



ISRAEL PHILATELIC FEDERATION

Member - Federation Internationale de Philatelie

# Holy Land Postal History

VII • 128-129

WINTER 2014



Civilian cover sent to Hampshire Regiment Palestine through Army Field Post Office SZ 59B, 24 December 1918. (Page 926)

# HOLY LAND POSTAL HISTORY



**ISRAEL PHILATELIC FEDERATION**

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**Annual Subscription fee:** \$35 (includes bulletin by airmail).

**Life Subscription:** \$250, payable in 2 yearly instalments.

**Price per bulletin:** \$25

Holy Land Postal History bulletin back issue available:

Bulletin 2-125 at \$20 - Each

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<b>Holy Land</b> <b>Postal History</b>	<b>VII</b> <b>128-129</b>
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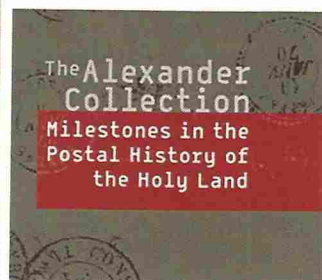
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#### Postcards from Herzl

Herzl's love for his children is demonstrated in three postcards written by Herzl to his daughter Paulina. The postcards were found in London in the 1970's in the inheritance of Joseph Weiman. Following prolonged negotiations, that lasted 10 years, the collector Zvi Alexander managed to purchase the three postcards and added them to his extensive collection.

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## Editorial

2014 marks the centenary of the outbreak of WW1. This war is well covered philatelically being represented in various collections in alternate forms, according to the special approach of the collector.

We publish a major article on the basis of such a collection. After some searching Mr. Galibov of London submitted such an article on the special subject of British Military Army Post Offices in the Sinai and in Palestine 1917-1920. As a foreword to the article a few sentences about the idea, the background and the philatelic effort and knowledge are given. We intend to continue to do it with future articles, where possible, to provide a broader view of the subject.

As a follow up to the article "Napoleon's Egyptian/Palestine Campaign 1799", which was published in the previous issue of the Bulletin and included an Internet extract of a letter to the Jews, by Napoleon. Mr. Jean Paul Danon the Editor of the "Doar Ivri" Journal, who lives in Paris, approached the Quai D'orsey (French Foreign Office) archive, trying to locate the letter. We publish their answer, but the search for this letter continues.

In 1839 our Country was occupied by Mehemet Ali, the Viceory of Egypt leading an Egyptian army. Britain, France and Austria came to the aid of Turkey (the rulers of Palestine at the time) to drive the Egyptian forces out. One famous battle during this episode was the bombardment of Acre by British and Austrian ships. Joseph Aron from Australia wrote an article about letters sent during this period in which this battle is described or mentioned.

And yet another war, WW2. A philatelic "drama" with a surprise that unfolds after 75 years at a stamp exhibition, is described in the article "Winds of War", the authors being from Poland and the U.S.A. This in my mind is one of the pleasures of our Hobby, you never know what to expect and surprises do happen. I am sure that many of us philatelists have had interesting and perhaps surprising events during our collecting

activities. Please share these with us and with our readers, tell us, and write to us about them.

The conveyance of mail between Jerusalem and Beirut and vice versa by the private companies of Santali and Micciarelli and between Beirut and Damascus by the company of Black and Held, which provided transit services to letters from Jerusalem, is described in the article “Jerusalem Via Maris to Beirut”, by Michael Fock, from Slovenia. Of special interest in the article is a 1848 letter from Jerusalem to Basle Switzerland, which apparently is the earliest letter known so far, from Jerusalem to Switzerland.

Postal history of the Israeli Arab conflict is the subject of two articles:

The first one is a review of a new book about the severance of postal connections between Israel and certain Arab countries. The book “The Arab – Israel conflict: No Service, returned and Captured Mail” is very detailed and provides a wide perspective of this postal history subject.

The second article “The Untold Story”, by Dayrl Kibble, from Australia, is associated with terrorist under cover mail, or bomb letters. Bomb letters had and could have had lethal consequences, thus putting a strain on postal authorities, whose responsibility, together with other organizations is to combat this use the postal system. It is an unusual subject, which is a new comer to us, appearing for the first time in the Bulletin.

In this issue we made some changes to the “appearance” of the Bulletin, a sort of facelift. We would like to hear from you what do you think about it.

As the years 2014 is about to close, let me wish to our authors, to our readers and to others who are involved in the publishing of our Bulletins; A healthy, happy and prospers 2015.

***Yehuda Kleiner, FRPSL***  
*Editor*

## Letters to the Editor

### Where have the Overland Mail Baghdad-Haifa collectors gone?

The title may sound a bit weird but I really wonder where all the collectors of the Overland Mail Baghdad – Haifa have been gone to?

It cannot be that I am the only serious collector of this fascinating area. Too many times I am outbid at auctions for interesting items and I ask who are the buyers?

Are they hiding in the woods?

I am in possession of at least part of the correspondence that Norman Collins had, with collectors worldwide, when he prepared his book on the overland Mail. At that time it seems collectors did not have a problem communicating and informing, each other, about items in their collections.

Over several years I have maintain a detailed Internet Site dedicated to the subject of Overland Mail, but so far I have not received any information from any Overland Mail collector. Except for some collectors who I have approached about the postal rates imposed by other Postal Agencies for the use of the Overland route for Mail going into Iraq.

For those who are not yet aware of my Internet Site it is: <http://fuchs-online.com/overlandmail>

Meanwhile, I have discovered many items with numerous previously unknown facts, Such as; new usage dates, even different sizes of Imprinted Envelopes, etc. However, in order to verify if some items are the ones listed in Collin's monograph, I would need images of listed items that Collins used. The study and research may even lead to an update of Collin's book **but such a book would not be correct or accurate without the cooperation of fellow collectors.**

**Therefore I appeal** to members who have Overland Mail items in their collection or know collectors of Overland Mail; please I would greatly appreciate to hear from them.

Due to my frequent business travel I would prefer communication by Email to: **rainer@fuchs-online.com**

However, snail mail is fine as well and may be addressed to:

Rainer Fuchs, Am Burkardstuhl 33, 97267 Himmelstadt, Germany.

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# **The Winds of War: An Unusual Aero philatelic Saga\***

## **The Nazis returned the letters**

**Jerzy W. Kupiec-Weglinski and Jacek Kosmala, Poland and U.S**

September 1, 2014 marks 75 years since Nazi Germany invaded Poland, the event that triggered the Second World War, the deadliest military conflict in the human history. Shortly before, on June 15, 1939, the national Polish Airlines LOT (PLL LOT), one of the most rapidly growing European air carriers, celebrated its 10th anniversary. It's exclusively serviced, multi-segment "Levantine" line between Helsinki (Finland) and Beyrouth (Lebanon) was the longest in Europe. **Moreover, a large portion of mail from Western Europe to the Middle and Far East was now passing through the Polish post office.**

We have reported in *The Airpost Journal* on the development of domestic and international airmail services by LOT in 1929-1939. Here, we present a quite fascinating story behind two letters, flown from British Palestine to Germany – on the day that Germany invaded Poland. The letters were carried by the last regular LOT service of 1939, on the very day World War II started. (Figs. 1 & 2).

The first item, shown in Figure 1, with intact content written in Polish and Yiddish, was posted at Haifa on Wednesday, August 30 at 8 p.m. It is addressed to Lwow (present-day Lviv, Western Ukraine), then the third biggest city in Poland with 318,000 inhabitants, one-third of its population being Jewish. The cover is correctly franked at 20 mils (airmail rate for a 20-gram letter to Poland, effective October 27, 1937), and bears a "By LOT Air Mail" bearing the airmail etiquette that attests to its transport by the Polish carrier.

A somewhat damaged second item Figure 2, was also dispatched from Haifa to Lwow on August 30 at 8 p.m., and franked with a single 20

---

\* First published by the American Air mail society.



*Fig. 1: Stamps are canceled 30 August 1939, two days before the outbreak of WW2. The letter was returned "Zuruck" German violet in Gotish script cachet and "Zuruck Postspeu" in Rumanian arriving in the Haifa, Hadar Hacarmel, post office on 12 November 1939, thus travelling about Two and a half month. (The reason for the Rumanian cachet is explained later in the Article.)*

mils adhesive. Instead of an airmail etiquette, "LOT" in manuscript was applied.

There is an interesting **"real-life"** story behind these airmail items, which the authors only recently discovered when confronted with a memoir, published back in 1993, by the second pilot of that particular LOT flight.

In his book, Captain Aleksander Onoszko recalls that, accompanied by Captain Karol Pustowka, he took off from Warszawa-Okęcie Airport on August 31, 1939, at 1 a.m., flying Douglas-DC2 aircraft on the regular route via Athens and Lydda to Beyrouth. The crew carried a mail bag, delivered a day earlier by representative. Captain Onoszko also recalls his

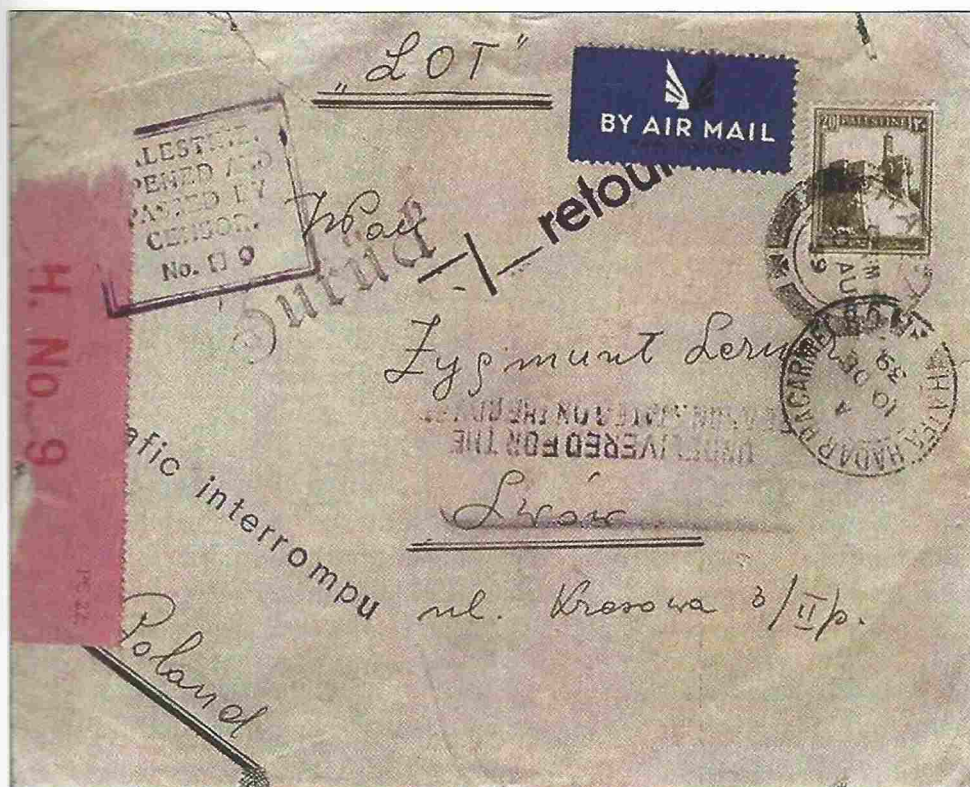
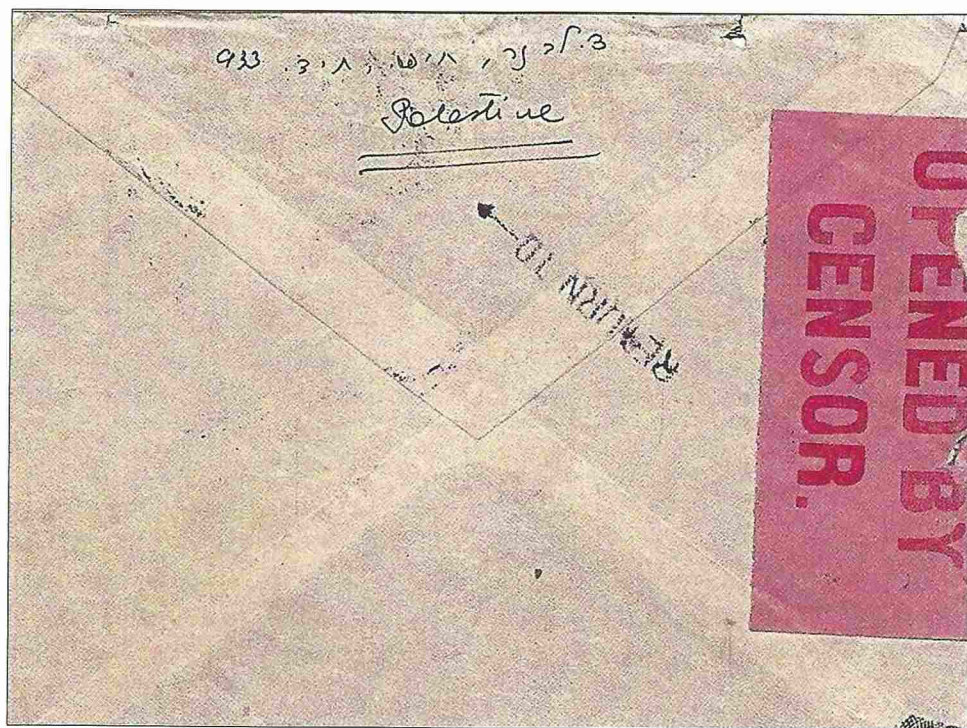


Fig. 2: This letter, like the one shown in Fig. 1 was also destined to Lwow and also sent on 30 August 1939, two days before the outbreak of WW2. The letter was returned "Zuruck" (German) and traffic interrupted in French, arriving in the Haifa, Hadar Hacarmel, post office on 10 December 1939, thus travelling about Three and a half month. At Haifa it received British censor cachet. A further description of the two letters is given in the text that follows.

departure from Lebanon on September 1, 1939, when the news about war activities in his native Poland was known. Records show that LOT Flight No. 1578 took off from Beyrouth at 7:40 a.m., and after a short stop-over in Lydda at 8:40 a.m. **to pick up mail (including "our" covers)**, it arrived in Athens at 1:15 p.m. from where it took off at 2.15. In Athens British officers boarded the plane.

However, instead of the usual direct route to Warszawa, the plane diverted eastward towards Bucharest. This maneuver prevented flying in a full daylight over the Polish territory and allowed British officers to communicate with their superiors on the ground in Bucharest. After arriving in the Romanian city of Cernauti (present-day Chernivtsi,





*Fig. 3: Backside of the cover shown in Fig. 2.*

Western Ukraine), just across the Polish border, the Brits were greeted by their consul, who informed the group about heavy German bombardment of southern Poland.

Consequently, the officers changed their travel plans. Escorted by Captain Onoszko, they hired five taxi cabs and arrived at the Sniatych railway station to catch a night train heading to Warszawa. Meantime, after an overnight stay at Cernauti, the LOT crew took off on September 2, flew at low attitude over bombed Lwow airport at Sknifow and the military training facilities of the Polish Air Force Academy in Deblin. They landed safely at the auxiliary military airfield near Grojec, some 50 km from Warszawa.

The saga of "our" airmail carried by PLL LOT Flight No. 1578, on the very day World War II erupted, does not end here. The first cover received German "ZURUCK" and Romanian "ZURUCK-Post-pen" cachets (front), along with its English "RETURN TO" equivalent (reverse), and a Haifa arrival postmark of November 12, 1939 (front).



The second cover shows German "ZURUCK" in addition to "retour" and "traffic interrompu" cachets in French. It was censored (boxed "Palestine Opened and Passed by Censor" handstamp plus pink paper tape along the left edge) and marked with "UNDELIVERED FOR THE REASON STATED ON THE COVER" cachet, along with a Haifa December 10, 1939 receiving postmark. The "BY AIR MAIL" etiquette seen on the second cover was attached at some later time point over the "retour" cachet (Figs. 1-3).

We believe both covers, along with many others carried by Flight. No. 1578, arrived in Poland and must have been retained at the Grojec military airfield until captured by the German forces (otherwise the covers would show Polish censorship interference). The letters were then processed by the occupying postal authorities who endorsed them "ZURUCK" for return to Palestine. The first one was dispatched via Romania, a neutral country at the time, where another "ZURUCK-Post-pen" marking was applied. The second cover was most likely carried via Romania as well.

Ultimately, back in Palestine, both received "RETURN TO" markings and Haifa arrival postmarks. Unlike the first item, the second was inspected by the censor, explaining the additional month in transit. Thus, it took 73 days and 101 days, respectively, for two letters flown on September 1, 1939 by PLL LOT from the Middle East to Germany-invaded Poland, to reunite with their senders in Haifa, Palestine.

**It took 75 years for the covers to miraculously reunite on the very same exhibition page of the Polish aerophilately collection in California.**

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- Kupiec-Weglinski JW, Kosmala J: "Development of Airmail Services in Poland (1929-1939). Part 1: LOT Polish Airlines Domestic and International Routes)." *Airpost Journal*, 83(10); 407-15, 2012.
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# **Letters during Mehemet Ali's arrival in and departure from the Holy Land, 1831-1840**

Joseph Aron, Melbourne, Australia

## ***Background***

In 1832 Mehemet Ali the Viceroy of Egypt, conquered Turkish Syria. Later he declared independence from Turkey. The Turks marched against him and he defeated them.



*Fig. 1: Mehemet Ali (1769-1849).*

Protecting Turkey, mainly from outside influence, had always been of great concern to Britain. The Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston, decided that British forces in the area had to restore Turkish rule in Syria.

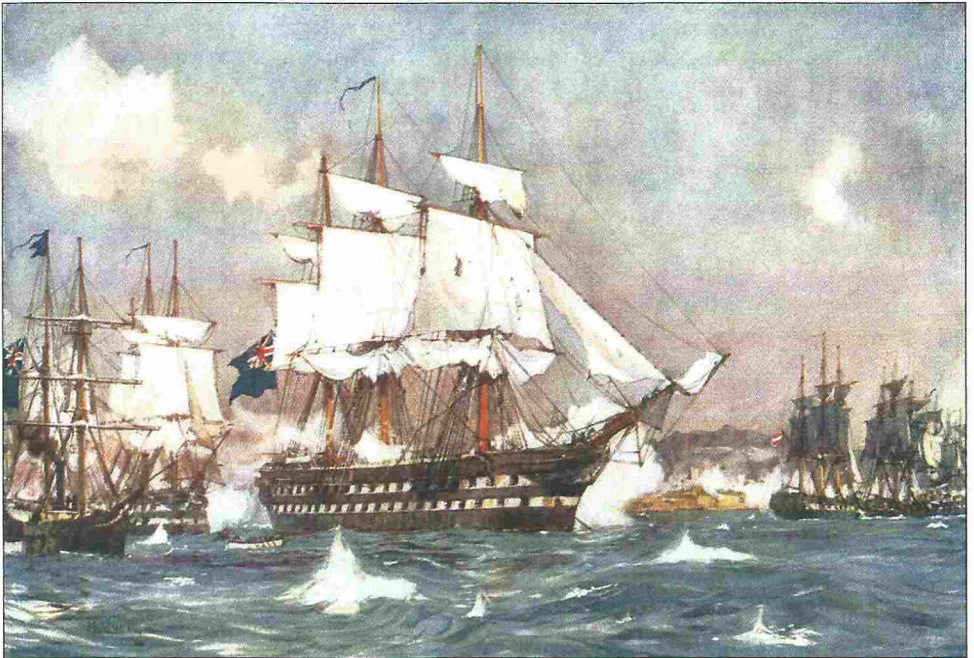
The French Government opposed any intervention but could not act as their fleet was not ready for war. In September 1840 British, Austrian and Turkish troops led by Commodore Charles Napier, second-in-command of the Mediterranean Fleet, drove the Egyptians out of most of

Syria's coastal towns, **except Acre, leaving it as the last remaining enemy stronghold.**

The Mediterranean Fleet, commanded by Vice Admiral Sir Robert Stopford, and supported by small Austrian and Turkish squadrons, moved into position against the western and southern sides of Acre on 3 November 1840 and opened fire at 14.00. The ships which anchored closer to the shore than expected, (450-800 meters), avoided the Egyptian guns which were aimed too high. The fire power of the British ships was devastating, disabling the Egyptians guns and by direct hits to the walls caused to parts of the fortifications to fall on the defenders who perished.

At 16.20 a shell penetrated the main magazine (storeroom) in the south of the city which exploded killing 1,100 men. The guns ashore fell silent and that night the city was occupied.

British losses were light with only 18 men killed and 41 wounded. The ships had fired 48,000 rounds.



*Fig. 2: British and Austrian ships shelling Acre, seen engulfed in white smoke between the two rows of ships.*

*The battle of Acre* was the last one on the Syrian Mediterranean coast after the fall of Beirut, Sidon, and Tyre and of Damascus in land. Mehemet Ali quickly ordered the evacuation of Syria and Ottoman rule was restored. In the peace agreement which ensued Mehemet Ali was given the hereditary rule in Egypt.

## ***The Letters***

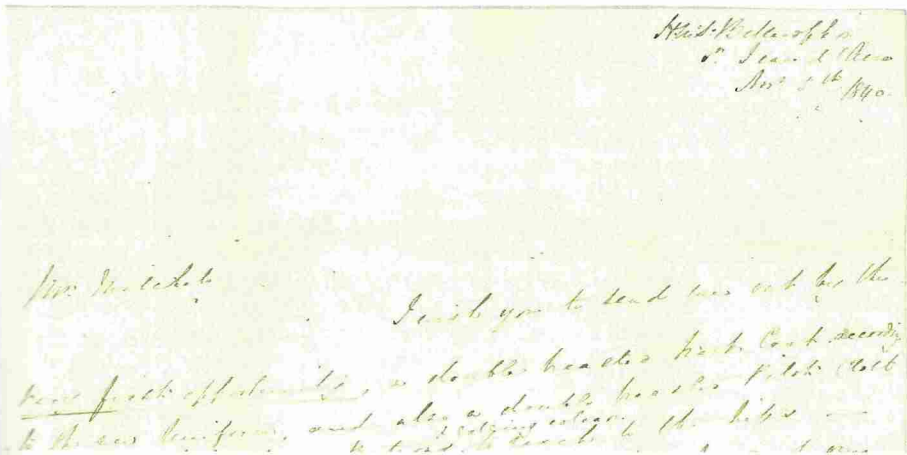
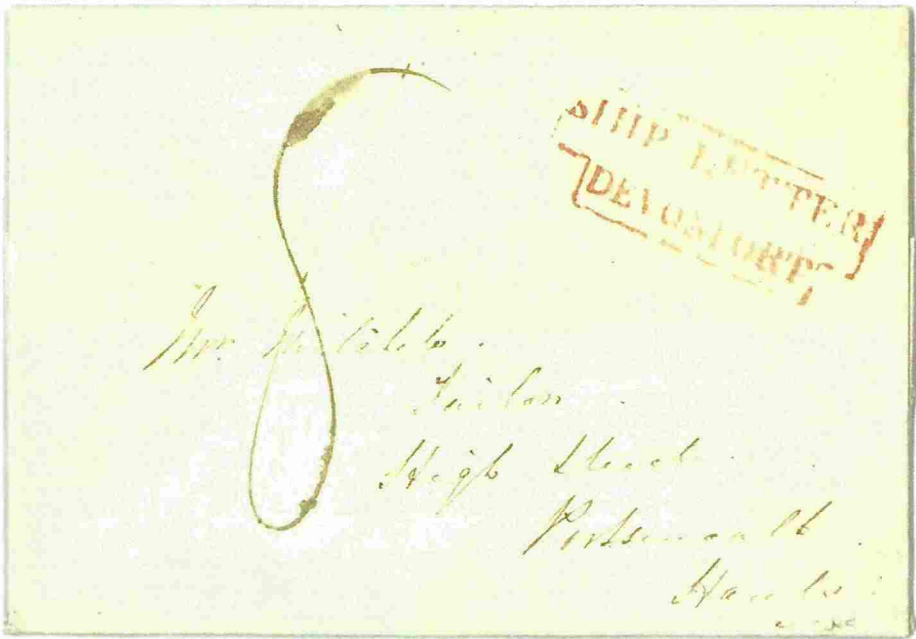
A number of letters relating to that siege have come on the philatelic market, these are discussed in detail in an article by Firebrace in BAPIP Bulletin #85, 1976, Vandervelde's "The Bombardment of Acre, 1840" (a BAPIP monograph published in 2010) and my own books, "Forerunners to the Forerunners" (published by our Society of the Postal History of Eretz Israel) or its expanded revised edition entitled "The Holy Land, 3000 Years of Prephilatelic Postal History" (James Bendon, 2004). Interested readers are referred to these.

The letters described by Firebrace including one actually datelined St Jean d'Acre and another from Livorno to Florence written two weeks later describing the battle, were sold by Cavendish in their 2001 sale of his collection of Military Postal History and (as it bears a Devonport Ship Letter marking) reappeared in a Cavendish sale of the postal history of Devon in March 2013 where the writer acquired them (Figs. 3 & 4).

At both sales the letters were accompanied by three related nineteenth century prints and a c1840 Piano score entitled "The Retreat from St Jean d'Acre".

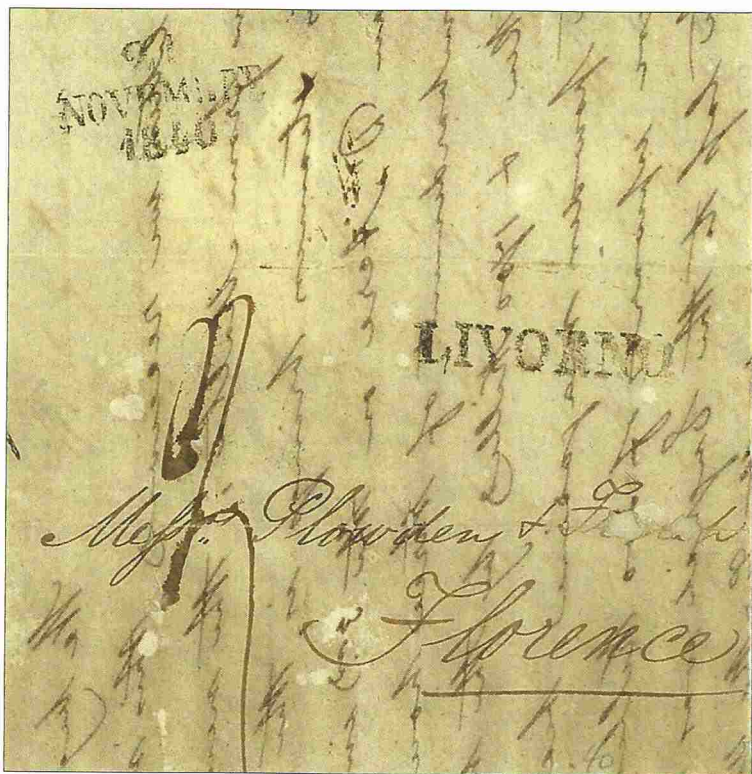
Three letters are mentioned by Denis Vandervelde in his Monograph. The three letters, all written by J.A.Sanford on board the British battle ship "Revenge" The earliest of the three letters was written on September 19<sup>th</sup>., while the "Revenge" was at Bayreuth, The letter was slit for disinfection and cachetted "PURIEFIE AU LAZARET/MALTA" and has a Malta c.d.s.of September 24<sup>th</sup>. destined to England. The other two letters dated October 30<sup>th</sup>, posted five days later, travelling on the same naval vessel as both received the same red "SHIP LETTER/DEVONPORT" postmark as John Fibrace's letter. (Unfortunately, we are unable to show the letters, hence we shortly describe these).





**Fig. 3: The letter sent from Acre to England. It is headed: "HMS Bellerophon (British battleship), St Jean d'Acre. Nov 5<sup>th</sup>. 1840". Addressed to Portsmouth, bears a red ship letter/Devenport postmark and a manuscript "8" the minimum ship letter rate.**

In my book "The Holy Land, 3000 Years of Prephilatelic Postal History", a whole chapter is devoted to the Postal History during the reign of Mehemet Ali. It includes a letter from Henry Baker who was assistant surgeon on the HMS Revenge and an eye witness to the battle.



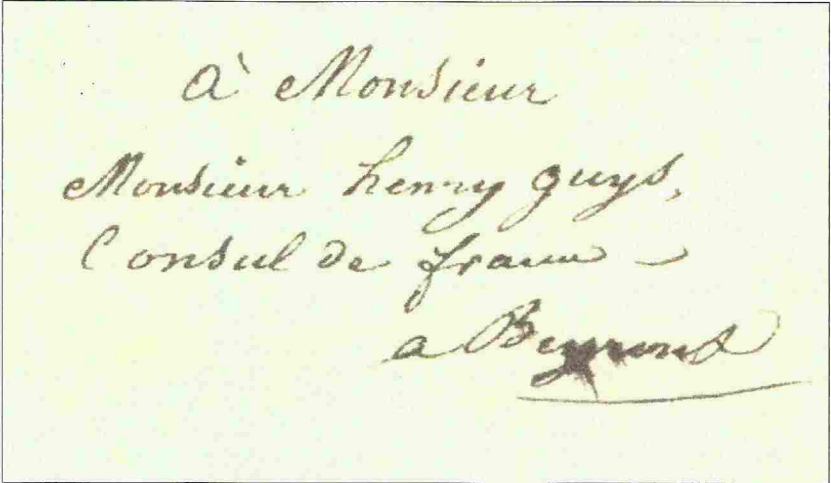
*Fig. 4: The letter from Livorno to Firenze sent in November 1840, although not from Acre but describing the siege.*

The letter is datelined 4 November 1840, St. Jean d'Acre and bears the red type SHIP/LETTER/DEVONPORT and over the word SHIP has been struck Packet letter.

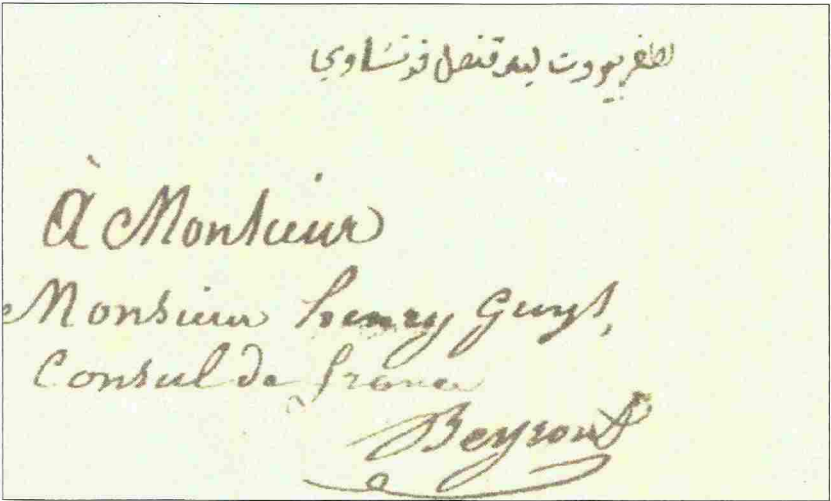
However the purpose of this article in addition to the above is to draw attention to the existences of additional related material.

In December 2010 the Boule Auction House based in both Paris and Monaco listed four letters dated 1831 to Henry Guyot, then French Consul in Beirut. (Henry Guyot is also known to postal historians from the series of letters to sanitary officials in Marseilles datelined "Consulate de France et Dependencies a St Jean d'Acre" but actually originating from Beirut). Of those four 1831 letters one (that was sold) was datelined from Nazareth and the other three were datelined from Camp de Sanour (somewhere near Jenin). Those latter letters included much reference to Nablus; one includes much detail of the encampments and the war while

another refers to the hopeless situation of the Turks seeking to hold off the Egyptians. They reappeared at an All World Feldman auction in May 2010 where the writer acquired the one detailing the encampments and the others again remained unsold (Figs. 5 & 6).



A handwritten French letterhead in cursive script. The text is written on a single line and reads: "A Monsieur Monsieur Henry Guyot, Consul de France a Beyrouth". The signature "a Beyrouth" is written in a larger, more decorative cursive script.



A handwritten letterhead in cursive script, featuring Arabic at the top and French below. The Arabic text reads: "الغفر بروت بعد قنصل فرنسا ودي". Below this, the French text reads: "A Monsieur Monsieur Henry Guyot, Consul de France a Beyrouth". The signature "a Beyrouth" is written in a larger, more decorative cursive script.

**Figs. 5 and 6: The Guyot Letters From Nazareth and Camp de Sanur to Bayruth describing the encampments of the Turks and their futility to hold of the Egyptian Army of Mehemet Ali.**

The other material so far undocumented in Holy Land postal history writings is of a different nature. A feature of mid nineteenth century British postal history is the existence of many illustrated envelopes as

well as Mulready caricatures – many in full colour (see “British Pictorial envelopes of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century” by Ritchie Bodily, Chris Jarvis and Charles Hahn, published by the collectors Club of Chicago.) Both Firebrace and Vandervelde have illustrated and described the Acre envelope – one of a series of illustrated envelopes produced by RW Hume of Leith depicting naval battles; Firebrace served as the source for my own reference to that production. However it is not the only such English production commemorating that battle. The other is one of a series of Mulready caricatures by William Spooner with Charles Napier who commanded the operation featured in the centre and various scenes involving Turks, Egyptians and British soldiers around the periphery. Available hand coloured, it is extremely rare, (Fig. 7).



*Fig 7: The Mulready caricature which was spawned by the siege.*

The third related item of interest is not actually philatelic but a medal. In return for the assistance provided by Britain to the Ottoman Sultan Mahmet II, the latter awarded a medal to each participant in the campaign. The medal, albeit criticised for its quality featured the sultan's toughra and a crude depiction of the citadel of St Jean d'Acre. It was the forerunner of the British campaign medals the awarding of which after key battles subsequently became standard military practise. Details of the background to this medal were included in an article in the spring 2013 "Spink Insider". The medals are shown in the Appendix.



# APPENDIX



Turkish medal showing the toughra of the Sultan on one side and the citadel of Acre on the other side. The Turks awarded medals to the British and Austrian participants. Golden ones to senior officers, silver ones to lower rank officers and copper ones to Non commissioned soldiers.



*The British Medal. Note “SYRIA” on the ribbon fastener.*

# **Sinai and Palestine, the S.Z. Army Postmarks 1917-1919**

## **MILITARY & CIVILIAN usage**

**Ze'ev Galibov, London**

### ***Foreword by the Editor***

This year 2014, is the centenary year of WW1. Philatelically, this war is the subject of many collections and we wished to have one as the basis for an article. Thus, we were happy when Ze'ev Galibov from London agreed to cooperate with us to write an article based **on the Palestine section** of his collection "From Gallipoli to Cilicia". Geographically, this was the war arena in the Mideast and Turkey, where the armies of Turkey, Germany, Austria, Great Britain and France fought.

The collection "British SZ Military (Field post) Postmarks" on which the article is based, is important not just philatelically, but also historically as it shows through the various field post offices allotted to the fighting units the progress of the war following the movements of the troops. Perhaps it could serve as an aid to the military historian who studies this subject.

The collection was assembled during many years. It was not an easy task. Although in this entire war arena there are "only" 62 field post offices with 62 SZ postmark numbers, there are various types and locations, when all these are put together there are 196 items needed for a comprehensive picture. Even then there is a sub division into; cards, stamped and stampless covers, preprinted cards, official letters, registered letters and so forth. It is the first time that we have an article devoted entirely to Military Philately. Although the Palestine section of the collection is a small one, unfortunately because of space limitations we can only show a small part of the Palestine items. We have selected the important ones.

## Introduction

A field post office (FPO) is setup during war time or following military occupation after the war. As a rule these are set in the field in proximity to the fighting units. Each military branch had it's own organic postal administration in charge of receiving and delivering mail. To preserve secrecy and to confuse the enemy about the locations of the troops FPO numbers would be interchanged or several FPO would be assigned to the same location (see table 2 page 943) Also, the sequence of the numbers does not imply that the units stayed at the same area. Some SZ numbers had short time duration because the unit moved on or was dissolved. Others had longer time duration, for instance, when the army unit served as the occupation force after the fighting ceased. In this case the occupation force's FPO had to cater also for civilian mail. In this case the civilian mail was charged the postal rate and usually stamps were affixed. In the same manner if a soldier wanted to send mail through a civil post office, full postage was collected.

The aim of this article is to provide a new **visual reference** for the SZ postmark series, used in Palestine, with actual Cards, Covers and other material to illustrate the recorded variations.

The S.Z. initials represented offices under the "Z" **Base Army Post Office** at Alexandria.

The offices in Palestine were opened or closed during various periods, starting in 1917 and closed altogether by the end of March 1920.

The postmarks may be found in four basic forms:



*Double Ring*  
26/16mm



*Small Skeleton*  
27/18/8mm





*Large Skeleton*  
27-30mm



*Bridge*  
35mm

but within the skeleton postmarks there are variations of setting.

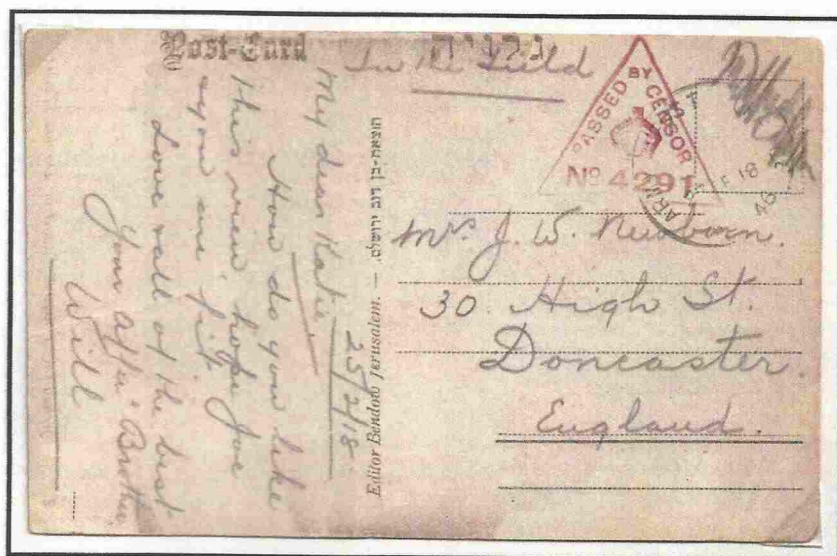
- A Variation in Diameter size of single ring.
- B Inscription "ARMY POST OFFICE" (APO).  
or  
"FIELD POST OFFICE" (FPO).
- C Dates are in One line or in Two lines.
- D Date inserted above or below index Code.
- E Closed or spaced between SZ & Number.
- F In a few postmarks there are Suffix letters.

NB – The letters ERD = Earliest Reported Date.

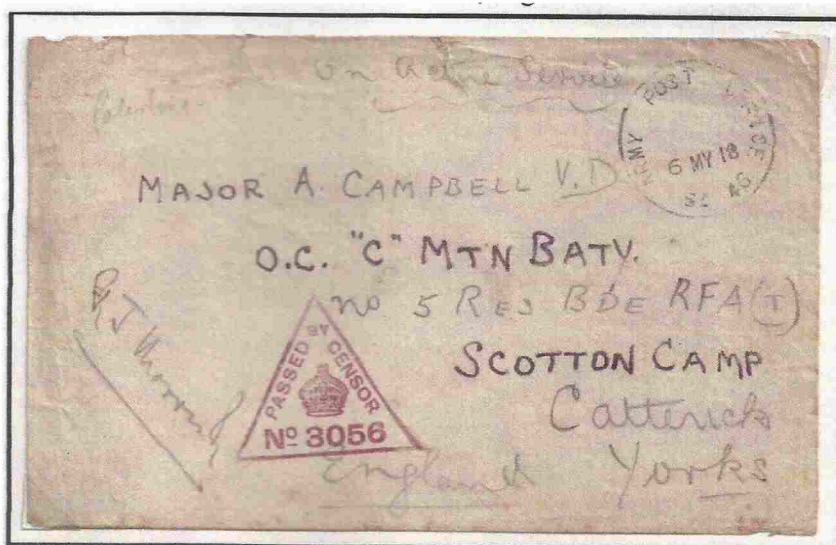
LRD = Latest Reported Date. Sk = Skelton.

References: A Kennedy & G Crabb, J Firebrace, M M Sacher, E Proud.  
M Lynes.

Fig. 1: Typical Army Postcard and cover from Jaffa, sent to England.



PM Sk. 29 mm dated: "APO SZ 46 27 FE 18" in 1 line. SZ 46 spaced.

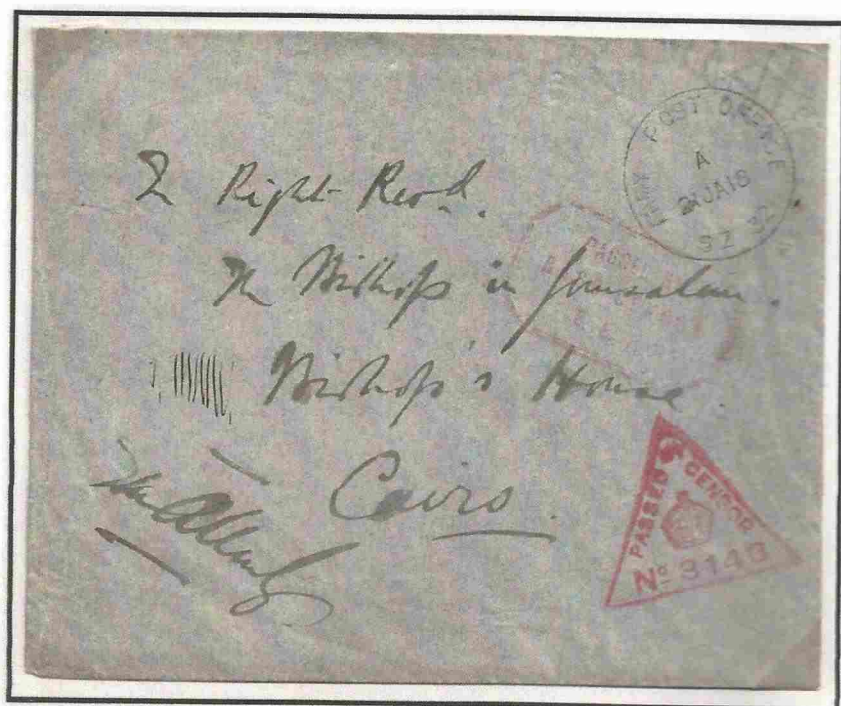


PM Sk. 29 mm dated: "APO SZ 46 6 MY 18" in 1 line. SZ 46 spaced.



**General Sir E. H. H. Allenby** commandeered the advance of the **Egyptian Expeditionary Force (E.E.F.)** through Palestine. The GM 1 GHQ 1st. Echelon, moved from Kelab (near Khan Yunis) on 20th January 1918 to their new location at BIR SALEM and from 21st January, stationed there until March 1919. It was there in the **General Headquarters**, where **General Sir E. H. H. Allenby**, had his war Cabinet.

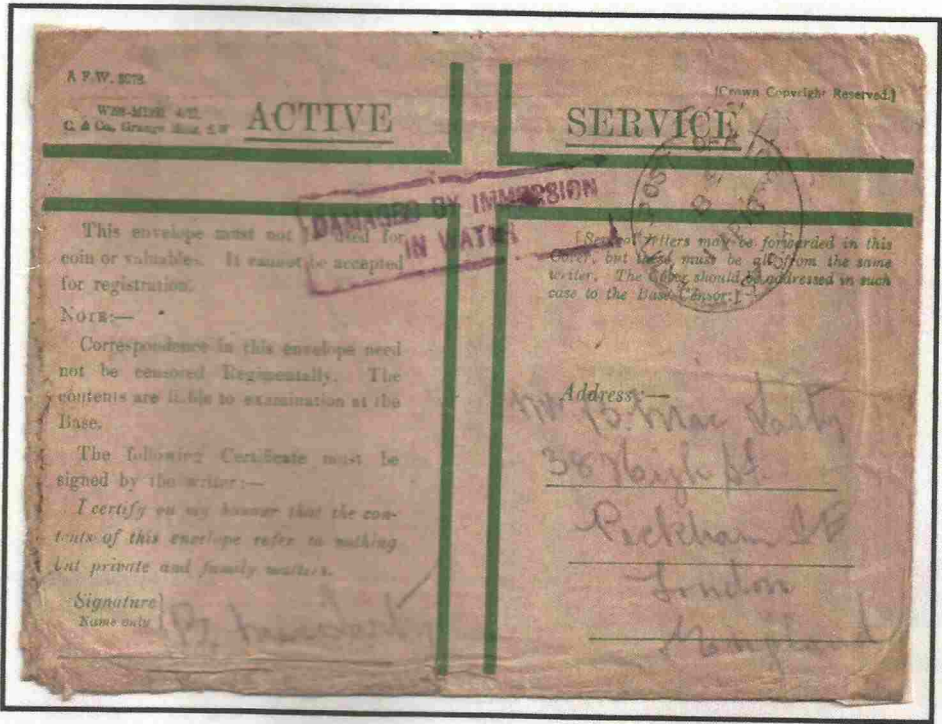
*Fig. 2: Letter by General Allenby through Army Post from Bir Salem to Cairo, Egypt.*



PM Sk. 29 mm dated: "APO SZ 32 A 21 JA 18" in 1 line. SZ 32 spaced. A cover used on the very **First Day** of "ARMY POST OFFICE SZ 32" in its new location. signed by **General Sir E. Allenby**.



Fig. 3: Ship Torpedoed, Army Post mail “Damaged by Immersion in Water” cachet. Honour cover sent from Ramle to London, England .



PM Sk. 28 mm dated: “APO SZ8 B 1 AP 18” in 1 line. SZ8 closed.  
Handstamped cachet in oblong box in 2 lines:

DAMAGED BY IMMERSION  
IN WATER

The cargo ship “Kingstonian” left Egypt to UK on 4th April 1918 carrying mails from the EEF, posted between 18th March and 2nd April. The ship was torpedoed and damaged on 11th April, was beached in Carloforte Bay, but was torpedoed again on 29th April by German SM UB-48 and was totalloss.

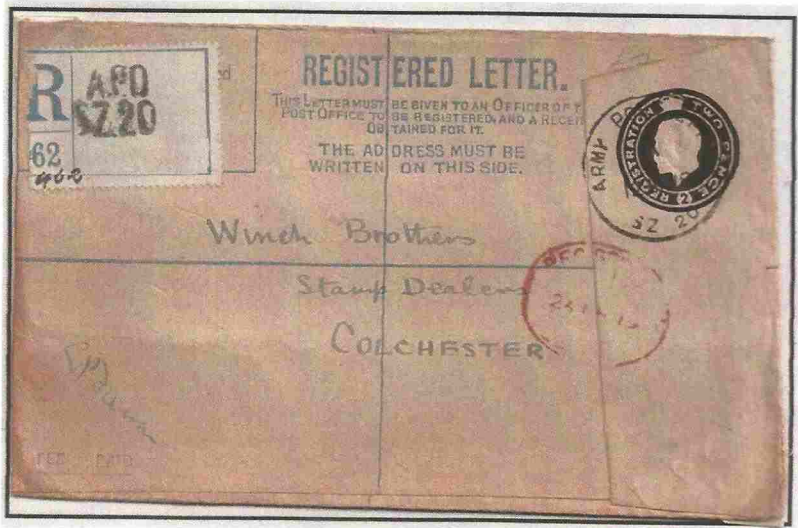
Fig. 4: Registered Army Post items required postage payment thus stamps and stationery were used.

**Registered Letter sent to Credit Lyonnais Bank, Cairo, Egypt**



PM Sk. 29 mm dated: “APO SZ 20 B 2 NO 18” in 1 line. SZ 20 spaced, 4 times Plus PM “APO SZ 10 -3 -NO -18”. Censor mark CM 7 No. 1288.

**Registered Letter sent to Colchester, England**

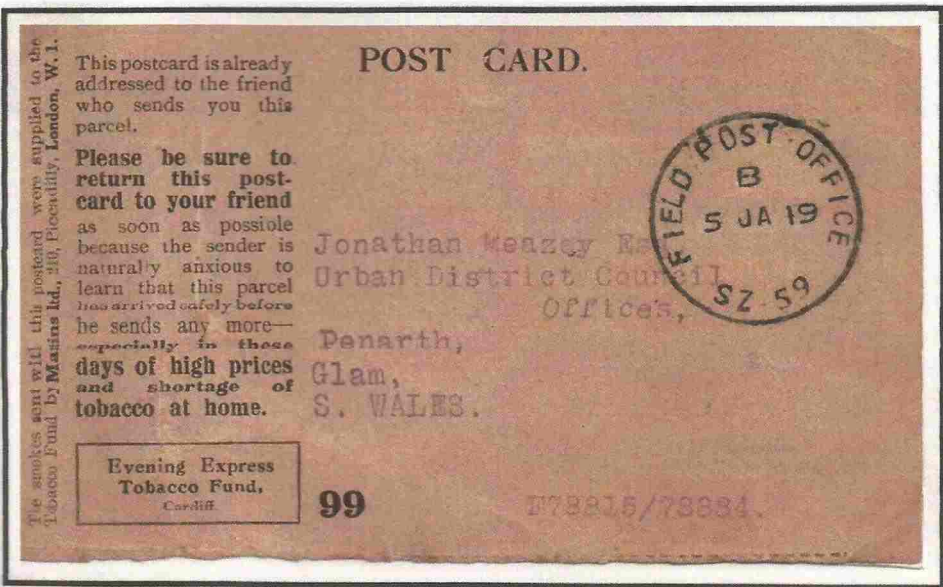


Registered Letter handstamped APO SZ 20.

Fig. 5: Receipt of a parcel by Army Post Office and confirmation of receipt by preprinted Army post card.



Parcel tag with Civilian Cairo Registration Label, franked 3 x 10 mil + 5 mil 1914 Egyptain Pictorial Issue, postmarked Cairo “1 Fe 19”. Additional military PM Sk. 29 mm dated: “APO A 3 FE 19” in 1 line.



PM Sk. 29 mm dated: “APO SZ 59 B 5 JA 19” in 1 line. SZ 59 spaced.



*Fig. 6: A military post office that will accept also civilian mail would be given the general name "Palestine" civilian cover postage was paid.*

**Registered civilian cover sent to London, England**



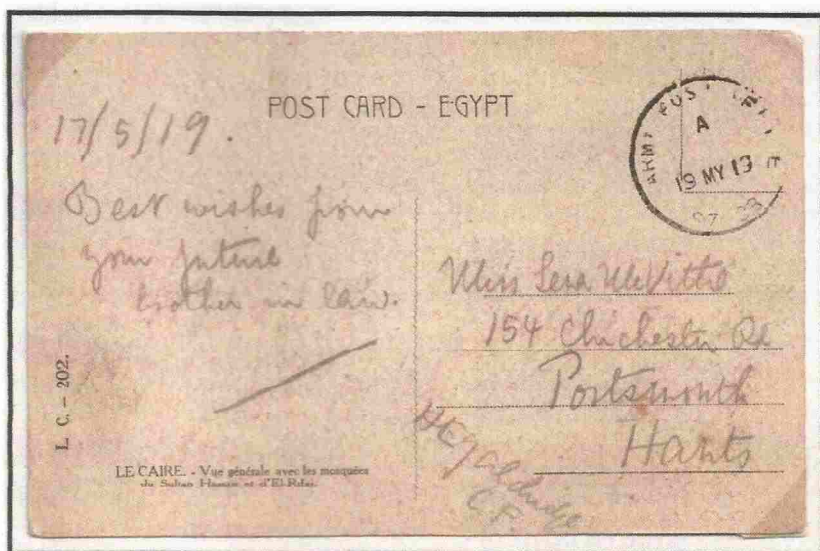
PM Sk. 29 mm dated: "APO A 5 AU 18" in 1 line. SZ 52 spaced.  
Censor mark CM 7 No. 1123.

Back PM Sk. 30 mm dated: "APO SZ 9 B 9 AU 18" in 2 line  
"Registered London E C 3 SP 18".

Fig. 7: A civilian cover and a post card from Lydda and Beersheba through the Army Post, to Kantara, Egypt and Portsmouth, England. The cover paid postage.



PM Sk. 29 mm dated: "FPO SZ 20 A 6 AP 19" in 1 line. SZ 20 spaced, Cover franked 2 x 5 mil Typo issue correct 1 Piaster foreign rate.



PM Sk. 28 mm dated: "APO SZ 23 A 19 MY 19" in 1 line. SZ 23 spaced.

### Background:

When Jerusalem was surrendered to the E.E.F. by the Turks, the city had no orderly postal services. To restore the service, while no stamps were available a privilege was granted for civilians to send letters free of charge via the Army Post in the Occupied Territory. O.E.T.A. Decree by Public Notice No. 38. The official earliest date was 17th december 1917.

*Fig. 8: Free Civilian mail through Jerusalem Army Post, Missent forwarded by General Headquarters Cairo, to France.*



PM Sk. 28 mm dated: "APO SZ 44 B 17 DE 17" in 1 line. SZ 44 spaced.  
"FPO GM 2 C 23 DE 17". Censor mark CM 3 No. 3346.

The above cover (front only) was sent on the very First Day of the above period, but as the sorters in the Egyptian Post did not know about the privilege given to the civilians in the Occupied Zone, directed it to G.H.Q. in Cairo, where they crossed out the Postmark of "APO SZ 44" and applied the "FPO G M 2" Postmark.



## The Italian Detachment

This Detachment was commanded by Major F. DwAgostino and served mainly as guards of Railways, Amunition, Food and Water Depots.

*Fig. 9: Cover of the Italian Detachment sent through the Beersheba British Army Post, to Bari, Italy.*



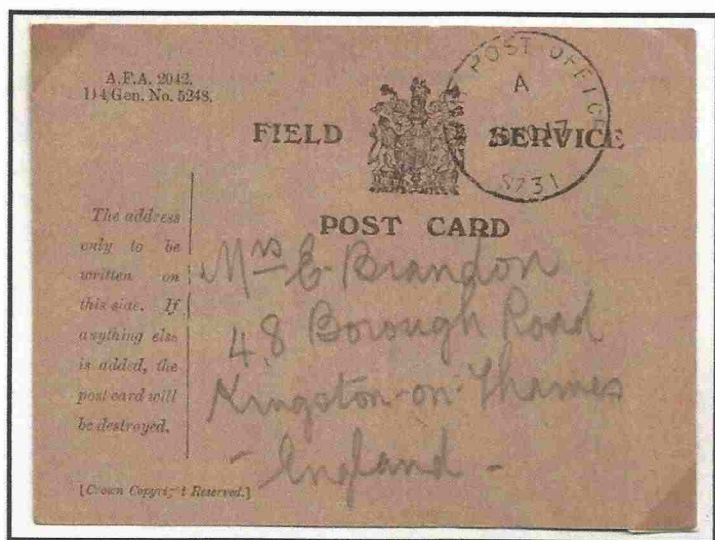
PM Sk. 29 mm dated: "APO SZ 34 A 9 JU 18" in 1 line. SZ 34 spaced.

Censor marks: Italian "CENSORE No. 1".

In oblong box "VERIFICATO PER CENSURA".

In double ring Cachet "Distacamento Italiano di Palestina – COMANDO" Back: repeat of above cachet. Arrival PM "Bari 22 6 18".

**Fig. 10: Special Field Post preprinted Formula postcards. These were sent from the Jerusalem Area, to Kingston-on-Thames, England.**

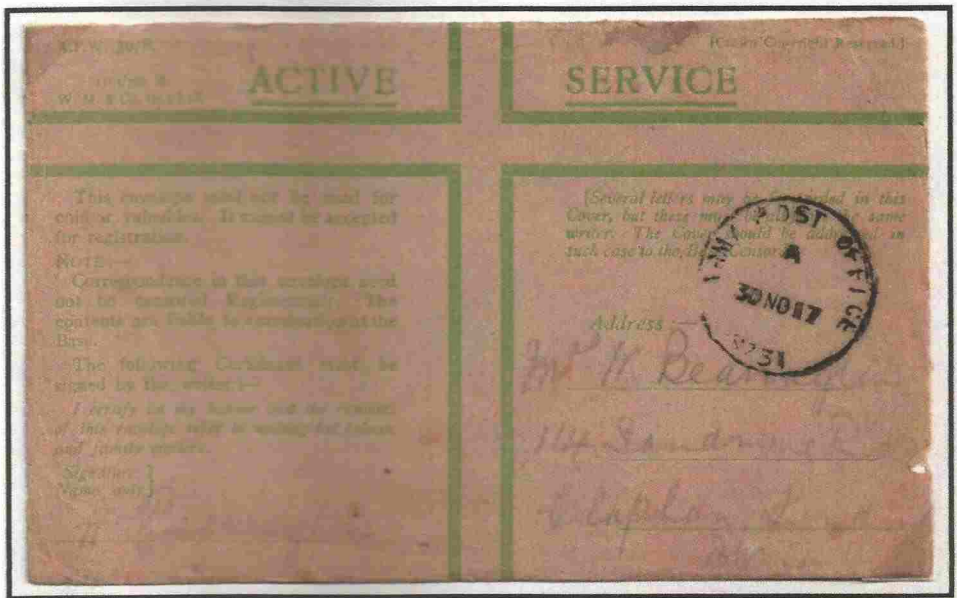


PM Sk. 29 mm dated: "APO SZ 31 A 30 NO 17" in 1 line. SZ 31 closed.  
The second Post mark discovered recently (see previous page).



PM Sk. 29 mm dated: "APO SZ 36 X 9 FE 18" in 1 line. SZ 36 closed.

Fig. 11: The **ONLY** Known so far, Honorary Military Cover from the Jerusalem area.



PM Sk. 29 mm dated: "APO SZ 31 A 30 NO 17" in 1 line. SZ 31 closed.

There is only **one cover** and **one card** from this Office known so far, see below.

Comment: Up to recently the Cover above was the **only one** known, a quote from J Firebrace 1991: "Opened at an unknown location, possibly in Palestine L. of C." The new discovery of a card sent by a soldier from same office and same date to an address in Kingston-on-Thames. With another card written by same soldier to same address, from APO SZ 36 located in Jerusalem Area give support to the location of "APO SZ 31" being in the area of Jerusalem.

*Fig. 12: Registered cover from the Austrlian Imperial Force (see pink label) sent through the Rafah British Army Post, to Norwich, England.*



PM Sk. 29 mm dated: "APO SZ 41 X 27 AU 18" in 1 line. SZ 41 spaced.

Registration Pink Label: "**Australian Imperial Force R No, 429**".

Same PM.



Fig. 13: Army Post SZ 61 SAFED. Few letters are known from this post office, particularly civilian ones like this one, to Bern, Switzerland.



PM Sk. 28 mm dated: "FPO SZ 61 X 26 JA 19" in 1 line. SZ 61 spaced.

Censor mark oblong "PALESTINE CENSORSHIP N. 3.

Back PM "Port Said E 1 II 19".

Note: Safed is the only place in Palestine where the old Yurkish octagonal date stamp was used. Some nine letters are known, dates: 1 DE 18 to 14 FE 19.

## ***LIST OF APO SZ NUMBERS***

<b><u>APO SZ NUMBER</u></b>	<b><u>LOCATION</u></b>	<b><u>DURATION</u></b>
2	Jerusalem	11/09/1918-03/11/1919
7	Sinai	26/01/1917-08/02/1918
7	Jaffa	02/05/1918-14/02/1919
8	Rafah, Beersheva, Ramle	27/08/1918-04/09/1918
9	Military+civilain	22/11/1918-06/01/1919
14	Dir El Belach	10/05/1917-31/01/1919
16	Haifa	11/01/1919-27/11/1919
20	Lud	14/04/1918-10/11/1919
23	Beersheva	05/07/1917-19/05/1919
27	Gaza	17/02/1917-01/11/1919
31	Jerusalem	31/11/1917- ?
32	Birsalem	24/02/1918-10/02/1919
33	Jericho	26/11/1917-12/10/1918
34	Beersheva, Jaffa	01/12/1917-10/10/1918
35	Jerusalem	01/02/1919-19/03/1919
36	Jerusalem	01/01/1918-09/07/1919
37	Rafah	16/12/1917-06/07/1918
38	Beersheva	24/12/1917-22/01/1918
41	Rafah	31/01/1918-14/03/1919
42	Rafah	02/01/1918-19/10/1918
43	Rafah	21/01/1918-12/07/1919
44	Jerusalem	17/12/1917-16/02/1918
45	Jaffa	28/12/1917-21/01/1919
46	Jaffa	27/02/1918-20/07/1918
47	Ramle	02/04/1918-25/02/1919
48	Palestine (Military + Civilain)	28/04/1918-16/11/1918
49	Lud	29/04/1918-16/11/1918
52	Palestine (Military + Civilain)	03/07/1918-??/11/1918
53	Palestine (Military + Civilain)	27/07/1918-04/09/1918
54	Beersheva	15/07/1918-15/11/1918
55	Palestine (Military + Civilain)	01/08/1918-30/07/1919
57	Haifa	27/04/1918-20/05/1918
58	Jericho	13/09/1918 -31/05/1919
58	Jerusalem	16/10/1918-19/05/1919
59	Tulkarem	20/11/1918-03/07/1919
60	Nazareth	14/10/1918-22/03/1919
61	Zafed	01/11/1918-18/02/1919

# ***LIST OF APO SZ NUMBERS***

## **SORTED BY LOCATION**

<b><u>APO SZ NUMBER</u></b>	<b><u>LOCATION</u></b>	<b><u>DURATION</u></b>
23	Beersheva	05/07/1917-19/05/1919
38	Beersheva	24/12/1917-22/01/1918
54	Beersheva	15/07/1918-15/11/1918
34	Beersheva, Jaffa	01/12/1917-10/10/1918
32	Birsalem	24/02/1918-10/02/1919
14	Dir El Belach	10/05/1917-31/01/1919
27	Gaza	17/02/1917-01/11/1919
16	Haifa	11/01/1919-27/11/1919
57	Haifa	27/04/1918-20/05/1918
7	Jaffa	02/05/1918-14/02/1919
45	Jaffa	28/12/1917-21/01/1919
46	Jaffa	27/02/1918-20/07/1918
33	Jericho	26/11/1917-12/10/1918
58	Jericho	13/09/1918-31/05/1919
2	Jerusalem	11/09/1918-03/11/1919
31	Jerusalem	31/11/1917- ?
35	Jerusalem	01/02/1919-19/03/1919
36	Jerusalem	01/01/1918-09/07/1919
44	Jerusalem	17/12/1917-16/02/1918
58	Jerusalem	16/10/1918-19/05/1919
20	Lud	14/04/1918-10/11/1919
49	Lud	29/04/1918-16/11/1918
9	Military + civilain	22/11/1918-06/01/1919
60	Nazareth	14/10/1918-22/03/1919
48	Palestine (Military + Civilain)	28/04/1918-16/11/1918
52	Palestine (Military + Civilain)	03/07/1918-??/11/1918
53	Palestine (Military + Civilain)	27/07/1918-04/09/1918
55	Palestine (Military + Civilain)	01/08/1918-30/07/1919
37	Rafah	16/12/1917-06/07/1918
41	Rafah	31/01/1918-14/03/1919
42	Rafah	02/01/1918 -19/10/1918
43	Rafah	21/01/1918-12/07/1919
8	Rafah, Beersheva, Ramle	27/08/1918-04/09/1918
47	Ramle	02/04/1918-25/02/1919
7	Sinai	26/01/1917-08/02/1918
59	Tulkarem	20/11/1918-03/07/1919
61	Zafed	01/11/1918-18/02/1919

# Jerusalem Via Maris to Beirut

Mihael I. Fock, FRPSL, Slovenia

According to historical data a French private post office was founded in Beirut by merchants Santelli and Micciarelli on 16<sup>th</sup> of November 1845. It provided mail delivery from Jerusalem by coast route (Via Maris) through Jaffa, Haifa, Acre, Tyre, Sidon to Beirut and back. Steamers of Messageries Imperiales Company transported mail from Beirut to Marseilles via Alexandria and Malta. Weight of shipment and delivery distance was taken into account for postal charge.

Even earlier, in 1840, two English merchants, Black and Heald, provided postal service by couriers between Beirut and Damascus.

Mr. Raphael Livnat, researcher on Beirut postal history discovered five letters posted in Jerusalem and one in Haifa for destinations in France.

In my research of Jerusalem mail I've found a letter from Suadea (Sidon), sent to Normandy in 1846 (Figs. 1 and 1.1) and a letter sent from Jerusalem to Switzerland in 1848 (Fig. 2).

In Lebanese "Archeology & History in Lebanon" (issue 30-31) I have found data about two letters sent from Beirut in 1847 and from Jaffa in 1851 (Postal Museum Beirut), and 2 letters (Cedar Stamp Auction) sent back to Jerusalem, all of them using Santelli and Micciareli post office service.

During this period letters were not cut or perforated but marked with ink, at the disinfection office in Marseilles.

Yehuda Kleiner emphasised to me, the importance of reading philatelic letters whenever possible. When I opened the letter I was surprised to find out that it contains plan of a flat in Suadea (Sidon) (Fig. 1.1). The flat's owner and writer of the letter in question is none less but *James Black*, co-founder of the first postal connection between Beirut and Damascus who was furnishing his seaside flat and reported this, among others, to his female friend in Normandy (Bacquerville). This letter was sent on 26<sup>th</sup> December 1846 and arrived via Marseille and Paris on 12<sup>th</sup> January, 1847. Postage paid in Beirut amounted to 21 Centimes.



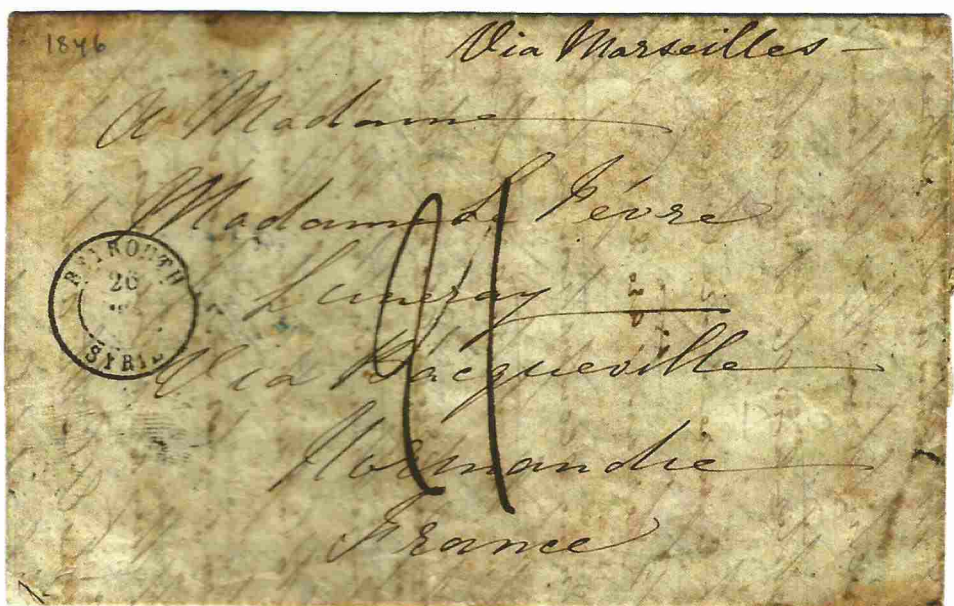


Fig. 1: 1846, Letter from Beirut to Normandy by James Black, co-founder of first postal connection between Beirut to Damascus.



of James Black  
 King Mary God

Fig. 1.1: Part of the text of the inside of Black's letter.

Taking account of this and other letters it is possible to reconstruct postal connection between Jerusalem and Beirut, the so called *via Maris*, since we have letters from Jerusalem, Jaffa, Haifa, Suadea (Sidon) and Beirut.

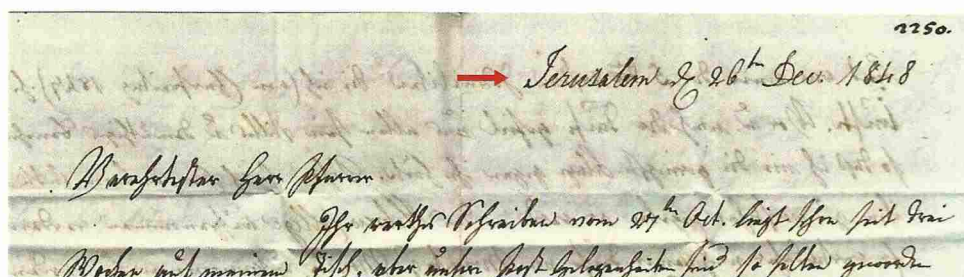


Fig. 2: 1848 letter from Jerusalem to Basle Switzerland, transit Beirut.

The letter, Figure 2, is probably the first known letter sent from Jerusalem to Switzerland. It was sent on 26<sup>th</sup> December 1848 from Jerusalem (French Post Office – Postmaster Tortorici) through French Post Office in Beirut (S&M – 6<sup>th</sup> January 1849). At that time ship “OSIRIS” (Paquebots de la Mediteranee in red frame) sailed to Marseille (19<sup>th</sup> January 1849) and from there through France (T.F. – Transit Francais in red) to Switzerland. 26 centimes were charged on arrival.





*Fig. 3: 1847, inland written on Mont Carmel, Haifa and sent 24<sup>th</sup> May 1847 to Jerusalem. The letter was probably carried privately by Santelli and Micciarelli company, as the letter does NOT bear Ottoman postal charges or the Ottoman negative seal postmark. The Santelli and Micciarelli Company operated mail connections at that time, between the cities of the Holy Land from their head office in Beirut.*

Another letter (Fig. 4) was sent by the Sanitary Director of Genoa to the Consul of Sardinia in Jerusalem, asking about the sanitary safety belt between Turkey and the Syrian region, (which included Palestine). The letter was posted on 12<sup>th</sup> of December and travelled through Livorno, from there on a French steam liner *Mentor* to Malta (23<sup>rd</sup> of December 1846) and from there (together with other mail) on the ship *Louqsor* which arrived in Alexandria on 2<sup>nd</sup> of January 1847.

*Louqsor* sailed from Alexandria on 4<sup>th</sup> of January and reached Beirut on 7<sup>th</sup> of January. The letter travelled from Beirut by Santelli & Micciarelli private postal courier service through the coastal towns Sidon, Tyre, Acre, Haifa and Jaffa to Jerusalem. There, it was delivered to the addressee who paid three Piastres upon delivery (manuscript on the front of envelope). Four different currencies were used for postal charges. Sender paid 2,80 Sardinian Liras. Two Sardinian Liras were charged for delivery to Beirut (as equivalent of two French Francs – “f2” in manuscript) and





# Letters from Napoleon's Egyptian/ Palestine 1799 Campaign

Yehuda Kleiner, Raanana, Israel

Following the obscurity about the "Napoleon Letter (manifest) to the Jews" referred to in the article "Letters from Napoleon's Egyptian/Palestine 1799 Campaign" in the previous issue (#VII-126-127, P.887) and the question about the authenticity of the letter, it was decided to research the matter, further.

The Editor approached Mr. Jean, Paul Danon, the Editor of the French philatelic journal "Doar Ivri" for his help. Mr. Danon made inquiries at the "Quai D'Orsay", The French Foreign Office archive which provided the answer shown in Fig. 1.

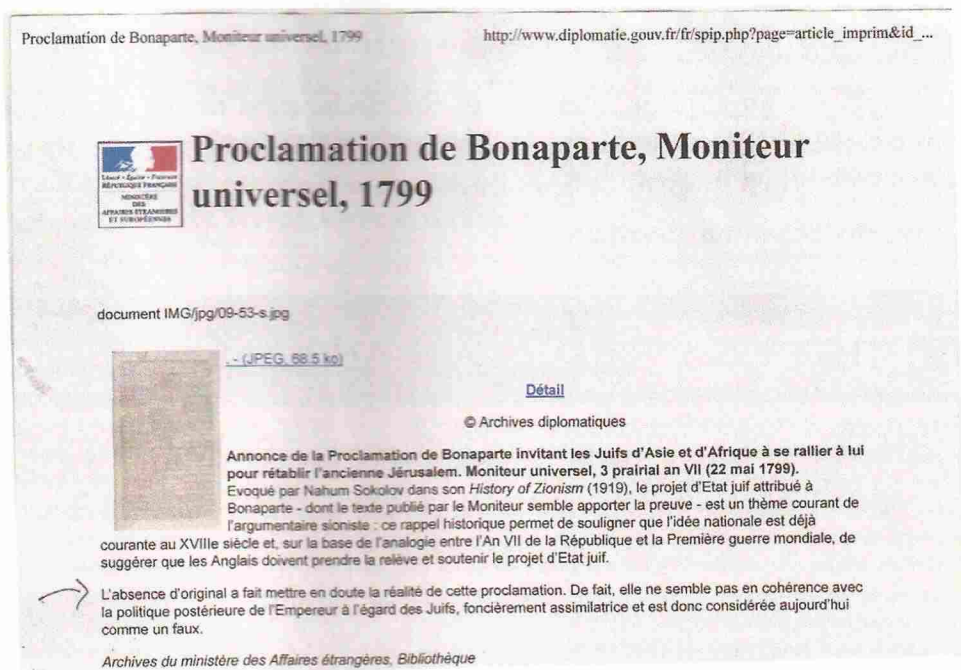


Fig. 1: The reply from The French Foreign Office Archive.

The translation of this **French Foreign Office** document is as follows:

### **THE DECLARATION OF BONAPARTE 1799**

The information about the declaration of Bonaparte in which he invites the Jews of Asia and Africa, to join him in the renewal of ancient Jerusalem, (as mentioned in the Universal Directory in the seventh year of The French Revolution, 22 MAY 1799).

Reference to this passage in the Universal Directory appears in the book "The History Of Zionism" by Nachum Sokolov, where the idea for the establishment of a Jewish state is related to Bonaparte. It appears that this implies that Zionist National ideal already prevailed in the Eighteenth Century, thus serving as an Analogy between the seventh year of the Republic and the First World War, suggesting that the British should promote the idea of a Jewish state.

The absence of the original document of the Declaration sheds doubt on its existence.

Furthermore the idea of a Jewish state is incoherent with the policy of Napoleon to integrate (assimilate) the Jews into the French society.

So, is this the end of story?

If there is an explicit reference to the declaration in the Universal Directory (in French Moniteur Universel 1799), which is an official publication, then there must be at least some truth in it.

We shall continue to search.

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# **The Untold Story**

## **How letter bombs impacted on Arab Israeli Under Cover mail after 1967**

Daryl Kibble, Australia

### **Foreword by the Editor**

I hesitated about publishing this article. Is it Postal History?

It could be, because it is about letters.

But then what is the postal history aspect of it?

After some thought I became aware that postal history in the wider sense, is about letters given to the post office, which rated these, collected the postal fee and delivered the letters through official governmental, or private postal systems.

Thus, the story and the letters discussed in the article are in accordance with the criteria of postal history.

It is an unfortunate episode associated with the post that demand efforts from the postal authorities to combat it. Still, it could be an interesting subject to study, terror and subversive mail.

### **The Letters of "Under Cover" mail**

In researching for my publication *The Arab Israeli Conflict: No Service, Returned & Captured Mail*<sup>1</sup>, I came across some previously unknown facts regarding the way that the British Post Office handled "undercover mail" between Arab States and Israel in the early 1970s. This is in part summarised in the chapter on Terrorism in the above publication.

The way undercover mail was processed has been detailed in numerous articles in the past by Dr Josef Wallach (including *The Israel Philatelist* Vol 65 No. 1 of 2014) as well as his excellent website on this subject, as referenced in that article.

On 19 September 1972 a successful letter bomb attack on the Israeli

embassy in London killed an Israeli diplomat. Eight bombs were addressed to diplomats at the embassy. Three were detected in the consulate post room and four others were intercepted at a London sorting office and given to police. All eight letters were posted in Amsterdam, Netherlands, on 18 September 1972.

Palestinian extremist group Black September posted the letters. Numerous letter bombs were also sent to other Israeli embassies, Jewish businesses and identities over the coming months, sparking a worldwide security alert. On one day in November 1972 alone, 42 letter bombs were intercepted in India addressed to Jewish businesses in Europe.

A selection of pages from hundreds of official post office documents researched for my above publication are reproduced for the first time in the book. These provide an insight into how the postal authorities were dealing in particular with the spate of Black September letter bombs in late 1972.

However perhaps the most fascinating official correspondence researched during this period of letter bomb activity was in relation to British Post's reluctance to continue handling the now well-entrenched undercover mail system. These undercover mails were mostly used by Arabs who resided in countries that did not have any postal relations with Israel, or Arabs residing within Israel. Such Arab senders would send their mail inside an outer envelope to a third party "neutral" country, typically with International Reply Coupons also enclosed. Britain (by way of The Postmaster London) was the primary "neutral" country being used. The third party country would then send the mail enclosed inside the outer envelope to Israel. See the Wallach website for further information.

Due to threat of letter bombs, undercover Arab mail received in late 1972 to early 1973 was destroyed by the British Post Office. There may be some exceptions, although none are presently known (and email correspondence from Dr Wallach confirms that he too has seen no examples of postal history from this period of time). By April 1973 the British Post Office was again accepting Arab undercover mails.

A summary of my research from the source documents is provided in the table below. Some examples of the official correspondence used



to formulate this table are illustrated in my publication *The Arab Israeli Conflict: No Service, Returned & Captured Mail*.

### Summary of British Post Official Correspondence – Letter Bombs impact on Arab “Undercover” Mail –

<b>Mail Exchange</b>	Between Israeli Senders and Arab Country Recipients (and Vice Versa) via British PO [Note: the majority of Israeli senders were Arabs residing in Israel]
<b>Demand on British PO</b>	Practice is tiresome for the PO (opening of mail, exchanging International Reply Coupons, placing stamps on letters, date stamping mail).
<b>Letter Bombs</b>	British PO staff refuses to handle “undercover” mail due to letter bomb activity.
<b>Quantity of Mail</b>	Since commencement of letter bomb activity in late September 1972, and up to 5 October 1972, British Post had accumulated 1,200 items that it refused to service. The Postmaster London was receiving 80-100 letters daily.
<b>Operational Decision</b>	Careful consideration was given as to what to do with such mail. Should it be returned to sender and how? Should it be destroyed, and is this legal? How should the “outer” letter be treated – is such mail actually “transit” mail under its true definition? Or is it now the possession of the British Post?
<b>Official Decision</b>	Ministry of Posts communication dated 9 January 1973 gives the green light for destroying all such “undercover” mail. The outer cover would be treated as being “delivered” once the Postmaster London took possession. Obligations under the UPU having therefore been met, such mail could be destroyed.

### References:

1. Kibble, D. *The Arab Israeli Conflict: No Service, Returned & Captured Mail*. Vivid Publishing, Perth, 2014. (<http://www.vividpublishing.com.au/darylkibble/>).

## **New Book**

### **The Arab-Israeli Conflict: No Service, Returned and Captured Mail by Daryl Kibble**

**Reviewed by: Gene Fricks (Editor, *Collectors Club Philatelist*, New York)**

Daryl Kibble has written a fascinating account to sort out a very chaotic and confused era. When Great Britain terminated its mandate over Palestine, they took with them many of the government services including the posts. With the termination came the declaration of the State of Israel, military attacks from surrounding Arab states, and embargos on the transfer of mail to Israel.

The author organized his presentation of this early time period based upon the postal markings of the sending countries. This framework accounts for both the large volume mailers such as the United States and Great Britain as well as the one-of-a-kind such as Malaya. Egypt became the holding point for much of the mail during the embargo and Syria continued to process the mail, sending on to Jordan to figure out how to deliver it. The first chapter contains a very useful table listing dates of suspension and resumption of services from about every member of the UPU as well as images of primary sources retrieved from postal archives around the world.

The second chapter renders the story of the embargo from the perspective of the Arab states, a boycott that lasted from 1948 until the 1980s (or to the present for a few such as Lebanon) with varying levels of commitment. At least for the early years the embargo saw extensive use of censorship; the various tapes and markings used in Egypt form a subtheme of their own in the book as well as being the first time publication of such tapes and markings in the philatelic literature.

A boycott usually engenders a response and Israel was no exception in this regard. The author documents 34 types of postal markings used by the Israeli administration to return undeliverable mail to senders (only



*Fig. 1: A letter from France to Betlhem in the West Bank Palestine, via Israel. The letter was returned to France because "PAS DE SERVICE VIA ISRAEL" However it was censored by the Israeli censor.*

five had been identified in previous research). These instruction markings are found as rubber handstamps as well as mimeographed labels.

The "captured mail" aspect of the title refers to events related to the 1956 Suez action, with Israeli, British and French forces engaged to reopen the canal after Egyptian nationalization. This affected particularly hard the postal activities in the Gaza strip. More mail became "captured" during the Six-Day war in 1967 and produced an extensive postal history that Kibble explores in some depth, again for the first time in the philatelic literature in this detail.

Mail recovered from crashes has its own interest level. When associated with any of the acts of terrorism of the last half-century, the artifacts become poignant examples. By their nature, most of these examples are not common.

The author concludes with surveys of postal operations and source materials for the Palestinian Authority and HAMAS, as well as what he calls "Other Conflicts & Incidents," such as the Yom Kippur war and the 1991 Gulf War. Kibble maintains the high standard of scholarship.



The book does not include an index in the traditional sense. This is because finding the relevant areas of interest in the publication are easily achieved through a comprehensive Table of Contents. The author also gives us an extensive bibliography. The presentation of the material in part resembles that of a postal history exhibit. Finding one's way about the subject will take a bit of experience for the non-postal history reader, but the learning curve is not steep. The publication is of course targeted to the philatelic postal history community.

Production qualities for the book are outstanding. Quality high-density paper shows off the huge number of illustrations to great advantage and the binding will last for many years of use. The work is produced by a "print on demand" system.

**Author's note:**

An index to the publication does exist, however the reviewer did not have access to it at the time of the review. It is a separate booklet that can be attached to the inside back cover in a sleeve.

*The Arab-Israeli Conflict: No Service, Returned and Captured Mail.* Available from publisher: [www.vividpublishing.com.au/darylkibble/](http://www.vividpublishing.com.au/darylkibble/), 384 pp, hardbound, AUD \$112. + postage. 2014. ISBN 9781925086584.

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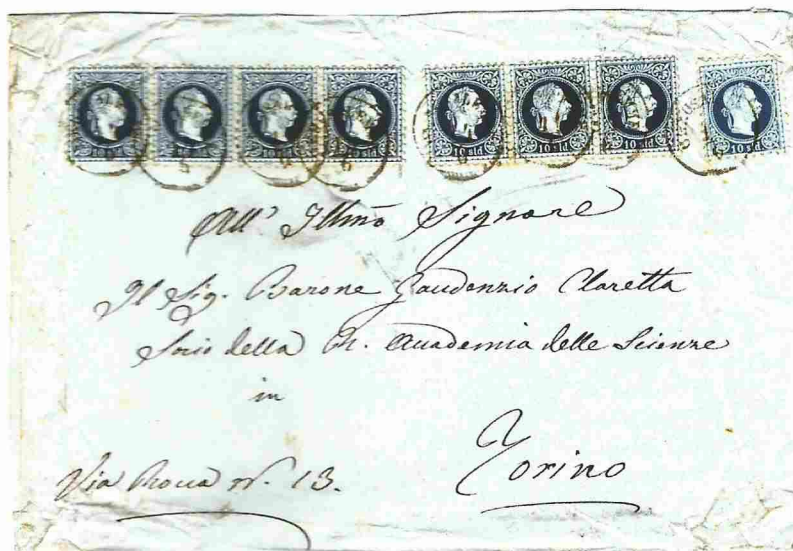
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## Items of Interest



Heavy letter with eight times regular postage. From Jerusalem through the Austrian post office. June 14, 1868 transit Alexandria June 17, arrived Torino June 23, 1878, postmarks on back side. (Collection Mihael fock, Slovenia)

### VENETIAN LETTERS FROM GAZA?

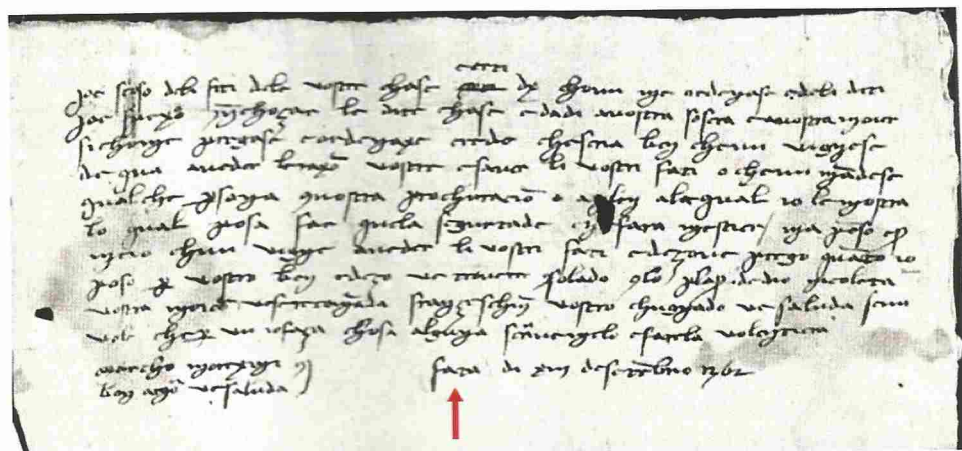
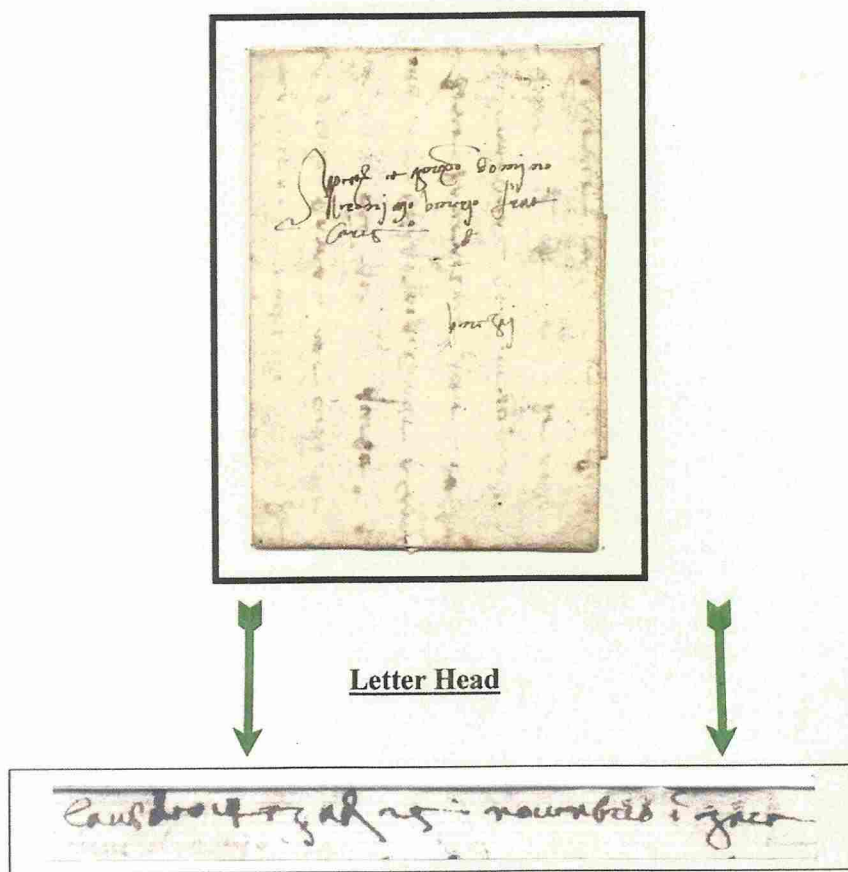


Fig. 1: 1362, letter from Gaza? To Aguila a place near Aleppo.

The Editor knows of two Venetian letters which were **apparently** sent from Gaza. The one shown in Figure 1 that was in the Sacher collection auctioned by Robson Lowe in November 1989 (lot 1052). The second one (Fig. 2), is in the Editor's collection. The fact that the letters are from Gaza can be established through the writing of the place of origin in the first letter and by the letter head in the second. After checking many sources no reference to Venetians in Gaza could be found. It was however, indicated to the Editor that a place in Turkey with a similar name (not exactly the same) existed and that "Gaza" was the abbreviation of it. May be, may be not. **Can any reader help?**



*"Lanus Dei 1427 ad 25 Novembre C(itta) gaza".*

*Fig. 2: 1427, Venetian merchant letter from Gaza to Tripoly (Lebanon), then under Mamaluk occupation. Delivery by ship captain.*

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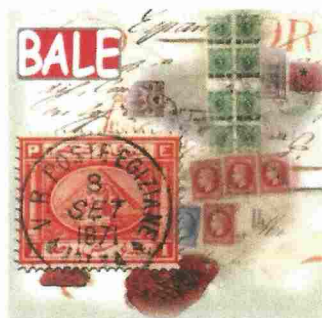
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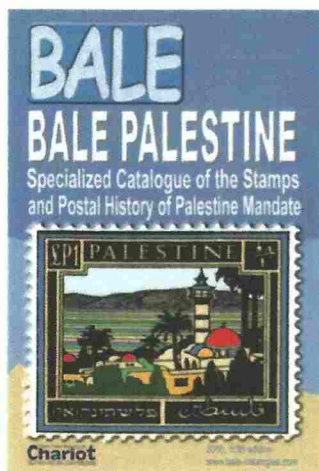


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