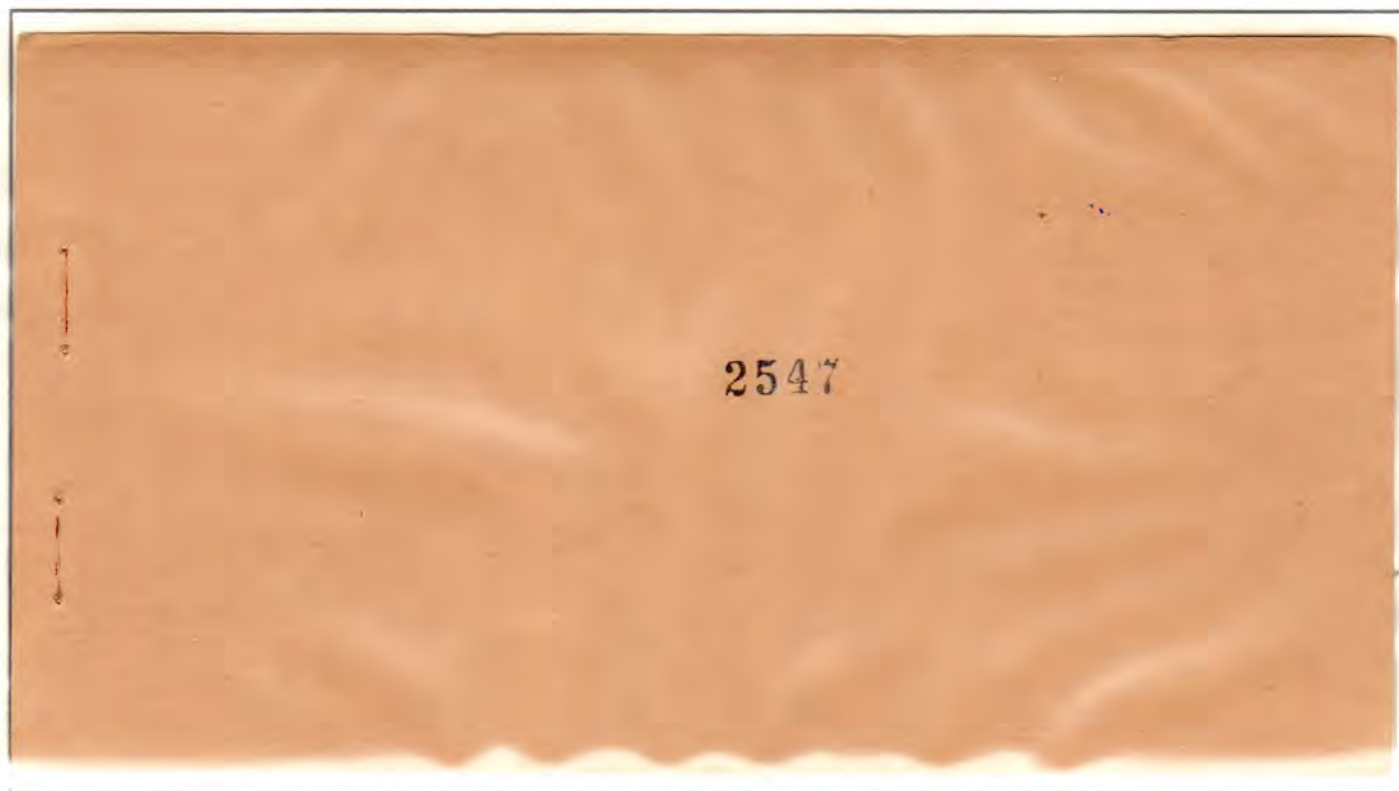
BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

First Issue — POSTAL SEAL



Pane of 20 stamps — Pane 3

Below:: Front and back covers and interleaving from a booklet of five panes



BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

First Issue — POSTAL SEAL

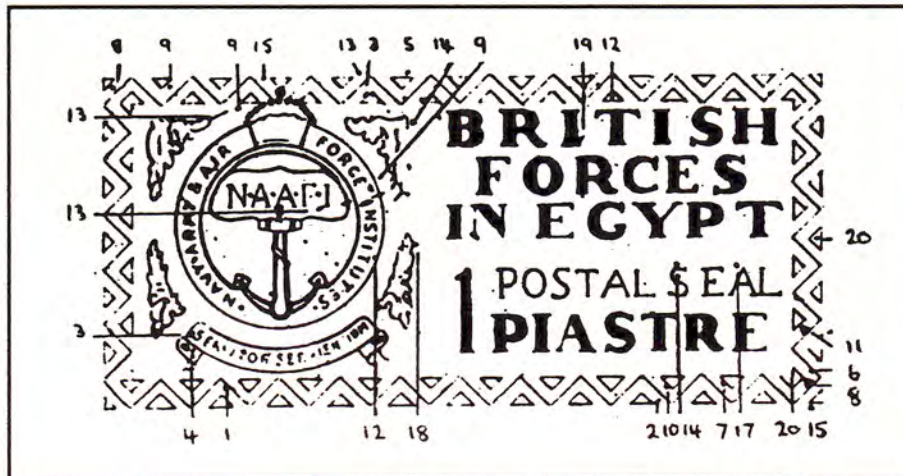


Plate flaws found on a pane of the Postal Seal stamps from Hobbs.

Hooked 'I' Variety

A projection from the lower right of the serif of the first "I" in "BRITISH" is the only major constant variety found on the postal seals. It is in position 19 of all four panes.



Positions 15, 16, 19, 20 — Pane 3

First Issue — POSTAL SEAL



Postally used copies showing black and red retta cancellations.



Multiple franking tied on piece of official O.H.M.S. cover.
Positions 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20.

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

First Issue — POSTAL SEAL

M.P.O. CAIRO 1 NO 32

CROWN CANCEL 19

Postal seal used on the first day of issue. It is also the first day for the Crown Cancel and the circular date stamp. The stamp is properly affixed to the back of the envelope and cancelled with a black retta.

The Military Post Office in Cairo served the Royal Air Force units at Heliopolis and Helouan and the army stationed in and around Cairo.



BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

First Issue — POSTAL SEAL

MAMURA 17 NO 32

CROWN CANCEL 13

Crown cancel #13 was assigned to the Royal Air Force base at Aboukir. The seal was cancelled and the crown cancel applied to the cover before being turned over to the Mamura post office where it was postmarked and then forwarded to the General Post Office in Alexandria for dispatch. On and after December 1, 1932, army mail could also be sent to the Aboukir civil post office for processing prior to Alexandria.

There was no concession rate for postcards so the postage for them from Egypt to Great Britain was one piaster. The postcard below shows an unusual use of the postal seal on a postcard



. The stamp is position 4 on the pane showing two dots under the S of SERVITOR.

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

First Issue — POSTAL SEAL

M.P.O. CAIRO 8 MA 33

CROWN CANCEL 4

Envelope front showing the incorrect use of the postal seal located on the front of the cover and not on the reverse.



BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

First Issue — POSTAL SEAL

ISMAILIA CAMP 15 JL 33

CROWN CANCEL 3

Here is an improperly franked letter to Cairo. Postal seals were to be used only on correspondence between the British troops in Egypt and the British Isles including the Irish Free State. Egyptian postage was required for letters within Egypt and to other destinations and for air mail, registration, and other services. The obliterated postage due **T** marking indicates the Egyptian post office at Ismailia Camp first considered the letter to be unfranked but the decision was later reversed and the **T** crossed out. Apparently the British postal clerk applied the retta and POSTAGE PAID numeral frank without noticing that the cover was addressed to Cairo. Ismailia Camp served the Royal Air Force



BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

First Issue — POSTAL SEAL

M.P.O. CAIRO 10 AP 33

CROWN CANCEL 4

Stamp is position 1 on the pane showing a dot on the line of the third right triangle from the bottom left.



BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

First Issue — POSTAL SEAL

ABU QIR 27 MA 33

CROWN CANCEL 13

Starting December 1, 1932, letters from the Royal Air Force station at Abu Qir were also sent through the Abu Qir civil post office. This cover bears the **ALEXANDRIA-ABU QIR & V.V. 27 MA 33** travelling post office datestamp (the Western Desert Line) and **ALEXANDRIA B 27 MA 33** c.d.s.



Position 3 S in **SERVITOR** joined to frame.

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 – 36

First Issue — POSTAL SEAL

M.P.O. MOASCAR 27 DE 32

CROWN CANCEL 7

Crown Cancel # 7 was used at Moascar from November 1, 1932 until it was reported lost sometime after 16 January 1933, making it the scarcest of the numeral franks. Covers are recorded with dates of November 8,, 1932 through January 16, 1933. Note that the date stamp has a wider than normal spacing between the "P" and O." This variation is only known used on covers with Crown Cancel 7 making the c.d.s. one of the scarcest of the M.P.O. series.

The cover is backstamped **LONDON 3 JA 33** and the envelope flap bears the crest of The West Yorkshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's Own).



Back of cover



Position 5 – Dot to the right of
The second outer triangle right
Of the crown.

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

First Issue — POSTAL SEAL

M.P.O. CAIRO 27 JU 33

CROWN CANCEL 4



Position 11 — Dot to right of second outer triangle above lower right corner.

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

First Issue — POSTAL SEAL

M.P.O. MOASCAR 775 SE 33

CROWN CANCEL 8

Crown Cancel # 8 was used at Moascar from November 1, 1932 until it was transferred to Cairo in June 1935. The stamp is from position 14 with the constant flaw dot over letter "S" of SEAL.



SEAL

Second Issue — CHRISTMAS SEAL

Essay of the Accepted and Rejected Design



Essay of the accepted design arranged tête-bêche with rejected design was prepared in imperforated blocks of four. Only four such miniature sheets exist.¹ The upper left and lower right stamps are the unadopted design.

The unaccepted design shows a clear sky, a complete inner frame, circular shading on the turban, black spots by camel's legs, and heavy and large lettering, among other things.

The regular Egyptian postage rate for unsealed Christmas and New Year envelopes was 4 milliemes but the concession rate was three milliemes. The XMAS SEAL was to be affixed to the back of the envelope but could not be used to seal the flap. If the flap was sealed then the one piastre rate applied.

¹ Joseph H. Chalhoub, *THE NILE POST, Handbook and Catalogue of Egyptian Stamps*, Joseph Chalhoub, Westmount, Quebec, 2003.

Second Issue — CHRISTMAS SEAL

Date of Issue: November 26, 1932 (withdrawn from sale, December 31, 1932)
 Designer: Sergeant W. F. Lait, Royal Army Service Corps
 Printer: Lithographed by Walker & Co., The Amalgamated Press, Cairo
 Value: 3 Milliemmes
 Perforation: 11 ½
 Notes: Estimated 42,000 printed in sheets of 20; issued and/or sold, 41,857.
 Printed on grey and azure-grey paper, they were bound in booklets consisting of five panes or 100 stamps. Hobbs points out the numerous flaws on the stamps enabling their plating.



BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 360

Second Issue — CHRISTMAS SEAL



Positions 2 and 7.



Positions 1, 2, 6, and 7.

Positions 5 & 10,
Azure Paper

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Second Issue — CHRISTMAS SEAL



Postally used copy struck with the retta cancel in black. Position 12, flaw in TI of *BRITISH*.

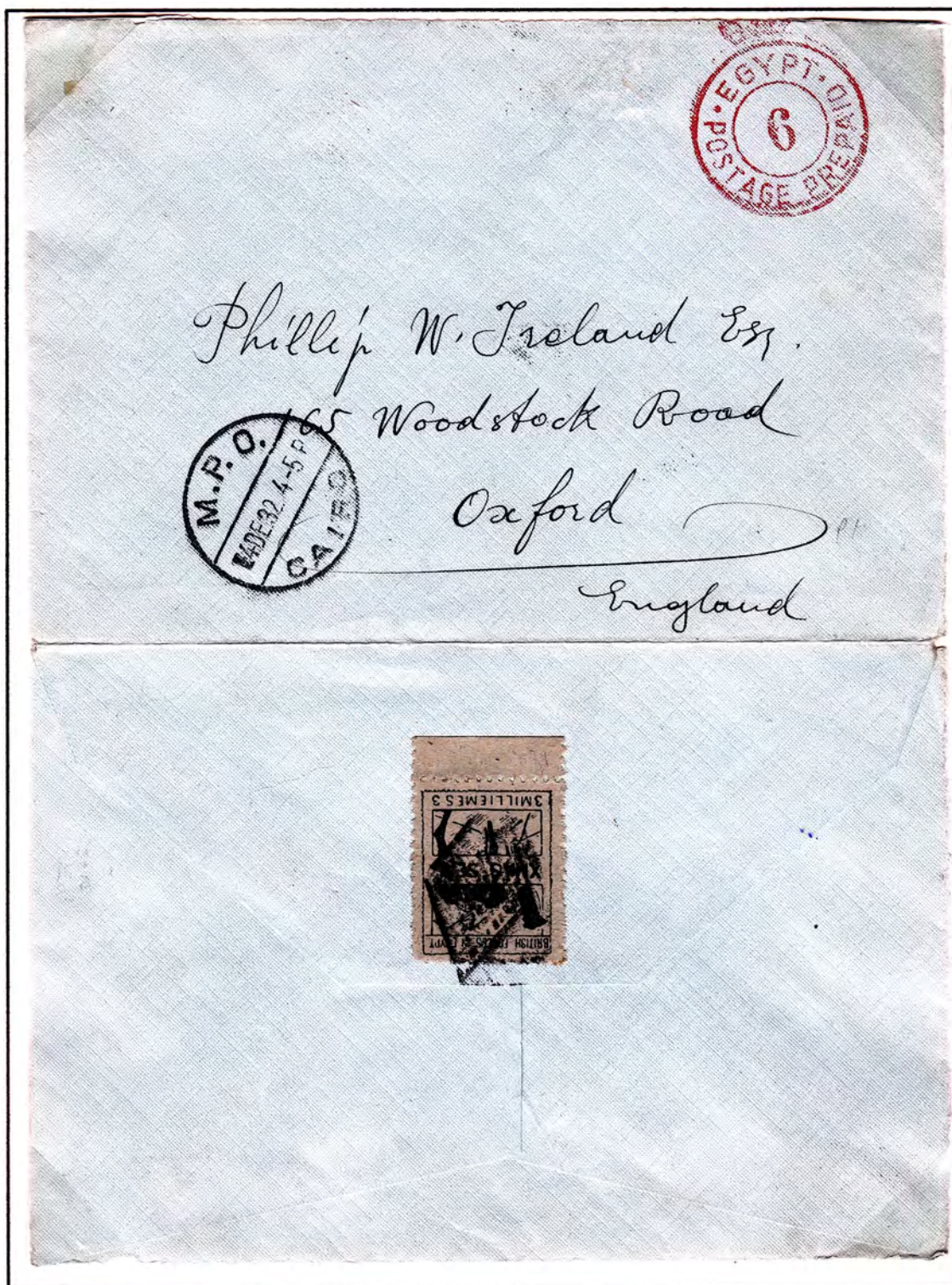


A piece from a cover with the Christmas stamp from the bottom row of the pane tied by a black retta cancel and struck with the M.P.O. CAIRO c.d.s. of 9 DE 32..

Second Issue — CHRISTMAS SEAL

M.P.O. CAIRO 4 DE 32

CROWN CANCEL 6



BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Second Issue — CHRISTMAS SEAL

M.P.O. CAIRO 8 DE 32

CROWN CANCEL 6

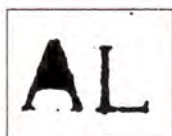
Stamp is printed on azure paper



Third Issue —LETTER SEAL

Date of Issue: August 25, 1933¹
 Designer: Lt. Col. C. Fraser and Ivor Roberts
 Printer: Typographed by Hanbury, Tomsett & Co., London
 Value: 1 Piastre
 Perforation: 11
 Notes: 516,000 printed in sheets of 20 (4 across and 5 down) with margins on all four sides.² They were bound in booklets consisting of five panes or 100 stamps. The constant and semi-constant flaws are the same as on the frame of the prior Postal Seal

Block of ten (positions 3-4, 7-8, 11-12, 15-16 and 19-10) with three prominent listed varieties and one unlisted variety. It is either pane 1 or 2.



Stamp number 4 of each pane has a constant variety showing the upper portion of the "A" in "SEAL" filled in.



Stamp number 11 has a constant variety showing a blob of ink on the top left of the crossbar of the second "I" of BRITISH.



Stamp number 15 of each pane has a constant variety showing a diagonal line across the upper portion of the letter "E" of "SEAL".



The broken lower right border on position 20 is a semi-constant variety found on panes 1, 2, and 4.

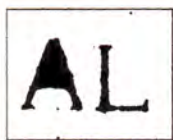


¹ . G. D. Thurton in *The Quarterly Circular*, June 1970, p. 32, gives the date of issue of August 25, 1933, whereas the major catalogues all list the issue date as August 1933, with no specific day given.

² See Peter A. S. Smith, *Egypt: Stamps & Postal History*, James Bendon, Limassol, chapter XXXVI, p. 711. G. D. Thurton says they were printed in sheets of 80 but that the plates differed from those used for the Postal Seal by the insertion of a gutter between panes 1 and 2, 2 and 3, and 3 and 4

Third Issue —LETTER SEAL

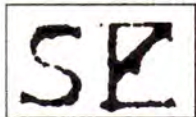
Used pane of 20 missing the left margin and with the three listed varieties. This is pane #1.



Stamp number 4 has a constant variety showing the upper portion of the "A" in "SEAL" filled in.



Stamp number 11 has a constant variety showing a blob of ink on the top left crossbar of the second "I" of "BRITISH."



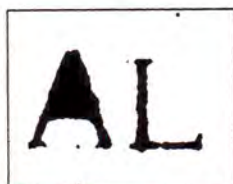
Stamp number 15 of each pane has a constant variety showing a diagonal line across the upper portion of the letter "E" of "SEAL".

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Third Issue —LETTER SEAL

Filled "A" Variety

Stamp number 4 of each pane has a constant variety showing the upper portion of the "A" in "SEAL" filled in.



Positions 3, 4, 7 and 8.

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Third Issue —LETTER SEAL

Diagonal Slash Across E Variety

Stamp number 15 of each pane has a constant variety showing a diagonal line across the upper portion of the letter "E" of "SEAL".



Positions 15, 16, 19 and 20.
Pane 1, 2, or 3.

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

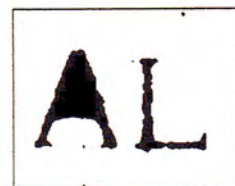
Third Issue —LETTER SEAL

Filled "A" Variety
Position 4

ABU QIR 25 AU 33

CROWN CANCEL 13

First day of use for the Letter Seal from the Royal Air Force base at Aboukir. After processing at the base the cover was sent to the local civil post office and then on to Alexandria for transmittal to England.



BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 – 36

Third Issue —LETTER SEAL

M.P.O. CAIRO ?? AP 34

CROWN CALCEL 6

Broken "T" Variety

Broken left bar in the "T" of PIASTRE, position 3, not a constant variety.

PIASTRE



Numeral frank 6 on large piece of cover from the military post office at Cairo, ? AP 34.

Third Issue — Letter Seal

Diagonal Slash Across "E" Variety

Top left stamp (position 15) has the "E" variety. The cover was posted at the Royal Air Force base at Aboukir and the seals cancelled with the retta and the envelope franked before handing over to the civil post office. It was sent to Alexandria for dispatch and bears the c.d.s. of **ABU QIR 30 MR 35** and the transit backstamp of **ALEXANDRIA (G) 30 MR 35**.

SE



BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 – 36

Fourth Issue — CHRISTMAS SEAL

Date of Issue: November 13, 1933 (withdrawn from sale, December 31, 1933)
 Designer: Sergeant W. F. Lait, Royal Army Service Corps
 Printer: Lithographed by Walker & Co., The Amalgamated Press, Cairo
 Value: 3 Milliemes
 Perforation: 11 ½
 Notes: 54,000 printed in sheets of 20; issued and/or sold, 53,736. They were issued in booklets consisting of five panes or 100 stamps.



Imperforate Trial Color Proof



Toned Paper – Position 6 – blob on left 3



Top left - Positions 1, 2, 6, and 7.
 Top right - Position 10, Lower right - Position 15 (?)

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Fourth Issue — CHRISTMAS SEAL

M.P.O. MOASCAR 14 DE 33

CROWN CANCEL 3



This retta cancellation is mauve.



BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 35

Fourth Issue — CHRISTMAS SEAL

M.P.O. CAIRO 24 DE 33

CROWN CANCEL 6



BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 – 36

Fifth Issue — LETTER STAMP

Date of Issue: June 1, 1934
Designer: Miss Waugh of Cairo
Printer: Photogravure by Harrison & Sons Ltd., London
Value: 1 Piastre
Perforation: 14 ½ x 14
Notes: 250,000 printed in sheets of 40 consisting of two frames or panes of 20 each. They were made into booklets consisting of five panes or 100 stamps. Perforations were made by a comb machine. Also, especially noticeable in multiples is the "blind" perforation at the top corner of the stamps. Plating characteristics have been described in Hobbs though some flaws are more noticeable than others.



This HARRISON'S SPECIMEN was discovered in 1999. According to The Nile Post Catalogue only four such examples exist.¹



Frame B, position 17.



Frame A, positions 7 and 8.



Frame B, positions 5, 6, 9 and 10.

¹ Chaloub, Joseph H., *The Nile Post Handbook and Catalogue of Egyptian Stamps*, Joseph Chaloub, Westmount, Quebec, Canada, 2003, pages 132 and 636.

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT 1932 - 36

Fifth Issue — LETTER STAMP

Hobbs has designated the top five rows as Pane B and the bottom five rows as Pane A. One would think that the order should be the reverse. Uncut sheets are extremely scarce.

Arrow points to unjoined "P".



15x11

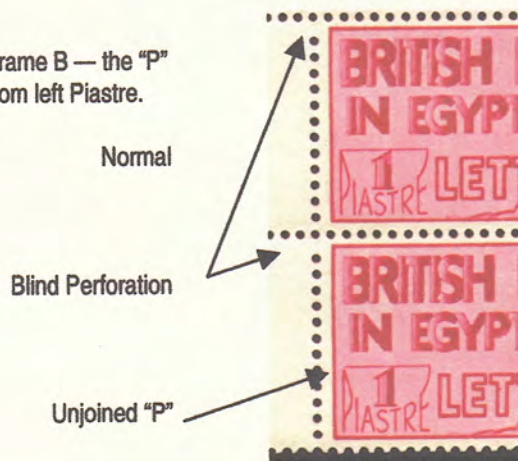
BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Fifth Issue — LETTER STAMP



Booklet Pane of 20 Frame B

There is a constant flaw in position 17 of frame B — the "P" does not join the top frame line of the bottom left Piastre.



BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Fifth Issue — LETTER STAMP



Booklet Pane of 19 Frame A

Stamp 17 – P in PIASTRE joins frame.
Blind perforation on top left vertical side of stamp.



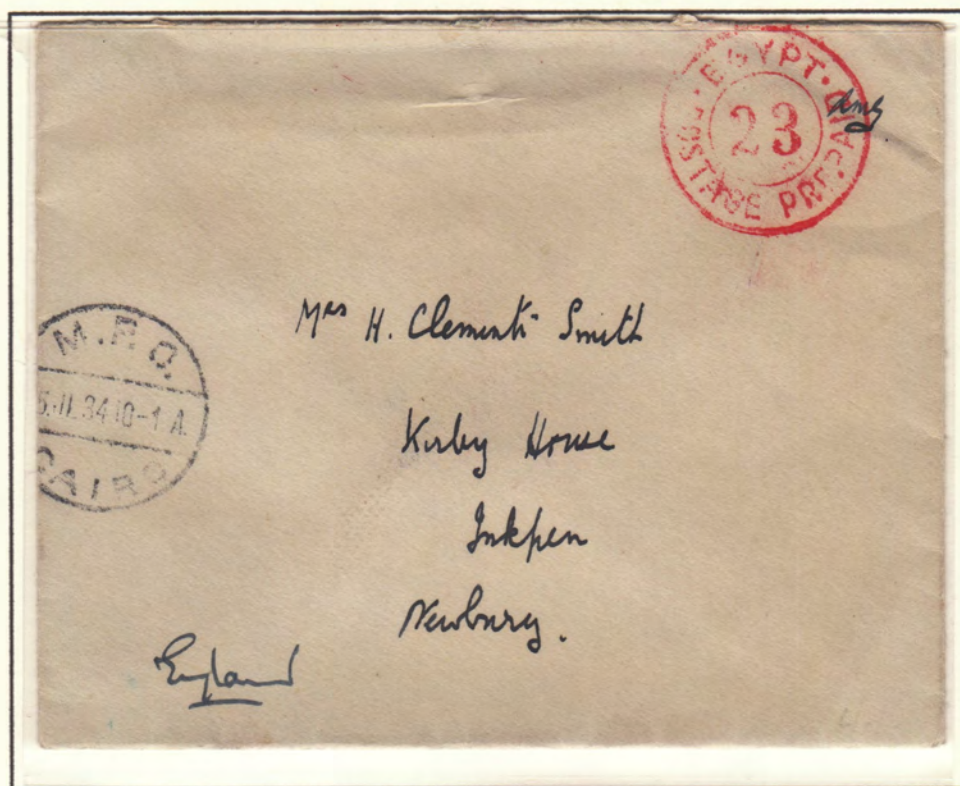
BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Fifth Issue — LETTER STAMP

M.P.O. CAIRO 25 JL 34

CROWN CANCEL 23

Crown Cancel 23 was used at Cairo until June 1935, when it was reallocated to the Moascar military post office.



Gloucestershire Regiment crest on envelope flap with letter stamp

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Fifth Issue — LETTER STAMP

ISMAILIA CAMP

11 NO 34

This cover was improperly posted in a civilian letterbox. The stamp was not cancelled but voided with a pencil line, the boxed T marking applied, and 4d postage due collected in England. It is backstamped with the B PORT SAID TRAFFIC 11 NO 34 transit mark.



BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Sixth Issue — CHRISTMAS SEAL

Date of Issue: November 17, 1934 (withdrawn from sale, December 31, 1934)
 Designer: Sergeant W. F. Lait, Royal Army Service Corps
 Printer: Lithographed by Walker & Co., The Amalgamated Press, Cairo
 Value: 3 Milliemmes
 Perforation: 11½
 Notes: 63,000 printed in sheets of 20; issued and/or sold, 62,865. They were bound in booklets consisting of five panes or 100 stamps.



Position 4



Position 11



Position 12



Stamps 7, 8, and 9 have prominent flaws (uncolored circle with a colored center) on the camel's neck. This variety has only been found on this issue of the Christmas Seals.

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 – 36

Sixth Issue — CHRISTMAS SEAL

Left: Positions 11 and 16
11 – Large dot in the left side
frame line of lower panel



Postally used struck with the black retta cancel. Used pairs are scarce,
and probably paid the postage on greeting cards weighing more than 50 grams.

Position 14 – shading lines under
Pyramids are faint



Position 19 – lump on top of camel's
Head and break in frame line of
Lower panel

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Sixth Issue — CHRISTMAS SEAL

MUSTAPHA BARRACKS 11 DE 34

CROWN CANCEL 17

Letters were franked and the seals cancelled at Mustapha Barracks before being handed over to the Alexandria post office where the mail was postmarked and processed.



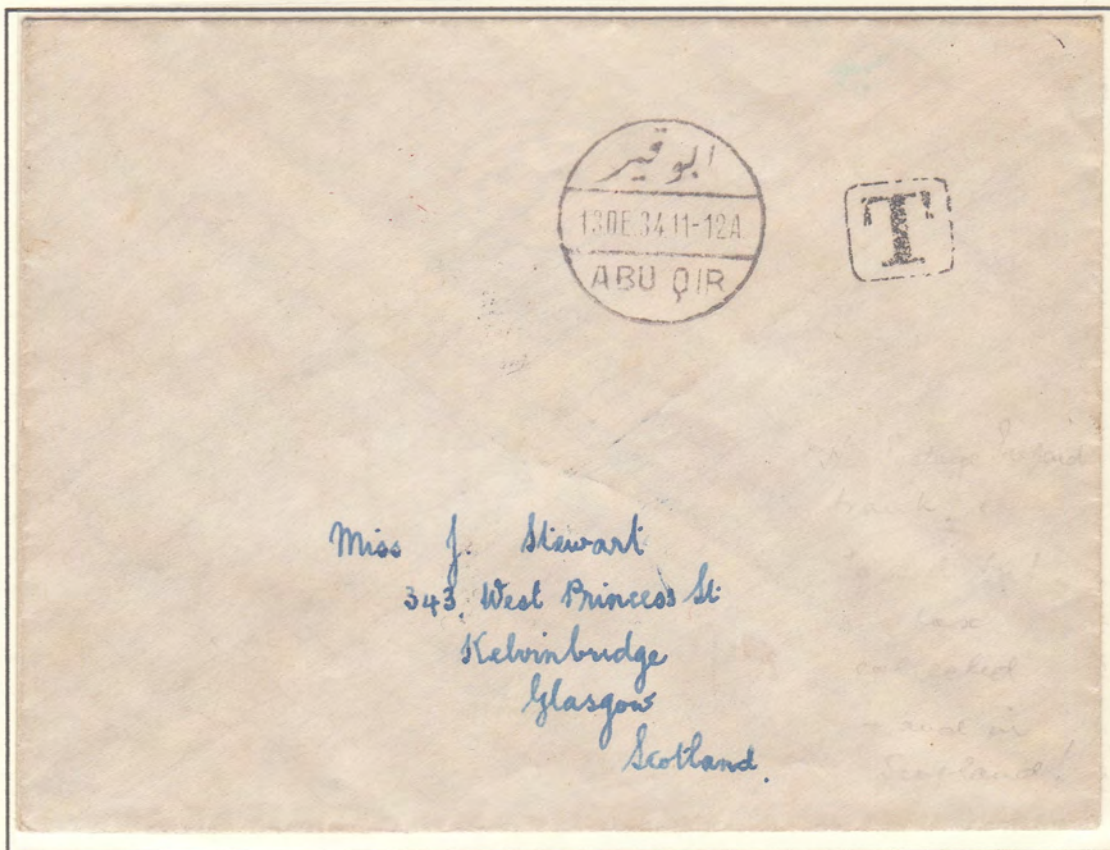
Position 2 — break on left side of lower frame and dot to right of bottom line above Arab's head.

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Sixth Issue — CHRISTMAS SEAL

ABU QIR 13 DE 34

No CROWN CANCEL



This cover was improperly posted in a civilian mailbox and thus did not receive the Crown Cancel (#13 or 14) to signify that appropriate postage had been paid. The boxed T marking was applied but upon arrival in Scotland the cover was accepted as valid and no charge collected. It is backstamped with the traveling post office datestamp **13 DE 34 ALEXANDRIA-ABU QIR & V.V.**



Reverse of cover (reduced)

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 – 36

Seventh Issue — LETTER STAMP

Date of Issue: December 5, 1934
 Designer: Miss Waugh of Cairo
 Printer: Photogravure by Harrison & Sons Ltd., London
 Value: 1 Piastre
 Perforation: 14 ½ x 14
 Notes: 250,000 printed in sheets of 40, two panes of 20 each. Pane B is comprised of the top five rows and pane A the bottom five rows. They were sold in booklets consisting of five panes or 100 stamps. The plates used were the same as for the fifth issue of June 1. Also, especially noticeable in multiples is the "blind" perforation at the top corner of the stamps.

Frame A



Stamp 15 – Dot left of first "E" in LETTER.

Stamp 16 – Dot near curved portion of frame, bottom PIASTRE..

Stamp 19 – Dot in bottom "P" of EGYPT.

Stamp 20 – Dot below left corner of "B" in BRITISH.

Frame B



Stamp 1 – Dot over "S" in top right PIASTRE.

Stamp 2 – Dot below right bottom corner of "H" in BRITISH.

Stamp 5 – Dots top right of "R" and "E" in top PIASTRE.

Stamp 6 – Dot left of "F" in FORCES.



Stamp 5 – Dots top right of "R" and "E" in top PIASTRE

Stamp 6 – Dot left of "F" in FORCES

Stamp 9 – Dot below line enclosing top PIASTRE

Stamp 10 – Dot in "P" of top PIASTRE



Stamp 15 – Dot left of "P" in bottom PIASTRE.

Stamp 16 – Dot below "P" of top PIASTRE.

Stamp 19 – Dot in bottom "P" of EGYPT.

Stamp 20 – Dot below left corner of "B" in BRITISH

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT 1932 - 36

Seventh Issue — LETTER STAMP

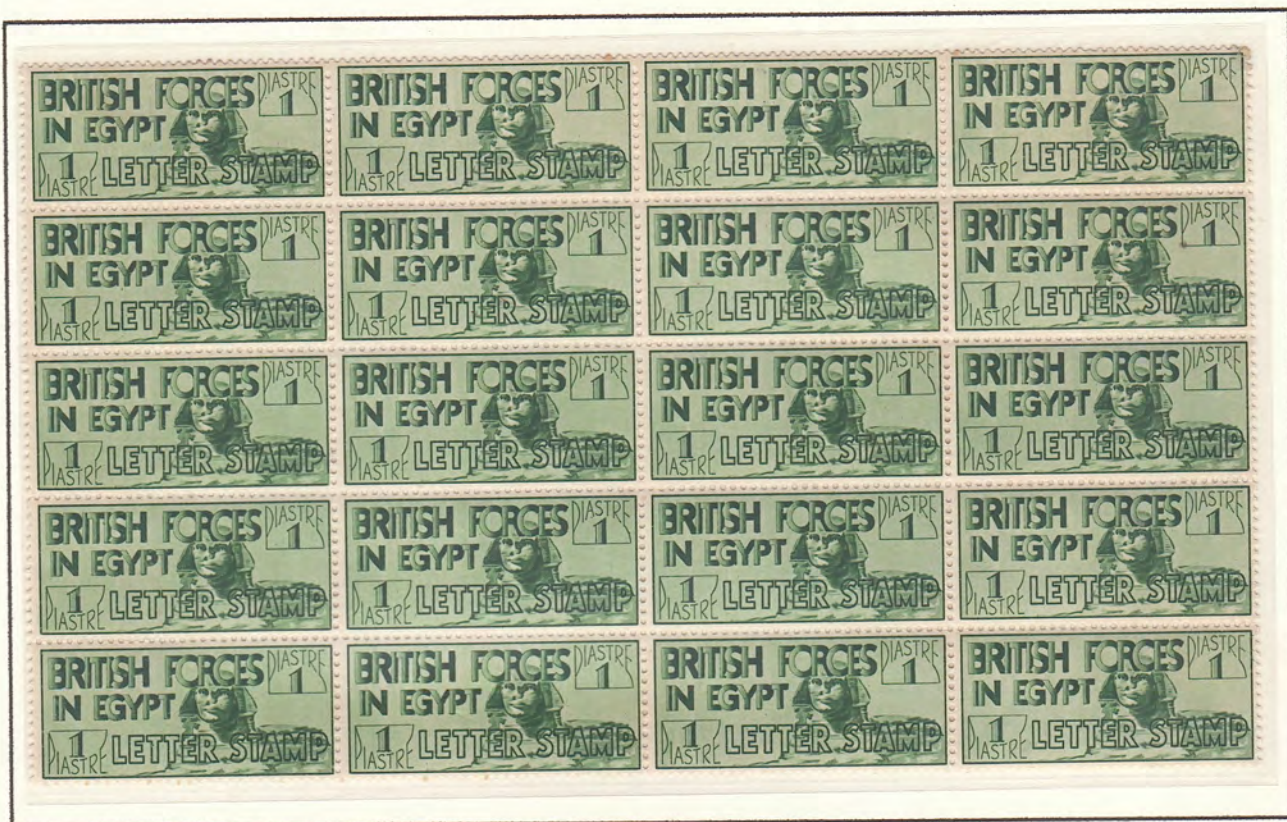
Hobbs has designated the top five rows as Pane B and the bottom five rows as Pane A. One would think that the order should be the reverse. Uncut sheets are extremely scarce.

Arrow points to unjoined "P".



14 1/2 x 14

Seventh Issue — LETTER STAMP



Booklet Pane of 20 — Frame B

Some of the flaws enabling the plating of the stamps are.

Stamp 1 — Dot over "S" in top right PIASTRE.

Stamp 4 — Dot under middle arm of "E" in top right PIASTRE.

Stamp 17 — Top frame line of the bottom left 1 of PIASTRE does not join the "P." Dot in first "T" of LETTER.

Stamp 20 — Dot in lower portion of leg of "R" in BRITISH..

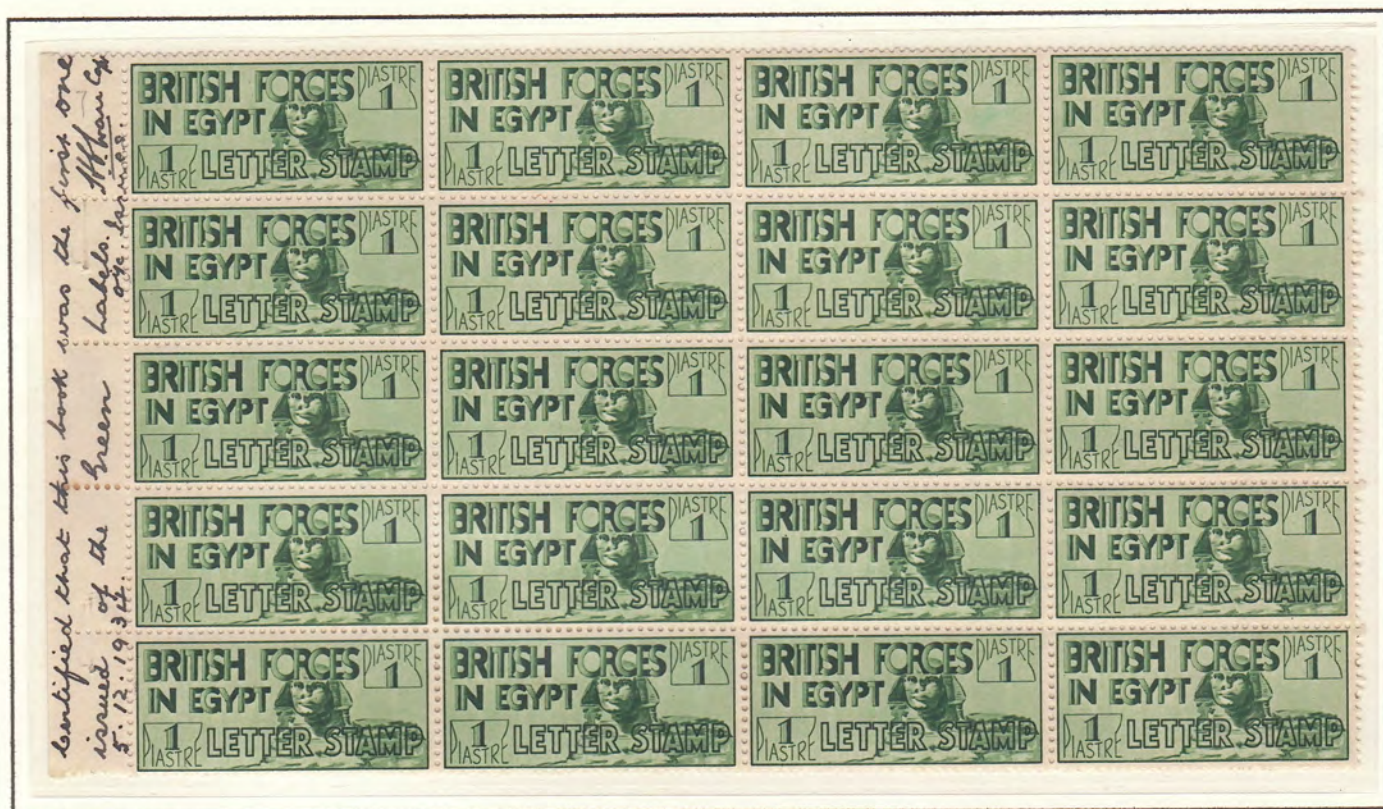
Blind Perforation

Stamp 17 — Unjoined "P"

Blind Perforation



Seventh Issue — LETTER STAMP



Ex: Hobbs

Booklet Pane of 20 — Frame A

The inscription on the left margin of the pane states:

*"Certified that this book was the first one issued of the Green labels. H. F. Ware Capt
5.12.1934 oic Issues"*

Each frame has different minor characteristics enabling the plating of the stamps.

Stamp 1 — Dot left of "F" of FORCES

Stamp 4 — Dot below "R" and left of "P" in PIASTRE

Stamp 17 — P in PIASTRE joined to frame. Dot below bottom right corner of "1" in top PIASTRE.

Stamp 20 — Dot below left corner of "B" in British.

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 3

Seventh Issue — LETTER STAMP

Postally Used Copies Showing a Variety of Cancellations



Properly struck with black retta cancel



Frame B

Stamp 5 – Dots top right of "R" and "E" in top PIASTRE.
Stamp 9 – Dot below line enclosing top PIASTRE.

Stamp 6 – Dot left of "F" in FORCES.
Stamp 10 – Dot in "P" of top PIASTRE.



Cancelled with the red retta



Cancelled by a circular date stamp



Struck with black retta and the red Crown Cancel from cover front (#22 is M.P.O. Cairo).

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Seventh Issue — LETTER STAMP

M.P.O. CAIRO 5 DE 34

CROWN CANCEL 19

First Day of Issue Cover.



BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Seventh Issue — LETTER STAMP

Stamp Used Contrary to Regulations

M. P. O. CAIRO 13 MR 35

CROWN CANCEL 22

This stamp on the front of the cover is contrary to regulations as it should be on the back.



Seventh Issue — LETTER STAMP

ABU QIR 25 AP 35

CROWN CANCEL 13

The curved ABU QIR civil datestamp is not listed by Hobbs as being used with the numeral frank. This cover is backstamped with two different ALEXANDRIA datestamps including the scarce ALEXANDRIA-ABU QIR & V.V. 25 AP 35 traveling post office circular date stamp.



Reduced view of the reverse of the cover

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 – 36

Eighth Issue — LETTER STAMP First Printing

Date of Issue: April 24, 1935
Designer: Miss Waugh of Cairo
Printer: Photogravure by Harrison & Sons Ltd., London
Value: 1 Piastre
Perforation: 14 by the first comb. A blind perforation is found at the lower left corner of each stamp. This is more evident in multiples than in singles copies.
Notes: 405,000 printed in sheets of 40, divided into two panes of 20 each and sold in booklets of five panes. 404,900 were issued and 100 copies destroyed. Of the amount issued, 10,000 were used for the December 16, 1935 provisional issue surcharged XMAS 1935 – 3 MILLIEMES. New plates were used for these stamps as shown by the minor plating flaws, which are less noticeable than the previous issues



Frame B

Position 6 and 11 (Dot between "E" and "S" of FORCES)



Frame A – position 2
Dot above "T" in BRITISH

Frame B – position 9
Dot below second "I" of BRITISH

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Eighth Issue — LETTER STAMP
First Printing

Postally Used Copies Showing the Black Retta Cancellation



A - 2



B - 17



A - 1

B - 12



A - 3

A - 8

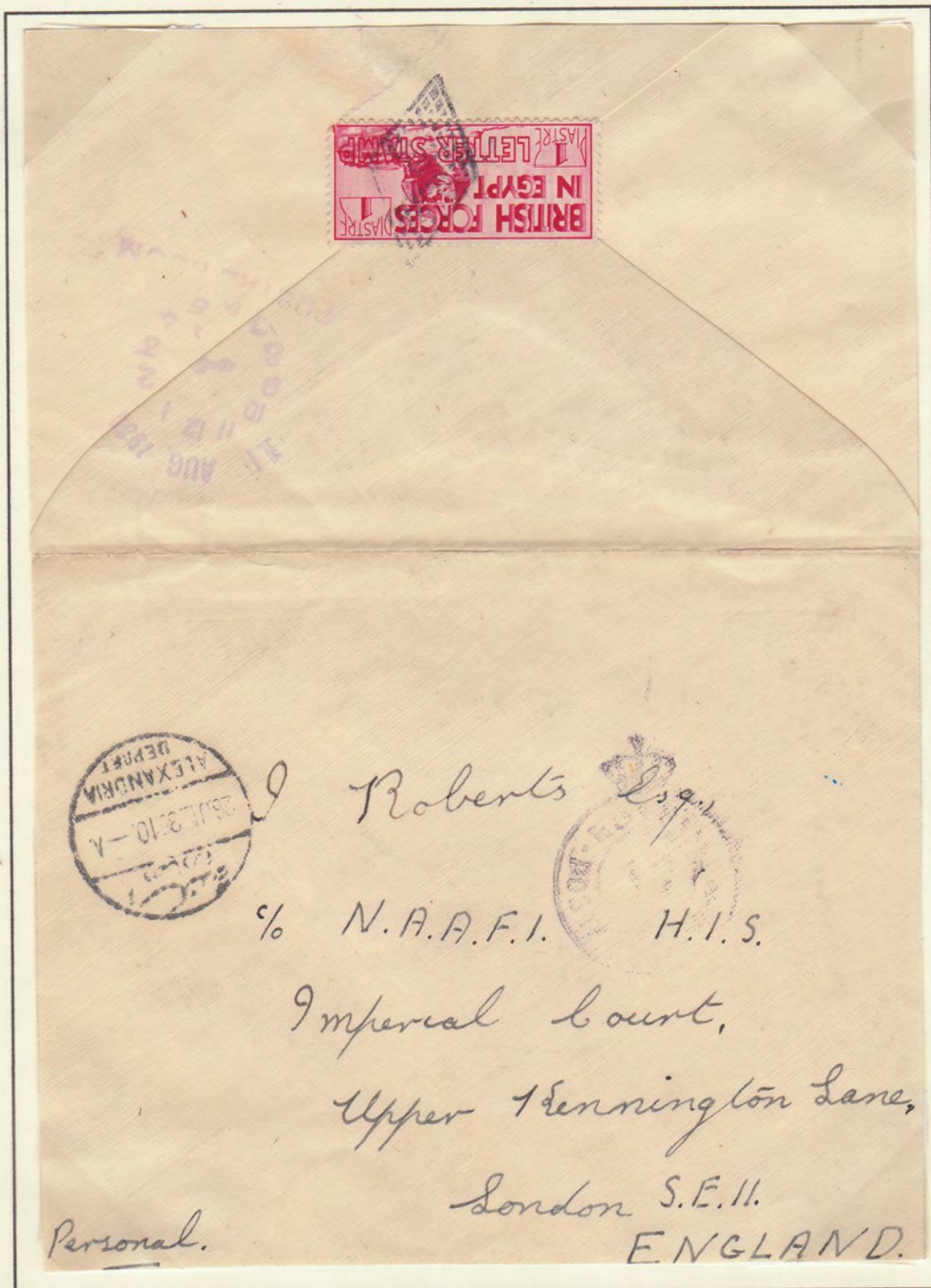
BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Eighth Issue — LETTER STAMP

MUSTAPHA BARRACKS 26 JL 35

CROWN CANCEL 17

Letters were franked and the seals cancelled at Mustapha Barracks before being handed over to the Alexandria post office where the civil postmark was applied. The receiving mark on the reverse shows that NAAFI (Navy, Army, & Air Force Institutes) received the envelope on 1 August 1935.



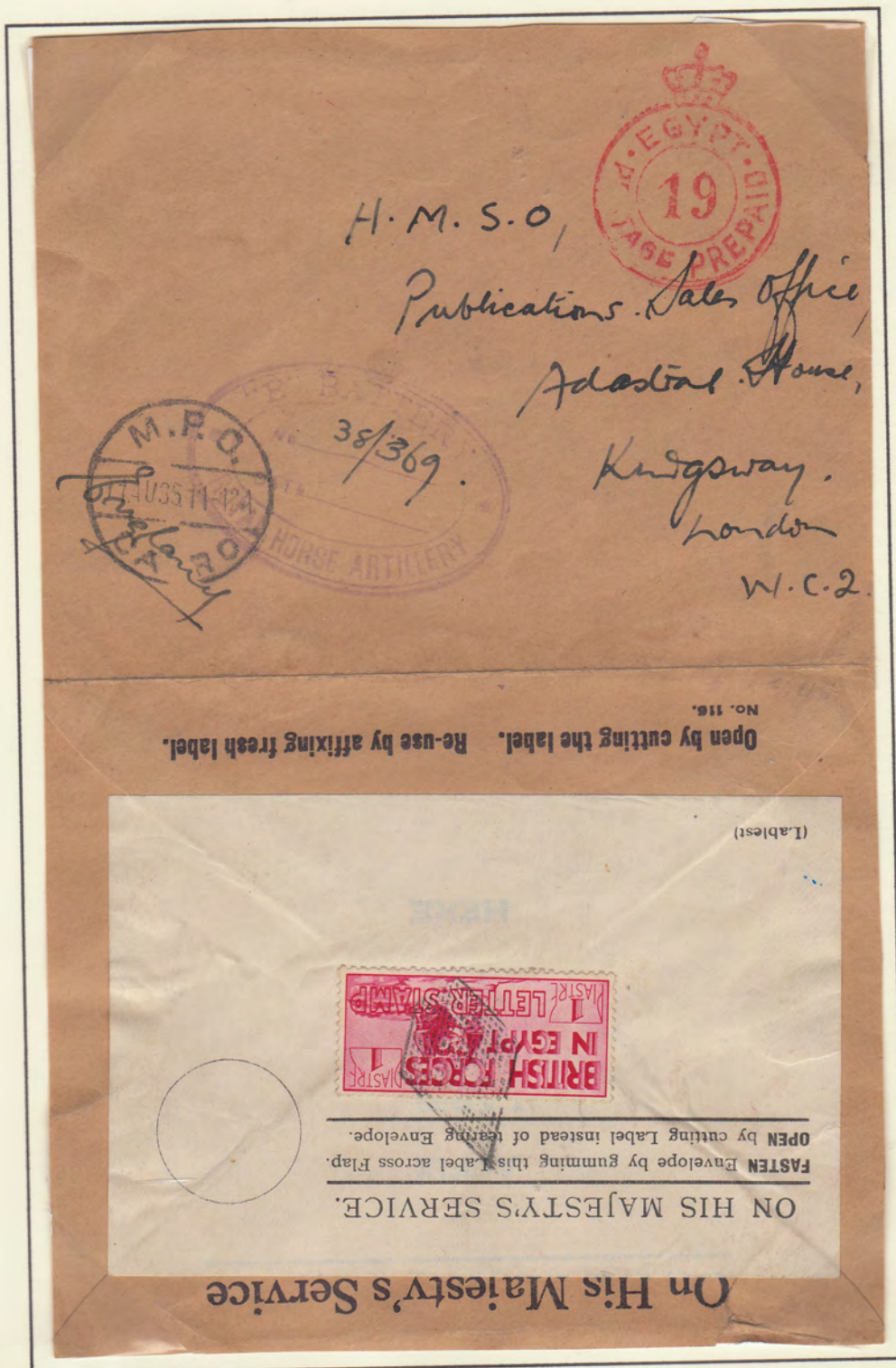
BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Eighth Issue — LETTER STAMP

M.P.O. CAIRO 17 AU 35

CROWN CANCEL 19

This O.H.M.S. cover has the handstamp of 'B' BATTERY ROYAL HORSE ARTILLERY. The M.P.O. c.d.s. has the curved CAIRO. Official military mail was subject to full postal rates under the postal concession.



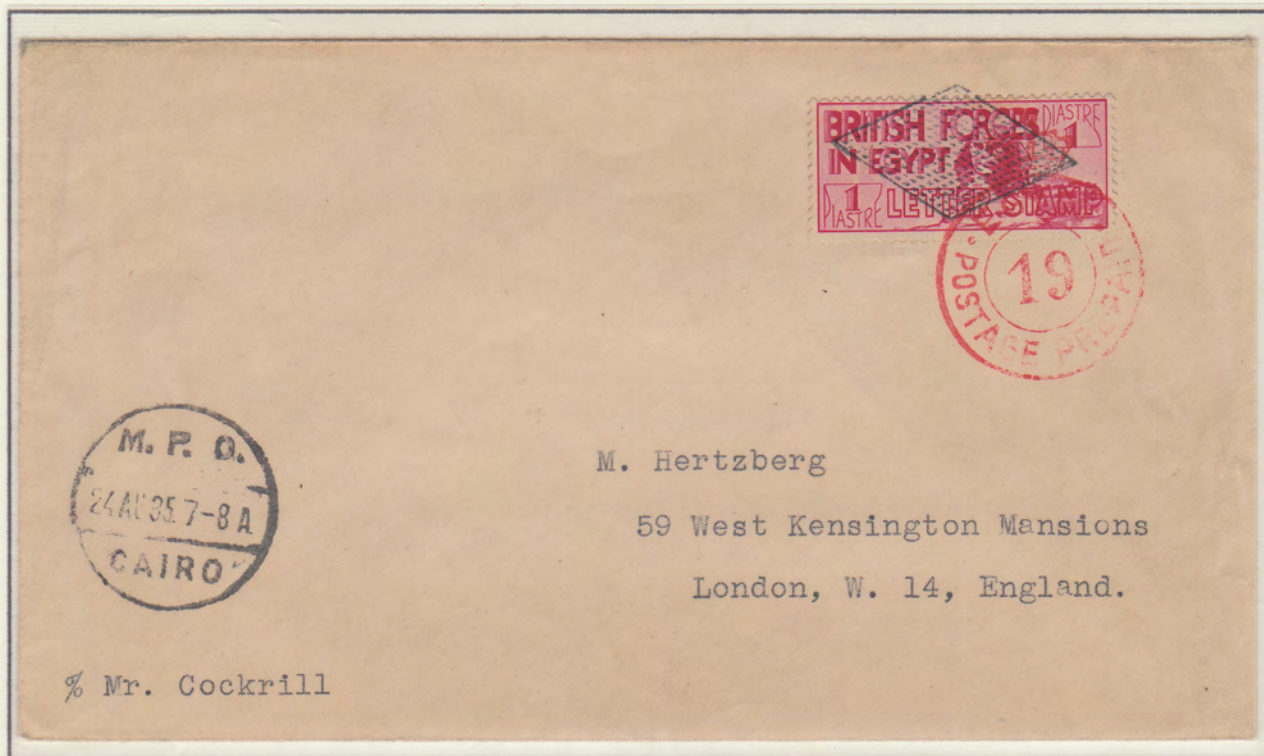
BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Eighth Issue — LETTER STAMP

M.P.O. CAIRO 24 AU 35

CROWN CANCEL 19

A contrived cover with the stamp on the front contrary to regulations.



BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 - 36

Eighth Issue — LETTER STAMP

M.P.O. ALEXANDRIA 6 DE 35

CROWN CANCEL 6

Letter sent to unauthorized destination and should have been charged postage due.



M.P.O. ALEXANDRIA 30 DE 35

CROWN CANCEL 6

Crown Cancel 6 was used at Cairo until it was transferred to the military post office in Alexandria on November 1, 1935. The use of the one piastre stamp on a post card is somewhat unusual. The concession rate only applied to letters and so post cards to the United Kingdom required one piastre Egyptian stamp. However, such postings were allowed to slip by.



Eighth Issue — LETTER STAMP
Second Printing

Date of Issue: December 21, 1935
 Designer: Miss Waugh of Cairo
 Printer: Photogravure by Harrison & Sons Ltd., London
 Value: 1 Piastre
 Perforation: 14 by the second comb. There is a second hole where previously the blind perforation or wide tooth appeared, i.e. at the bottom of the stamp. It is at the top of the stamp on those sheets that were inserted upside down in the perforating machine.
 Notes: 500,000 printed in sheets of 40, two panes of 20 each. 214,000 were sold and the remainder destroyed. They were bound five panes to a booklet. In addition to the absence of the blind perforation, the color of the stamps is somewhat paler than those of the first printing. Apparently new plates were used, as the flaws are different than those of the first printing. They are also difficult to recognize.



Position 17, Frame A
 Dot right of "T" of EGYPT

Position 14, Frame B
 Dot under first "E" in LETTER



Frame A, Positions 1,2,5 and 6
 Position 1 – Dot in first "T" in LETTER
 Position 2 – Dot in "I" in IN
 Position 5 – Dot between "R" and "E" in top right PIASTRE
 Position 6 – Dot between legs of "A" in top right PIASTRE
 Extra hole at the top of the stamp.

Eighth Issue — LETTER STAMP
Second Printing



Frame A is comprised of the bottom five rows of stamps.

The extra hole is at the top of the stamps indicating that the sheet was inserted upside down in the perforation machine.

Left marginal strip of four - positions 1, 5, 9, 13

Right strip of four – positions 2, 6, 10 and 14



Plate Flaws found on Frame A from Hobbs

Eighth Issue — LETTER STAMP

Second Printing — Frame A

Booklet A 2281



Complete Booklet of 5 Panes of Frame A

Extra perforation pin added to the comb.
Normal perforation with the extra hole
at the bottom of the stamp.

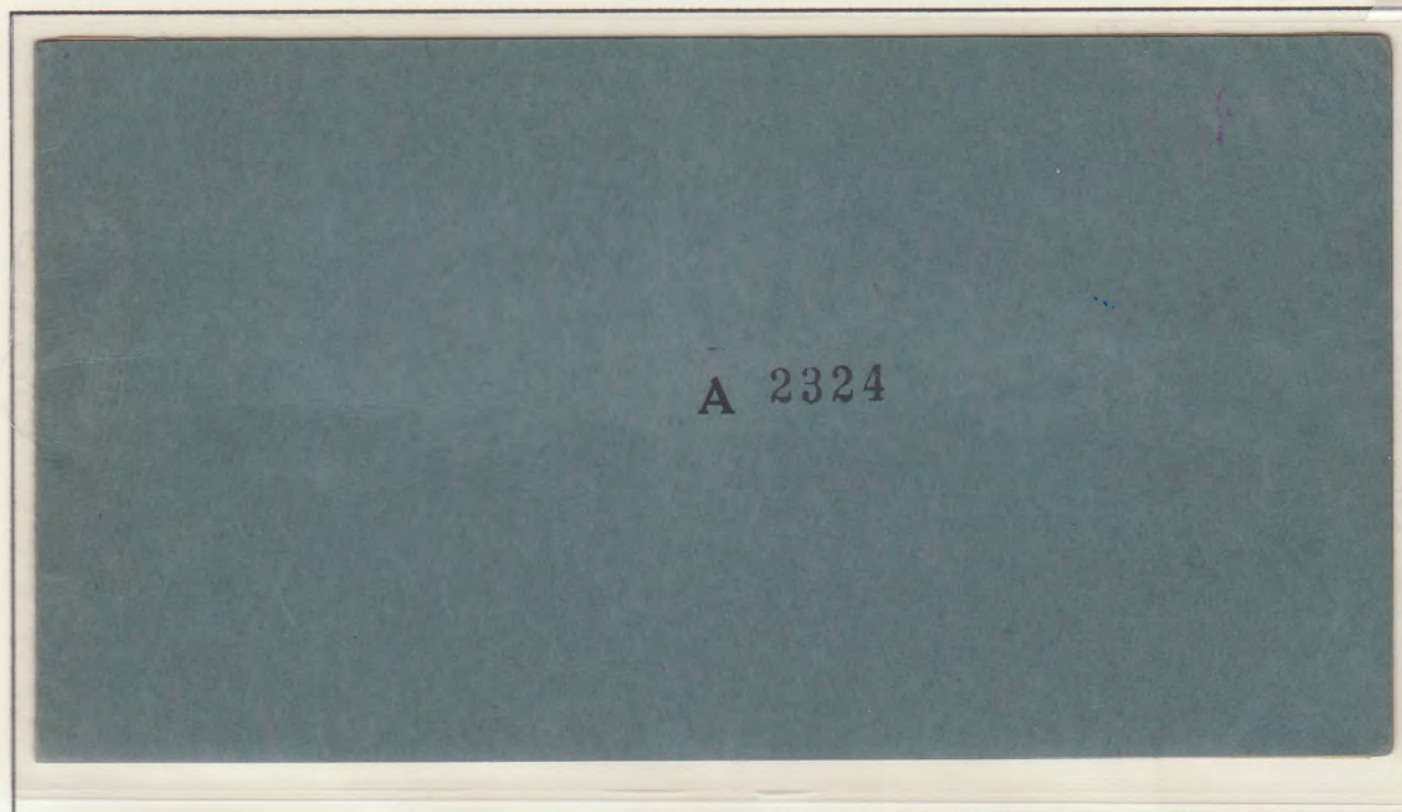


BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Eighth Issue — LETTER STAMP

Second Printing — Frame A

Extra hole at top of stamp.



Booklet Cover with Interleaving

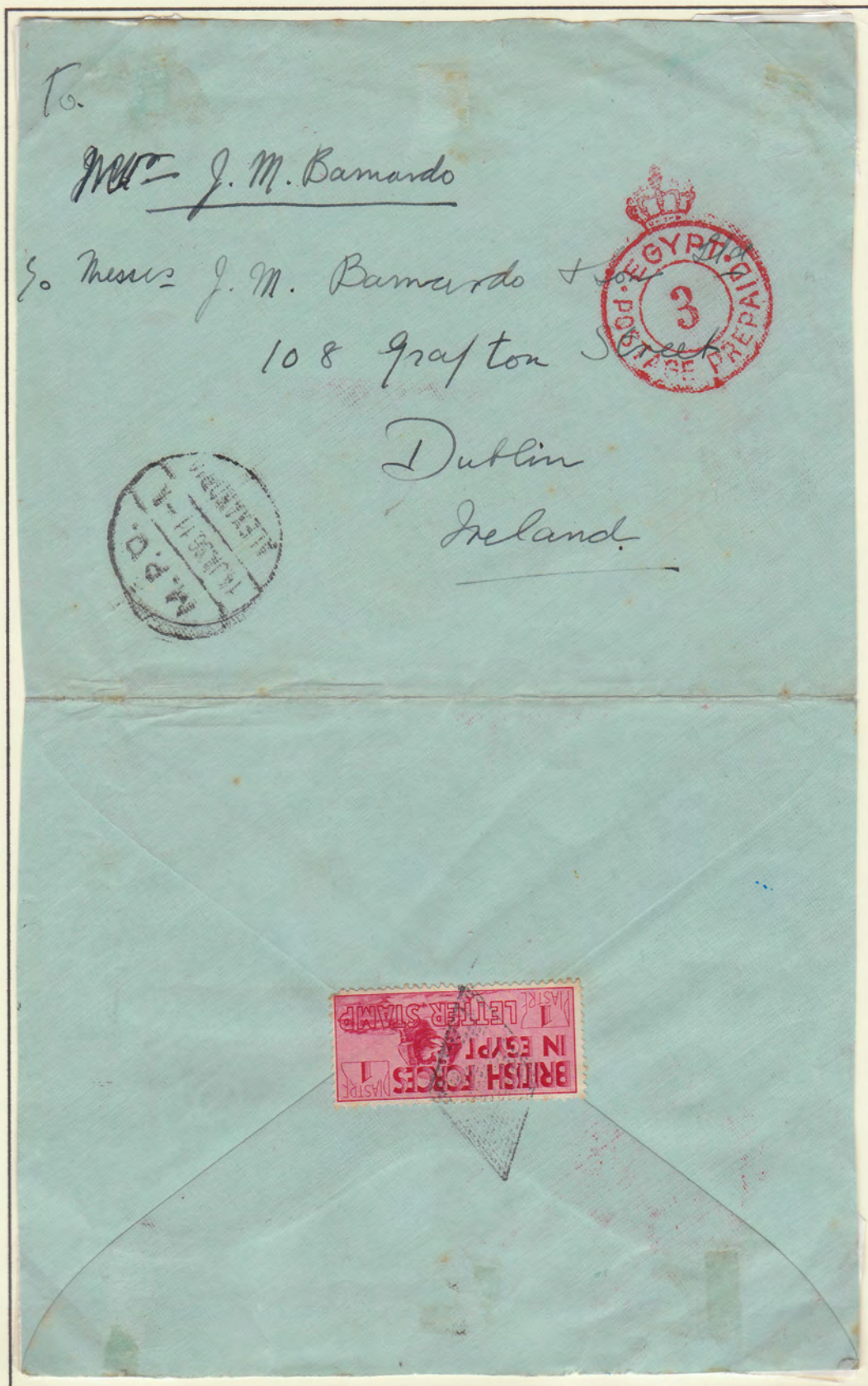
BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Eighth Issue — LETTER STAMP
Second Printing

M.P.O. ALEXANDRIA 14 JA 36

CROWN CANCEL 3

On 1 November 1935, a military post office was re-established at Alexandria and numeral frank #3 was transferred from Moascar.



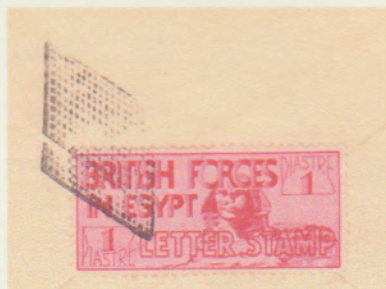
BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Eighth Issue — LETTER STAMP
Second Printing

M.P.O. ALEXANDRIA 29 FE 36

CROWN CANCEL 3

This cover is postmarked on leap year day. It is the "official" last day for the crown cancel and the letter stamp as the Army Post stamps appeared on March 1st. However, the letter stamps remained valid through 15 March 1936..



Eighth Issue — LETTER STAMP
Second Printing

Invalid Local Use of Stamp

FAGGALA to CAIRO

3 3 936

This philatelic cover is improperly franked with a bisect of the 1 piastre stamp to pay the internal letter rate of five milliemes. It is backstamped the next day with a Cairo civil date stamp. It should have been charged postage due as these stamps were only legal for use by the British military to addresses in the United Kingdom and the Irish Free State.



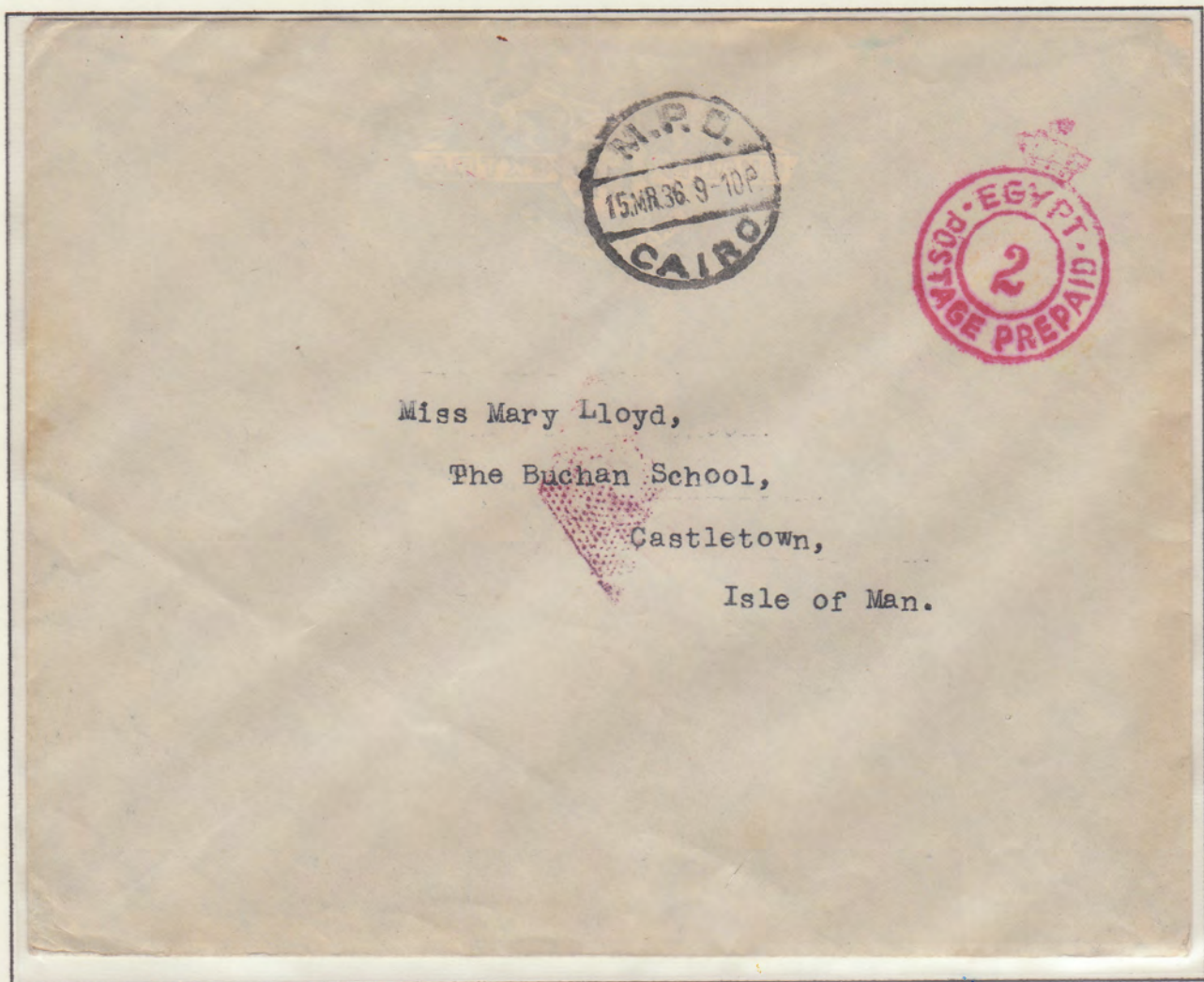
This is one of four bisect covers recorded. Two are known with vertical bisects (the above and one illustrated in Hobbs) and two with diagonal bisects. Postmarked FAGGALA on 3 March 1936, they were sent from the Soldiers Home or the Sailors Home to Cairo and Alexandria.

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Eighth Issue — LETTER STAMP

M.P.O. CAIRO 15 MR 36 to ENGLAND

CROWN CANCEL 2



Crown Cancel #2 was never allocated to any military post office and is only known used on these special presentation last day covers. This cover shows the last day of use of the Crown Cancels and the last day of validity for the letter stamps. Army Post stamps came into use on March 1, 1936. This cover is part of a presentation set of the 24 different Crown Cancels (Crown Cancel 7 was lost and thus not in the presentation set). Fifty sets were made and distributed to notables and others involved with the postal concession. The stamp is cancelled with a mauve retta, not the normal black.



Ninth Issue — LETTER STAMP — JUBILEE COMMEMORATION

Date of Issue: May 6, 1935
 Designer: Miss Waugh of Cairo
 Printer: Photogravure by Harrison & Sons Ltd., London
 Value: 1 Piastre
 Perforation: 14 by the first comb. A blind or omitted perforation hole is found at the lower left corner of each stamp. This is more evident in multiples than in singles copies.
 Notes: 27,000 printed in sheets of 40, two panes of 20 each using the same plates as the fifth and seventh issues. Sales were supposedly limited to ten stamps per customer but at least one pane of 20 has been recorded. Hobbs says the overprint was done ten stamps at a time, columns 1 and 2 and then 3 and 4 on each pane of 20. Chalhoub in *The Nile Post* offers another theory that an 80-subject form overprinted full sheets of 80.¹ However, the plates used printed sheets of 40, not 80, as shown in the sections of the fifth and seventh issues.



Frame B Positions 1, 2, 5 and 6



Frame B Position 13

Frame A Position 19

Frame A Position 20

¹ p. 637.

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Ninth Issue — LETTER STAMP — JUBILEE COMMEMORATION

Postally Used Copies
Frame B



Black Retta Cancel
Position 8 — Dot above "E" of FORCES



Red Retta Cancel
Position 8 — Dot above "E" of FORCES



Crown Cancel
Position 4 — Dot under middle arm of "E" in top right PIASTRE

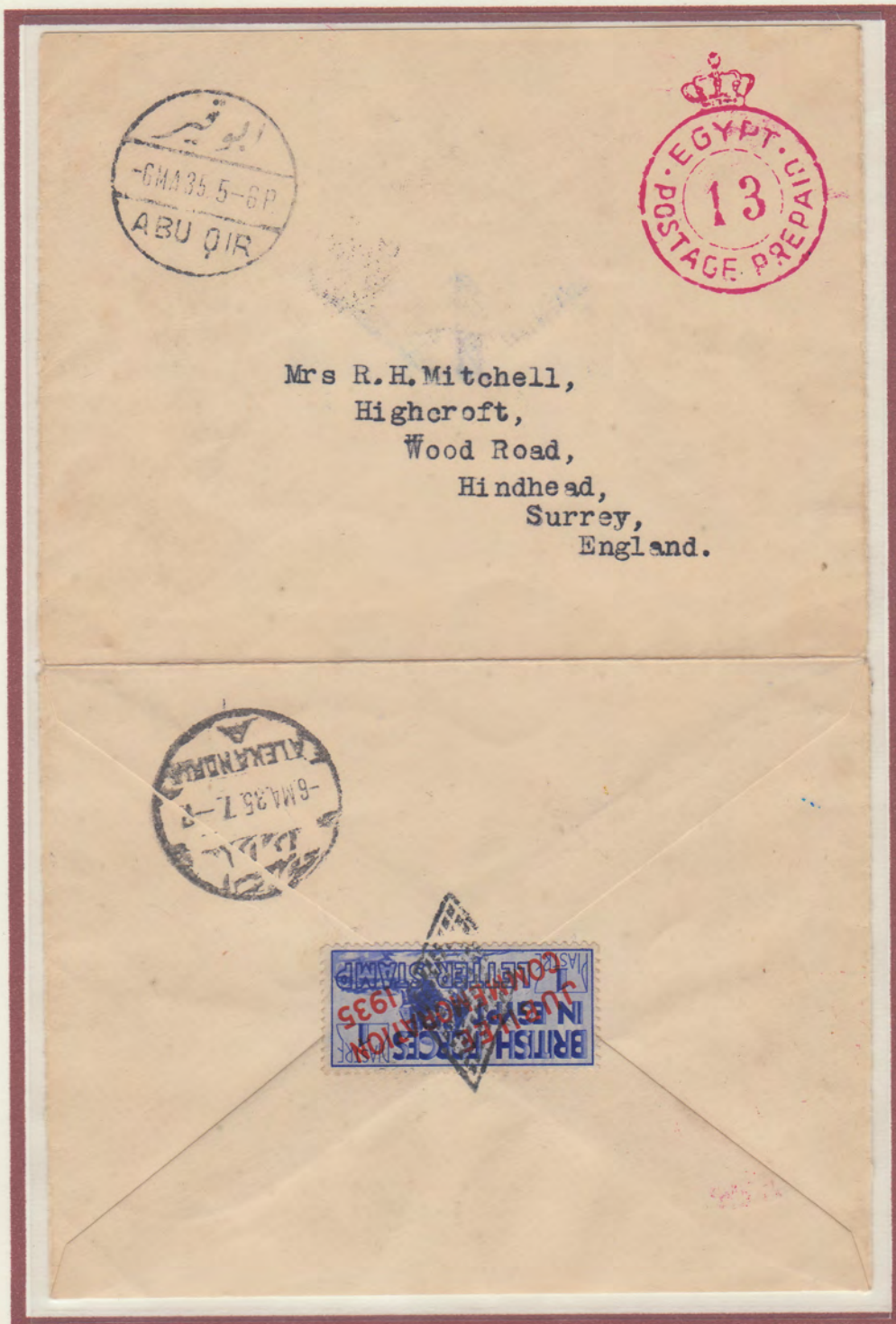
BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Ninth Issue — JUBILEE SEAL

ABU QIR 6 MA 35

CROWN CANCEL 13

First day cover of the George V Jubilee Issue. As this day was a service holiday, military letterboxes were only cleared once, in the morning. Covers with the Jubilee stamp posted later that day were not picked up and processed until the next day. In addition, many service personnel were not aware of the issuance of this stamp until after its appearance. These factors make for a relative scarcity of Jubilee first day covers. Position 11 from Frame B, dot between "E" and "S" of FORCES.



BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Ninth Issue — LETTER STAMP — JUBILEE COMMEMORATION

Short or Broken "U" Variety

JUB

A major variety in the overprint is broken right side at the top of the letter "U" in JUBILEE. It is found on positions 6 and 8 of frame A and often on the same positions in Frame B..

Frame B Position 8 — Dot above "E" of FORCES



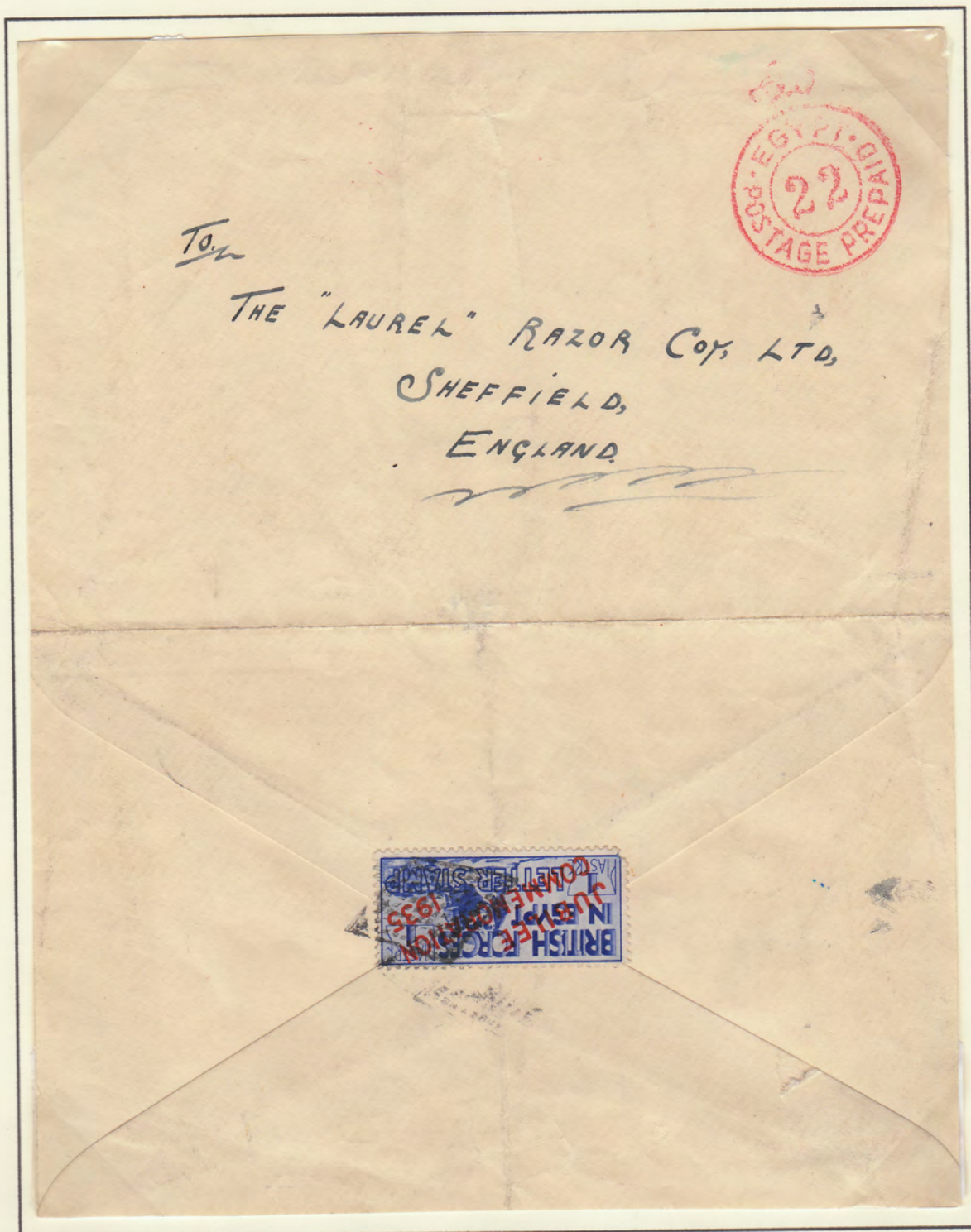
Cover to England franked on the reverse with the JUBILEE variety broken "U", Frame B Position 8 — Dot above "E" of FORCES. The obverse side shows Crown Circle # 23 and **M.P.O. CAIRO 7 MA 35**, the second day of issue. A review of auction catalogues suggests that second day covers are scarcer than first day covers. The Numeral Frank was transferred to Moascar in June.

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Ninth Issue — LETTER STAMP — JUBILEE COMMEMORATION

M.P.O. c.d.s. is missing

CROWN CANCEL 22



This cover was probably posted at M.P.O. CAIRO although M.P.O. ALEXANDRIA is a possibility as the designator number 22 was used at Alexandria on and after 1 November 1935.

Tenth Issue — CHRISTMAS SEAL
First Printing

Date of Issue: November 23, 1935
 Designer: Sergeant W. F. Lait, Royal Army Service Corps
 Printer: Lithographed by Walker & Co., The Amalgamated Press, Cairo
 Value: 3 Milliemes
 Perforation: 11 ½
 Notes: 101,100 stamps printed in sheets of 20 and sold in booklets consisting of five panes or 100 stamps. The first printing was a red-orange shade.



Position 13

Positions 14, 15

Position 5



Positions 1, 2, 6, 7

Positions 9, 10, 14, 15

Positions 4, 5, 9, 10

Positions 2, 10, 18, 19, 20 have a break in the left side frame line of the lower panel near the top.

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Tenth Issue — CHRISTMAS SEAL
First Printing

Unlisted Variety
Misplaced perforations at the top below BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT

Position 3



Scan of the reverse showing
misplaced perforations.



BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Tenth Issue — CHRISTMAS SEAL
First Printing

M.P.O. CAIRO (curved) ? DE 35

CROWN CANCEL 19

This stamp is distinctly redder than others of the first printing.





Tenth Issue — CHRISTMAS SEAL
Second Printing

Date of Issue: December 19, 1935
Designer: Sergeant W. F. Lait, Royal Army Service Corps
Printer: Lithographed by The Amalgamated Press, Cairo
Value: 3 Milliemes
Perforation: 11 ½
Notes: A second printing was required due to the increased number of troops in Egypt at that time. 21,500 stamps printed in sheets of 20 and sold from booklets consisting of five panes or 100 stamps. 12,075 stamps were sold and 9,425 copies were destroyed. The second printing was a lighter shade or pale orange.



Position 1 and 11



Positions 9, 10, 14 and 15

Tenth Issue — CHRISTMAS SEAL
Second Printing

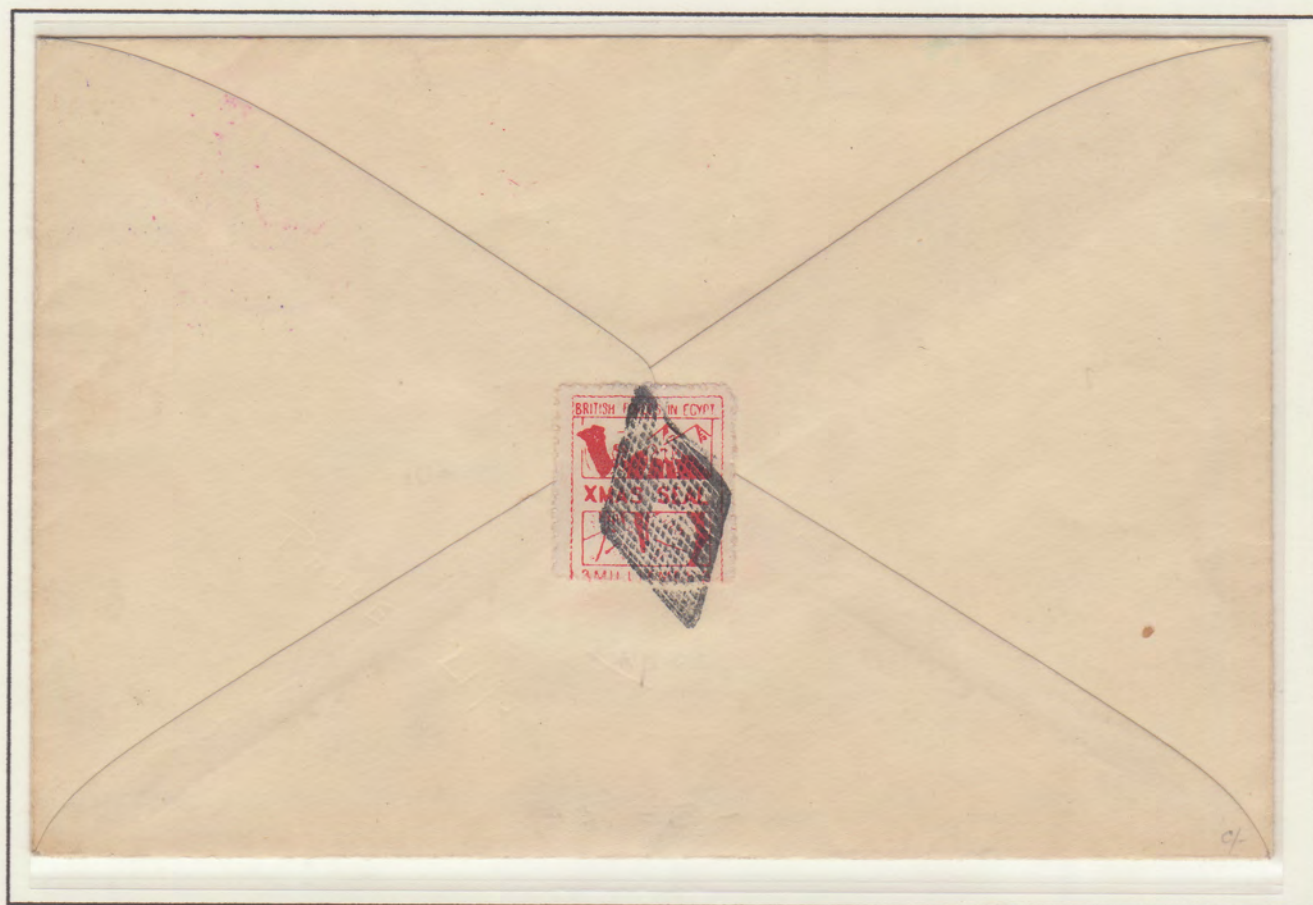


BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Tenth Issue — CHRISTMAS SEAL
Second Printing

M.P.O. CAIRO 23 DE 35

CROWN CANCEL 19



Front of cover

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Eleventh Issue — LETTER STAMP PROVISIONAL CHRISTMAS OVERPRINT

Date of Issue: December 16, 1935 (withdrawn from sale 31 December 1935)
 Designer: Miss Waugh of Cairo
 Printer: Photogravure by Harrison & Sons Ltd., London
 Value: 3 Milliemes
 Perforation: 14 by the first comb (blind perforation).
 Notes: 10,000 stamps of the first printing of the Eighth Issue were overprinted of which 9,920 were sold and 80 destroyed. The stamps were placed on sale at Mersa Matruh, Headquarters of the R.A.F. in Cairo, and the Citadel in Cairo.



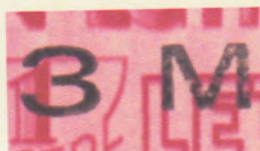
Frame A Position 9



Frame A Positions 1, 2, 5 and 6

The overprinting was done in two operations with ten stamps overprinted at a time — columns 1 and 2 and then 3 and 4. There are two noticeable overprint varieties found on each pane. The first letter "M" in Milliemes in positions 13 and 15 has less intense inking giving rise to irregular blotches (at times even a break) in the right leg. This is a minor flaw and is sometimes undetectable. Similarly the "3" in 1935 in positions 18 and 20 appear clipped.

Damaged "M"
Frame A Position 13

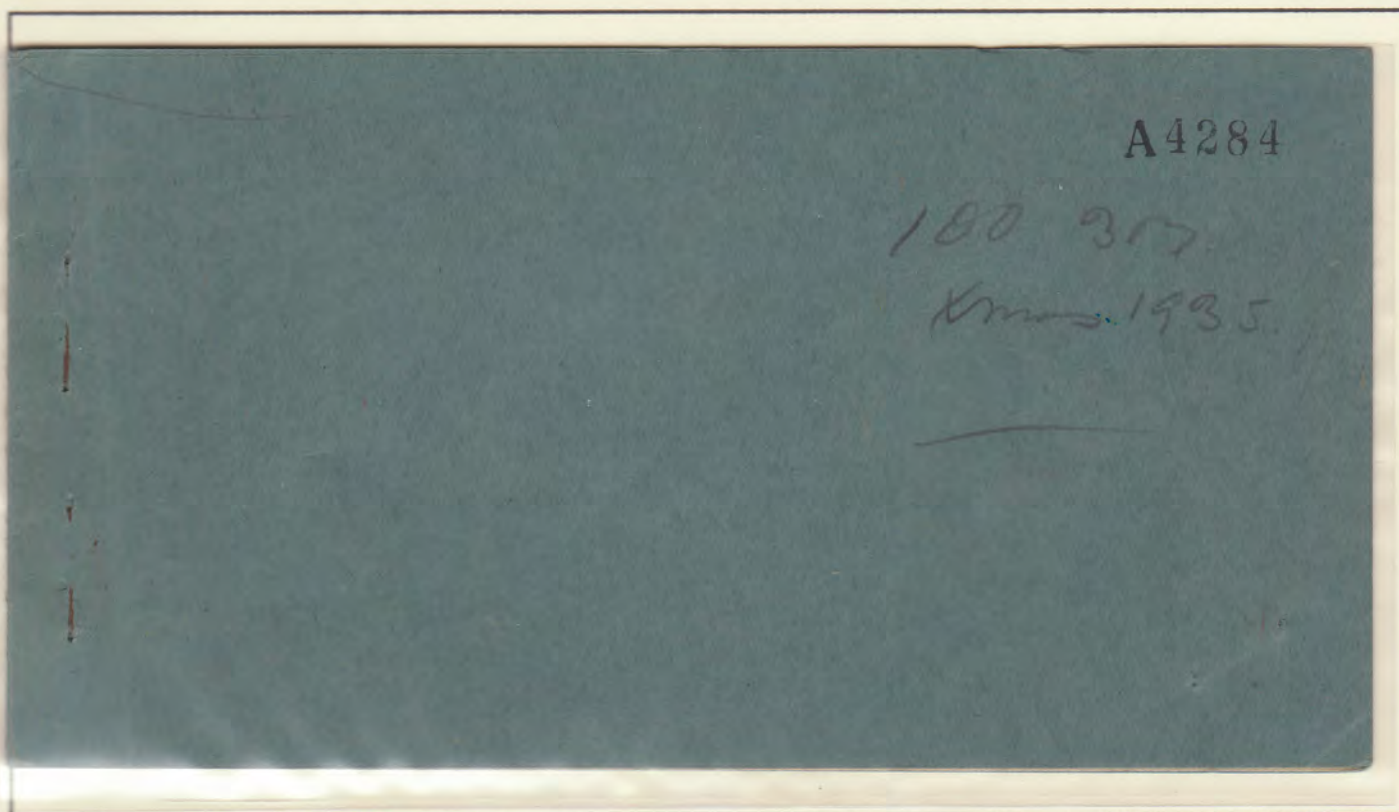


Clipped "3"
Frame A Position 18



BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Eleventh Issue — LETTER STAMP PROVISIONAL CHRISTMAS OVERPRINT
Frame A



Booklet Cover

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1932 — 36

Eleventh Issue — LETTER STAMP PROVISIONAL CHRISTMAS OVERPRINT

M.P.O. ALEXANDRIA 16 DE 35

CROWN CANCEL 3

First Day Cover



This cover originated at Mersa Matruh, which received a small supply of these stamps as Alexandria was not on the distribution. This military sub-office opened in November 1935 during a buildup of British forces but it was not issued a M.P.O. datestamp, a retta obliterator or a Crown Cancel numeral frank. Mail was taken to the Alexandria military post office for processing where the retta was applied along with the M.P.O. datestamp and the numeral frank.

THE END OF THE SEALS AND STAMPS

Official notice of the end of the letter stamp period and the introduction of the Army Post stamps

POSTAL CONCESSION

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT

The use of the present letter stamp which is sold at all N.A.A.F.I. Institutes in connection with the postal concession for the British Forces in Egypt will be discontinued with effect from 1st March, 1936.

On that date a special postage stamp issued by the Egyptian Postal Administration, with the effigy of H.M. King Fuad, and marked "Army Post" will be placed on sale at all N.A.A.F.I. Institutes.

These special stamps will cost 1 piastre, the same as the letter stamps now used, and the only difference will be that they will be placed on the top right hand corner of an envelope on the front, the same as an ordinary postage stamp.

Letters bearing these stamps must continue to be posted in military or Royal Air Force post boxes, and should not be placed in Egyptian Post Boxes.

Any member of the Forces in possession of an excessive number of the letter stamps now in use (red), may forward them to the Camp Commandant, Headquarters, B.T.E., provided they are not mutilated and are in good condition, up to the 29th February, 1936, when he will be refunded the face value thereof should he so desire.

In order to cover those who have only a few of the present letter stamps, i.e. not worth commutation, they will be accepted in Military Post Offices as stamps on letters up to and including the 15th March, 1936. After that date they will cease to be of postal value and any letter bearing the present letter stamp will be taxed on arrival in the United Kingdom or Ireland.

The use of the new stamp is covered by the same conditions as apply at present to the letter stamp, i.e. they can only be used for the postage of letters to the United Kingdom and Ireland, including the Irish Free State, and must not be used on letters to any colony, possession, or foreign country, or for air mail, registered letters or parcels.