

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT

— 1936-1941 —

THE POSTAL CONCESSION



El Daba M.P.O. — one of four recorded covers

Richard S Wilson

New Discoveries Of M.P.O. El Daba On Cover

Richard S. Wilson (E.S.C. 230)

M.P.O. El Daba is one of the scarcer of the Named Military Post Office datestamps and it is now somewhat less so with the recent discovery of the fourth and fifth examples (Figs. 1 and 2) of which four are on cover and one is on a piece. The cover postmarked 6 June 1939 and backstamped Alexandria 7 June 1939 appeared on eBay last autumn. I thought that I would have to bid and arm and a leg to obtain it but fortunately I was the only bidder and am pleased to add it to my collection at a very reasonable price. The other newly discovered El Daba cover postmarked 31 August 1939 showed up in Argyll Etkin's Auction number 33, February 2014. This is the second cover known with that date.

John Firebrace and Charles Minett in the QC, Vol. 5, Nos. 7 & 8, whole series 55 & 56 (1960) *Circular Datestamps of the Military Post Offices during the Postal Concession Period*, knew of two examples. One was a pair of the ten millimetres large Army Post on piece dated 5 August 1939 owned by Firebrace and the other a cover postmarked 31 August 1939 owned by the late John Revell. The latter was displayed at the London International Stamp Exhibition in 2010. I have heard of another cover postmarked 2 April 1939 but have not seen it. The M.P.O. El Daba datestamp has a diameter of 26 mm with the date bars 9 mm apart and the M.P.O. 15 mm wide. Shortly after the war started M.P.O. Daba was replaced with F.P.O. E.606.

El Daba, a small village on the Mediterranean Sea some 180 kilometers west of Alexandria, was home to one of the Royal Air Force's Desert Landing Grounds set up after the 1938 Munich Crisis. On the airbase were an ammunition depot, a bomb dump, and a petroleum storage facility. A railroad running from Alexandria to Sidi Barrani passed nearby. RAF and military exercises were held in the area in March 1939 and at the beginning of August the base became operational. During the North African Campaign the United States Army Air Corps and the German Luftwaffe also used the base. Later in the war a camp for German prisoners of war was located there.

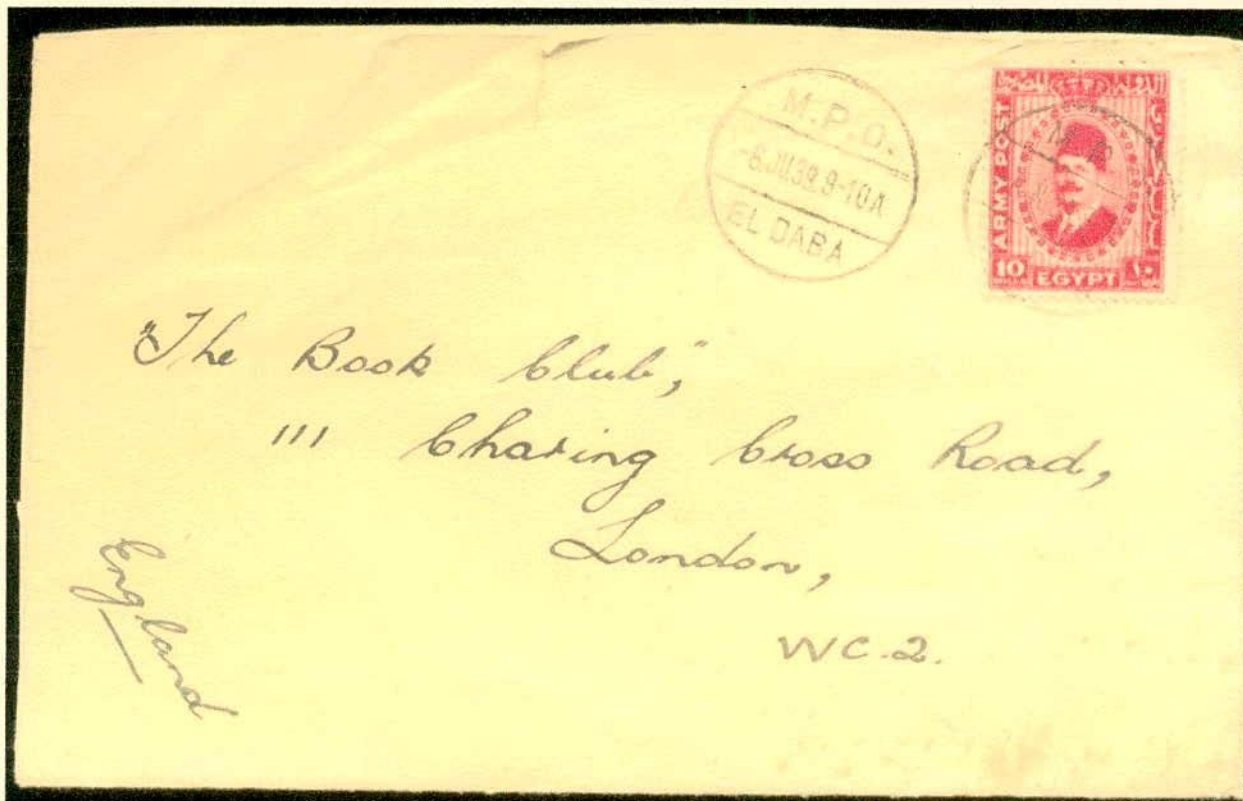


Fig 1.



Fig. 2

BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1936-1941 — THE POSTAL CONCESSION

SYNOPSIS

Purpose of Exhibit: This exhibit is a military postal history study of the British and Commonwealth forces usage of the four special stamps issued by the Egyptian Government during the second part of the postal concession period. The covers show the various datestamps and other markings used by military postal services within Egypt as well as in Libya and Greece during the currency of the Army Post stamps. A study of the stamps is excluded from this exhibit as the American Philatelic Society's *Manual of Philatelic Judging* states: "Unused stamps ... are not usually appropriate for postal history exhibits."

Scope and Treatment: Generally arranged by type of postmark, the covers include examples of the named military post offices, Series E600, Field Post Offices, Commonwealth forces, and other datestamps. A comparative table of postmarks is shown in those instances where a military post office was allocated more than one datestamp (named MPOs and Series E600). Stampless covers posted during the four-day special holiday post in December 1940 are also presented. Noteworthy items are identified with a 6 point maroon border. These include the rare M.P.O. cover from El Daba (four known); earliest and latest recorded postmark dates; the earliest known use of the military censor marking; the scarce curved M.P.O. E.601 and short-lived M.P.O. E.608 circular datestamps; first day of use of Field Post Office 171 datestamp; F.P.O. 189 c.d.s. used on last day of validity of the Army Post stamps; captured Italian envelope used by an Australian Army soldier, and a front of an honour envelope sent by an Australian soldier during the campaign in Greece. The three millimetres small Army Post stamp is represented by solo, combination, and multiple uses on cover. It should be noted that the dates given for the postmarks may be extended and in some cases are the approximate periods of use.

EXHIBIT PLAN:

- FRAME 1 - NAMED MILITARY POST OFFICES
- FRAME 2 - NAMED MILITARY POST OFFICES AND SERIES E.600 DATESTAMPS
- FRAME 3 - SERIES E.600 DATESTAMPS AND FIELD POST OFFICES
- FRAME 4 - FIELD POST OFFICES AND COMMONWEALTH FORCES POSTAL SERVICE
- FRAME 5 - COMMONWEALTH FORCES AND OTHER DATESTAMPS

Knowledge of Subject: The exhibitor has been accumulating and researching this material for more than 30 years. At the beginning of 2015 the exhibit was extensively revised and rewritten with the addition of new and/or scarce to rare covers. It also was reduced from six to five frames. At the request of the author the exhibitor reviewed, edited and commented on three drafts of a new book on the Postal Concession period (see Davis below).

Historical Background: On 1 March 1936 there was a change in the postal concession regulations between the Egyptian postal authorities and the Commander of the British Forces in Egypt. A new ten millimetres Army Post stamp bearing King Fouad's portrait replaced letter stamps. As with the earlier letter stamps and seals they could be used only on letters posted in military mailboxes from members of the British forces to destinations in the United Kingdom and the Irish Free State. However, the destination regulations were relaxed when Commonwealth troops came to Egypt at the beginning of World War II in September 1939.

On 1 December 1936 a green three-millimetres stamp was issued for use on unsealed Christmas and New Year's cards. This value was withdrawn from sale on 15 February 1937 and re-released in 1937 through 1940 in time for the holiday mail season, each time being withdrawn the following February. 16 December 1939 saw the issuance of the small Army Post stamps of three and ten millimetres with King Farouk's picture replacing the large Army Post Stamps. This was too late for use of the three millimetres stamp on Christmas cards so the stamps were withdrawn from sale and re-released in October 1940. Legitimate first day covers of the small Army Post stamps are not known. While covers with the 10-millimetre value are plentiful that is not the case with the small Army Post 3-millimetres covers. Members of the Egypt Study Circle record only 33 solo-use covers and any other use of the stamp on cover is scarce. While the sale of Army Post stamps ceased on 1 May 1941 when the postal concession was again revised to allow the troops free postage for surface mail and use of their countries' stamps for airmail, they can be found on covers as late as 1942.

Timeline:

- 1 March 1936 – Postal concession changes and Army Post stamps issued.
- 15 August 1939 – First Indian Army troops arrive on Egypt
- 3 September 1939 – Great Britain declares war on Germany
- September 1939 – Named M.P.O. datestamps replaced by E.600 series.
- 16 December 1939 – Small Army Post stamps issued.
- 14 February 1940 – New Zealand forces land in Egypt.
- 10 June 1940 – Italy declares war on Great Britain
- 11 June 1940 – British forces enter Cyrenaica, Libya.
- September 1940 – Australian troops transferred from Palestine to Egypt
- 24 September 1940 – Royal Engineers take over mail service and F.P.O. datestamps issued.
- 1 May 1941 – Use of Army Post stamps discontinued and the *EGYPT POSTAGE PREPAID* datestamp begins service.

Selected References: (suggestions for jury members are in bold face):

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- Davis, John. ***Egypt: From the Postal Concession Until Suez 1932 to 1956, Part 1 Until 1st May 1941***, John Davis, Upton Snodsbury, England, 2014.
- Hobbs, John E. O., ***British Forces in Egypt Postal Service 1932-1940***, Second Edition, John E. O. Hobbs, Worthing, England, 1984.
- Kennedy, Alistair, ***Egyptian Military Post Offices of the E600 Series***, Forces Postal History Society Newsletter 261, Autumn 2004, Vol. XXVII, No.1, pages 304-310.
- 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.
- Minett, Charles and Firebrace, John, *Circular Datestamps of the Civil Post Offices During the Postal Concession Period (pre-censorship), 1932-1939.*, The Quarterly Circular of the Egypt Study Circle, Vol. VI., No. 1, 1963, pages 1 – 12
- Proud, Edward P., *History of the Australian Military Postal Services 1914 – 1950*. Proud-Bailey Co. Ltd., Heathfield, East Sussex, United Kingdom, c 1991.
- 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 (?).
- Proud, Edward B., ed. *History of the Indian Army Postal Service, Vol. III, 1931 – 14 August 1947*. Proud-Bailey Co. Ltd., Heathfield, East Sussex, United Kingdom.
- Smith, Peter A. S., ***Egypt, Stamps and Postal History, A Philatelic Treatise***, James Bendon, Limassol, Cyprus, 1999.
- Startup, R. M., *The Mails Went Through*, R. M. Startup, Masterton, New Zealand, 1957.
- Stobbs, Stephenson, *Postmarks of the Australian Forces From All Fronts 1939 to 1953* Second Edition, Harry Hayes, West Yorkshire, 1976
- Wilson, Richard S., *New Discoveries of M.P.O. El Daba on Cover*, The Quarterly Circular of the Egypt Study Circle, Vol. XXII, No. 1, Whole Series No. 248, March 2014, pages 12-13.

NAMED MILITARY POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

Nineteen datestamps from eight military post offices are found on the Army Post stamps. Four of the date stamps are extremely scarce on cover with very few recorded of each. They are: #5 Alexandria (three known), #12 M.P.O. G.H.Q. Cairo (two covers known), #13 El Daba (four known), and #16 Mersa-Matruh (one known, 2 below M.P.O.-).





BRITISH FORCES IN EGYPT — 1936-1941 — THE POSTAL CONCESSION

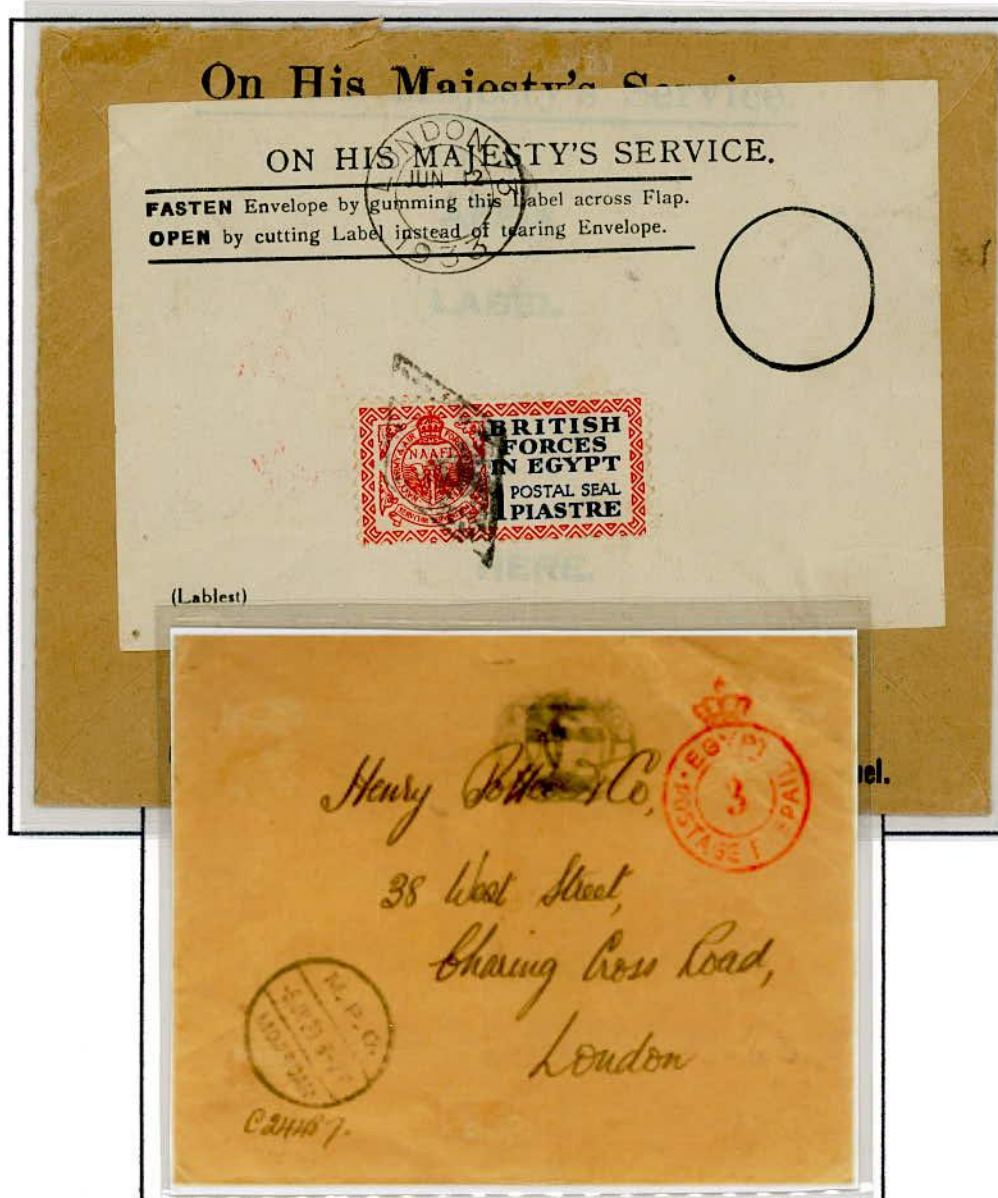
Prologue

In 1931 the postal rate for sealed letters from Egypt to the Great Britain was increased from ten to fifteen milliemes. This met with strong objection by the military. In 1932 a special arrangement was made with the Ministry of Communications and the British Army and Air Force whereby the postal department was granted a subsidy to provide military personnel the privilege of sending letters at the old rate of one piastre (ten milliemes). 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 were issued 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 was stamped 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 postmarked on the front with the military post office circular date stamp. After processing the mail was handed over to the Egyptian post office for forwarding in the normal manner. 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.

M.P.O. MOASCAR 5 JU 33

CROWN CANCEL 3



OFFICIAL NOTICE ANNOUNCING 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.

NAMED MILITARY POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. ABU QIR

1 MR 36

Royal Air Force depot personnel used the Military Post Office at Abu Qir. It opened on 1 March 1936 and closed 24 January 1937. The latest date recorded is 29 December 1936. This cover is postmarked on the first day of issue of the 10 milliemes large Army Post stamp.



M.P.O. ABU QIR

26 DE 36

Sometime around mid-December a dent appeared at the bottom of the datestamp under the "Q" of QIR.

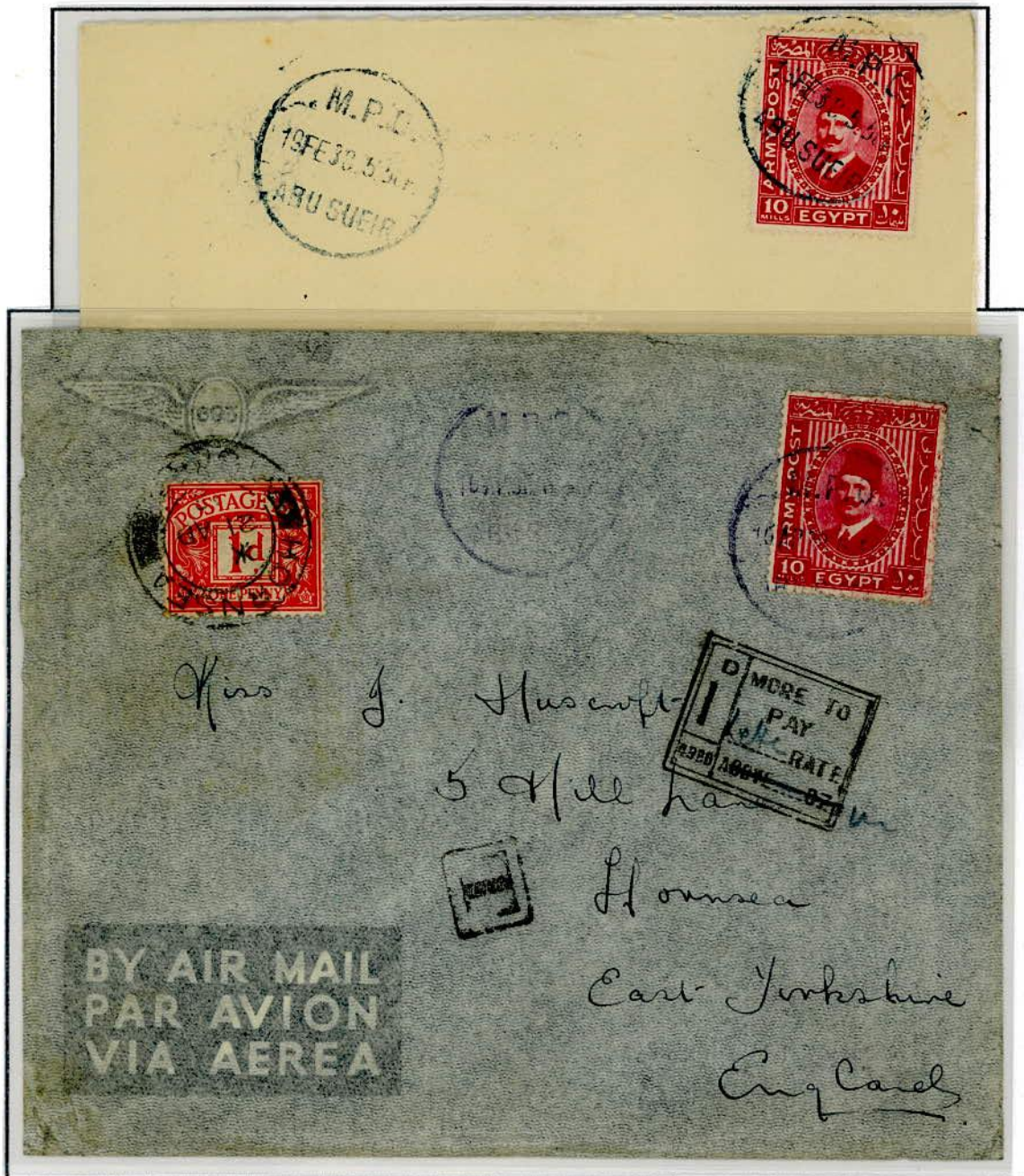


NAMED MILITARY POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. ABU SUEIR

19 FE 38

The Military Post Office Abu Sueir serving the No. 4 Flying Training School was issued its circular datestamp on 1 March 1936. Contrary to what is stated in Hobbs (p. 66), the military post office wasn't closed in December 1936 but remained open using the M.P.O. Abu Sueir datestamp until at least October 1940. Early postmarks were in black but for some reason (perhaps a temporary shortage) the ink was changed to a bluish green in mid-1937. Covers were routed through the civil post office at Abu Sueir and sent by train to Alexandria.



M.P.O. ABU SUEIR

15 AP 38

While this cover went by surface mail to England and has the appropriate 10 milliemes Army Post stamp and the M.P.O. datestamp, it was erroneously charged postage due. The T marking was applied at the civil post office and in England the **D/1/MORE TO/PAY/letter RATE** handstamp added (*letter* in manuscript). It was five mills underpaid if sent via the regular Egyptian mail and thus should have been charged double the deficiency or 10 milliemes, equal to 2½ d, not 1d.

NAMED MILITARY POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. ABU SUEIR

5 MR 40

When the Second World War started the use of Army Post concession stamps was expanded to include destinations within the Empire and use by allied troops. The original postal concession did not provide for airmail service. However, an airmail concession was arranged, becoming effective on 28 October 1939 and providing a 40 millimetres rate (10 millimetres surface rate plus a 30 millimetres airmail surcharge) compared to the previous 60 millimetres rate. This cover was sent to St. Catherines, Ontario, Canada and forwarded to Kirkland Lake. It has on the reverse the Abu Sueir civil c.d.s. and the B.P.O./6 MR 40/E602 (Alexandria) transit stamps and a St. Catherines slogan postmark.



Reverse side of cover

NAMED MILITARY POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. ABU SUEIR

7 OC 40

This airmail concession rate honour cover is the latest recorded with the M.P.O. ABU SUEIR datestamp. Later mail from the R.A.F. base at Abu Sueir was sent to Port Said for processing, which used the MPO E604 c.d.s., or to Cairo or Alexandria. This cover is backstamped with the civilian post marks of *ABU SUEIR 7 OC 40* and *ALEXANDRIA 8 OC 40*.



Backstamps

NAMED MILITARY POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

MILITARY POST OFFICE ALEXANDRIA

1 VI 36

The Alexandria Military Post Office opened on 1 November 1935 utilizing four datestamps including the barrel type that first saw service in the late 1890s. This M.P.O. served army units in and near Alexandria including Mustapha Barracks at Sidi Gaber and the camp at Sidi Bishr. It was closed on 24 January 1937.



Fifteen milliemes was the Empire letter rate, but this cover is franked with a five milliemes Egyptian stamp and a ten milliemes Army Post stamp. Apparently the envelope was dropped into a British Army postbox and the five milliemes stamp voided with the heavy black marking as the Army Post stamp was sufficient to carry the cover to England.

FOUR TYPES OF M.P.O. ALEXANDRIA DATE STAMPS

Type	Layout	Diameter	Date Bars	M.P.O.	Earliest Recorded	Latest Recorded
1	Curved/Curved	28.5	7.5	Barrel	22 NO 35	24 NO 36
2	Straight/Straight	27	7	16	11 NO 35	24 JA 37
3	Straight/Straight	27.5	12	12	7 JL 36	27 JL 36
4	Straight/Straight	27	9	14.5	21 JL 36	18 DE 36



Type 1



Type 2



Type 3



Type 4

NAMED MILITARY POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. ALEXANDRIA (type 2)

30 MR 36



M.P.O. ALEXANDRIA (type 4)

31 AU 36

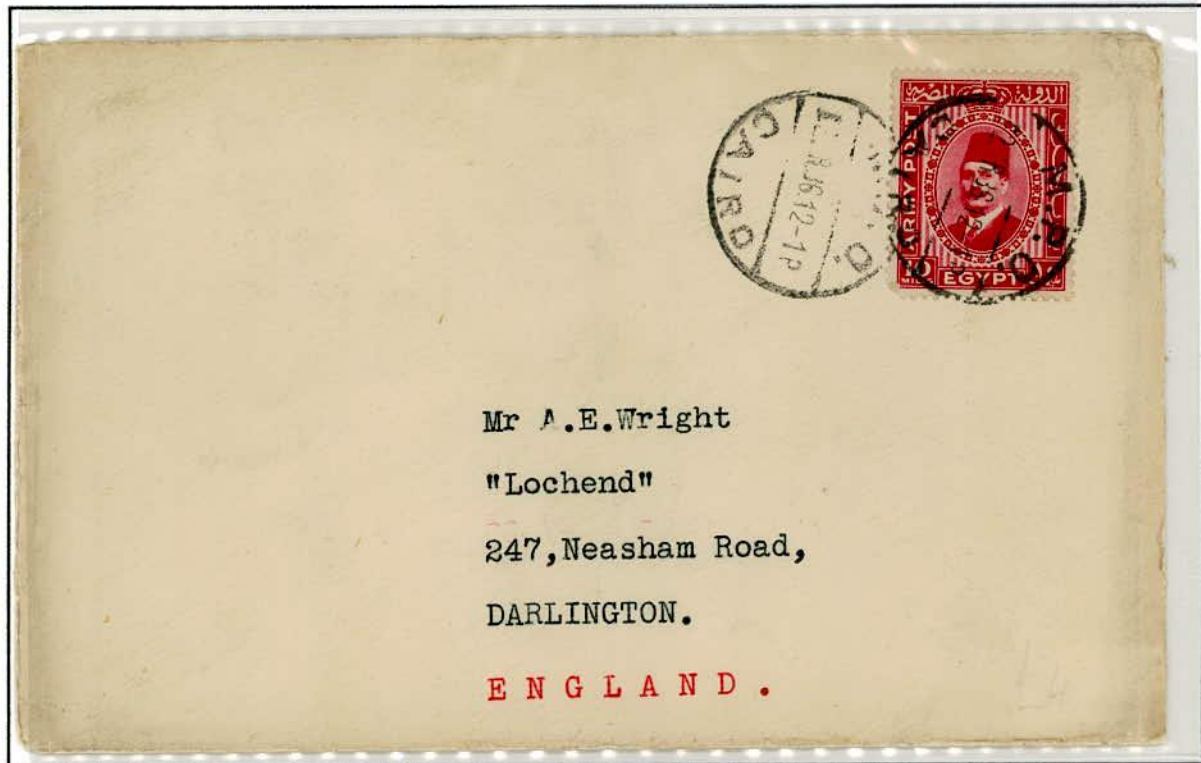
PLEASE NOTE: Type 3 (not shown) is the scarcest of the Alexandria military M.P.O. datestamps having been in service from about 7 to 27 July 1936. Only three covers have been recorded.

NAMED MILITARY POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. CAIRO (type 1)

2 MR 36

Type 1 M.P.O. CAIRO c.d.s. (curved) used on the second day of issue of the Army Post 10 milliemes stamp. This datestamp saw service from the beginning of the postal concession in 1932 to at least 9 July 1940 when it was replaced by the series E.600 circular datestamps.



Excluding M.P.O. G.H.Q CAIRO (only two covers recorded), there are five different named military post office datestamps found on Army Post covers.

FIVE TYPES OF M.P.O. CAIRO DATE STAMPS

Type	Layout	Diameter	Date Bars	M.P.O.	Earliest Recorded	Latest Recorded
1	Curved/Curved	26.5	8	14	1 NO 32	9 JL 40
2	Straight/Straight	28.5	10	17	26 SE 35	6 FE 37
3	Straight/Straight	26.5	8	16	1 NO 32	26 SE 39
4	Curved/Curved	28	8.5	13	26 AP 37	7 OC 39
5	Straight/Straight	29	12	18	10 DE 38	11 OC 39



Type 1



Type 2



Type 3



Type 4



Type 5

NAMED MILITARY POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. CAIRO (type 2)

1 MR 36

First Day Cover



M.P.O. CAIRO (type 2)

1 DE 36

Perhaps this unsealed Christmas greeting cover posted on the first day of issue of the three millimes stamp was in the second weight stage, thus a pair of the 3 millimes.

NAMED MILITARY POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. CAIRO (type 4)

11 MA 37

This curved c.d.s. (type 4) is known used from at least 26 April 1937 to 7 October 1939



M.P.O. CAIRO (type 4)

5 OC 38

The concession rate for letters weighing 21 to 40 grams was 20 milliemes while the Egyptian postal rate of 28 milliemes. This overweight letter was charged 3d. postage due upon arrival in England. The correct postage due should be double the ten milliemes deficiency or 20 milliemes, equal to 5d. (10 milliemes equals 2 ½d.). However, the 3d. postage due is equal to the 13 milliemes second weight stage for civilian letters so perhaps it was just a slipup by some postal clerk. Application of postage due was not consistent during the postal concession period.

NAMED MILITARY POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. CAIRO (type 5)

9 FE 39

This is the largest of the Cairo MPO datestamps measuring 29mm in diameter with date bars 12mm apart. The most noticeable difference is that Cairo is in smaller Letters. It had a relatively short life with examples known from 10 December 1938 to 11 October 1939.



M.P.O. CAIRO (type 5)

24 AP 39

This is an out of the ordinary use of the ten millimes Army Post stamp used as a convenience franking on a picture postcard. The military postal concession rate did not provide for a special rate for postcards and so this should have been franked with a regular Egyptian ten millimes stamp and posted in the civilian mailbox.

NAMED MILITARY POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. EL DABA

6.JU.39.

El Daba, a small village on the Mediterranean Sea some 180 kilometers west of Alexandria, was home to one of the Royal Air Force's Desert Landing Grounds set up after the 1938 Munich Crisis. On the airbase were an ammunition depot, a bomb dump, and a petroleum storage facility. A railroad running from Alexandria to Sidi Barrani passed nearby. RAF and military exercises were held in the area in March 1939, and at the beginning of August the base became operational. During the North African Campaign the United States Army Air Corps and the German Luftwaffe also used the base. Later in the war a camp for German prisoners of war was located there.

The cover below (found in 2013) is only the fifth recorded example of the postmark for the El Daba M.P.O. The others include three covers with dates of 26 AP 39 and 31 AU 39 (two covers) and a pair of the ten milliemmes on piece postmarked 5 AU 39.



NAMED MILITARY POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. EL DABA (defaced)

16.SE.39.

Sometime after the start of the war the military post office datestamp for El Daba was defaced with the erasure of El Daba. This presumably was done for security purposes but no other military post office is known to have done so. Only one other cover postmarked 6 October 1939 has been recorded. The dimensions of this strike are the same as that on the previous cover, a combination missing from all of the other named MPO datestamps.



Measurements of the El Daba Datestamp

Diameter	26 mm
Date Bars	9 mm
M.P.O.	15 mm



Image processed by Retroreveal

NAMED MILITARY POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. MERSA-MATRUH (type 1)

1 MR 36

The Military Post Office at Mersa-Matruh in the Western Desert on the Mediterranean coast opened 1 March 1936 and closed on 30 October. It was reopened in 1938. Two different datestamps have been recorded during the first period and two in the second period.



M.P.O. MERSA-MATRUH (type 2)

23 JU 36

NAMED MILITARY POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

MARSA MATROUH M.P.O. 1

19 SE 39

The Military Post Office at Marsa Matrouh (note the spelling change) reopened in 1938 when the Mobile Division (later known as the 7th Armoured Division – Desert Rats) operated in the area during September and October. The 7th Armoured returned to the Western Desert in March 1939. This cover has a late date and also shows the earliest reported use of the military censor marking. The franking of 60 milliemes (one stamp is missing) paid the pre-concession airmail rate to England that was soon reduced to 40 milliemes.



FOUR TYPES OF M.P.O. MERSA MATRUH/MARSA MATROUH DATE STAMPS

Type	Layout	Diameter mm	Date Bars mm	M.P.O. mm	Earliest Recorded	Latest Recorded
1	Straight/Curved	26.5	10	14.5	1 MR 36	23 JY 36
2	Straight/Curved	27	8	15	14 MR 36	2 OC 36
3 (MPO 2)*	Curved/Curved	26.5	10	14	2 OC 38	*
4 (MPO 1)	Curved/Curved	26	9	13.5	4 MR 39	25 SE 39



Type 1



Type 2



Type 3*



Type 4

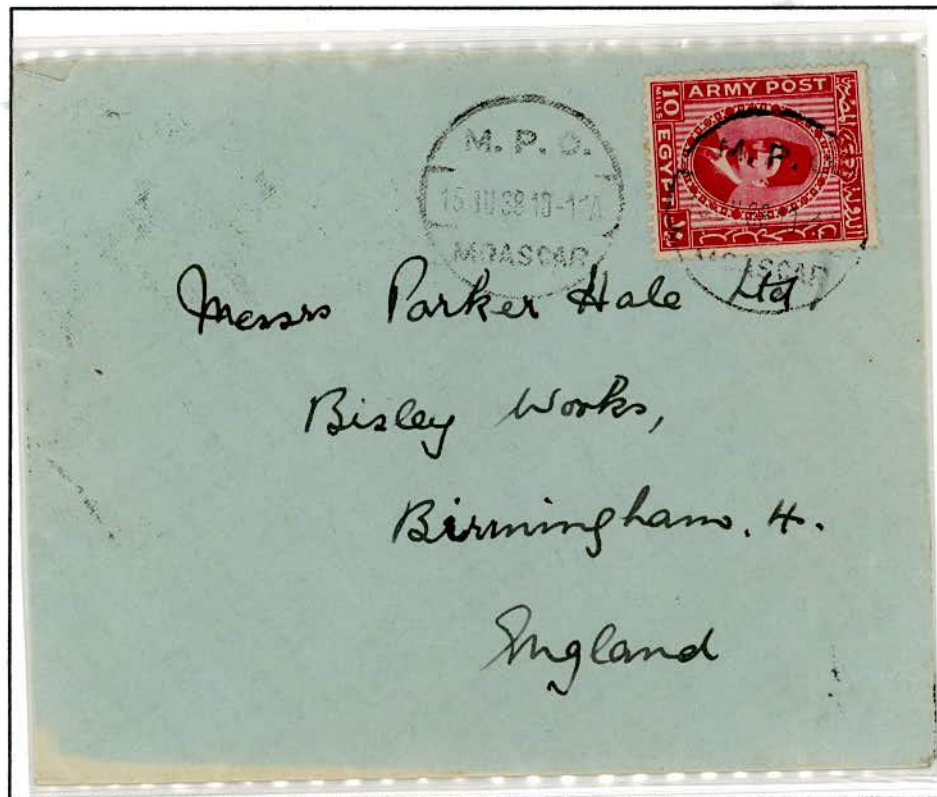
* Type 3: Only one cover recorded.

NAMED MILITARY POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. MOASCAR (type 2)

16 JU 38

The Military Post Office at Moascar opened on 1 November 1932 at the start of the postal concession, serving the army in Moascar and the Royal Air Force at Ismailia. The first datestamp was lost in early 1933 and was replaced with a similar one with M.P.O. being 2mm shorter (type 2). This second datestamp continued in use until the start of World War II when M.P.O. E.603 replaced it. The cover is backstamped ALEXANDRIA 16 JU 38.



TWO TYPES OF M.P.O. MOASCAR DATE STAMPS

Type	Layout	Diameter mm	Date Bars mm	M.P.O. mm	Earliest Recorded	Latest Recorded
1	Straight/Straight	26.5	7.5	18.5	11 NO 32	6 MR 33
2	Straight/Straight	26.5	7.5	16.5	5 AP 33	3 OC 39



Type 1



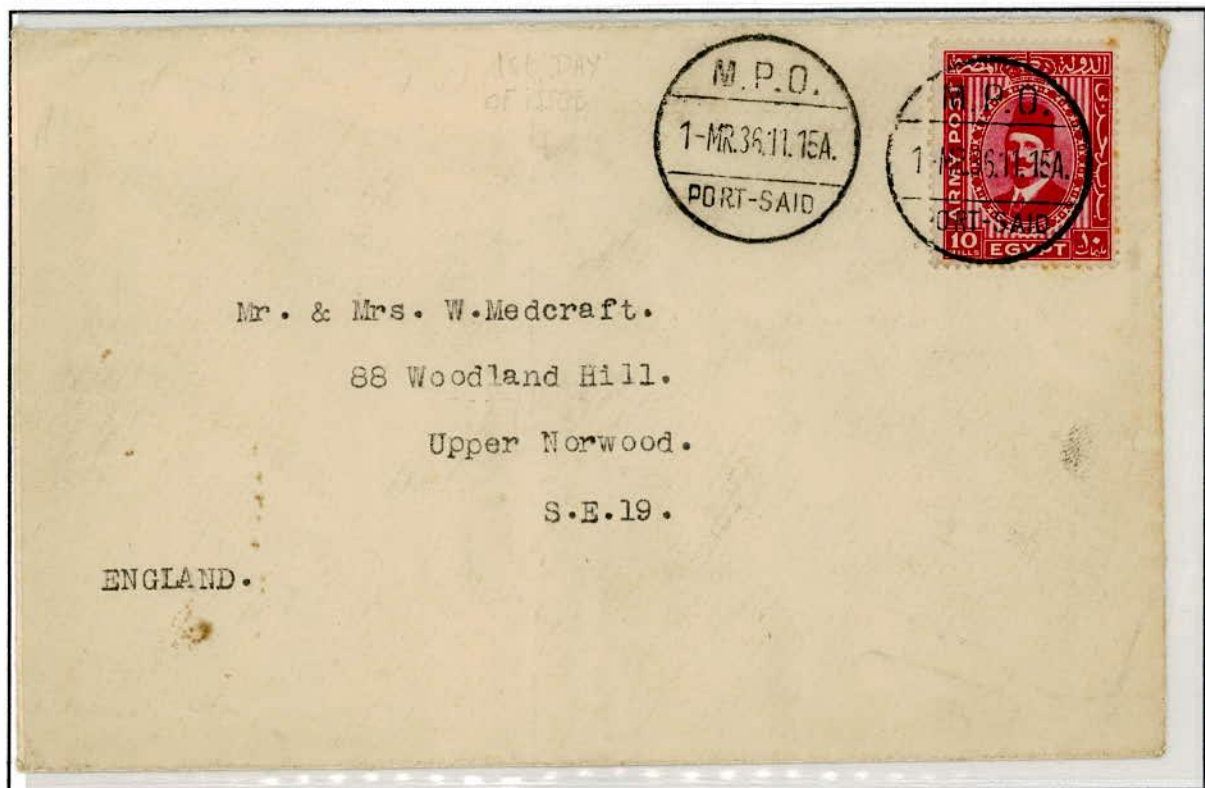
Type 2

NAMED MILITARY POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. PORT-SAID

1 MR 36

The Military Post Office at Port Said opened on 1 March 1936 and supposedly closed 24 January 1937, the same date that the military post offices at Alexandria and Abu Qir were closed. As with Alexandria, mail was then routed through the Egyptian civil post office. Situated at Navy House, it was used by military and naval personnel in the area. Only one datestamp was issued and very few covers have been recorded. The latest date known is February 4, 1937, which puts into question the 24 January post office closing date.¹



¹ This previously unknown cover was offered in an auction lot by Argyll-Etkin (London) on 28 February 2014.

CIVILIAN POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

ALEXANDRIA-ABU QIR & V.V.

16 MA 37

The military post office at the Royal Air Force base at Abu Qir closed on 24 January 1937 and all mail after that date was routed through the local Egyptian civil post office. This double-weight cover is postmarked with the travelling post office circular datestamp.



ABU QIR

18 DE 39

The cover is backstamped **ALEXANDRIA 18 DE 39** and has a weak censor handstamp in the lower left. The latest recorded date of the Abu Qir civil c.d.s. on a concession rate cover is 6 JA 40..

CIVILIAN POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

MARSA MATROUH

3 OC 36

The Military Post Office at Mersa-Matruh closed on 30 October 1936 and reopened about September 1938. In the interim period the personnel at the Royal Air Force facility used the civilian post office. As suggested by the cover below the civilian post office was also used prior to the closing of the Military Post Office. At that time the civilian post office had a slightly different spelling from that used on the MPO datestamps and the handstamp on the reverse of the cover.



SIDI GABER TRAFFIC D.

5 JL 39

After the Military Post Office at Alexandria was closed on 24 January 1937 mail from Mustapha Barracks was handled by the Sidi Gaber civilian post office. The postal noncommissioned officer who took the mail to the post office was also responsible for the delivery of incoming mail to the various units. The latest recorded date for the Sidi Gaber datestamp is 1 September 1939.

CIVILIAN POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

SIDI BISHR (STATION)

The military post office at Alexandria closed on January 24, 1937. The military postal authorities did not recognize the Sidi Bishr post office in Alexandria as a processing point for military correspondence. Therefore, mail posted there was subject to postage due. This cover postmarked 28 February 1938 apparently slipped through the ropes.



Ex Hobbs



Ex Hobbs

This letter postmarked 2 March 1938 was properly charged 4d postage due (equal to the 15 milliemes deficiency) upon arrival in the Irish Free State.

E600 SERIES DATESTAMPS

Shortly after the war began the named military post office datestamps were replaced by the E600 series with M.P.O. E.601 assigned to Cairo. The Series E600 were in turn replaced by double-ring datestamps issued after the Royal Engineers (Postal Section) formally took over the mail service on 24 September 1940. However, occasional use of the E600 series datestamps continued in order to satisfy the requirements of Australian and Indian Army postal needs.

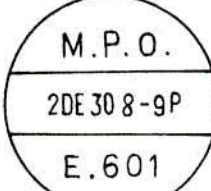
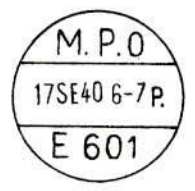
Initial Allotment of the E 600 Series of Datestamps¹

M.P.O. E.601	Cairo	M.P.O. E 602	Alexandria
B.P.O. E.602	Alexandria	M.P.O. E.603	Moascar
M.P.O. E.604	Port Said	F.P.O. E.605	Marsa Matrouth
F.P.O. E.606	El Daba	M.P.O. E.607	Sidi Gaber
M.P.O. E.608	Abbassia	F.P.O. E.609	Not used by British
F.P.O. E.610	Port Tewfik	F.P.O. E.611	Western Desert
F.P.O. E.612 to 614	Not issued	F.P.O. E.615	Baqqush and Sidi Haneish

Several of the datestamps (E609, 611 and 615) were in use for less than three months. E605, 606, 607, 608, 609, and 611 were borrowed by the Australians in November 1940 and used in Egypt and Palestine. Indian forces used E601, 602, 603, 604 and 615 in field post offices in Sudan and Eritrea. Not all of the datestamps are found on Army Post covers.

M.P.O. E601 CIRCULAR DATESTAMPS

Five M.P.O. E601 datestamps were issued, each distinguishable from the other by the diameter, distance between the date bars, or length of the M.P.O. The illustrations below are slightly smaller than the original size.

					
	Type 1*	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4	Type 5
Diameter (mm)	26	30	27	27	26
Bars (mm)	9	10	9	8.5	8
E.601 (mm)	12	12	8	11	12
Comment	Dot between E & 6	Dot between E & 6	No dot	No dot	No dot
Earliest Recorded	1 October 1939*	3 December 1939	22 July 1940	20 July 1940	7 August 1940
Latest Recorded	19 July 1940*	23 September 1940	21 September 1940	17 September 1940	23 September 1940

* Type 1 can be separated into type 1 and 1a. Type 1 is known used from 1 October 1939 to 29 November 1939. Type 1a has an elongated bar to the bottom of the E as a result of a merging of the letter E and the dot due to a worn and perhaps dirty datestamp. Type 1a is recorded from 8 February 1940 to 19 July 1940.

¹ "Egyptian Military Post Offices of the E600 series," by Alistair Kennedy, Forces Postal History Society Newsletter 261, Autumn 2004, Vol. XXVII, No. 1, pages 304 – 310.

E600 SERIES DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. E.601 (type 1) (Cairo)

7 NO 39

Airmail to England with an unusual green PASSED BY UNIT CENSOR marking. Recorded dates for the type 1 datestamp extend for less than two months, 1 October to 29 November 1939.



Envelope flap sealed with censor's label

M.P.O. E601 (type 1) (Cairo)

30 OC 39

This block of nine ten-millimes stamps probably franked a letter packet weighing from 161 to 180 grams

E600 SERIES DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. E.601 (type 1a) (Cairo)

4 MR 40

Covers are known with this circular datestamp from 8 February to 19 July 1940. Note the elongated bar to the bottom of the E which was the result of a merging of the letter E and the dot due to a worn and perhaps dirty datestamp. Some view this as an entirely separate datestamp but it is more like a variety of type 1 as the diameter and bar measurements are the same as type 1



Elongated E



M.P.O. E.601 (type 1a) (Cairo)

13 MA 40

E600 SERIES DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. E.601 (type 2) (Cairo)

11 MR 40

Airmail concession rate on honour envelope to England backstamped with B.P.O. E602 (no dot) 12 MR 40 at Alexandria. M.P.O. E.601 type 2 covers have recorded dates from 3 December 1939 to 23 September 1940.



M.P.O. E.601 (type2) (Cairo)

6 MA 40

Surface concession rate cover to Northern Ireland backstamped with B.P.O. E602 (no dot) 7 MA 40 at Alexandria. It has the PASSED BY UNIT CENSOR 19 marking.

E600 SERIES DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. E601 (type 3) (Cairo)

9 AU 40

This datestamp is only found on covers from 22 July to 21 September 1940.



Ex Hobbs¹

M.P.O. E601 (type 4) (Cairo)

24 AU 40

This control block of 4 (A/40 A/39) is cancelled with the curved (type 4) M.P.O. E601 c.d.s. Hobbs stated that he had seen only one cover (above) with the curved c.d.s. although others must exist as recorded dates range from 20 July to 17 September 1940. Note the absence of a dot after the letter O. It is censored by the DEPUTY CHIEF FIELD CENSOR.

¹ John E. O. Hobbs (1925-2009) was the author of *British Forces in Egypt Postal Service 1932 – 1940* (March 1984). Robson Lowe Ltd. sold his collection in June 1978.

E600 SERIES DATESTAMPS

B.P.O. E 602 (type 2) (Alexandria)

10 JU 40

Two datestamps were issued to the Alexandria Base Post Office, the scarce type 1 and the common type 2 that lacks the dot between E and 602. The mixed franking airmail cover sent by Wing Commander Donkin of the 103 Maintenance Unit of the Royal Air Force at Aboukir is overpaid by five milliemes, the concession rate being 40 milliemes. It is interesting to note that **the stamps are cancelled on the same day that Italy declared war on the United Kingdom.** On that day British Overseas Air Corporation suspended service to Europe and mail was flown to Durban, South Africa, and then went by ship to Great Britain.



TWO TYPES OF B.P.O. E602 DATE STAMPS

Type	Layout	Diameter mm	Date Bars mm	M.P.O. mm	Earliest Recorded	Latest Recorded
1	Straight/Straight	26	9	12.5	13 OC 39	11 JL 40
2	Straight/Straight	26	9	14	10 OC 39	19 SE 40



Type 1



Type 2

E600 SERIES DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. E.602 (Alexandria)

19 JA 40

This mixed franking airmail honour envelope is postmarked with the relatively scarce M.P.O. E.602 datestamp with recoded dates of use between 3 January and 16 May 1940.



M.P.O. E.603 (Moascar)

5 MR 40

M.P.O. E.603 was assigned to the army and the Royal Air Force station in and around Ismailia and Moascar. One type of datestamp was issued with a dot between the E and 6. The c.d.s. is known used from 27 October 1939 to 23 September 1940 when it was replaced by Field Post Office 173. The cover is backstamped **B.P.O. E602 6 MR 40** (type 2) at Alexandria and bears three different censor markings including the CHIEF FIELD CENSOR and the Egyptian civil censor.

E600 SERIES DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. E.603 (Moascar)

29 JL 40

This cover is censored with the Royal Navy tombstone censor mark used on ships of the Australian Navy. The difference between this and the regular Royal Navy mark is that line below the signature consists of dashes - - - - - and not the normal dots It also has the rectangular PASSED BY NAVAL CENSOR 3796 cachet. The cover was written on HMAS Stuart, censored on 26 July and processed at the Military Post Office at Moascar on 29 July.



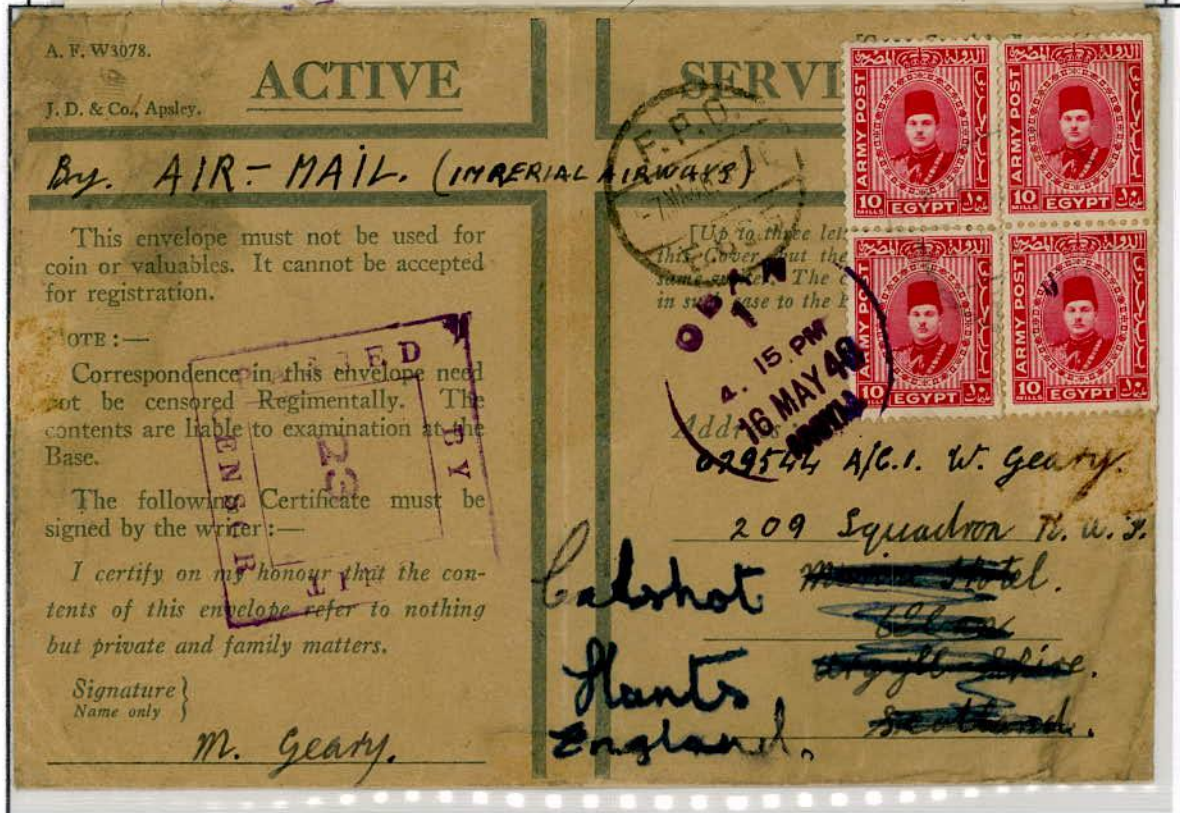
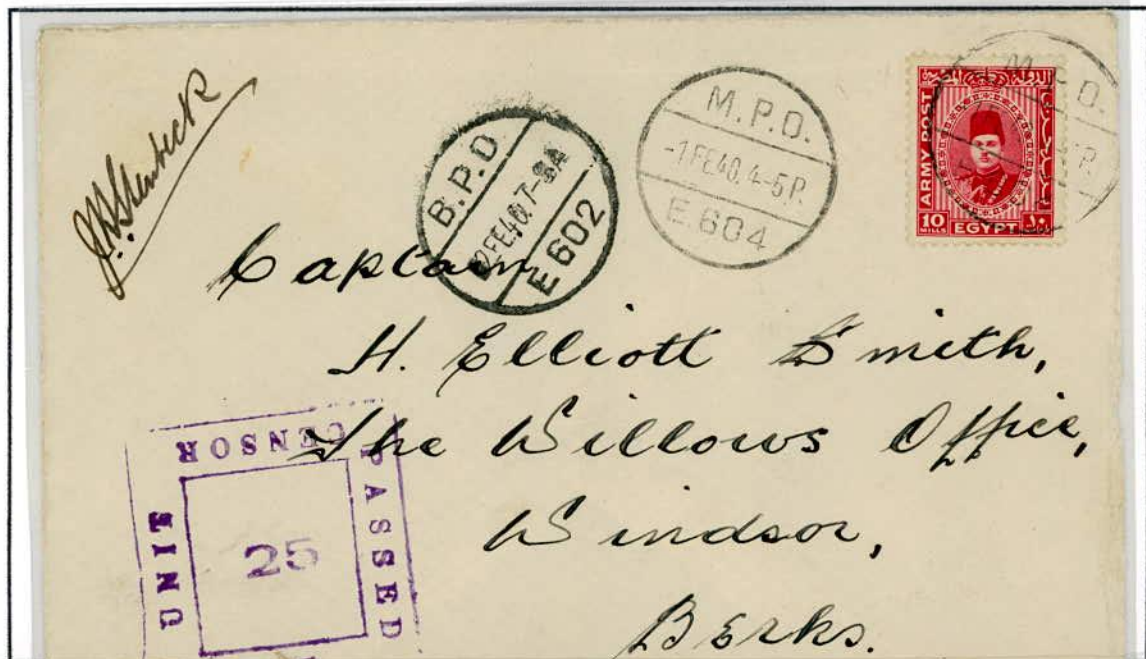
HMS Stuart, commissioned in the Royal Navy in 1918, was transferred to the Royal Australian Navy in 1933. She was recommissioned for war service on 1 September 1939. Together with four Australian V-class destroyers the ship went to the Mediterranean in December 1939 to form the 19th Destroyer Division (later the 10th Destroyer Flotilla). HMAS Stuart was present at the Battles of Cape Matapan and Calabria and on 17 August 1940 she took part in the operation of bombarding Italian troop concentrations near Bardia. She returned to Australia in September 1941 for repairs and refitting, spending the rest of the war in Australia and New Guinea waters. She was sold for scrap in 1947.

E600 SERIES DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. E.604 (Port Said)

1 FE 40

M.P.O. E.604 datestamp was located at Port Said serving the military, naval and air force units in the area. One datestamp was issued with recorded use between 19 October 1939 and 12 September 1940. This surface rate cover has the transit c.d.s. **B.P.O E602 2 FE 40** from Alexandria.



F.P.O. E.605 (Mersa Matruh)

8 JA 40 & 7 MA 40

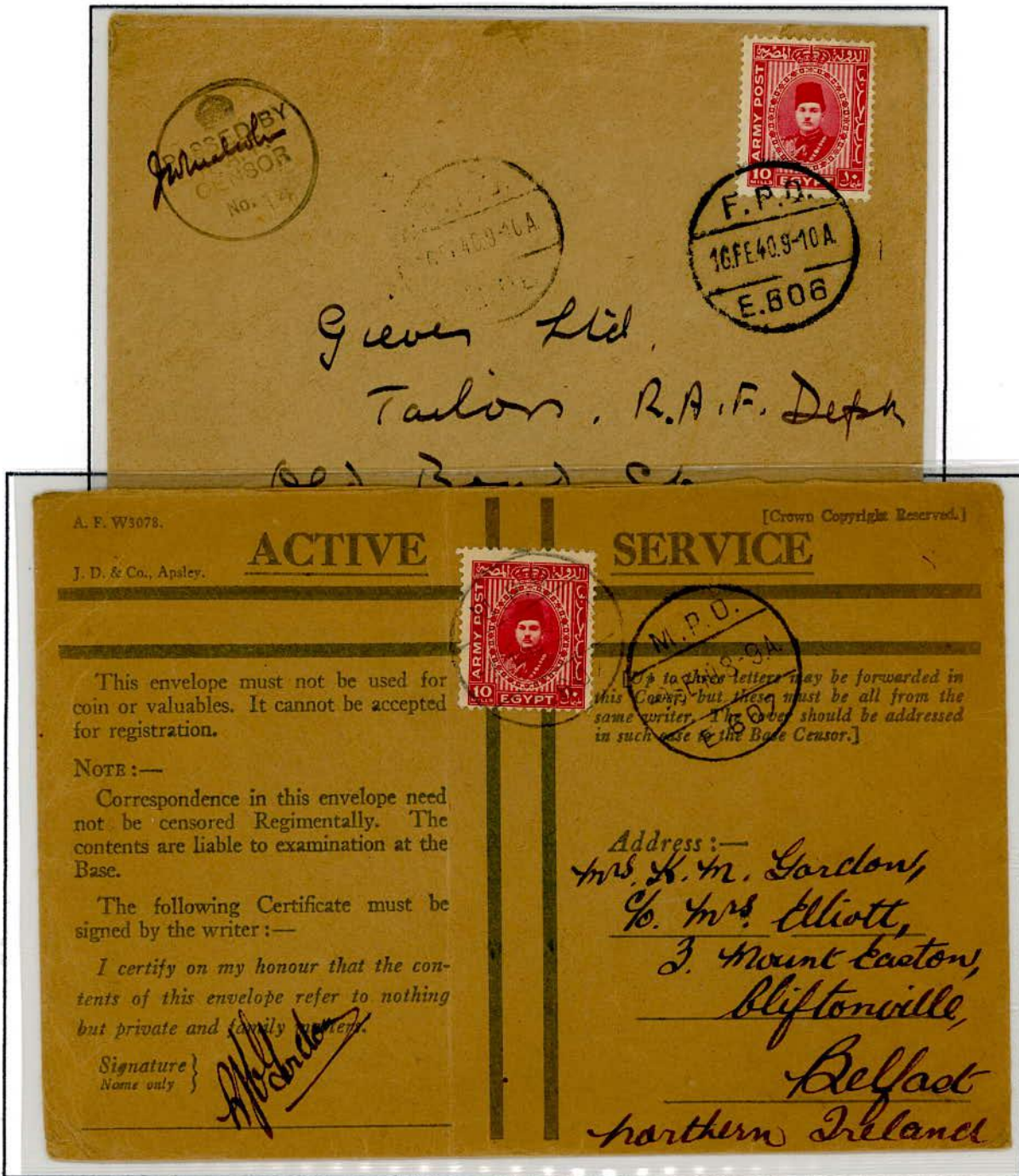
F.P.O. E.605 was assigned to Mersa Matruh with recorded used from 20 October 1939 to 5 September 1940. The datestamp was lent to the Australians in November and returned to British Army Headquarters on 30 July 1941.

E600 SERIES DATESTAMPS

F.P.O. E.606 (El Daba)

16 FE 40

F.P.O. E606 was located at the small village of El Daba, about 110 miles west of Alexandria. The datestamp is recorded used between 24 October 1939 and 22 September 1940. It was loaned to the Australians in November 1940 and returned in late 1942 or early 1943. The cover bears the army censor marking PASSED BY R.A.F. CENSOR No. 15 and is backstamped with B.P.O. E 602 16 FE 40 at Alexandria.



M.P.O. E.607 (Sidi Gaber)

9 SE 40

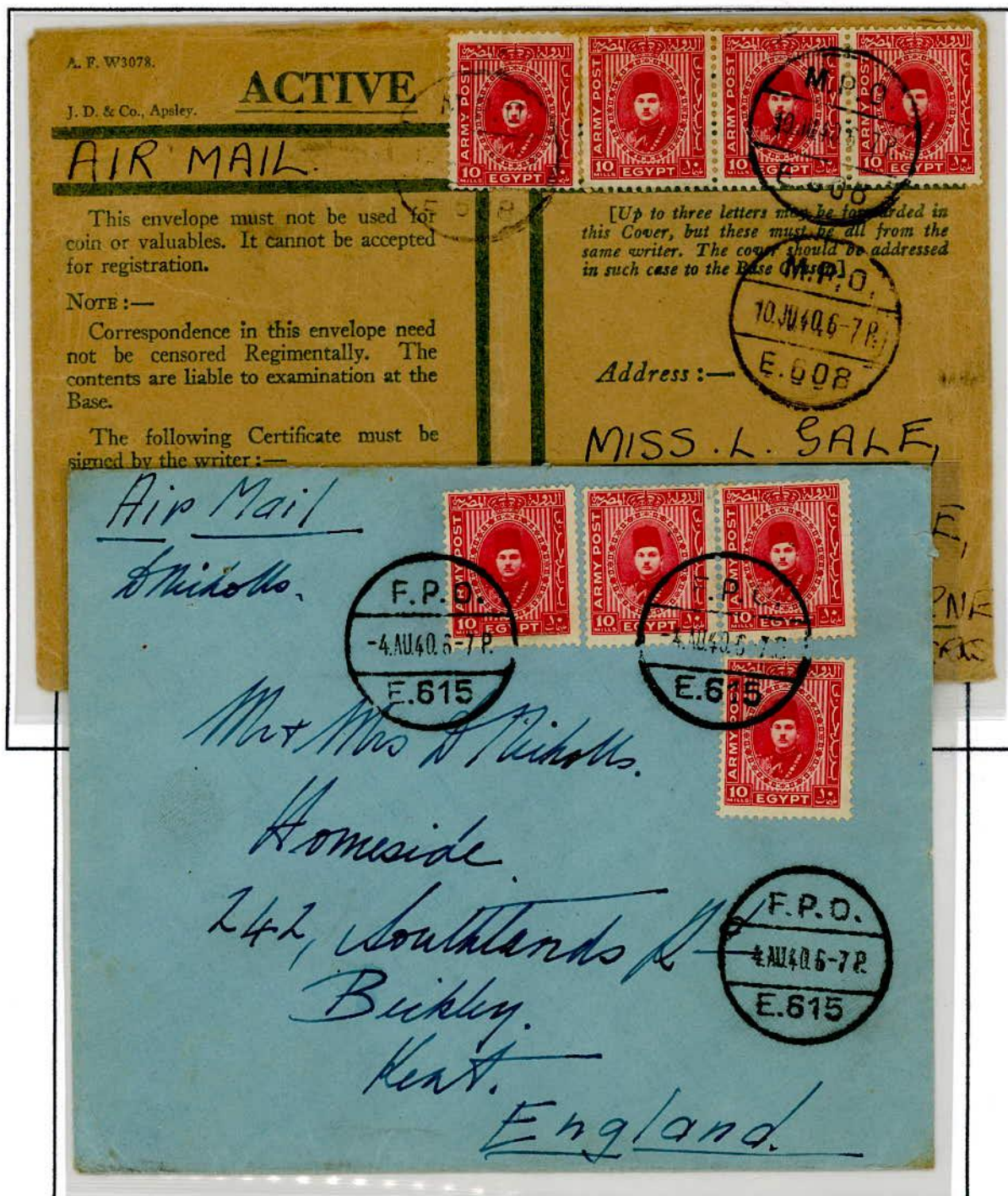
M.P.O. E.607 was located at Mustapha Barracks in the Alexandrian suburb of Sidi Gaber. It is known on covers dated 9 January 1940 to 23 September 1940. In November the Australian Army Postal Service borrowed the datestamp, returning it in late 1942 or early 1943. This cover is backstamped B.P.O. 9 SE 40.

E600 SERIES DATESTAMPS

M.P.O. E.608 (Abbassia)

10 JU 40

M.P.O. E.608 was assigned to the military post office in Abbassia, Cairo in June 1940. The earliest recorded date is 4 June and the latest 23 September making it one of the scarcer E600 series postmarks. This cover, postmarked the date Italy declared war on Great Britain, is backstamped **B.P.O. E602 12 JU 40**. M.P.O. E.608 was withdrawn from service when it was replaced by the double-ring Field Post Office 188 c.d.s. on 24 September. Placed in storage it was transferred to the Australian Army in November 1940.



F.P.O. E.615 (Sidi Haneish)

4 AU 40

British Forces in the Western Desert at Sidi Haneish used datestamp F.P.O. E.615. It saw service for only about three months with the earliest recorded date of 7 July 1940 and the latest recorded 23 September 1940. The datestamp was turned over to the Indian Forces in late 1940 and saw use in Egypt and Sudan.

BASE ARMY POST OFFICE DATESTAMP

B.A.P.O. 4

3 MA 41

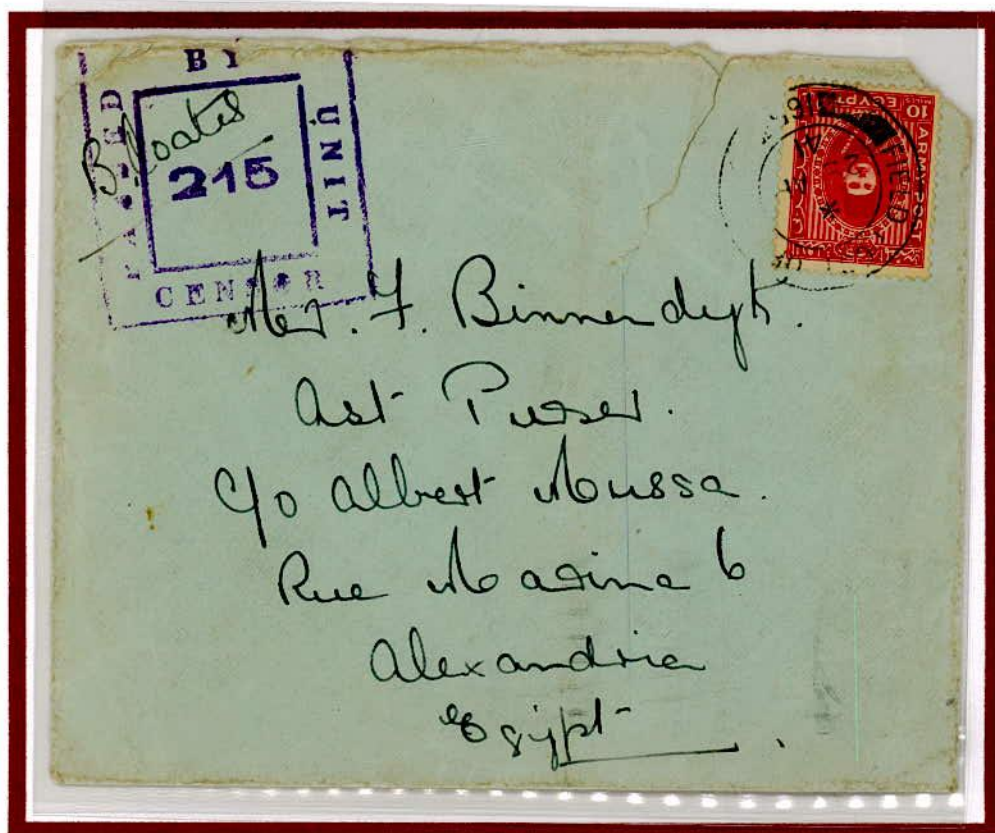


Base Army Post Office 4, located at Cairo, the headquarters of the British Troops in Egypt, was issued with BAPO datestamps on 10 December 1940. They were not immediately placed in service, using FPO 169 and 190 instead. In fact, the earliest known use on Army Post covers is 4 April 1941 and the latest 17 May 1941

FIELD POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

F.P.O. 165

28 AP 41



The series E600 datestamps were replaced on 24 September 1940 by the standard British double-ring FIELD POST OFFICE c.d.s. when the Royal Engineers (Postal Section) formally took over postal operations. They were supplanted on 1 May 1941 by the Egypt Postage Prepaid datestamps when the postal arrangements for military mail were changed and surface mail was allowed free of charge.

F.P.O. 165 was a short-lived datestamp as far as the Army Post period is concerned. It has been identified as being in Port Tewfik, Egypt on 25 April and in Palestine from 26 April to 3 July 1941. This cover to Alexandria and posted in Palestine shows an unusual use of the Army Post stamp

FIELD POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

F.P.O. 166

23 AP 41

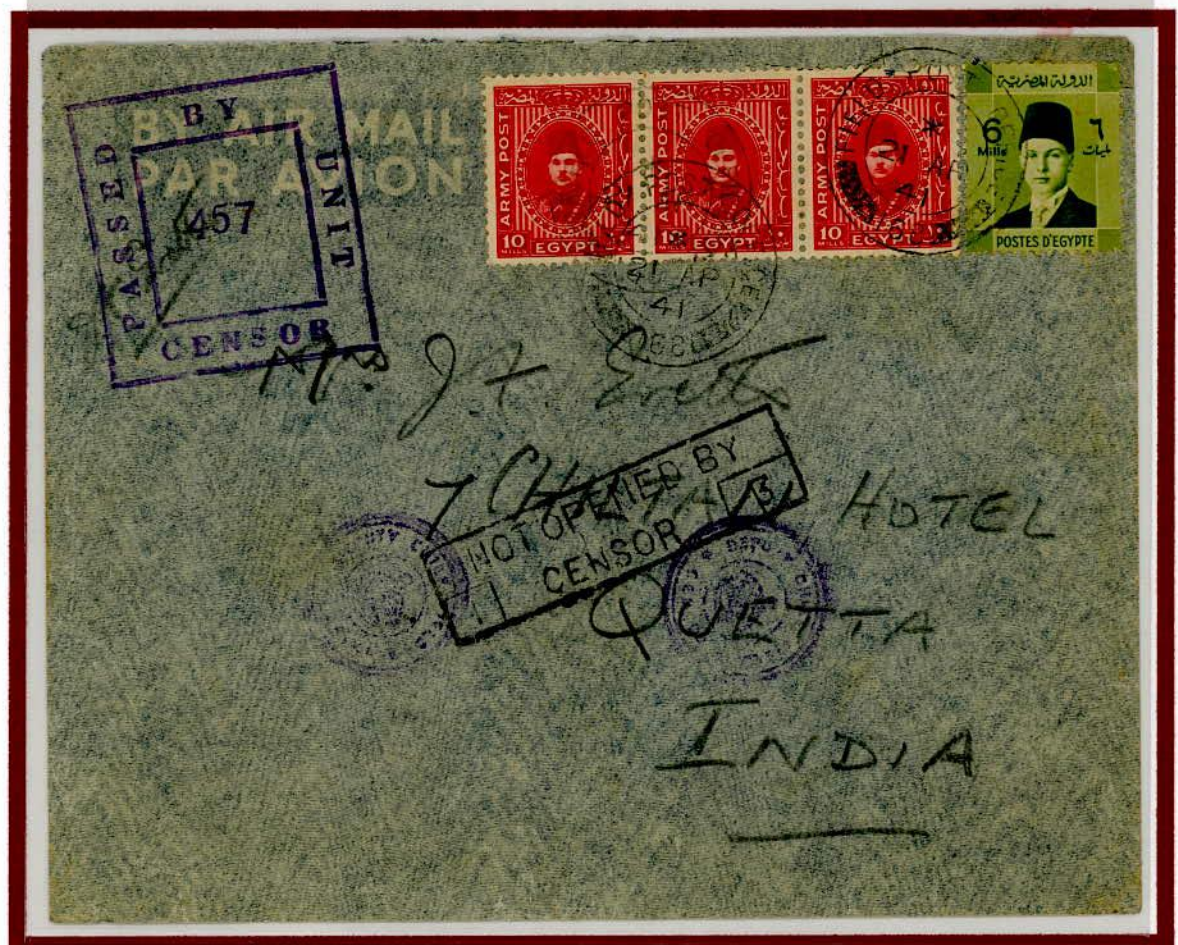
F.P.O. 166 is another short-lived datestamp found on Army Post stamps. It was assigned to the Base Army Post Office in Cairo with recorded dates from 22 to 26 April 1941.



F.P.O. 168

21 AP 41

F.P.O. 168 was allotted to the Base Army Post Office in Cairo. It entered service late in the Army Post period with recorded dates from 21 April to 25 April 1941. This airmail cover is underpaid by 4 milliemes and no postage due was charged. It bears three censor markings including the seldom seen NOT OPENED BY CENSOR 3.



FIELD POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

F.P.O. 169

26 NO 40

FPO 169 was first used on HM Transport Queen Mary between 5 and 27 July 1940. It was allocated to General Headquarters in Cairo. The earliest recorded date is 26 September 1940 and the latest 21 April 1941. This airmail cover from Sapper J. Purdie, Royal Engineers, was received January 6, 1941.



FIELD POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

F.P.O. 170

26 JA 41

F.P.O. 170 was allotted to the 5th Line of Communications Postal Unit at Port Tewfik. The earliest known date is 30 September 1940 and the latest is 23 April 1941. The contents of this cover to Palestine were written in Hebrew and the cover is backstamped with the arrival c.d.s. ALLENBY ROAD/A/29 JA/41.



F.P.O. 171

24 SP 40

Allotted to the 5th Line of Communications Postal Unit, F.P.O 171 replaced the M.P.O. E601 datestamp at Cairo when the Royal Engineers (Postal Section) took over military postal operations on 24 September 1940. Used on mail from the Royal Air Force Base at Heliopolis with recorded dates from 24 September 1940 to 17 April 1941, it was moved to Palestine later that month. This cover is **postmarked on the first day of use of the datestamp** and has the PASSED BY R.A.F. CENSOR No. 7 marking. The cover is backstamped LONDON S.W.1 / 2 NOV 1940.

FIELD POST OFFICE DATESTAMP

FIELD POST OFFICE 171

9 NO 40

The issuance of the three milliemes small Army Post stamp on December 16, 1939, was too late to be used by the troops for the timely sending of Christmas and New Year cards. The stamps were withdrawn and reissued in October 1940. Members of the Egypt Study Circle have recorded 33 covers bearing a single three milliemes stamp for the unsealed holiday card rate to destinations in the British Empire. Two of philatelic origin (from one philatelist to another) are postmarked 16 JA 40 and addressed to England. Of the remaining 31 covers one has a retta cancel and no datestamp and one has an unclear date with a December 1940 postmark. The other 28 are postmarked from 23 October to 14 December 1940. The destinations of the 31 covers properly used during the correct October/December 1940 period are as follows: England, 6; Northern Ireland, 1; Irish Free State, 1; Scotland, 2; Wales, 1; New Zealand, 8; Australia, 7; India, 4, and Egypt, 1. Note that the postal concession rate for holiday surface mail was suspended between 6 and 9 December and letters and cards were carried free.



Endorsed "*Card Only In English*" this is one of four recorded covers to India with the solo 3 milliemes small Army Post stamp, and one of the two covers posted at the Royal Air Force base at Heliopolis. The backstamp reads 10 DEC. 40/11:45 A.M. The cover bears the circular **DEPUTY CHIEF FIELD CENSOR** and the Indian triangular **PASSED BY CENSOR** handstamps.

FIELD POST OFFICE DATESTAMP

FIELD POST OFFICE 171

2 DE 40

There were no regulations prohibiting the use of the 3 milliemes Army Post stamp for other authorized postal purposes. Due to a shortage of 1 millieme coins the stamps were sold in multiples of five so there were extra to go around and not to be wasted. The honour envelope below shows the legitimate use of the three milliemes stamp along with two of the ten milliemes to make up 23 milliemes of the 40 milliemes airmail concession postal rate. The rest of the rate is comprised of various young King Farouk stamps totaling 17 milliemes. F.P.O. 171 was used on mail from the Royal Air Force base at Heliopolis.



FIELD POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

F.P.O. 172

23 OC 40

The Field Post Office 172 datestamp replaced B.P.O. E.602 used in Alexandria. It was assigned to the 5th Line of Communications Postal Unit and known used 24 September 1940 to 24 April 1941. This surface rate letter has the large crown PASSED BY CENSOR No. 466 handstamp.



F.P.O. 173

12 JA 41

F.P.O 173 replaced the M.P.O. E603 datestamp at Moascar/Ismailia on the Suez Canal. Allocated to the 5th Line of Communications Postal Unit, it served the army and Royal Air Force units stationed in the area. The datestamp is known used from 24 September 1940 to at least 25 April 1941. This airmail cover has the PASSED BY R.A.F. CENSOR No 4 marking in red, not the usual purple or black..

FIELD POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

F. P. O. 186

11 JA 41

The military post office at Port Said – M.P.O. E604 – was redesignated to F.P.O. 186 on 24 September 1940. The new datestamp is found on Army Post covers dated from the redesignation to 23 April 1941. The return address on the envelope flap is *THE PICCADILLY TEA CLUB* with *PORT SAID* inked over.



F. P. O 187

21 OC 40

F.P.O. 187 replaced M.P.O. E.607 which was used at the Mustapha Barracks, Sidi Gaber near Alexandria. Known dates on Army Post covers are from 28 September 1940 to 25 April 1941.

FIELD POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

F.P.O. 188

3 NO 40

F.P.O. 188 replaced M.P.O. E.608 at Abbassia in Cairo. Recorded dates are from 24 September 1940 to 23 April 1941. Greece was not an allowed destination for postal concession stamps and this should have a total of 22 milliemes Egyptian postage. This letter was posted just a week after the start of the Greco-Italian War.



F. P. O. 189

19 DE 40

The Field Post Office 189 datestamp, assigned to the 5th Line of Communications Post Unit, was located at Geneifa on the western bank of the Great Bitter Lake. Geneifa was a huge ordnance camp, a transit camp, and a training base for No. 52 Commando. Army Post covers are known with dates from 23 October 1940 to 30 April 1941. Registered covers are not too common from the war front. The registry fee is 30 milliemes and the airmail postage another 40 milliemes

FIELD POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

F. P. O. 189

30 AP 41

The Field Post Office 189 c.d.s. assigned to the 5th Line of Communications Post Unit, was located with the military camp at Geneifa. Army Post covers are recorded with dates from 24 October 1940 to 30 April 1941. **This cover is postmarked on the last day of valid use of the Army Post stamp.** The next day ordinary surface mail became free and the EGYPT POSTAGE PREPAID datestamp came into use. Also, troops could use the stamps of their own country to pay for airmail postage.

 BY AIR MAIL	IVE	SER	
BY AIR MAIL			
This envelope must not be used for coin or valuables. It cannot be accepted for registration.	[Up to three covers may be sent in this Cover, but by the same writer. The writer must sign the back of the cover in such case to the Base Censor.]		
NOTE:— Correspondence in this envelope need not be censored Regimentally. The contents are liable to examination at the Base.	T.M. Address <u>Miss Rison</u>		
The following Certificate must be signed by the writer:—	<u>Alma House</u>		
I certify on my honour that the contents of this envelope refer to nothing but private and family matters.	<u>Dinas Davis</u>		
Signature } Name only }	<u>Barcliff S Waters</u> <u>England</u>		

SMALL ARMY POST STAMPS

FIELD POST OFFICE DATESTAMP

FIELD POST OFFICE 190

Combination Franking

20 JA 41



F.P.O. 190 was assigned to the General Head Quarters in Cairo. The airmail rate to Hong Kong was 75 milliemes consisting of 10 milliemes basic concession letter rate plus a 65 milliemes airmail surcharge. The three milliemes small Army Post stamp is used in combination with a 2 milliemes "Boy King" Egyptian stamp and seven 10 milliemes Army Post stamps to make the required postage. This piece bears *PASSED CENSOR/4* in a triangle, a Hong Kong censor marking

FIELD POST OFFICE DATESTAMP

FIELD POST OFFICE 190

14 FE 41

Three blocks of four and a pair of the small Army Post 3 milliemes stamps making up the 40 milliemes concession airmail rate with 2 mills to spare. Field Post Office 190 served the General Headquarters at Cairo with recorded dates from 20 October 1940 to 30 April 1941. The cover is censored by **PASSED BY UNIT CENSOR 310.**



FIELD POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

F.P.O. 190

16 DE 40

FPO 190 was used at General Headquarters Cairo from 20 October 1940 to 30 April 1941.



F.P.O. 201

28 FE 41

This F.P.O. 201 datestamp was assigned to the 5th Line of Communications Postal Unit at Heliopolis (likely the 3rd Battalion Coldstream Guards) with recorded dates of only 13 February 1941 to 6 April 1941.

FIELD POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

F.P.O. 242

17 JU 41

While EGYPT POSTAGE PREPAID datestamps came into service on 1 May 1941, the FIELD POST OFFICE c.d.s. continued in use. EPP datestamps were used to cancel stamps and the FPOs were used for money orders, registration, and the like. The mixed franking on this piece is cancelled with an unclear EGYPT POSTAGE PREPAID. Postage was underpaid so the postage due stamps were added in London (cancellation unclear). The registration label is postmarked with the still used FIELD POST OFFICE 242 c.d.s. which was assigned to the 7th Armoured Division now at Aboukir. It is recorded from 1 May to 1 July 1941.

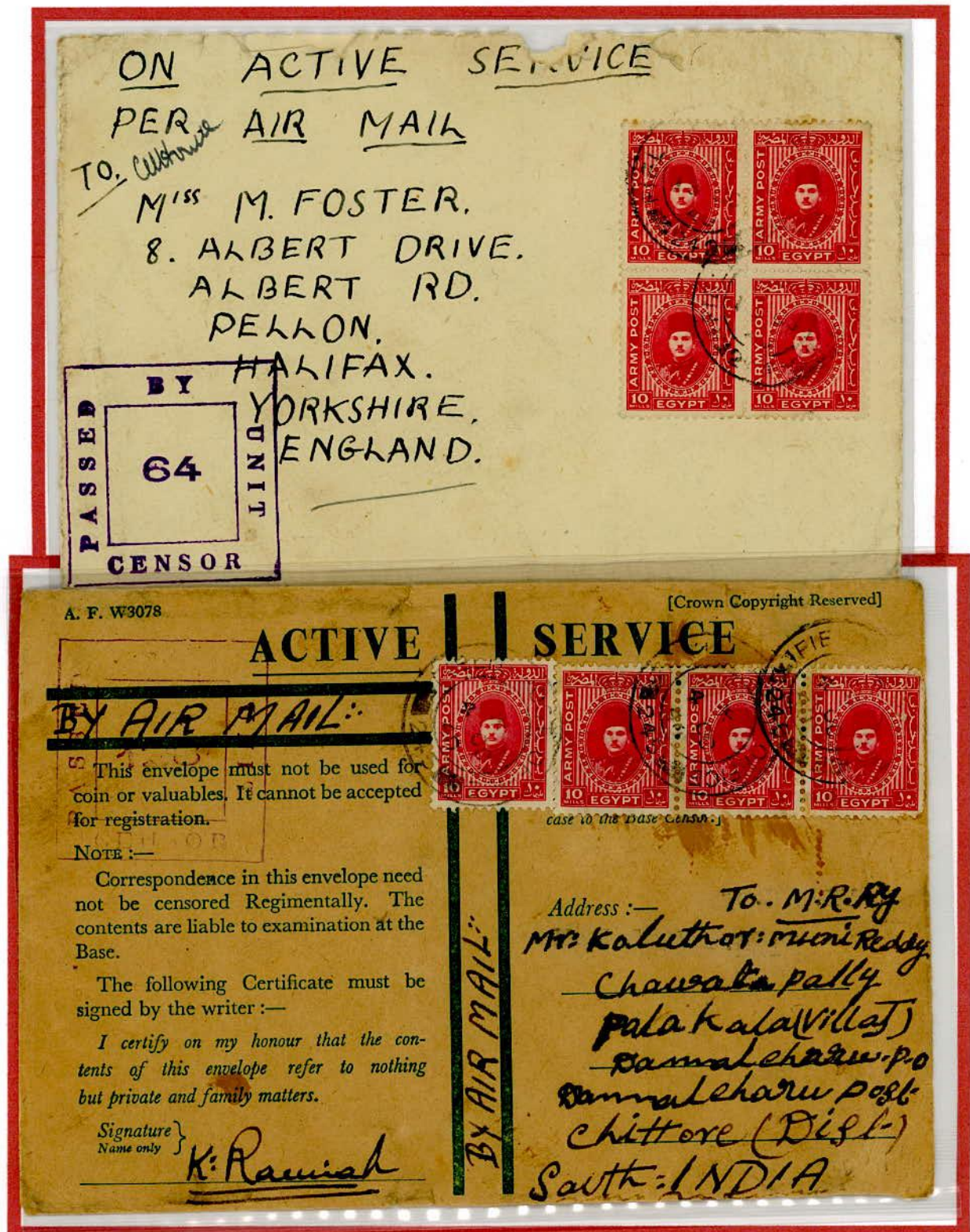


FIELD POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

F. P. O. 242

13 OC 40

F.P.O. 242 replaced F.P.O. E.605 at Mersa Matruh, the base of the 7th Armoured Division (*The Desert Rats*) until early January 1941, when the Division moved to Aboukir. It is found on Army Post covers from 13 October 1940 (the cover below) to 1 July 1941.



F. P. O. 245

4 OC 40

This datestamp replaced M.P.O. E.615 at Sidi Haneish on 24 September 1940. Assigned to the 7th Armored Division at the Headquarters of the Western Defense Force, it is known from 4 October 1940 to 9 January 1941. This is the earliest recorded date.

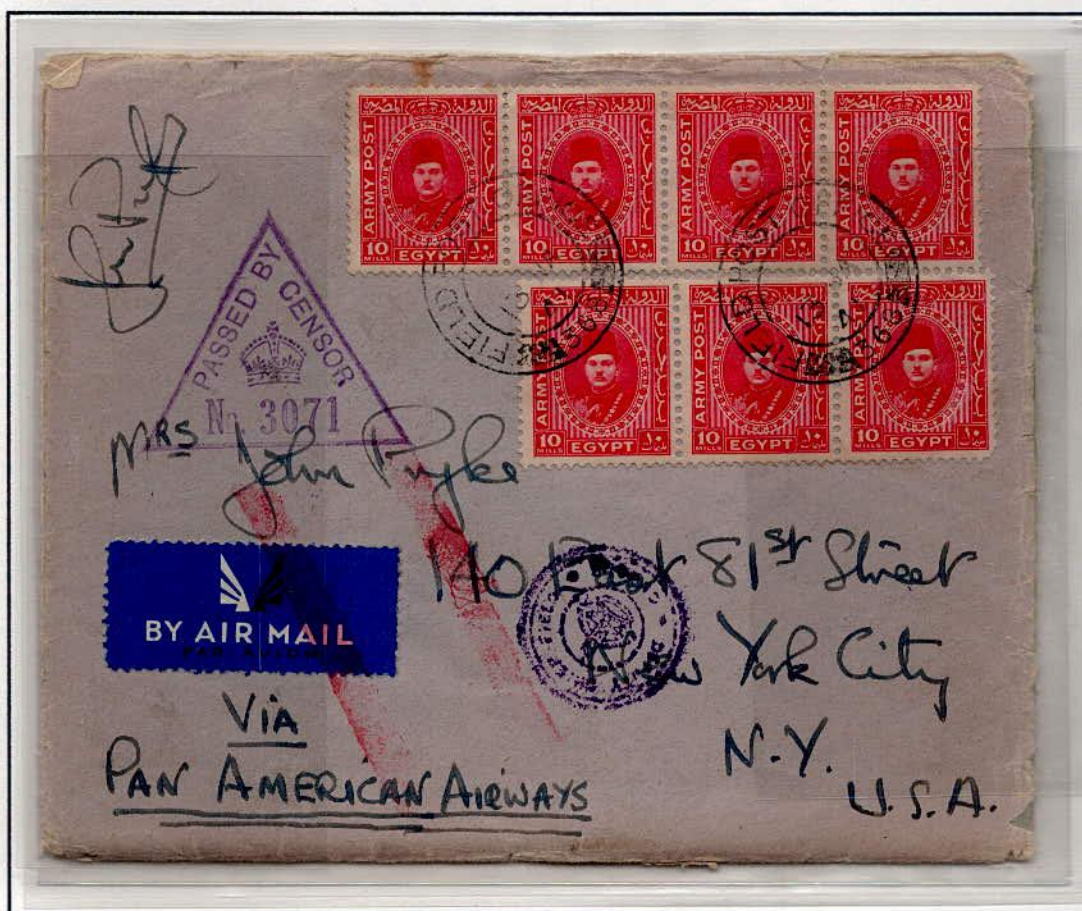
FIELD POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

F.P.O. 368

13 JA 41

The F.P.O. 368 datestamp was allotted to the 2nd Armoured Division in June 1940 when it was undergoing training in the United Kingdom. The division was sent to the Egyptian Western Desert in late 1940 before moving into Libya in January 1941. Dates of use in Egypt/Libya are reported from 6 January to 12 March 1941. The datestamp was lost or destroyed when the Italian 10th Bersaglieri Regiment and troops of the German Afrika Corps captured most of the Division at Mechili in a pincer movement on 8 April 1941. Some personnel escaped and were evacuated from Tobruk. On 10 May 1941 the division was officially disbanded and not reformed.

This cover was sent by a captain in the Light Repair Section, Royal Army Ordnance Corps to his wife in New York City, an unauthorized destination for covers with Army Post stamps. However, regulations were relaxed after the war started. The cover has a total of 212 mills of postage—21 x 10 mills Army Post stamps and 2 x 1 mill "Boy King" stamps—for transmission by Pan American World Airways. The basic surface rate was 22 mills plus 190 mills for a double-weight letter. The cover went from Cairo to Singapore by B.O.A.C., then on to Sydney via QUANTAS and finally to the United States by Pan Am. There aren't any transit markings on the envelope.



Scan of back of envelope, reduced

FIELD POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS

F.P.O. 372

3 FE 41

The F.P.O. 372 datestamp was allotted to the 3rd Armoured Brigade of the 2nd Armoured Division in 1940 when it was based in the United Kingdom. The division was sent to the Egyptian Western Desert in late 1940 before moving into Libya in January 1941. Dates of use are reported from 29 January to 4 March 1941. The datestamp was captured or destroyed when the Italian 10th Bersaglieri Regiment and troops of the German Afrika Corps captured most of the Division in a pincer movement on 8 April 1941. Some units escaped and were evacuated from Tobruk. On 10 May 1941 the division was officially disbanded and not reformed.

A.F. W3078. *By AIR MAIL*
ACTIVE
P.A. & Co. Ltd., London
PAR AVION.

This envelope must not be used for coin or valuables. It cannot be accepted for registration.

NOTE :—
Correspondence in this envelope need not be censored Regimentally. The contents are liable to examination at the Base.

The following Certificate must be signed by the writer :—
I certify on my honour that the contents of this envelope refer to nothing but private and family matters.

Signature }
Name only }

Smith
PROCESSED BY CENSOR
No 3142

[Crown Copyright Reserved]

SERVICE

in the field

Address :— *M^r G. Smith*
17 King Edward Rd
New Barnet
Herts.

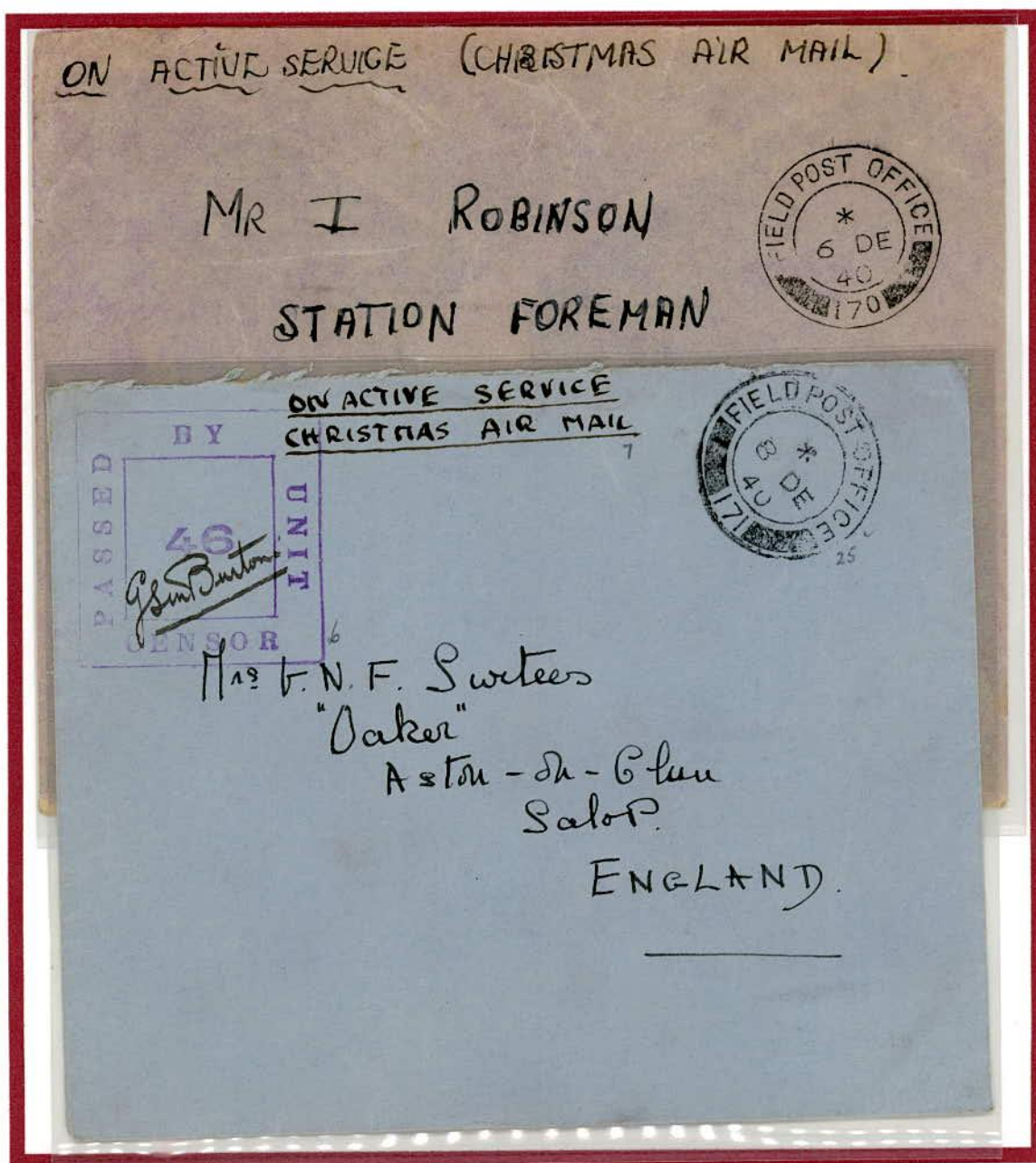
**FIELD POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS
ON ACTIVE SERVICE CHRISTMAS AIR MAIL.**

Both Hobbs (p. 75) and Smith (p. 719) are wrong when they state that the postal concession for surface letters was cancelled in November/December 1940. What occurred was a special suspension of the postal concession allowing military and naval personnel of the Middle East Command to send one letter each by airmail without the payment of postage. Each letter had to be marked **ON ACTIVE SERVICE CHRISTMAS AIR MAIL**. Letters were postmarked between the 6th and 9th of December 1940. After sorting, the mail (approximately 85,000 letters) was dispatched by air to Lagos, Nigeria where it connected with a special flight to the United Kingdom. The mail arrived in the United Kingdom on 21 December.

F.P.O. 170

6 DE 40

Mena Camp, Cairo



F.P.O. 171

8 DE 40

PASSED BY UNIT CENSOR 46 is an Army marking used at the Heliopolis R.A.F. base.

FIELD POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS
ON ACTIVE SERVICE CHRISTMAS AIR MAIL.

F.P.O. 171

9 DE 40

This cover originated in Greece as indicated by the double circle PASSED BY UNIT CENSOR 7 marking. Royal Air Force squadrons were deployed in Greece in November 1940. The cover is postmarked at the Heliopolis R.A.F. base



F.P.O. 188

9 DE 40

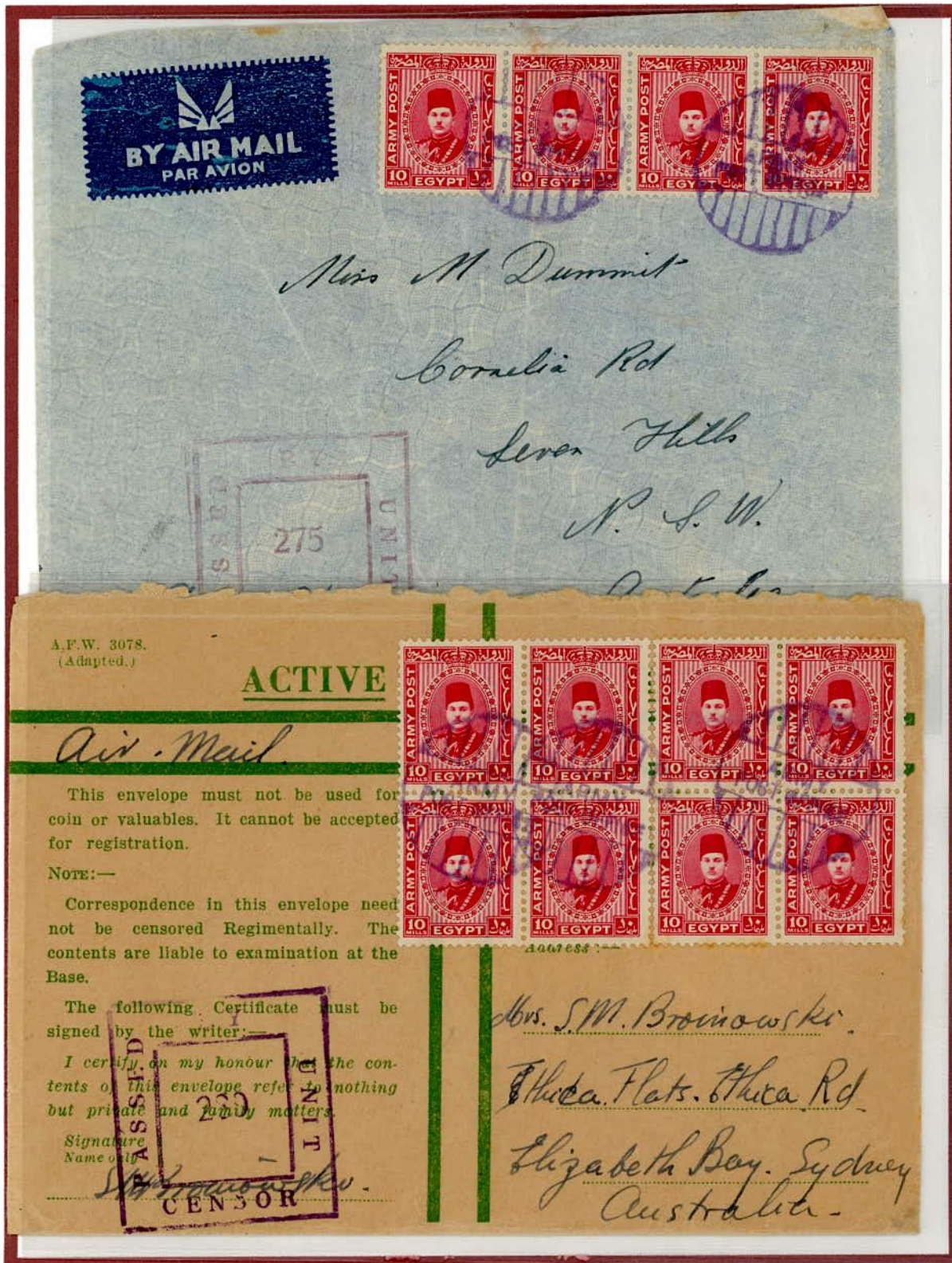
F.P.O. 188 was used at Abbassia.

AUSTRALIAN ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

Borrowed Cancellor

ARMY POST OFFICE ("dumb" canceller)

The ARMY POST OFFICE "dumb" cancellers were normally used to cancel stamps on parcels. The Australian Base Post Office in Cairo borrowed the handstamp from the British. Considered among the scarcer postmarks on cover, it was used for a short time around September/October 1940.



PASSED
 BY UNIT
 CENSOR 275

PASSED
 BY UNIT
 CENSOR 280

Double weight letter — postage should have been 70 milliemes, not 80.

AUSTRALIAN ARMY POSTAL SERVICE
Borrowed Datestamps

Issued to Australian forces that arrived in England in June 1940, the Field Post Office 443 and 444 datestamps made their way to Egypt via Palestine when the troops were transferred there in January 1941. F.P.O. 443 was used at the Line of Communications post office situated in the Atlantic Hotel in Alexandria during January to May 1941. F.P.O. 444 was used by Egypt Lines of Communications Postal Unit at the stationary Post Office at Ikingi Maryut near Alexandria from about March to November 1941. This datestamp was returned to the British Headquarters Middle East in January 1943.

F.P.O. 443

26 JA 41



F.P.O. 444

17 AP 41

AUSTRALIAN ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

Borrowed Datestamps

The 18th Australian Infantry Brigade borrowed the F.P.O. E605 datestamp when it arrived from England in January 1941. The Brigade was engaged around Giarabub Oasis in Libya during February and March when it returned to Ikingi Maryut, Egypt. The datestamp was returned to British Headquarters, Middle East in July 1941. The recorded dates of use are 6 February 1941 to 7 March 1941.

F.P.O. E.605

6 FE 41

Earliest recorded date



F.P.O. E.605

Free surface rate

28 FE 41

When Australian troops moved across the border to Cyrenaica, Libya the forces were allowed free postage for surface mail but postage for airmail was still required.

AUSTRALIAN ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

Borrowed Datestamps

M.P.O. E.606

3 MR 41

Another borrowed British datestamp, F.P.O. E.606 (originally at El Daba), was allotted to the Postal Off-Loading Unit at Suez. It was in use from March to December 1941 and returned around December 1942/January 1943. Note the purple datestamp known from 3 March to at least 7 April 1941.



M.P.O. E.608

24 APR 41

The borrowed datestamp M.P.O. E.608 was used by the Australian 1 Base Postal Unit in Cairo from December 1940 to mid-March 1941, when it was transferred to the Australian General Hospital in Kantara. The datestamp went to Australia when the hospital returned there in 1943.

AUSTRALIAN ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

In September 1940 Australian army troops of the 6th Division moved from Palestine to Egypt, establishing a sub-Base Post Office in Cairo with the A.M.1. datestamp. The c.d.s. was withdrawn in July 1941 and reallocated to Mersa Matruh and then to Kantara where it was used as late as September 1942. The blue ink used for the cancellations suggests that the postmark was recently introduced into service.

ARMY P.O. A.M. 1.

16 SE 40



ARMY P.O. A.M. 1.

4 OC 40

AUSTRALIAN ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

1ST. BGE. H.Q.P.O. M.1.

Posted in Tobruk, Libya

5 FE 41

Forces in the Western Desert and outside of Egyptian borders were given free surface mail thus the 30 milliemes paying the airmail surcharge on a captured Italian envelope. Effective 8 February Australian forces could use Australian stamps.



1ST. BGE. H.Q.P.O. M.1.

Posted in Greece

4 AP 41

The 6th Division Postal Unit returned to Egypt from Libya by 12 March 1941. After refitting the first unit was in Greece on March 18 and by April 1 the rest had arrived. This cover front is dated 4 April 1941, just two days before the Germans launched their invasion. On 27 April the 6th Division Postal Unit was evacuated to Alexandria with one section of the unit going to Crete. The c.d.s. was lost during the withdrawal from Greece.

AUSTRALIAN ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

Datestamp M2 was allotted to the headquarters of the 17th Brigade of the 6th Division. Located at Helwan, south of Cairo, it moved to the Mediterranean coast west of Alexandria before the Libyan invasion in December. Dates of use are recorded from about 14 October 1940 to May 1941 when it was lost during the Crete campaign. Note that the brigade abbreviation **BDE** differs from that of the **BGE** found on c.d.s. M.1.

2ND. BDE. H.Q.P.O. M.2.

2 NO 40



DIV. H.Q. P.O. D.M.1.

17 OC 40

The D.M.1. postmark was assigned to the 6th Australian Imperial Forces' Division Headquarters at Helwan in September 1940 when it was transferred from Palestine. The division then moved to the Ikingi Maryut/El Amirya area in October/November followed by Libya from December to March 1941. The datestamp was lost during the Greek campaign in April. The earliest recorded date is 3 October 1940.

AUSTRALIAN ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

3RD. BDE. H.Q.P.O. M.3.

20 AP 41

The M.3. postmark was allocated to the 21st Brigade of the 7th Division being held in reserve at El Amirya Mersa Matruh areas for possible deployment in Greece. It is known on covers dated from mid-March to late April 1941. The division never was sent to Greece but to Palestine in May.



3RD. BDE. H.Q.P.O. W.3.

2 NO 40

The 19th Brigade arrived in Egypt from Palestine in November 1940 to bring the 6th Division up to full strength. Located at Burg el-Arab near Alexandria, it was given datestamp W.3. This is a very early use of the c.d.s. It later saw service in Libya, Greece, and Crete. Like postmarks M.1. and M.2 this one was lost during the fighting on Crete in May, 1941.

SMALL ARMY POST STAMPS

AUSTRALIAN ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

DIV. H.Q.P.O. D.M.1

Multiple Franking

26 OC 40



Blob constant variety position 47



A block of ten and three pairs of the 3 milliemmes small Army Post stamps overpaying the 40 milliemmes airmail rate by 8 milliemmes. **This extraordinary franking may be a record for this stamp.** The second stamp from the left on the top row is position #47 showing a small blob next to the lower right margin. The marking **PASSED BY UNIT CENSOR 237** and the datestamp were used at Ikingi Maryut located in the Western Desert outside of Alexandria.

SMALL ARMY POST STAMPS

AUSTRALIAN ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

DIV. H.Q.P.O. D.M.1

Christmas Posting

30 OC 40



Members of the Egypt Study Circle record 36 covers bearing a single three millimes stamp for the unsealed holiday card rate. Two of philatelic origin (from one philatelist to another) are postmarked 16 JA 40 and addressed to England. Of the remaining 34 covers one has a retta cancel and no datestamp ("of doubtful authenticity")¹ and one has an unclear date. Thirty-two covers are postmarked from 23 October to 24 December 1940. The destinations of the non-philatelic covers are as follows: England, 8; Northern Ireland, 1; Irish Free State, 1; Scotland, 2; Wales, 1; New Zealand, 9; Australia, 7; India, 4, and Egypt, 1 (incorrect use). Note that the postal concession rate for holiday surface mail was suspended between 6 and 9 December and letters and cards were carried free.

The D.M. 1. Postmark was assigned to Division Headquarters of the 6th Australian Imperial Forces when it was moved to Ikingi Maryut, Egypt in September 1940. The datestamp was lost during the 1941 Cretan campaign.

¹ Gould, Andy, *Army Post – King Farouk 3 mills green on cover: Census Update*, The Quarterly Circular of the Egypt Study Circle, Vol. XXII, No. 7, September 2015, pages 154-155.

AUSTRALIAN ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

Postmark S.P.1, assigned to the 6th Division Supply Headquarters, had been used by the Division at Barbara in Palestine prior to its move to Egypt in September 1940. In December the Division went into Libya and was relieved by the 9th Division in March 1941. The 6th returned to the Alexandria area to await transport to Greece. The datestamp was lost in Crete in May. Note the use of a captured Italian envelope

DIV. SUPPLY H.Q. P.O. S.P.1.

18 JA 41



DIV. SUPPLY H.Q. P.O. S.W.1.

10 MR 41

The S.W.1 c.d.s. was issued to the 1 Corps Postal Unit at Ikingi Maryut, Egypt in January 1941. It then went to Libya and back again to Ikingi Maryut in late February where troops were assembling before departure for Greece in mid-March. The datestamp was lost in Greece during the British withdrawal in April.

AUSTRALIAN ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

The RAILHEAD P.O. R.M.1. datestamp was first used as a travelling post office postmark by the 6th Division Postal Unit at Gaza Ridge in southern Palestine from February 1940 to January 1941. Then it was transferred to the 1 Corps Postal Unit at Ikingi Maryut, went to Tobruk, Libya in early February and back to Ikingi Maryut on 24 February where troops were assembling before departing for Greece in mid-March. This cover is believed to be from a member of the 16th Brigade that embarked on 18 March. The datestamp was lost in Greece during the British withdrawal in April.

RAILHEAD P.O. R.M.1.

17 MR 41



AUS FPO 31.

2 AP 41

In late March 1941 the 18th Brigade of the 7th Division returned from operations around Giarabub Oasis in Cyrenaica to camp at Ikingi Maryut, and then went to Tobruk at the beginning of April where it remained until withdrawn in September. It was issued with the skeleton type c.d.s. borrowed from the Palestine Post Office. This captured Italian envelope was posted 2 April 1941, 8 days before the start of the siege of Tobruk, which lasted until the end of November.

AUSTRALIAN ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

The skeleton AUS FPO datestamp, borrowed from the Palestine post office, was brought into service with the 7th Division Headquarters on 16 March 1940 when the Division was in reserve at Mersa Matruh. In May the Division (ex the 18th Brigade) was sent to Palestine to take part in the invasion of Lebanon and Syria.

AUS FPO 32.

18 AP 41



AUS FPO 32.

24 AP 41

This cover front is franked with 50 milliemes of postage including the 3 milliemes small Army Post stamp. However, the mixed postage is 10 milliemes too much. Perhaps a soldier posted this cover who had an interest in stamps or, more likely, he wanted to get rid of all his Egyptian stamps. An agreement was reached between the Egyptian Post Office and the Australian Army Post Office providing that the Australians could use their own stamps on mail starting 24 April 1941. The new rate of 9d was the same as the cheaper rate for troops in Palestine.

AUSTRALIAN ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

In July 1941 a new group of datestamps arrived in the Middle East of which only a few were used in Egypt. The rest were distributed to units in Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, and Malaya. A.I.F. FIELD P.O. No. 16 was assigned to Egypt Line of Communications Postal Unit in Cairo and known used from October 1941 to January 1942. This was a new unit designed to help lessen the load of the Base Post Office. This cover shows a very late use of the small Army Post stamps: Australian or Egyptian stamps should have been used by this date.

A.I.F. FIELD P.O. NO. 16

17 JA 42



INDIAN ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

F.P.O. No. 13 was assigned to the 7th Brigade of the 4th Indian Division. Raised at Poona on 29 July 1940, it departed Bombay for Egypt on 25 September, and arrived at Mena Camp on 13 October. It stayed there for five weeks before going to Baqush in the Western Desert. A month later it moved to Amiriya before leaving Port Said for the Sudan on 25 December.

The recorded dates are:	Mena Camp	13 October to 16 November 1940,
	Baqush	21 November to 16 December,
	Amiriya	18 to 23 December.

F. P. O. No. 13

16 NO 40



F. P. O. No. 17

23 JA 40

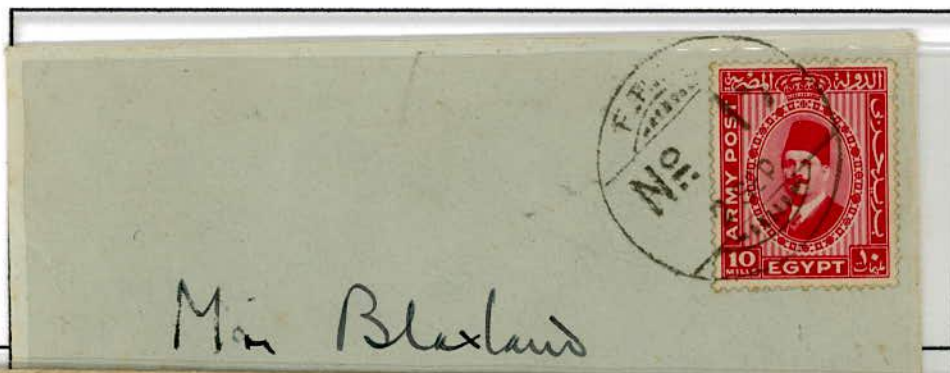
Division Headquarters and other units of the 4th Division (Red Eagles) departed Bombay on 22 September and arrived at Suez on 3 October. Assigned F.P.O. No. 17, the division headquarters was at Mena Camp near Cairo from 4 October 1939 to about mid-August 1940 when it left for the Western Desert for several months, returning to Amiriya on 20 December. It departed Egypt for Sudan on 1 January 1941.

INDIAN ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

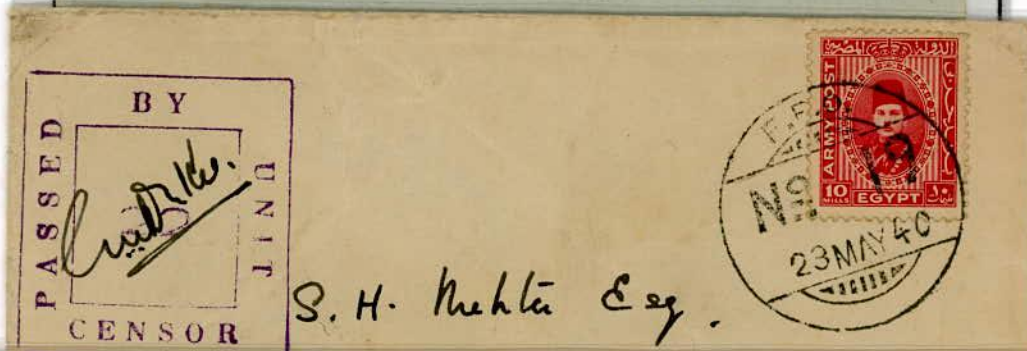
Force Heron (11th Infantry Brigade/4th Infantry Division), the first Indian unit to arrive in Egypt, departed Bombay on 2 August 1939, a month before the start of the Second World War, arriving at Suez on 15 August. The brigade went into camp at Fayid in the Canal Zone where it remained for a month before being transferred at the end of September to Mena Camp near Cairo. It stayed at Mena Camp until July 1940 when it was transferred to the Western Desert. Between 14 September and mid-November 1940 it was located at Baqush east of Mersa Matruh. In December it moved to Amiriya before leaving for Sudan on the 31st.

F. P. O. No. 19

Fayid
22 SEP 39
backstamp:
Alexandria 23 SE 39



Mena Camp
23 May 1940



Baqush
20 SEP 40



INDIAN ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

F. P. O. No. 25

6 DEC 39

The 5th Infantry Brigade (4th Infantry Division) was allotted FPO No. 25. The Brigade, raised at Jhansi, left Bombay 22 September 1939 and arrived at Suez 4 October. It was stationed at Beni Yusef, a camp in the Cairo suburbs, from 6 October 1939 to about 14 May 1940. The Brigade took part in the early battles in North Africa and the datestamp was lost near Mersa Matruh on 28 June 1942. This cover carried a Christmas greeting to Scotland and bears the 3 milliemes postal concession stamp.



F. P. O. No. 25

15 (?) DEC 39

This thrice-censored airmail cover is addressed to Turkey, an unauthorized destination for concession rate mail. However, it may have been allowed as it is to the British Embassy, considered as British diplomatic territory. It is backstamped **THINA 7 XII 39 POST AERIENNE, ISTANBUL 121939** and **CANKAYA ANKARA** (date is not clear). The **T/75 cent** postage due tax apparently went uncollected.

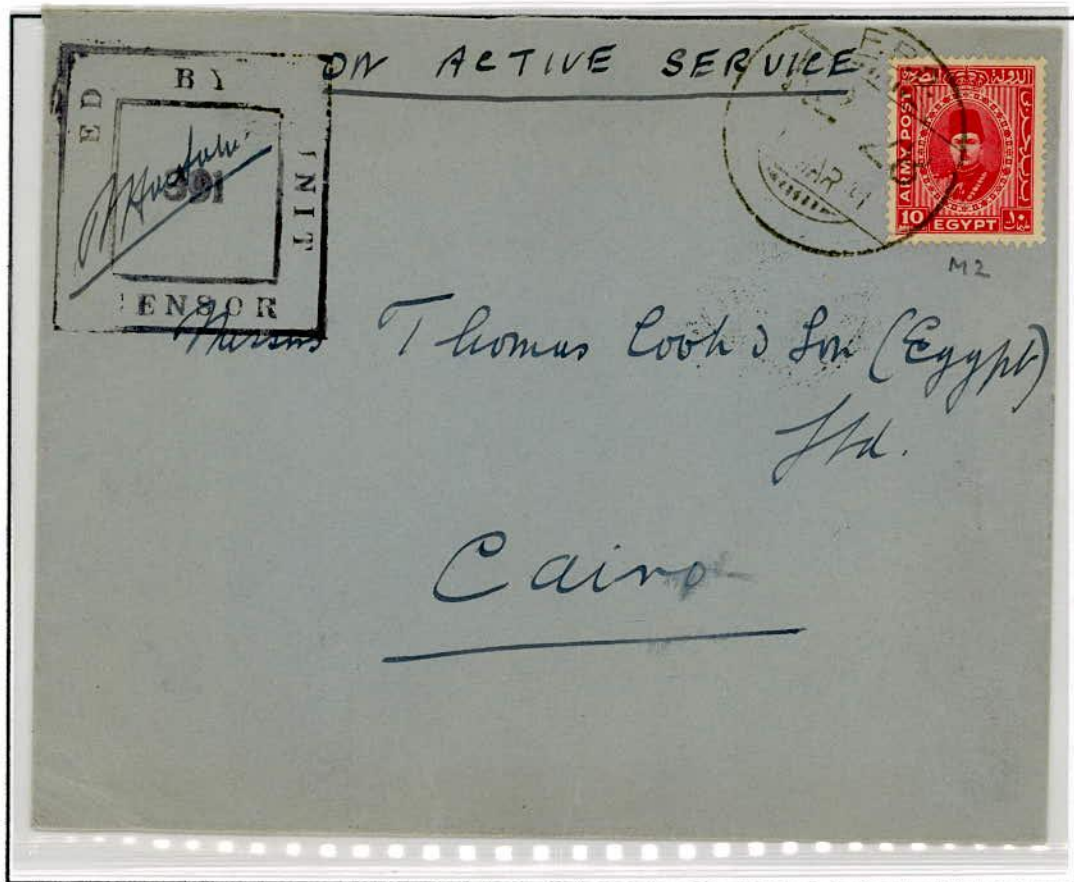
INDIAN ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

F. P. O. No. 28

1 MAR 41

FPO No. 28 was assigned to the 3rd Motor Brigade that was mobilized for active service on 7 January 1941. It left Bombay, India on 23 January 1941, arriving in Egypt on 7 February. It encamped at the Mobilization Center at el Tahag before going on to Mersa Matruh and the Western Desert on 7 March. It was at Tobruk in Libya from 28 March to 17 April when it was evacuated by sea to Alexandria, arriving at Mena Camp on April 20. F.P.O. 28 lost most of its equipment in the confusion of battle in and around Tobruk.

Letters to destinations within Egypt required 6 milliemes of Egyptian postage although it wasn't strictly enforced, especially with troops in the front lines. The cover is backstamped 2 MR 41 with the Cook (Cairo) c.d.s.



INDIAN ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

This IND. B.P.O. canceller was used at the Indian Section Base Post Office. Located at the Egyptian main post office in Cairo it opened in about 4 December 1939. Early operations were inefficient and it was thoroughly reorganized in July 1940. The earliest recorded use on Army Post stamps is 18 January 1940 and the latest is 10 May 1941.

O.H.M.S. official envelopes required postage. This cover, addressed to Partabgarh, Uttar Pradesh, India, was forwarded to Lucknow. Posted on 10 December it reached Partabgarh on the 19th and Lucknow on the 20th.

IND.B.P.O.

10 DE 40



IND.B.P.O.

19 JA 41

The sender of this cover was an R.A.F. cypher officer located at an "aerodrome" at a small port on the Mediterranean that was formerly occupied by the Italian army. In the enclosed letter the address is given as 202 Group H.Q. R.A.F. ME. This was the Air Headquarters Western Desert located at Ma'aten Bagush between Fuka and Mersa Matruh. He also states that mail is taken down from his base to Cairo by plane. The cover bears two censor markings including the Deputy Chief Field Censor and the R.A.F. censor No. 19.

NEW ZEALAND ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

In January 1940 the 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force left Wellington for Egypt, arriving at Port Tewfik on February 14. The Base Post Office was first located at Camp Maadi outside of Cairo but on March 5 it moved into Cairo. The postal facility moved several more times in the following months finally ending up at the Credit Lyonnais Building on 30 November. The Army Base Post Office datestamp accompanied the troops on the voyage to Egypt and is found on Army Post covers from 22 February 1940 to 26 April 1941.

N.Z. ARMY BASE POST OFFICE (Cairo)

5 MR 40

N.Z.F.P.O.1 (Alexandria)

13 MR 40

30 millimetres mixed franking paying the 22 mills surface rate to the United States. It is backstamped B.P.O. E 602 16 MR 40 (Alexandria) and has a partial CAIRO 16 MAR 40 machine postmark. The unusual dual postmarks suggest the 20 mills stamp was added in Alexandria by someone other than the sender.



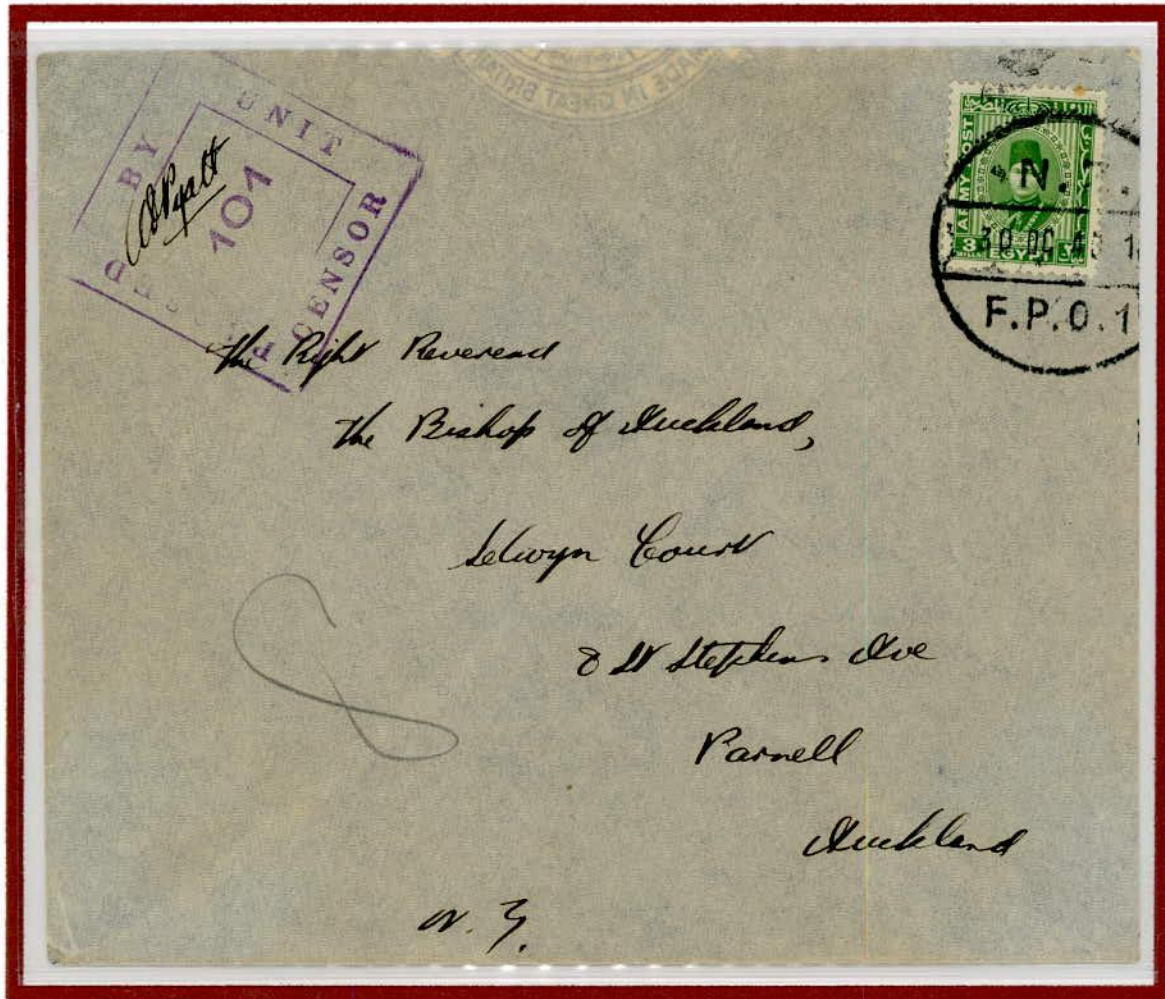
SMALL ARMY POST STAMPS

NEW ZEALAND ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

N.Z. F.P.O. 1

Christmas Posting

30 OC 40



At this time the New Zealand Field Post Office No. 1 was located at Camp Maadi near Cairo and surface letters were sent from Port Tewfik on the Red Sea. One of nine recorded covers sent to New Zealand with the solo use of the three millimetres Farouk stamp, it bears the censor mark **PASSED BY UNIT CENSOR 101**.

NEW ZEALAND ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

Numerous charitable organizations made free envelopes available to the armed forces.

N.Z. F.P.O. 1 (at Camp Maadi)

Y.M.C.A. and CHURCH ARMY COVERS



NEW ZEALAND ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

The N.Z. F.P.O.2 circular date stamp is scarce having been used during the Army Post period at Amiriya only from 2 March to about 15 March 1941. Amiriya, on the Mediterranean coast east of Alexandria, was used at that time for troops of the 2nd Division who were leaving for Greece. Mails were sent to Alexandria for dispatching to Cairo.

N.Z. F.P.O. 2

5 MR 41



NEW ZEALAND ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

The 2nd New Zealand Infantry Division Postal Unit was organized in November 1939, and opened in Egypt at Camp Maadi on 14 February 1940. On 6 September B.P.O. K.W. moved to Ikingi Maryut, a staging camp ten miles west of Alexandria. It closed around mid- September and reopened in Amiriya. That office closed on 1 March 1941 and the datestamp was sent to N.Z.F.P.O. 2.

B.P.O. K.W.

28 FE 41

A. F. W3078.

ACTIVE

C & Co (B) Ltd.

Air Mail.

This envelope must not be used for coin or valuables. It cannot be accepted for registration.

NOTE:—

Correspondence in this envelope need not be censored Regimentally. The contents are liable to examination at the Base.

The following Certificate must be signed by the writer:—

I certify on my honour that the contents of this envelope refer to nothing but private and family matters.

A. F. W3078.

ACTIVE

C & Co (B) Ltd.

This envelope must not be used for coin or valuables. It cannot be accepted for registration.

NOTE:—

Correspondence in this envelope need not be censored Regimentally. The contents are liable to examination at the Base.

The following Certificate must be signed by the writer:—

I certify on my honour that the contents of this envelope refer to nothing but private and family matters.

Signature }
Name only }

J. G. G. G. G.

[Crown Copyright Reserved.]

SERVICE

[Up to the
this Cover, by
same writer.
in such case to

Address:—

Miss M. Adam
Pashvale
Lenterton
Wairarapa

[Crown Cop.]

SERVICE

Miss K. Humphrey
Address:— % HANNAH & CO.

MAIN ST.

TAUMARUNUI N.Z.

New Zealand

F.P.O. K.W1

11 DE 40

On 5 September 1940, Field Post Office K.W. 1 was sent to El Daba in the Western Desert to serve the postal needs of the 4th New Zealand Infantry Brigade. It opened on 6 September and returned to Camp Maadi on 14 December 1940.

2nd NEW ZEALAND INFANTRY DIVISION ARMY POSTAL UNIT

Field Post Office K.W. 2 opened 19 June 1940, at Gerawla in the Western Desert where defenses were being prepared. The Division Signals Unit at Baggush (east of Mersa Matrouh) handled mails between it and Cairo. In December F.P.O. 2 was closed when the troops returned to Helwan.

F.P.O. K.W. 2

15 OC 40



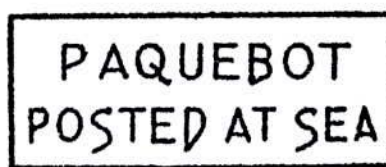
F.P.O. K.W. 2

18 DE 40

BRITISH FORCES ARMY POST

POSTED AT SEA

This is an unusual postal marking on an Army Post stamp as mail was normally processed at the unit postal facility. In this case the censorship may have been done at a military postal facility and the rest of the processing done in transit on board a returning troopship. The paquebot cancel was applied in London.



This type of machine cancel was in use from 1935 to 1965.

ROYAL NAVY MAIL 1940 (?)

Two airmail covers to the United Kingdom from Royal Navy personnel. Note the absence of a circular date stamp and the use of the retta cancel. On the reverse of the top cover is the signature of C Smock and the handstamp "Paymaster. Lieut. RNR." Both covers have the same Naval Censor marking 5862.



EGYPT POSTAGE PREPAID DATESTAMPS

On 1 May 1941 new postal arrangements with Egypt came into force allowing surface mail to the serviceman's homeland to be carried free of postage and the use of Army Post stamps was discontinued. Airmail postage required the stamps of the United Kingdom and the Dominions. Egyptian postage had to be used for mail from the forces to Egypt and other countries.

EPP 6

to Cairo

14 MA 41

EPP 6 was probably used at Army Headquarters in Alexandria. Letters to destinations within Egypt required 6 milliemes Egyptian postage although for a period of time Army Post stamps went through as shown by this cover.



Standard type
of Egypt Postage
Prepaid datestamp

EPP 37

15 MA 41

EPP 37 was assigned to the South African Army Post Office U located at the Union Defence Force Depot at Helwan to serve personnel in transit. South African forces did not arrive in Egypt until the beginning of May, too late for the normal use of Army Post stamps.

EGYPT POSTAGE PREPAID DATESTAMPS

EPP 40 c.d.s. was assigned to the R.A.F. headquarters in Cairo.

EPP 40

9 JU 41

This shows another late improper use of the Army Post stamp on cover to Alexandria. It is backstamped CAIRO 10 JUNE 1941 and has an unclear Alexandria postmark.



EPP 40

10 AU 41

Postcard sent by airmail properly franked with Great Britain 3d postmarked 10 AU 41. The discontinued 10 millimetres Army Post stamp was probably added for philatelic reasons, as the recipient is a stamp collector.