



ISRAEL PHILATELIC FEDERATION

Member - Federation Internationale de Philatelie

# Holy Land Postal History

No. 132-133

| SPRING 2017



"A.R". ("Avis de Reception") box cachet on 1917 registered letter from Jerusalem to Switzerland. (details page 23).

# HOLY LAND POSTAL HISTORY



**ISRAEL PHILATELIC FEDERATION**

Member - Federation Internationale de Philatelie

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# **Holy Land • Postal History**

**No. 132-133**

**Spring 2017**

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**Postcards from Herzl**

Herzl's love for his children is demonstrated in three postcards written by Herzl to his daughter Pauline. 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

As the Editor of the 'Holy Land Postal History' Bulletin, I am very proud to announce that last year our publication was awarded a LARGE VERMEIL Medal at 'EXFILNA 2016' National Exhibition, in which Israel was invited as a special guest. The exhibition was held in Zaragoza, Spain, under the auspices of FEPA [Federacion Europea de Sociedades Filatelicas], despite our limited budget and the fact that Israel is comparatively small in size and population the Bulletin was awarded this sign of merit. Certainly, I must share the award with others and would like to thank our authors, graphic designers, the printers and our Philatelic Federation, who contributed to this success.

Especially, to those who do so on a regular basis. *Itamar Karpovsky*, *Zvika Aloni*, *Yakov Tsachor*, *Les Glassman*, *Tibi Yaniv*, from Israel and *Mihael I. Fock* from Slovenia, *Joseph Aron* from Australia and *Zeev Galibov* from England. And I should also mention the Late *Yakov Shabtai Z"L*, who unfortunately is no longer with us.

\*\*\*

We may question whether the relationship between Postal History and History is relevant? In this issue an article about Censorship in Palestine during WW I is given, with emphasis on the history and the characteristics of Censorship rather than on the details of the philatelic side of the subject. It is hoped that it will assist collectors in their understanding of this collecting field.

Unusual subjects of collecting are always welcome. The "A.R. – Avis de Reception, – Advice of receipt", in Palestine during 1850-1918 is such a subject, which is not widely known. It is discussed in detail and while on the subject a unique "A.R" letter from besieged Jerusalem during the War of Independence is shown, although it is from a later period.

The fascinating story of the *Santelli & Micceditiarelli* post company operating "underground" thus misleading the Ottoman authorities with the support of the French Post Office, is an interesting episode of

establishing a privately owned postal service in the mid 19<sup>th</sup>. Century. Perhaps this was the forerunner to the modern private letter and package companies that operate alongside and in competition with the governmental ones.

A short article about the Ottoman postal rates in Palestine, based on a scan of the official relevant document in Turkish is shown. These were translated and should help in the understanding of the letter rates.

A relatively unknown subject is the 'Newspaper' stamps and their usage in the Holy Land. We like to publish such subjects that are relatively unknown which may be classified as "under the radar".

Another subject that in my view is relatively unknown is the special delivery service of the Italian Post Office in the Holy Land which utilized ships to expedite delivery when mail was to be sent between port cities like Haifa and Jaffa and vica versa. Special Express stamps were used for the franking.

As always we have the regular features namely: Items of Interest, New Book and Letters to the Editor.

***Yehuda Kleiner***  
***Editor***

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Mr Kleiner,

We met at the Jerusalem exhibition and I promised that I would send to you a scan of an interesting item to publish in your journal.

This telegram shown below, was sent from Warszawa (Warsaw) on the 31<sup>st</sup> of August (1939) at 22:10 thus, 1 hour and 50 minutes before the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> WW, arriving at Tel Aviv on the **1<sup>st</sup> of September 1939**. Apart of the sad text, it might be, the latest Polish postal document before the war. It's a unique item and I'm sure, you'll like it. Feel free to publish it.

Goregorio L. Zuskis, Piazza PIO XI, nr 120123 Milano – ITALY

PALESTINE POSTS, TELEGRAPHS & TELEPHONES			
מברק TELEGRAM		13	
<p>This form must accompany any enquiry respecting this Telegram.</p> <p>45</p> <p>يجب ان يرسل هذا النموذج مع كل استعلام بخصوص هذا التلغراف</p> <p>את הטלוגרם הזה צריך לצרף לכל בקשה העוסקת בנושא/הטלוגרם הזה</p>	<p>Service Instructions</p> <p>Handed in at <i>Warszawa</i></p> <p>Time <i>22/10</i> on <i>31</i></p> <p>Received at <i>0309</i></p>	<p>تعليمات ادارة المراسلات</p> <p>سلم في <i>Warszawa</i></p> <p>الوقت <i>on 31</i></p> <p>دست في <i>0309</i></p>	<p>DAVID</p>
	<p>To <i>Le Anglobank S. Aulheimer Tel Aviv</i></p>		
<p><i>Please cable immediately whether advise Fanny should come with any to Palestine. Hinder</i></p>			

The text of the Telegram: "Please cable immediately whether advise Fanny should come with..... to Palestine." Indeed a unique item.

Dear Yehuda,

Could you tell me information about this postmark?

I cannot find anything about it.

Best regards – Luigi



It seems straight forward, but I am not familiar with the Minhelet Haam collecting area. So may be our readers could help. Luigi's Email is: [l.martinoja@tin.it](mailto:l.martinoja@tin.it)

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BRANCHES: Jerusalem, Haifa, Ramat-Gan, Petach-Tiqva, Rehovot, Beirut, Damascus

№ 0030 א. נ.

בֹּזֵה הִנְנוּ לְהוֹדִיעַכֶּם שֶׁבְּמִשְׁרָדֵנוּ בִּ (מִלֵּא) בְּרַחוּב מִס.

נִמְצָא בְּשִׁבְלֵכֶם (מִלֵּא) מִס.

שֶׁנִּשְׁלַח מִעִיר (מִלֵּא) בְּיוֹם (מִלֵּא) לְפִי ת. מ. (מִלֵּא) גִּבְיָא דְּמִי חֻבְלָה

לְמַסּוֹר רַק נִגְדַּ גִּבְיָה סָךְ (מִלֵּא) נֶא לְבֹא וּלְקַבֵּל מִנְהֵל הַמְשָׁרָד (מִלֵּא) תֹאדִיר

נ. ב. הַחֻקֵּת הַמְסוּרָה בַּמְחֶסֶן בְּלִי תְּשֻׁלִּים נִוְסָף עַד הַמֶּשֶׁה יָמִים הַמְשֻׁלָּח.



This is the notice to the addressee about the postcard shown above to come and collect it. The date is 5 May 1948 about 9/10 days before the Declaration of Independence of the State of Israel. It was the twilight time of the British Mandate and it seems that the British Mandatory Post Office was already not fully operative, thus the postcard was delivered by the "Shelev" Transport Cooperative.

# Newspapers Stamps Examples from the Holy Land

Mihael I. Fock, FRPSL, Slovenia

## *Introduction*

A **newspaper stamp** is a special type of postage stamp used to pay the cost of mailing newspapers and other periodicals. Although many types were issued in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, typically representing rates reduced from regular mail, they generally fell out of use in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, as mail services began to arrange bulk handling directly with publishers.

The exact use of newspaper stamps varied; small-value stamps were generally intended to be affixed to newspaper wrappers, in much the fashion of regular mail, but with values usually less than regular stamps. Higher values were used on bundles of newspapers, and later on receipts.

The first newspaper stamp was issued by Austria in 1851, and a number of nations soon followed suit, including the Ottoman Empire.

Newspaper stamps seem to have been printed in great quantities, and almost all types are today inexpensive and easily acquired. However, some are very rare like the famous red Austrian 1856 Mercury news paper stamp shown below.



Newspapers after being read are usually discarded. Thus newspapers from the Ottoman period in the Holy Land, particularly in Jerusalem, with the newspaper stamps or with postal cancellations are not easily to

found. At the time newspapers and magazines from Europe were sent to subscribers through the Post offices of Turkey, Austria and Italy, mostly using Austrian Lloyd maritime services. From ports of Beirut, Alexandria and Jaffa they were delivered by postal couriers, postal coaches or trains. Some such examples are shown.



Fig. 1: August the 21<sup>st</sup>, 1884: HAMAGID – a weekly magazine in Hebrew, by editors David and Dan Gordon. Printed in Lyck, Prussia and sent through Beirut on September the 7<sup>th</sup>, 1884 to be delivered in Jerusalem on September the 17<sup>th</sup>. Stamps were applied presumingly on the wrapper of the news paper packet, but postmarks of Beirut and Jerusalem were struck on the top item of the packet.









Fig. 3: January the 5<sup>th</sup>, 1912: *Le Jeune Turk*, weekly newspaper sent from Istanbul to Turkish post office in Jerusalem to be dispatched to Dr. Wallach (director of Sharai Tzedek Hospital in Jerusalem at that time). Franked by a Turkish newspaper stamp, Jerusalem arrival postmark.

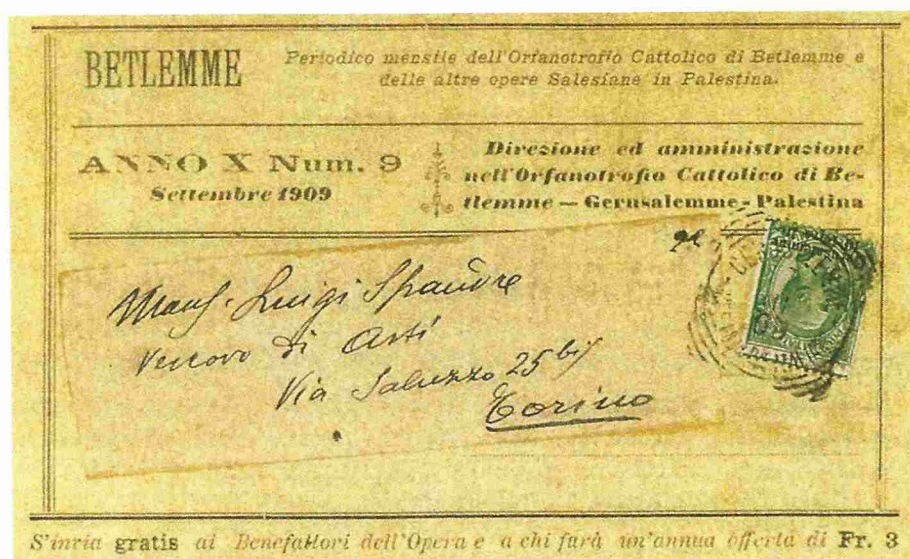
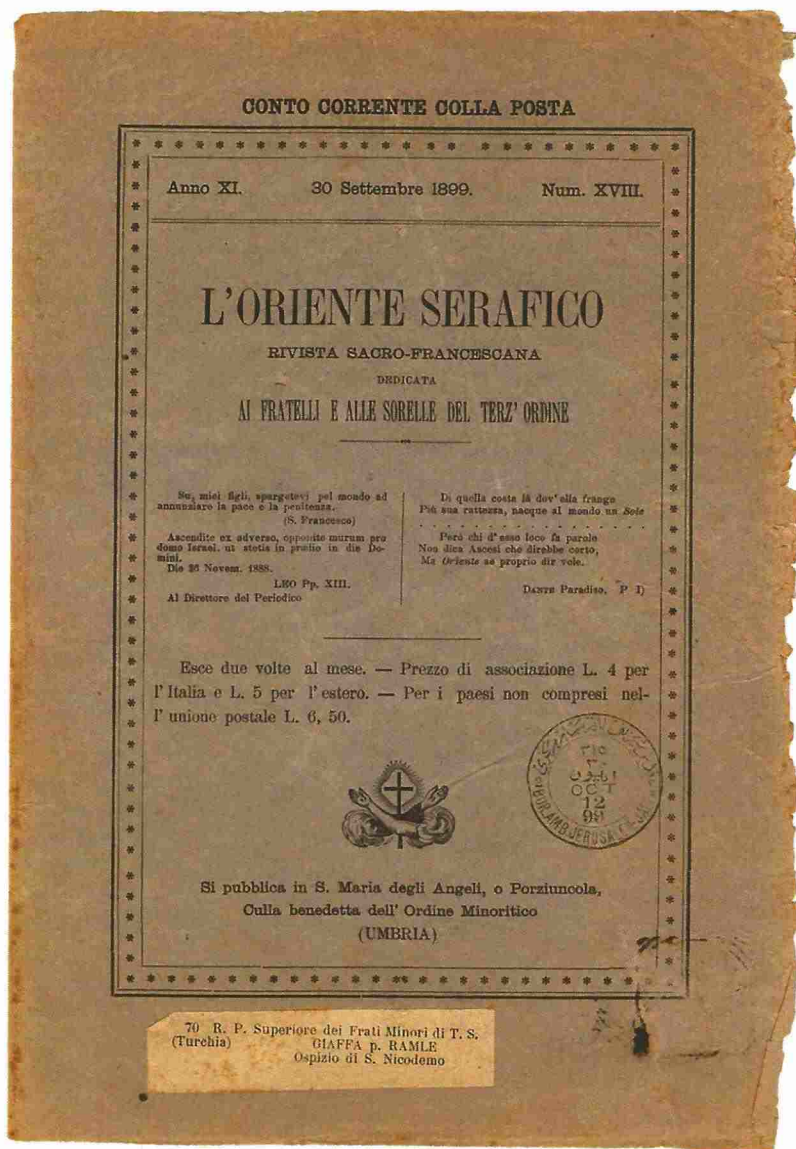


Fig. 4: Only two preserved specimens of the monthly magazine *Betlemme* are known. The illustration above is probably of the sticker which was placed on the wrapper of a bundle, or packet of the newspaper. Sent in 1909 from Jerusalem to Torino through the Italian post office in Jerusalem, which had no news paper stamps and therefore used a regular Italian Levant stamp.



*Fig. 5: L'ORIENTE SERAFICO (a monthly magazine edited by Minorite convent in Umbria, Italy) sent to Jaffa and from there by train to Jerusalem to Hospital of St. Nicodemus in Ramla. No stamp was applied but the »BUR.AMB.JERUSALEM OCT 12, 99« Ottoman train postmark.*

## References:

HLPH 107/108

Wikipedia

Author's collection

## Palestine Forunners – the A.R. Letters (1850-1918)

Itamar Karpovsky, Tel Aviv, Israel

One of the services which the post office offers, is the “*Avis de réception*”, advice or acknowledgment of receipt) service. Factually, it is the returning to the sender, of a form or card signed by the recipient as evidence that the letter was received. These forms (or cards) are frequently seen with legal endorsements. It had existed under various names in some postal entities as early as the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, and was adopted by the General Postal Union (GPU) in 1875, and again by its successor, the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in 1879.

Equivalent terms include “*Aviso de Recibo*”, acknowledgment of receipt (Canada), advice of receipt, advice of delivery (UK and much of the Commonwealth), return receipt requested/required/wanted/demanded (US), “*Rückschein*” (Germany), “*ricevuta di ritorno*” (Italy), “*zwrotne potwierdzenie odbioru*” (Poland), “*Aviso de Recepcion*” (South America), and many others. The standard abbreviations are “**AR**” and “**AD**”, which are usually stamped on the card or the form. Obviously, this service applies to registered letters.

Although this service existed in the Ottoman post in Palestine such letters are rare. Even more so in letters sent from the Foreign Post Offices in the land, particularly the Austrian and French ones. The two Austrian “AR” letters shown in the article, are examples of the three known so far. The Turkish and the Austrian post offices charged a fee of one piaster for the service which was collected by adding one piaster to the regular franking of the letter, while the French Post put the extra stamp fee on a special “A.R.” Receipt form.

In the following pages several “A.R.” covers and documents are illustrated.

# TURKISH POST

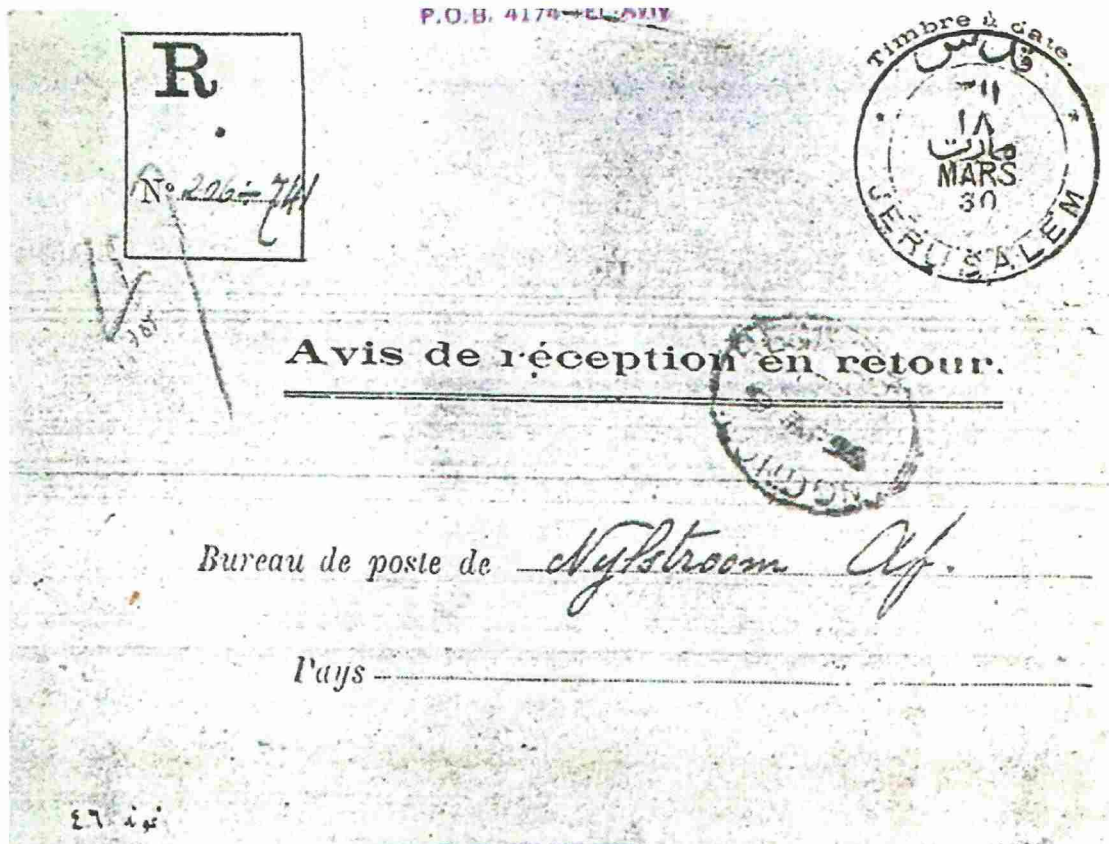


Fig. 1: **ADVICE OF DELIVERY**, “Avis de reception en retour”, imprinted on a stampless official envelope, requiring certification of delivery, usually by the signature of the recipient. Sent from Jerusalem 30.3.1895, transit London 9.4.1895, to the unusual destination Nystroom, Transvaal, South Africa. “R” 206-741 registration number.



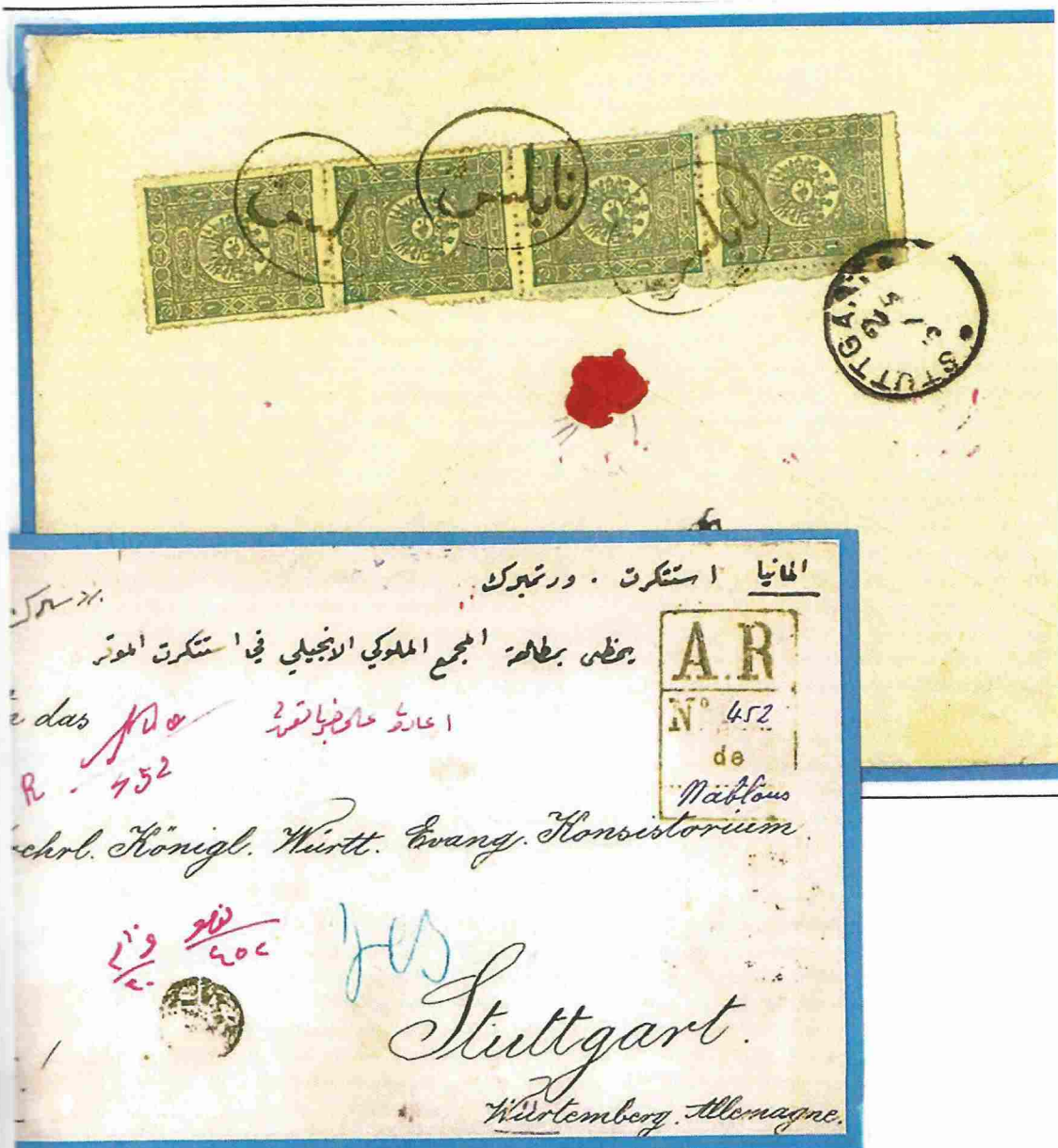


Fig. 2: Registered "A.R." letter from Nablus to Stuttgart franked on reverse with 4 Piaster Turkish 1892 issue to pay 2 Piaster double letter rate + 1 Piaster registration + 1 Piaster "A.R." fee. Cancelled by Arabic "Nablus" oval postmark. Nablus registration circular negative seal and unrecorded "A.R." box cachet.



Fig. 3: Registered "AR" letter from Acre to Constantinople. Franked on reverse with 3 Pias. Turkish 1892 issue stamps to pay 1 Pias. each for: letter rate, registration and "A.R." fee, canceled "ACRE" 12 April 1899. Redirected to London and charged additional 1 Pias. letter rate. Arrival London 28.4.1899. Unrecorded Acre "AR" cachet and the rare Acre registration negative seal.



Fig. 4: Registered "A.R." letter from Acre to Chicago franked 3 Pias. Turkish 1892 issue stamps to pay 1 Pias. each for: letter rate, registration and "A.R." fee, canceled "ACRE" 18.2.1901 with "A.R." No. 9 de Acre" framed cachet. London transit and Chicago arrival March 19 postmarks.





*Fig. 5: Back of 1908 registered "A.R." LITTORAL (port to port) letter from Jerusalem to Istanbul. Franked 2.5 Pias. (1 Pias. = 40 Para) = 20 Para unusual Littoral letter rate and 1 Pias. each for registration and "A.R." fees. The only such letter recorded from the Turkish post in Palestine.*



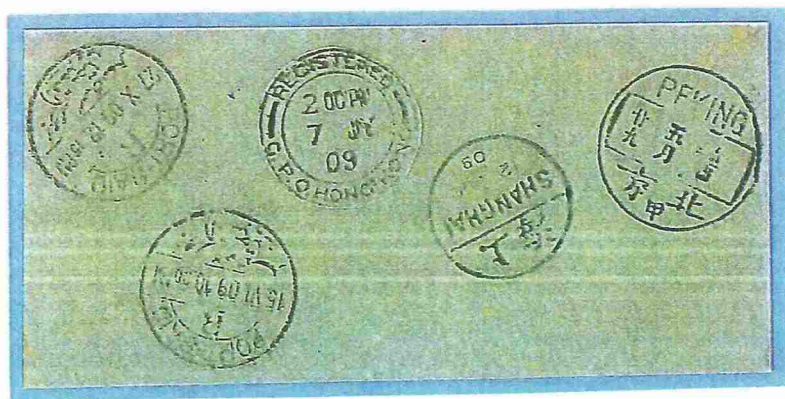
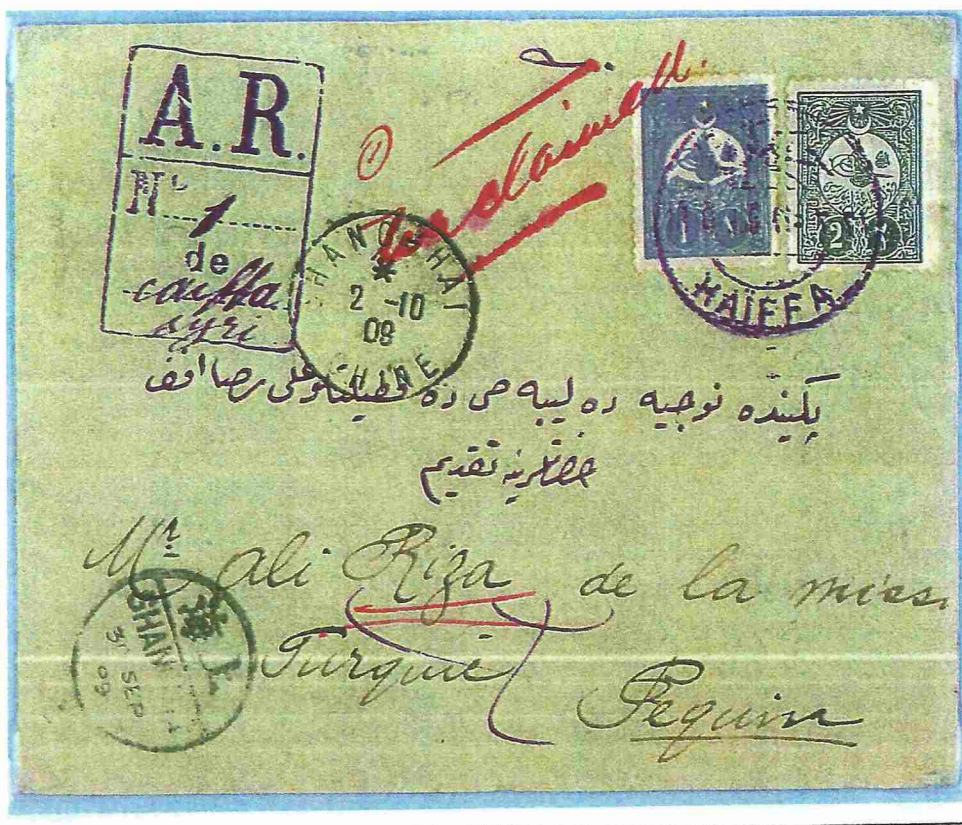


Fig. 6: Registered "A.R." letter to an UNUSAL DESTINATION PEKING CHINA. Franked with 3 Pais. Stamps to pay 1 Pias. each, for the letter rate, for registration and for the "AR" fee. Cancelled Caiffa 13.6.1909, transit Port Said 5.6.09, Hong Kong 7.7.09 and Shanghai 12.07.09. Rare violet "A.R." box cachet No.1 of Caiffa. As the letter was unclaimed it was returned to the sender via Shanghai 2.10.09. One of two recorded AR letters from Haifa at the period.

AUSTRIAN POST



Fig. 7: Registered "A.R." letters from Caiffa to Chicago 4 Piaster double rate for registration (2 Piaster single rate for each letter). 1 Piaster stamp affixed to pay the "A.R." fee overwritten in red in "Avis de Reception". Two of the three such letters recorded so far.



# FRENCH POST

N° 514.

**AVIS DE RÉCEPTION**

DE L'OBJET  
CHARGÉ OU RECOMMANDÉ

Pour le bureau de Vigo  
Département Espagne

AR

PALESTINE  
LEVANT

N° 514.  
(Reins rose 178.)

(Moo. B. de l'Union.)

SOUS-SECRÉTARIAT D'ÉTAT  
DES POSTES  
ET DES TÉLÉGRAPHES.

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE.

**AVIS DE RÉCEPTION**

d'un (1) Imprimé { valeur déclarée:                      } enregistré au bureau  
recommandé:                     

de (2) JERUSALEM le 24-8-07 sous le n° 421  
et adressé à (subscription complète) M. Daniel R. Valdes

Timbre du bureau d'origine.

                     à Vigo  
(rue et n° s'il y a lieu) Espagne

Nom et adresse de l'expéditeur (A). M. Consulat P. de France  
à JERUSALEM

JERUSALEM  
24-8-07  
PALESTINE

Fig. 8: The rare "Avis De Reception" form for registered printed matter of the French Foreign Post Office in Jerusalem. Properly franked 10 cent by a French Levant stamp with the octagon "AR" cachet alongside for a letter from Jerusalem to Vigo Spain. Dated Jerusalem 28.8.1907. The only complete "A.R." form known today from this post office.

## 1948 Transition Period – Minhelet Haam “A.R.” Letter

As a follow up to the “A.R.” subject the Author thought that this could be a good opportunity to present a very unusual “A.R.” letter of about 30 years later than the ones in the article. This letter was sent during the War of Independence from besieged Jerusalem to Haifa, by the Minhelet Haam Provisional post on the 15<sup>th</sup>. of June 1948. The “A.R.” service was requested by the sender due to the uncertainty of delivery because of the dangerous war conditions. Due to the siege the letter left Jerusalem only on the 21<sup>st</sup>. of June with the second convoy arriving in Haifa on 23<sup>rd</sup>. June 1948.

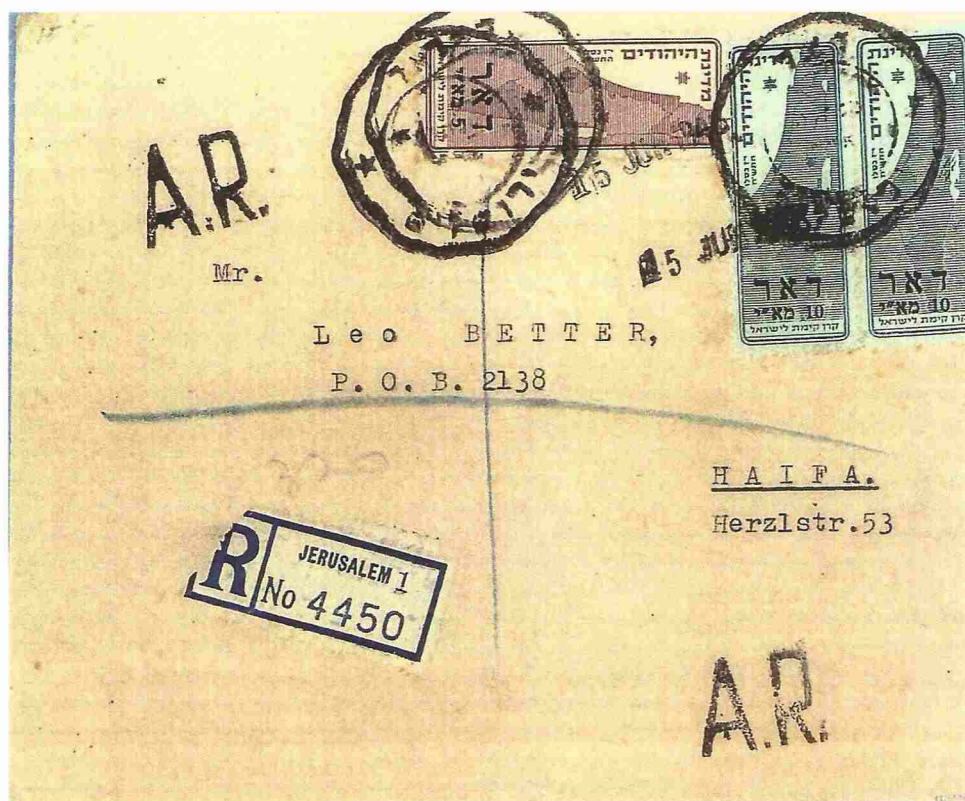
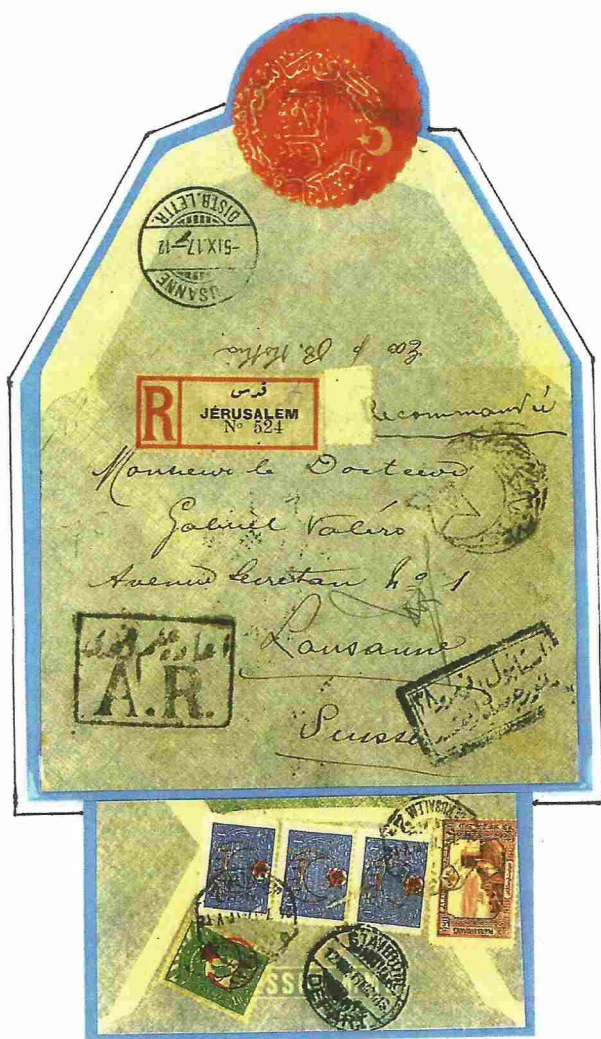


Fig. 9: Registered “A.R.” Convoy letter, sent from besieged Jerusalem to Haifa via Tel Aviv by the Minhelet Haam post. Franked 25 mils with KKL “post” overprinted stamps of the second printing to pay the domestic registered letter rate. Posted at “Mea Shearim” canceled by Minhelet Haam postmarks. The additional 15 mils to pay for the “A.R.” service was collected separately and the 15 mils stamp was affixed to a special form. However, after payment the letter was stamped with the “A.R.” cachet.





Front Page: Registered "A.R." from Jerusalem to Lausanne Switzerland. Franked on reverse 3 Piaster and 30 Para to pay: 1 Piaster regular letter fee, 1 Piaster registration and 1 Piaster AR fee and 30 Para War Tax. Cancelled Jerusalem 24.7.17. Transit Beirut and Istanbul and Lausanne arrival 5.9.1917. On observe "A.R." box cachet and Jerusalem registration label. (page ...)

# The Haganah and Pigeon Post

Joseph Aron, Melbourne, Australia

*Note by the Editor: A detailed article about "Pigeon Mail in the Holy Land" was published in the Holy Land Postal History Bulletin number 123-124*

*Recently, Joseph Aron acquired an instruction book about the "Hagana" (The Jewish unofficial army during the British Mandate), dealing with the raising, training and operating of Pigeon Post. Due to the fact that extensive use of Pigeon Post was utilized before and during the War of Independence, thus a special Pigeon Post unit was established for the military. The information in this article is an interesting addition to the previous one.*

\* \* \*

As documented by Salvador Bofarull in his monograph "Pigeon Mail through History", carrier pigeons were already used to facilitate communication in Ancient Egypt, China, India and then Greece and Rome. There is much evidence of their use in the Medieval Near East from Egypt to what are now Syria and Iraq and Turkey. Also Talmud contains much reference to dovecotes/pigeon lofts but there is no specific mention of the use of pigeons for transmission of information.

There was much use of pigeons by armies on both sides of the Second World War and such use may have extended to the Middle East.

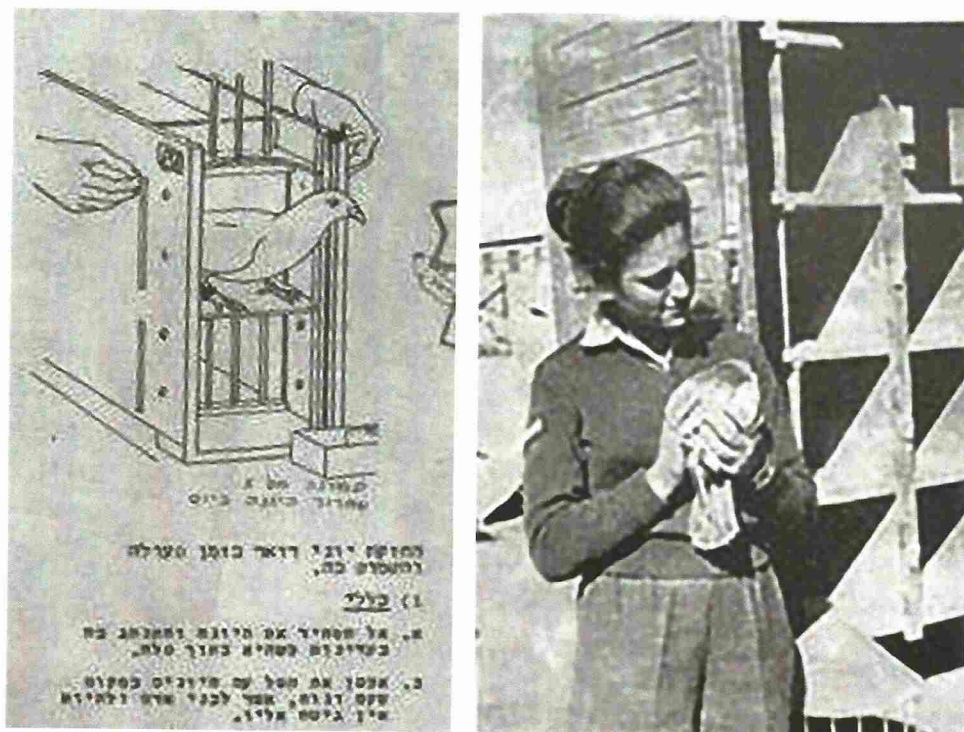
As far as Israel is concerned, the first mention by Bofarull relates to their use by the NILI underground during World War I. Unfortunately one of the birds utilized by NILI joined an Ottoman "flock" and discovery of a secret message led the Ottoman authorities to members of the group including Sarah Aaronson who was tortured but committed suicide rather than reveal information.

Of particular interest is Bofarull's brief reference to their use during the War of Independence for military purposes and connections between isolated settlements. He refers to the Israel Defence Forces having had a short-lived Pigeon Communications Unit for these purposes and that

IDF personnel on secret missions in Jordan during the 1950's also used pigeons for communication. However our knowledge of the operation is extremely scanty and according to Bofarull only two flimsies have survived.

Recently however I acquired at auction a stencilled 98 page book entitled "Gidul Yonei Do'ar" (Raising Post Pigeons) that casts light on the operation of that pigeon post. On the first page is printed: "Growing Carrier Pigeons and their use for communication, Instructions for dovecote, Second edition corrected May 1946". This extensively illustrated publication of the Haganah Movement – then an illegal underground grouping – is extremely rare and interesting. Not found in any libraries in Israel, it is only briefly referred to in Dan Yahav's book about the use of animals in the Hagana organization. Thus, it can be assumed that only a small number of copies were printed – for the dovecote owners in the Haganah organization and this explains its rarity. (The auctioneers, Jerusalemofgold.com site, suggested that it is possible that it is the only existing copy.)

The book has sixteen chapters, amongst them: The basics of communication with the help of carrier pigeons; feeding the pigeons; general knowledge on breeding carrier pigeons; training and practicing with the pigeons for communication roles; organizing the communications service by carrier pigeons (in which is a detailed description of the uses of carrier pigeons in modern armies). It contains 60 impressive and interesting illustrations of the pigeons, their growing and training, as well as lists and charts.



*Fig. 1: A drawing from the instruction book and a girl soldier from the IDF Pigeon Communication unit.*

The use of pigeons in "The Haganah" began in 1938, and started from the idea of Abraham Etz-Hadar, the pigeon breeder. He met with Yochanan Ratner, who was then the Rama (Chief of Headquarters), and suggested to him to add the carrier pigeons to the communications framework and to allow him to bring suitable pigeons from abroad. Ratner was enthusiastic and brought about the realization of the idea, amongst other things with the help of David Ben Gurion. And so in the years 1938-1948 the use of carrier pigeons was widespread throughout all of Israel. The Haganah had dovecotes in central locations in Israel, A major one in the Jerusalem area.

The Mandate government understood that the pigeons were "weapons" and forbade their use. Consequently, began the secret use of carrier pigeons by the underground movements. With the outbreak of the Second World War and the activation of emergency laws by the British, there was great difficulty in keeping the pigeons. In order to continue



the activity a way was found to co-operate with the British Army, and some of the carrier pigeons who had been in the service of the Haganah, were donated for fighting purposes. However their use by the Haganah continued until absorption of all fighting forces into the IDF that then took over the pigeons and their use. Interestingly Zerifin – Sarafand – which was the major British army base, subsequently captured and taken over by the IDF, was a major point from which pigeons were utilised by the British and IDF respectively. IDF use stopped in the 1950's when radios replaced the pigeons for communication.



*The "Pigeoners", Memorial at the Communication's Unit Headquarters of the Israeli Army.*

# **Postal Censorship with reference to Palestine WW1**

**Compiled by Yehuda Kleiner, Raanana Israel**

## ***Foreword***

Postal Censorship is part of postal history. The philatelic topic is a vast one, especially when world wars involving several nations are concerned. Thus, to write a full scale article describing the particular facets of the Postal Censorship of each of the combating nations is nearly impossible. For this reason I chose to compile an article which discusses the characteristics of Postal Censorship that are common to most armies and civil institutions. Reference is made to the Ottoman and British armed forces, where examples of postal censored items are shown. The article is a background to the philately of "Censorship" which is intended to contribute to a better understanding of this collecting field.

## ***Introduction***

**Postal censorship** is the inspection or examination of mail, most often by Governments in peace time and by Military or specially established civil organizations in war time.

Historically, postal censorship is an ancient practice; it is usually linked to espionage and intelligence gathering. Both civilian mail and military mail may be subject to censorship, and often different organizations perform censorship of these types of mail. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century wars, the objectives of postal censorship encompassed also economic warfare, social moods as well as security and intelligence.

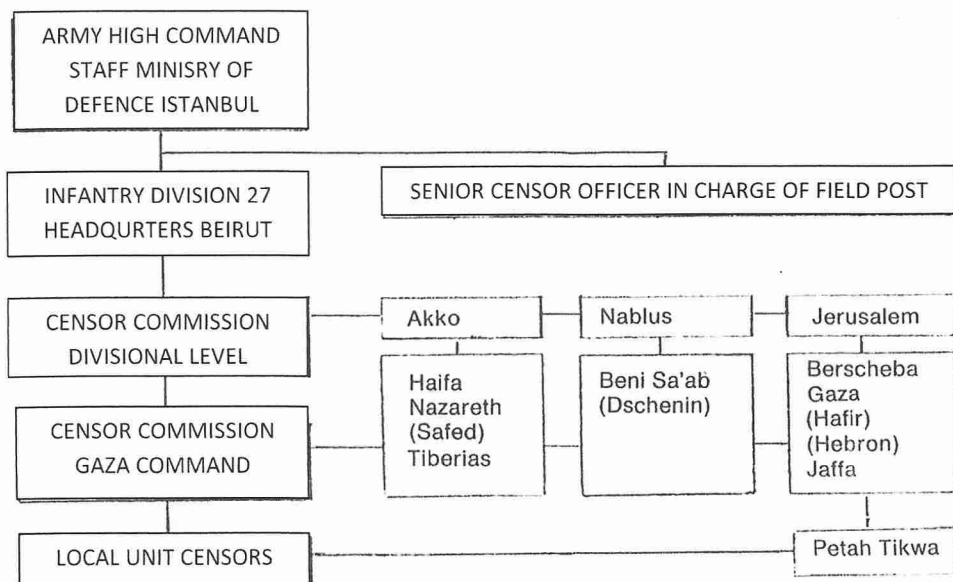
Censorship in times of war is also used as an indispensable propaganda weapon: its task to keep the people in an atmosphere of utter ignorance and unshaken confidence in the authorities, and to allow their boundless indoctrination, so that they would despite terrible losses and privations,

accept holding on until the bitter end and the complete “knock out” of the enemy.

*“If people really knew, the war would be stopped tomorrow! But of course they don’t know and can’t know. The correspondents don’t write and the censorship would not pass the truth.” David Lloyd George (1863-1945), Britain’s prime Minister.*

## Censorship organization

Whereas, on the continent censorship was introduced and justified by the proclamation of the state of siege, in Britain and later in the United States the parliamentary bodies had to be consulted. Censorship was thus authorized in Britain by the Defence of the Realm Act (DORA) in the USA by the Anti Espionage Act but not introduced before 1917. In Germany, France and the Ottoman Empire, soon after the breakout of hostilities. **An example of the Ottoman postal censor organization in Palestine is given below\*.**



\* (Steichele 1037.1)

The British War Office founded MI7, a propaganda department of its own, which included a section of censorship of military matters.

The censors – in Prussia, Russia and Austria mostly career officers and in Britain and France mostly civilians – received their instructions from the service departments of the military authorities, and from various ministries (in Germany sometimes even directly from the chancellor) and passed them on.

In France, local authorities had an important, and in Germany a decisive, influence. In France Censorship was not only subordinated to the Ministry of War, but also to the prefects of the fifty-five departments and the commanders of the twenty-one military regions, and its work was duplicated by 300 provincial control missions. Altogether 5,000 censors were on duty throughout the war.

Germany had been placed under more than sixty military commanders who operated the censorship in line with guidelines from the war office in Berlin.

In all armies, sooner or later postal control was introduced. As said its aim was to look for disclosure of military secrets, to test the morale of the soldiers, and to find out about “subversive ideas”; in the correspondence of soldiers and civilians. In Italy only the correspondence between the soldiers and their families in the so-called “war zones”, that is, border zones and areas with strong socialist influence, was centrally controlled, but by the end of 1917 it was extended to ALL civilian letters as well. In the French army central postal control started only as of January 1915, however from July each army corps had a commission of twenty members who opened the letters. “Subversive” paragraphs in letters were “*caviardés*” by the censors – deleted with ink and aniline pencil – and a significant number was not transmitted at all. It seems that there was no postal control in the American army but the French censors took care of its soldiers as well, destroying their postcards and censoring their letters. The quantity of American controlled letters is estimated at 180,000 out of 5 to 7 million French letters per week.

In the German and British Armies censorship of the soldiers’ correspondence was at first handled by their own officers. Even when central censorship was introduced the secrecy of correspondence was still



violated. In Italy, France, Germany, and Austria soldiers could be punished and even court-martialled for letters containing supposedly “exaggerated and false information”.<sup>1</sup> In Italy, some servicemen were even executed on the spot. In order to escape control, soldiers in all armies sometimes asked comrades on leave to post their letters at home, but in the German army such voluntary “postmen” were sometimes controlled and searched on the trains and severely punished.<sup>1</sup> In Britain, civilian correspondences were also censored and in 1918, between 4,000 and 5,000 persons were busy with it. In Austria, civilian letters to the soldiers mentioning food shortage and hunger were confiscated so as not to “endanger the discipline of front troops and negatively affect their spirits”. In France, the correspondence of “suspect” civilians was controlled by police after September 1915 but not intercepted.

To operate and to control the censoring activity “Censor Manuals” were used by the various censor commissions attached to army commands. An example of a page of such a manual of the Naval Command, is shown on the next page.



*Fig. 1: A British soldier writing home from the trenches in the front line.*

### Unframed PASSED BY CENSOR

CENSOR Ref	INITIALS or NAME	POST MARK(S)	DATE(S)	VESSEL	COMMENTS
3A1	R.F.Ashley-Spencer	8 bar	3.12.15	Hospital Ship <i>Magic</i>	Also with ms RFM, but no fit to <i>Magic</i> , unless a badly written RFA.
3A2	RDW	n/r			Only one RDW in the Navy Lists: Lt Richard D Williams. 1915 no ship; 1916 <i>Reliance</i> ; 1917 <i>Texol</i>
3A3	EMWH	X mute		<i>Reliance/Manica</i>	Surgeon Edward MW Hearn, apptd to <i>Manica</i> , but has <i>Reliance</i> as return address – base ship. Why two marks (with 3A46) ?
3A4	BO'H	FPO a	25.5.17	<i>Rutheria</i> (water vessel and stores ship)	Paymaster Bernard P. O'Hara
3A5	ARU	8 bar		<i>Minotaur</i>	Surgeon Algernon R Upton; also with ms GSBL of Surgeon George SB Lang, <i>Minotaur</i> in 1917.
3A6					Australian army
3A7	JWD	8 bar		<i>Ebro</i> ?	Possibly Surgeon Probationer James W Duncan, but there is a major RM with these initials.
3A8	JW ON ACTIVE SERVICE			<i>Reliance</i>	Engineer Captain James T Willoughby, on the books of <i>Lord Nelson</i> , but accommodated in <i>Reliance</i> .
3A8	W ON ACTIVE SERVICE	London m/c	17.3.16	<i>Reliance</i>	Paymaster Septimus Walker
3A8	M ON ACTIVE SERVICE	London m/c	1.5.15	<i>Reliance</i>	Surgeon Vincent McGee
3A69	WGA	Drem	18.9.18	East Fortune Airship Base	Captain WG Amos
3A83	□JD The hollow square seems to be part of the mark	London m/c	18.9.16	<i>Cyclamen</i>	Surgeon Probationer James S Durward

### Unframed PASSED CENSOR

CENSOR Ref	INITIALS or NAME	POST MARK	DATE	VESSEL	COMMENTS
3A9	AGVF	8 bar		<i>Marshal Ney</i> (probably)	Surgeon Arthur G Valpy French. At Chatham 1916, <i>Marshal Ney</i> from 3/17. Later in <i>Vindex</i> in the Med – but would not be an 8 bar cancel. Would he have censored while in Chatham naval hospital ?

Fig. 2: A page from the censor manual book, of the Naval Command with the name of the censor, his mark and the name of the ship. I ground forces the name/number of the platoon replaces the ship's name.

An example of a typical censor page from a censor book of a naval commanding centre showing the censor Ref. number and name, the type of censor mark and the ship. Similar censor books were at division level of ground forces.

There were many designs of censor marks used on letters, documents and parcels. The one, a triangle with the crown in the center is commonly used on letters from soldiers of the ground forces.





## ***What was censored-Relevant to Soldiers Letters?***

The following categories concern delicate topics which were in all countries usually suppressed either explicitly or after preventive censorship.

- 1) Criticisms of the army and unauthorized information about military operations, especially about military failures or mutinies.
- 2) Information about casualties at the front – on the German side alone an average of 1,158 soldiers fell per day.
- 3) Unauthorized letters of soldiers, those who were prevented of writing due to disciplinary measures.
- 4) Information about espionage and counter-espionage.
- 5) Pacifist subjects and activities.

There were many other thorny subjects as well but censorship was not handled equally in all belligerent countries and the instructions could vary from time to time. As a general rule all events which could alarm the population were usually forbidden or put under preventive censorship.

The terrible food shortages in Austria and Germany culminating in the “turnip winter” of 1916/1917 could not really be passed over in silence but had to be excused and minimized. Censorship regulations to this effect were issued.

The jokes about the infidelity of wives were another thorny problem because many soldiers, absent from home for a long time, did not trust their spouses. Such writings either explicit or inactive were either suppressed or modified. Nevertheless some jokes and cartoons could slip through.

Each week, more than 12 million British letters were delivered to soldiers during the First World War, providing opportunities to exchange news with family and friends, request parcels and confirm that they were still in one piece. As the main method of communicating with home, servicemen placed huge importance on correspondence which, from our modern perspective, can reveal the writer's thoughts, beliefs and experiences while providing an immediacy often lacking in diaries or memoirs. Letters therefore remain a vital source for understanding the First World War.

Some news was not disclosed before the end of the war, like the sinking of the dreadnought HMS *Audacious* in October 1914. A more famous case



is that of the *Lusitania*. Sunk on 7 May 1915 by a German submarine, it was not only a passenger ship but functioned as well as a military cargo and a troop transport. Besides approximately 1,200 passengers, it also had ammunitions and sixty-seven Canadian soldiers aboard. Too detailed descriptions of enemy's atrocities which might demoralize the population or spread panic, were banned. In the Baltic provinces of Russia with their numerous Baltic-Germans, all German words or phrases had to be removed from publications and letters. News about deportations from occupied territories, jokes about the Kaiser, Turkish atrocities and all illustrations had to be submitted to preventive censorship.

Censors in all countries also stopped exaggerated propaganda such as the denigrating of the enemy and of foreign politicians, the praising of atrocities, and appeals to the worst instincts because they were worried about the emotional effects on the population.

Censoring was a tedious and boring task as described by one censor:

"Censoring is interesting at first, but it rapidly becomes boring; no letter is allowed to leave without it having been read by an officer and franked by him on the envelope; fortunately my platoon do not write very long letters though they write very often. A typical letter starts like this. 'My Dear Father and Mother, Ellen and Mary, I take pleasure in writing these few lines hoping that you are in the pink as it leaves me at present.' Many of the men talk awful drivel about cannon balls flying around them, but as a general rule they are short and rather formal letters... The men always write very extravagantly after a spell in the front line – "All the ravines were full of dead Germans and Bulgars", "It was absolute Hell!", "I said more prayers then than at all of the Church parades I've attended"

### ***What was the role of self-censorship?***

Self-censorship either for patriotic reasons or for fear of sanctions was widespread. It was facilitated by the patriotic attitude of most soldiers who would willingly cooperate in order to support the homeland in danger.

On the other hand soldiers were afraid of being punished for letters containing criticisms, and would not dare to mention grievances and abuses unless the letters could be carried home by comrades on leave.

Another option was the Field Service Postcard, a pre-printed card (pictured below) with optional text which could be deleted as appropriate to transmit basic information ("I am well, letter to follow") in a quick and simple way. A soldier confirmed the importance of such postcards: "It's a wonderful thing, a Field Service Postcard. It costs nothing, takes no time, and needs no mental energy. It is in fact the essence of laziness, the ideal of the wordless correspondent and the bored nephew alike.

**NOTHING** is to be written on this side except the date and signature of the sender. Sentences not required may be erased. If anything else is added the post card will be destroyed.

[Postage must be prepaid on any letter or post card addressed to the sender of this card.]

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*I am quite well.*

*I have been admitted into hospital*  
     { *sick* } *and am going on well.*  
     { *wounded* } *and hope to be discharged soon.*

*I am being sent down to the base.*

*I have received your* { *letter dated* \_\_\_\_\_  
                                   { *telegram* " \_\_\_\_\_  
                                   { *parcel* " \_\_\_\_\_

*Letter follows at first opportunity.*

*I have received no letter from you*  
     { *lately*  
     { *for a long time.*

**Signature** }  
     **only** }

*Date* \_\_\_\_\_

Wt. W65—P.P.948. 8000m. 5-18. C. & Co., Grange Mills, S.W.

Fig. 3: The "lazy, wordless" writing card.

## Examples of censored letters from Palestine



Fig.4: Reverse of a 1917 letter from Jerusalem to New York indicated as censored by the red Ottoman censor sticker.

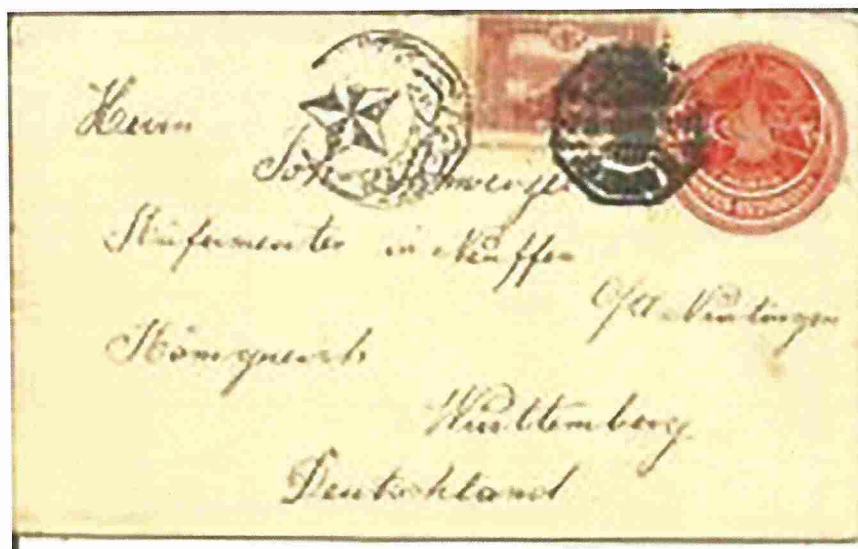


Fig. 5: 1915, censored letter from Jerusalem to Germany. The crescent with the star in the center is the most used censor cachet of the Ottoman Army.



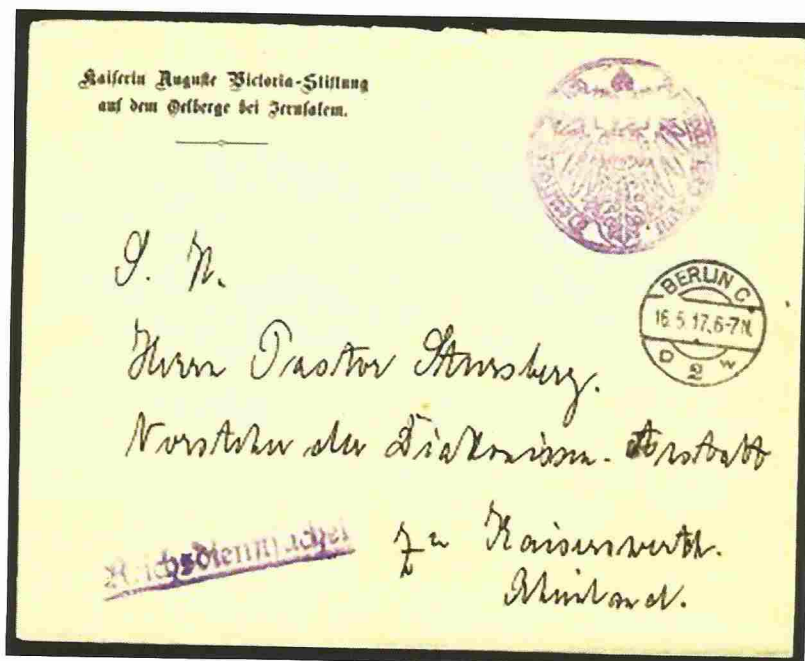
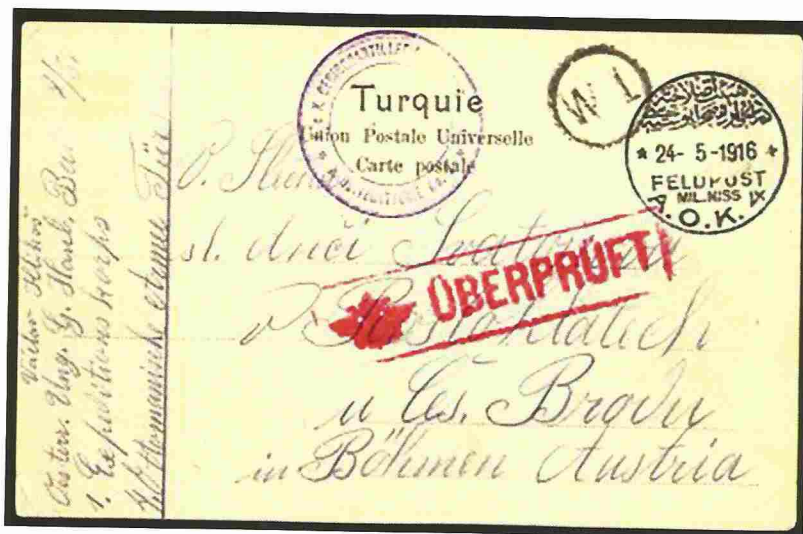






Fig. 8: 1918 Registered PPC from Palestine Egypt with s/r. APO SZ 44 p/m, franking (SG 3 & 4) and framed PALESTINE CENSORSHIP No. 2 h/s. Also s/r. FPO GM1 and APO SZ 22 p/m's.



Fig. 9: 1918 Registered Letter from the Western Front to Australia with d/r. FPO D 62 p/m. [3<sup>rd</sup> Australian Division] and censor 1768. Also Australian Imperial Force label and s/r. KEW receipt p/m.

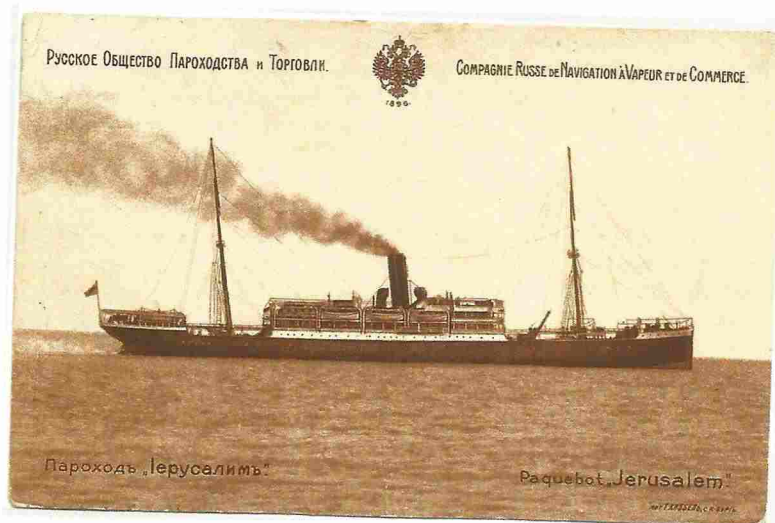
# Examples of "PAQUEBOT" Cachets on Post from Jerusalem

Mihael I. Fock, FRPSL, Slovenia

"PAQUEBOT" is a French term which is used to mark consignments and letters sent by ships. It is a generally used by the French liner ships "Compagnie des Messageries Maritimes", but could also be found on non French ships, such as: Austrian Lloyd ships Russian, Hungarian and Italian ships. It substitutes for instance, the English "MAIL BOAT", or "SHIP POST", and the Italian "PIROSCAFI ESTERI" terms.

The "PAQUEBOT" mark is usually applied upon actual reception on the ship. In the Holy Land it is known for ships which served the Jaffa and Haifa ports.

Although, most Foreign Post Offices in the Holy Land were associated with shipping lines of their own country, we find instances where one Foreign Post Office will use the ship of another one to despatch it's letters. Thus the Austrian post, may use a French ship or an Italian ship and vice versa. A few such examples are shown in the article.



*Fig. 1: The Steamer (Paquebot) "Jerusalem" of the Russian ROPIT company 1896, which sailed to ports in the Middle East, including the Holy Land.*





Fig. 2: Posted on 31<sup>st</sup> of January 1894, a rare use of French ship by the Austrian post office in Jerusalem, postmarked in French "Ligne N Paq.(uebot) R. No3, Fevr 2, 94". Carrying 2 piasters Austrian Levant stamps, cancelled by the Austrian Jerusalem 31.1.94 postmark. The post rate of 2 Piasters was 1 Piaster regular letter fee and 1 Piaster the charge of the shipping line.



Fig. 3: Posted on 19<sup>th</sup> of November 1901, Registered letter from Austrian post office, bearing the Italian "PIROSCAFI ESTERI" postmark, yet carrying 3 Piasters Austrian Levant stamps. 1 Piaster regular letter fee, 1 Piaster registration fee and 1 Piaster ship post fee. Stamps canceled by the Austrian Jerusalem postmark. A rather rare use of an Italian ship for Austrian mail. Letter sent through Naples to Bern.

## ***Hungarian ships***

In 1867 the Habsburg Monarchy became part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Hungary obtained access to the sea by gaining jurisdiction over Croatia, Slavonia and the port of Fiume (Rijeka) in 1868. Hungary didn't have a merchant fleet at that time, so Hungary started to develop the port of Rijeka, schooling captains and sailors and establishing maritime companies.

In 1879 the Adria Steamship Company was established in Rijeka by private investors, with 7 ships built in English shipyards. Following government investment in the company it was renamed to Adria Hungarian Royal Sea Navigation Incorporated and its fleet increased to 31 ships.

Another company called Hungarian-Croatian Sea Steamship Inc. (shortly Unagro-Croata) was also founded in Rijeka to provide connections with southern Dalmatia as far as Dubrovnik (Ragussa). End of 1914 company's fleet consisted of 45 ships.

All these ships were formally Hungarian territory and when receiving consignments in ports used Hungarian stamps. The companies had their own mailboxes in Holyland ports. Mail and consignment taken by the Hungarian shipping lines were marked additionally with seal KIKÖTÖBEN meaning, "from port".

So far I have discovered three post cards which were sent from Jerusalem and carried by Hungarian ships across the Mediterranean. Hungarian ships did not frequently traveled to the Holyland. Three cards sent from Jerusalem and equipped with purple PAQUEBOT and the KIKÖTÖBEN cachets, are shown on the next pages.





Fig. 4: Post card sent 26<sup>th</sup> of December 1889 from Jerusalem to Vienna. It was delivered by S.S. Hungaria from Jaffa to Rijeka (Fiume) and from there by train to Vienna on 5<sup>th</sup> of January 1890. It is handstamped KIKÖTÖBEN and PAQUEBOT.



Fig. 5: Turkish postcard sent on 24<sup>th</sup> of December (1891) from Jerusalem to Vienna. It was delivered by SS Petöfi from Jaffa to Rijeka and forwarded from there to Vienna. It is handstamped KIKÖTÖBEN and PAQUEBOT and S.S. PETÖFI.



Fig. 6: Postcard sent from Jerusalem by German post office August 30, 1911 delivered by SS Petöfi from Jaffa to Alexandria via Port Said September 1, 1911. It is handstamped KIKÖTÖBEN and PAQUEBOT and S.S. PETÖFI.

## References:

Nagy Homonay, Czirok: The Golden Age of Hungarian Sea Navigation 1868-1914

Bale Holy Land Catalogue 2008

Autors own collection: Jerusalem 1655-1917

# **Santelli & Micciarelli**

## **1846/1847 the Private Postal Service**

The article is based on an article by Bernardo Longo, published by the LAP Postal History Society in their website and additions from the Internet.

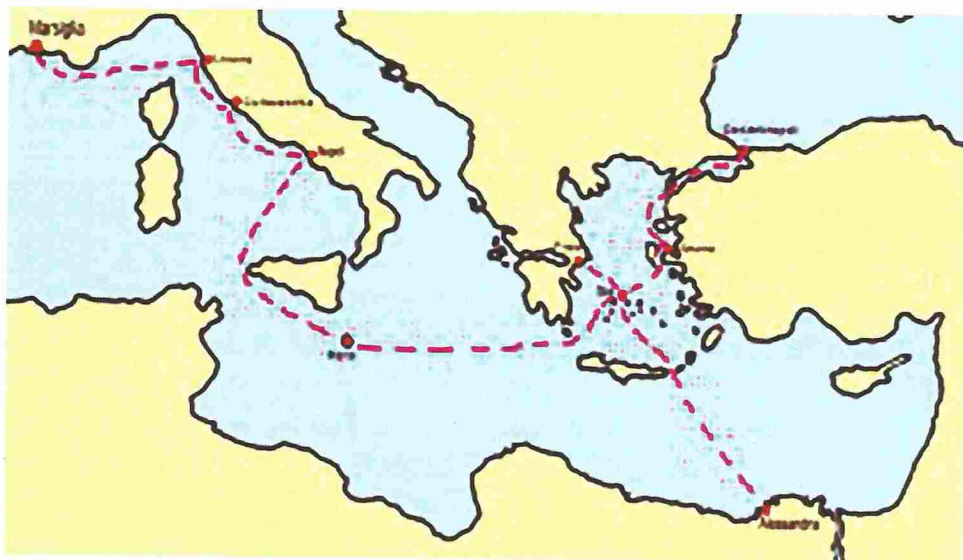
### ***Introduction***

Tito Vespasiano Micciarelli was born in Senigallia in 1811, he participated in the attempted revolution in central Italy in 1831 and was forced into exile in Belgium and France. Afterwards taking refuge in Alexandria and later by the end of 1844 in Beirut till 1848. Micciarelli had connections with the secret service of many European countries as well as the European consular environments in the Middle East. This helped him later with his postal private enterprise, particularly with the French post. In Beirut he met the Frenchman Antoine Louis Santelli, who in 1852 obtained the position of director of the new French post office which was opened in Jaffa. Thus, when the two opened their private postal service, they bypassed the Ottoman authorities, with their close association with the French Official Post Office and "Les Paquebots De L'Administration des Postes" shipping company. Which in May 1837 began its activities between Europe and the eastern Mediterranean, through two lines, its main line the Marseille-Syra-Smyrne-Constantinople line and the second the Piraeus-Syra-Alexandria sub line. From Marseilles the main line made stops in Livorno, Civitavecchia, Naples and Malta (Fig. 1). Enclosed in this article are three letters related to the postal history of the Holy Land, the Editor would like to hear from our readers if they know of any other letters which exist?

In November 1845 the two lines became independent, the first on the main route Marseille-Italian ports-Malta-Piraeus-Constantinople and back, the second Marseille-Malta-Alexandria-Beirut and back (Fig. 2). Beirut which is today the capital of Lebanon was occupied by the Egyptians as all as most of Syria from 1832 to 1840. The Egyptians equipped Beirut with a very functional Lazzareto in 1834. The opening of this health station favored the establishment of many European commercial representatives



and thus the city became a consular base for several European nations, especially for France which opened the new Post Office there (Fig. 3).



*Fig. 1: The cross structure of the shipping line of the French company "Les Paquebots de l'Administration des Postes". Operating since 1837 held the service of two parts, the main axis Marseille-Sira-Constantinople and the secondary Piraeus-Sira-Alexandria sub line.*



*Fig. 2: In November 1845 the system was split into two separate lines. The Egypt line was prolonged up to Beirut (red line), and the Palestine coastal line to Beirut, the green line on the map which corresponds to the existing coastal road at the time used by the Ottoman Postal Service.*





*Fig. 3: This letter sent on 16 December 1845, is an important with regard to the Beirut French Post Office opening. The letter addressed to Alexandria, was sent exactly one month after the first day of opening of this foreign post office. The letter traveled on board the French steamer "Louqsor", arriving in Alexandria Egypt, on 18 December 1845.*

*As mentioned, the steamers of the new line, connected Alexandria to Beirut, passing Jaffa, Haifa, Acre, Tyre and Saida (Sidon). The connection of these cities to the French Post «reseau», stimulated the creation of a private company that would use the coastal road between Beirut and Jaffa for delivery of mail. The company Santelli & Micciarelli, operated the post service to and from the cities along the Palestine coastal road Jaffa-Haifa, Acre and further north to Tyra, Saida (Sidon) and Beirut, It was done through the French post office, the letters arriving or departing through the French post were routed by the **Santelli & Micciarelli Company**, to the cities mentioned above. All this with the tacit approval of the French Post Office, perhaps in an attempt to avoid the Ottoman government demand from foreign postal administrations, not to operate between towns located inside the land, apparently served by the Ottoman post. These demands however were easily by passed, not only by the French, but by all foreign postal administrations operating in that area.*

An example of a letter handled by the *Santelli & Micciarelli* Company in association with the “Les Paquebots De L’Administration des Postes”, is shown in Figure 4, where on the back of the letter (arriving from Marseille), the forwarder Rostand wrote the day of arrival in Beirut and the day of delivery to the *Santelli & Micciarelli* Company.

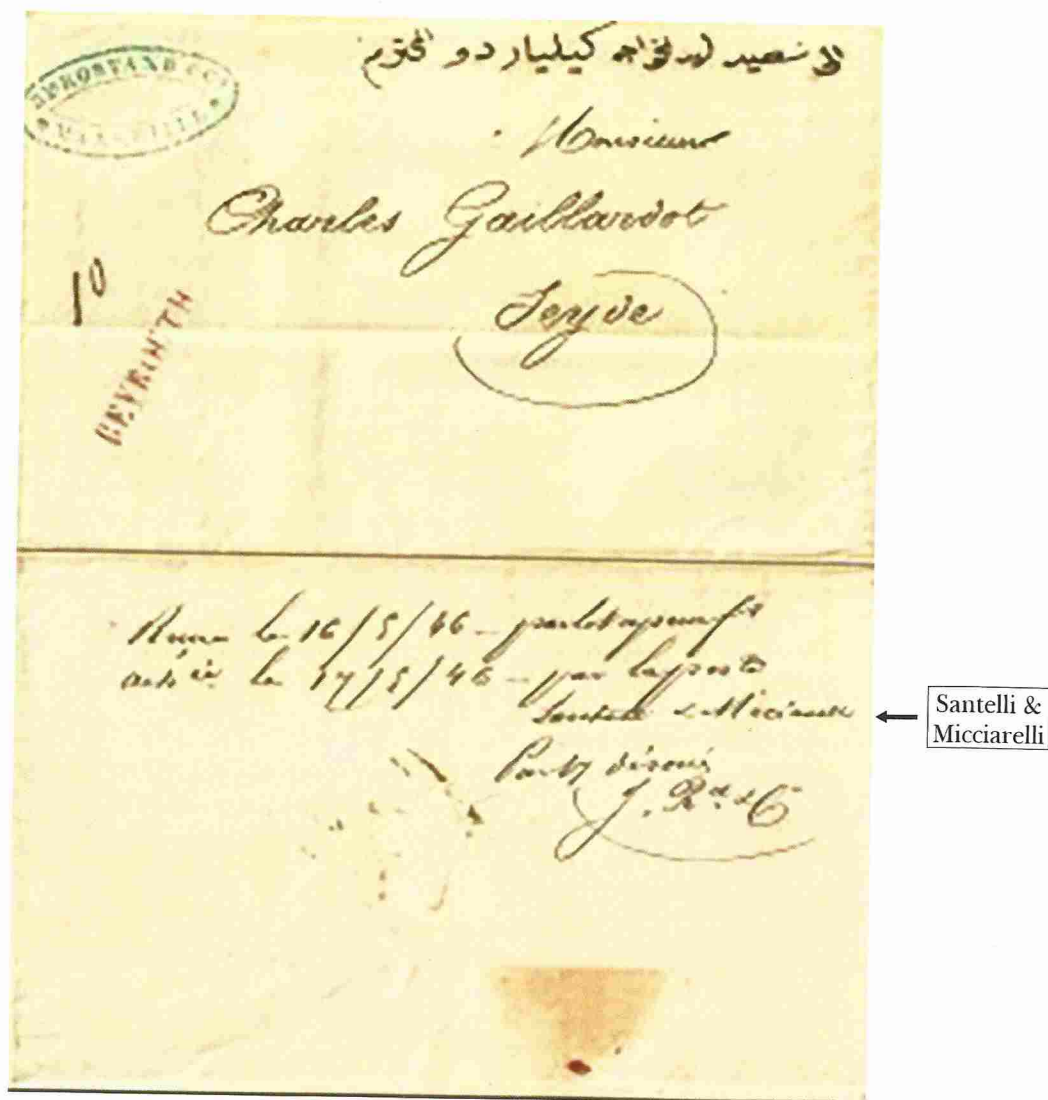


Fig. 4: The letter written in Marseille on 3 May 1846 arrived in Beirut on May 16 with the French steamship, as shown by the handwritten note by the receiver on the back “Reçu le 16/5/46 par le vapeur fr.” (Received on 16.5.46 by French steam) “Arivée le 17/5/46 La Posta Santelli & Micciarelli” The letter addressed to Saida (Sidon), in passing through Beirut received the red postmark “Beyrouth” and the handwritten rate “10” paras.

The straight line "*Beyrouth*" postmark used by *Santelli & Micciarelli* as shown on the letter in fig. 4, is generally used in Beirut for the letters addressed to the coastal towns of Saida (Sidon), Tyre, Acre, Haifa and Jaffa, as well as other locations nearby. It is known in blue, red and black. Alongside this postmark at the front of the letters usually are the handwritten required fees expressed in Para or Piaster. Note the spelling of "Beirut".

**BEYROUTH**



Another source tells a different story about the creation of the Company. Ottoman postal services were organized at the local level by the provincial governors and leases for these (*Posta mültesimi*) came up for auction annually in the month of March. It is reported that in 1846 the Italian businessmen *Santelli and Micciarelli* became leaseholders and ran a service from Jerusalem to Ramle, Jaffa, Sûr, and Saida (Sidon). Initially all the postal facilities had the status of relay stations, and letters received their postmarks only at the Beirut post office.

I am not in the position to decide which version is the historically correct one. I can only surmise that in the major cities the ottoman post was bypassed, perhaps even legally, by the Foreign Post Offices, on ground of the Capitulation Agreement. However, in the inland region the provincial governors arranged the leases for "Baksheesh" the Mideast Arabic term for a handout.

A most interesting letter which passed through the *Santelli and Micciarelli* service delivered to Jerusalem is shown in figure 5.





Another letter, this time from Jerusalem to Alexandria probably through the *Santelli & Micciarelli* service is shown in figure 6.

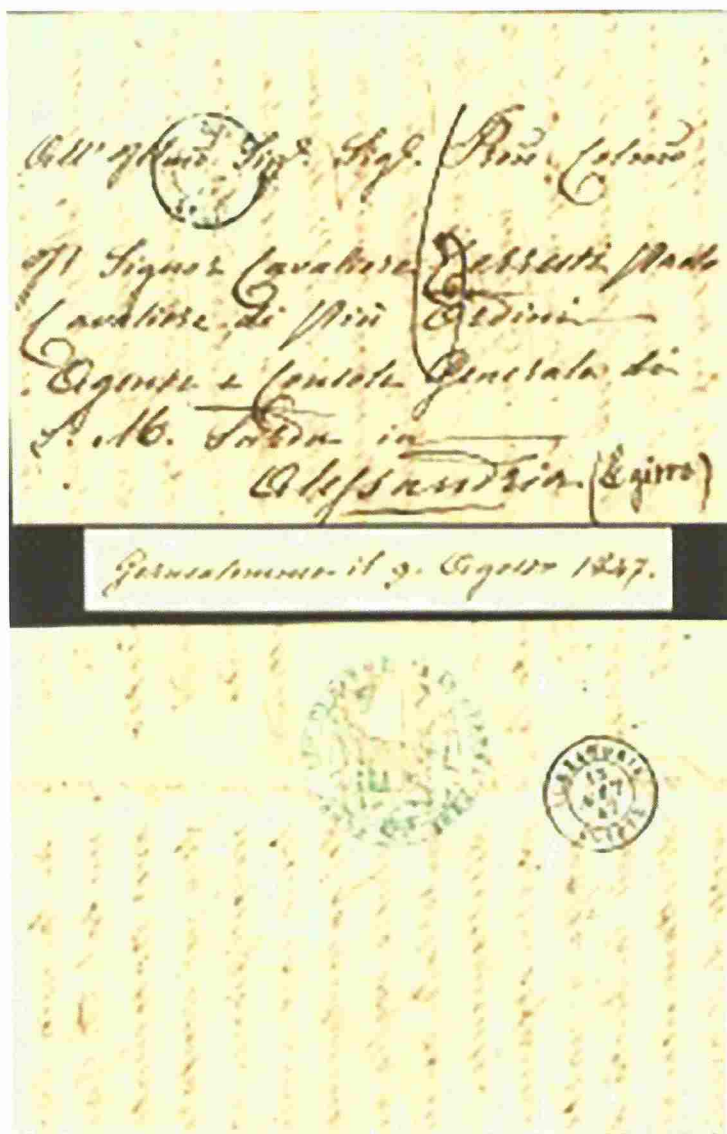
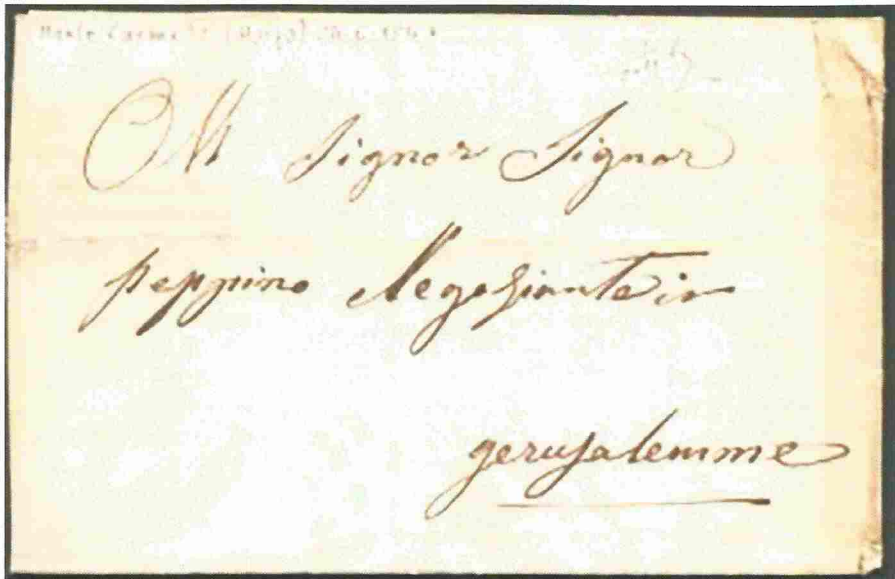


Fig. 6: This letter was sent from the Sardinian consulate in Jerusalem on 9 August 1847, and routed via Beirut on the 16<sup>th</sup> of that month to Alexandria. In Alexandria, where it arrived on 18 August 1847, the recipient paid 6/10, corresponding to 60 cents of the French Franc. Although there is no indication that it was transported from Jerusalem to Beirut through the “Santelli & Micciarelli” Company, it must be said that Europeans were reluctant to dispatch letters by the Ottoman Post, especially when it came to consular affairs, so that it could be assumed that in Beirut the letter was handled by the “Santelli & Micciarelli” Company.

Furthermore the fact that there is no explicit indication that the letters in figures 5 and 6 were sent through the *Santelli & Micciarelli* service it was said before that this service by passed the Ottoman Law on Postal exclusivity. One way of doing it was to use a diplomatic bag. Thus, letters from Beirut to or from the coastal cities were allowed to enter or leave the city so disguised as to be protected by diplomatic immunity. This demanded the involvement of a European who had diplomatic credentials, it seems likely that Micciarelli had this connections. In addition the diplomatic bag had to be French and the letters had to go in part through the French post as can be seen from the French post type cancellations on the letters.

For how long did the *Santelli & Micciarelli* service operate? It started in November 1845 and lasted most probably until mid 1847, a little more than one and a half years. One of the last letters by this service is a letter from Mount "Carmelo" (Carmel Haifa) to Jerusalem, sent on 24 May 1847 (Fig. 7). Further evidence may be obtained from a letter sent from Beirut to Saida (Sidon) by the Ottoman post at even an earlier date of February 1847, rather than by the *Santelli & Micciarelli* service (Fig 8).



**Fig. 7:** Letter sent from Monte Carmelo (Carmel Mountain, Haifa) on 24 May 1847 to Jerusalem. No postal sign indicating its transport, but it was probably one of the last letters carried by *Santelli & Micciarelli* between localities of Palestine region. Being an inland letter it did not pass through Beirut receiving the typical *Santelli & Micciarelli* Beirut post mark and no indication of a postal fee, perhaps because it was paid in advance by the sender?



Fig. 8: This letter was written in Beirut on 10 February 1847, directed to Saida (Sidon), also provides an indication about the closing of the "Santelli & Micciarelli" service. It was routed directly from the Ottoman Post in Beirut, as shown by the negative postal seal "An Canib-i posta i-Beyrut 257", where the number 257 is actually abbreviated of 1257 Hegira year, corresponding to 1841, the year when this post office was opened. This shows the availability of an Ottoman postal route since that year to transport correspondence up to Saida (Sidon) and beyond rather than by the "Santelli & Micciarelli" service.

It is unusual because a major correspondence to this recipient *Charles Gaillardot* was delivered by the "Santelli & Micciarelli" service, however in earlier dates during 1846 as shown by the letters in the Appendix to the article.

In conclusion, it should be said that this private enterprise had facilitated the transport of correspondence, where the Ottoman post did not operate efficiently, in contrast to Ottoman administration that was opposed to foreign postal links in its inland territory. Later the Turks had tolerated the French Jerusalem-Jaffa postal links, which began in 1852, and Alexandretta-Aleppo that started in 1856. In a way the short lived company Santelli & Micciarelli remains a curiosity operating a post system for letters from also from port to port during a short period. Due to its short existence "Santelli & Micciarelli" letters are very rare and hardly to obtain.



## Appendix

To further illustrate the service of the *Santelli & Micciarelli* Company and the *rate system they used*, several letters are pictured. All from the year 1846 and all from the correspondence of Charles Gaillardot, sent from Beirut to Saida (Sidon). Charles Gaillardot (1814-1883) arrived in Syria with the Egyptian troops in 1837 and remained there even after their withdrawal took place in 1840. He was then appointed by the Ottoman government to oversee the management of the health administration of the Syrian coastal area based in Saida (Sidon). Due to his post a correspondence ensued which was preserved. Unfortunately no such correspondence exists for the Holy Land.

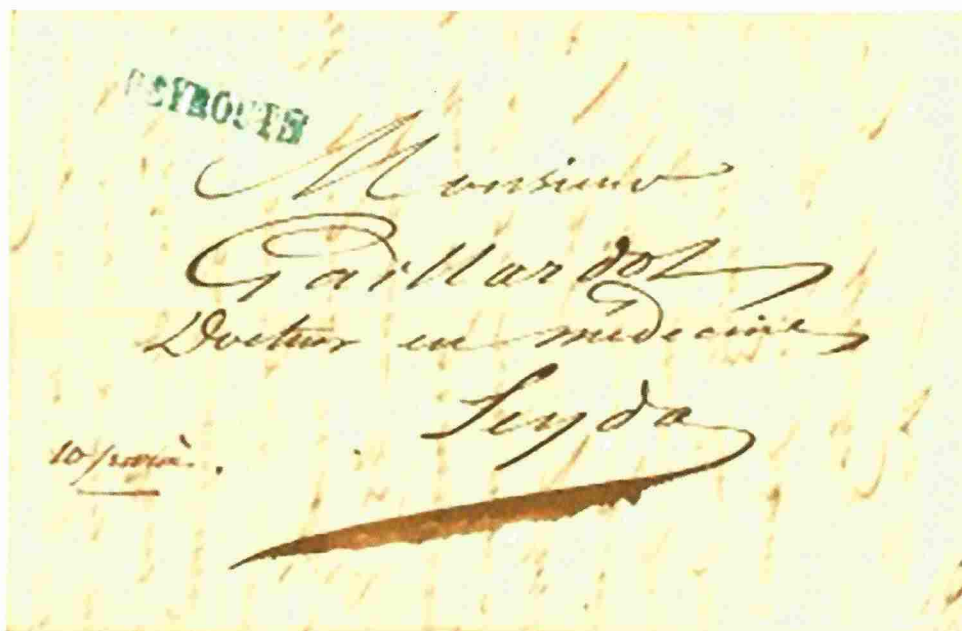


Fig. 9: This letter was sent from Beirut on 11 March 1846. It has the only recorded blue Santelli & Micciarelli "BEYROUTH" postmark. The letter must have weighed 2 dirhem (6.4 grams) paid fees equivalent to 10 paras, as the basic rate was 5 para for 1dirhem for this distance.

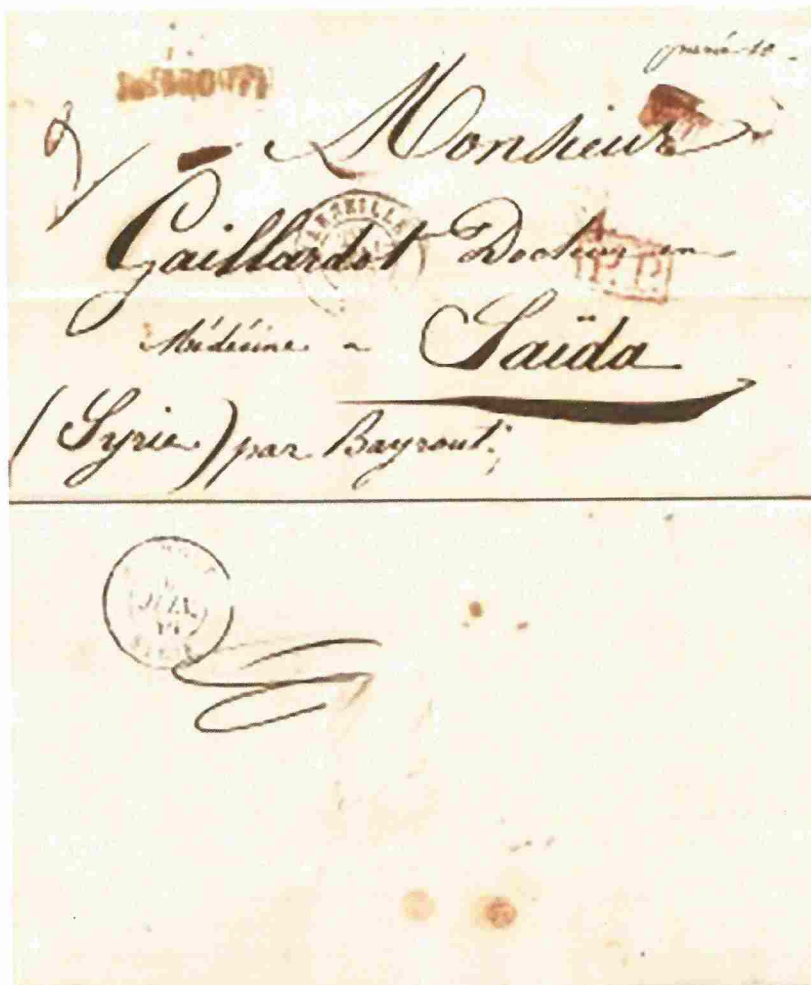


Fig. 10 : From Marseille on 20 May 1846, it weight rate up to 7.5 grams, was paid by 0.90 French Francs. The mark "PP" must be interpreted not as "Port Paye" but as "Port Partial". Arrived in Beirut on June 6 was taken over by Santelli & Micciarelli with a charge of 10 paras, as the letter weighed less than 2 dirham (6.4 grams). The "BEYROUTH" postmark is in red oily color.

With respect to rates, the basic Ottoman fee was 5 paras for the weight of one dirhem (3.2 grams), but it was also affected by the distance. For instance the letter from Beirut and directed to Jerusalem (Fig 5) which weight 6 dirhem (19.2 grams) and thus the weight rate should have been 30 para (5para x6), was taxed of 3 Piasters corresponding to 120 paras because of the distance. In contrast the letter from Beirut to Siada (Sidon) figure 11 also weight 6 dirhem (19.2 grams), but was only taxed 30 para because of the short distane.

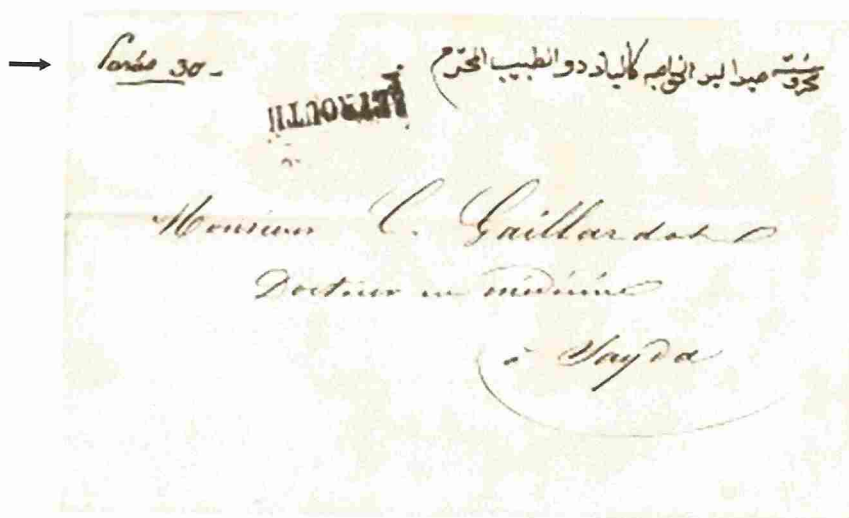


Fig. 11: Sent from Beirut on 17 July 1846 to Saida this letter weight 6 dirhem (19.2 grams) paying the rate of 30 paras for the distance.

The letters under figures 12, 13 and 14 all sent from Beirut to Saida (Sidon) had the following weight: 3, 4 and 5 dirhem and thus were charged 15, 20 and 25 para respectively, on the basis of 5 para per dirhem for the distance Beirut – Saida (Sidon).

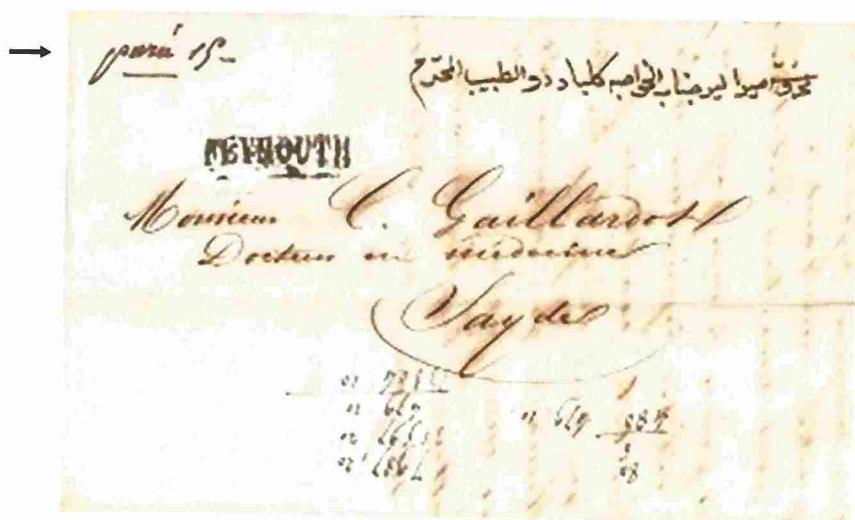


Fig. 12: 15 Paras, equivalent to three rates (3 dirhem x 5 para), paid Dr. Gaillardot on arrival of this letter to his home in Saida (Sidon). Sent from Beirut on 27 July 1846 where it was marked with the black BEYROUT postmark of the Santelli & Micciarelli Company.





Fig. 13: This letter was delivered to the post office in Marseille on 1 December 1846, was sent on 4 December and embarked on "Egyptus", a steamer of the French company, reaching Beirut on December 16. It weighed around 12 grams so the quadruple rate of the Santelli & Micciarelli (4 dirhem x 5 para), justified the charge of 20 paras.



Fig. 14 : This is the last date so far recorded the postmark "BEYROUTH" used by Santelli & Micciarelli. The letter was written in Beirut on 8 January 1847. Its weight was up to 16 grams (5 dirhem x 5 para) and therefore was charged for 25 para.

**References:** Some of the Internet articles gave the following as sources.

- U. Del Bianco**, *Il Lloyd Austriaco e gli annulli marittimi dell'Austria-Ungheria*, Sorani, Milano 1978.
- R. Livnat**, *Jérusalem, la poste française 1846-1880*, edited by the author, Puteaux 2007.
- T.V. Micciarelli**, *Risposta a un articolo del Times riprodotto nel Mediterraneo, gazzetta di Malta, nelle sue colonne del 1° febbraio 1854, Rassegna Storica del Risorgimento, Biblioteche di Francesco II Re delle Due Sicilie*.
- R. Salles**, *La Poste Marittime Française Historique et Catalogue, vol.2* edited by the author, Paris 1962.
- N. Shehadi**, *Charles Gaillardot, Archaeology and History in Lebanon, volume 12*, London 2000.

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# **Special Delivery (Express) Mail from Jerusalem the Italian Foreign Post Office**

**Mihael I. Fock, Slovenia**

“Express Mail” is the fast delivery of mail, which is based on available routes and transport facilities. Today this service is known as “Priority Mail”, but due to emails, faxes, skype, whatsapp, sms, messages etc, the need for “Priority Mail” and mail in general has drastically decreased.

During the Ottoman rule of the Holy Land, the quickest method of sending mail, was to send it via a ship which sailed in the direction of the addressee, or by a ship liner which called at the ports of Jaffa, Haifa, Akko or Beiruth. This mail was usually marked with PAQUEBOT, MAIL BOAT, BOAT MAIL, PIROSCAFFI ESTERI, or PIROSCAFFI FRANCHESI postmarks depending on the origin of the vessel.

In the Ninetenth and the beginning of the Twentieth Century five foreign post offices operated in Jerusalem, but only the Italian post office (which was the smallest and least popular) used special stamps for Express delivery, possibly to strenghten their reputation and increase their profits through the Express delivery service.

The Italian Foriegn Post Office operated in Jerusalem for a relatively short period of time, from 1908 to 1910 and 1912 to 1914 (after the Crimean war) thus, very few Express letters with the additional “Express” stamps are found. A registered letter with express delivery would require double payment. Italian Espresso 30 centesims stamps as of 1908, and subsequently from 1910 Espresso stamps overprinted for the Levant: “*1Piaster + 25centesims or 60 Paras + 30 centesims*”, according to the required franking.

Examples of these “ESPRESSO” letters are shown in the article. It should be noted that very few Genuine letters exist, most are philatelic, especially those with unnecessary high franking.





Fig. 1: Postcard charged with 20 Paras plus 1 Piaster, 'Espresso' Italian Levant stamp. Sent from Jerusalem to Stockholm, transit TPO Amb Firenze-Milano April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1913 and maritime TPO Sasnitz-Trelleborg postmarks, arrived Stockholm on April 26<sup>th</sup>. The only recorded so far post card surcharged Express delivery sent from the Holyland during Ottoman rule.



Fig. 2: October 27, 1908, registered letter from Jerusalem by the Italian Post Office sent to Dresden, Germany Mailed Special Delivery (Express) with special additional stamp. Postage 3 Piasters (letter 1 P + 1 P Registered + 1 P for Express. 1 P = 40 Para) Registered label 217. On reverse transit Brindisi Italia and Radebeul arrival postmarks.

Bale catalogue contains only one letter sent from Jerusalem as Express and registered mail (from Alexander's collection). Anton Steichele's Handbook of Holy Land Philately contains list of 20 known Italian Registered mail letters but without mentioning about the Express surcharge. Thus the one shown in figure 2 being Registered and Express is from the Alexander's collection.



Fig. 3: April 3, 1914 Registered Express Hotel cover (front only) from Jerusalem sent to Vienna, Austria franked 7,60 Piasters + 1 Piaster 30 Centesimi Express stamps. Overpaid letter Registration 1,5 Piaster + 1 piaster to foreign destination and 1,2 piaster for Express. Total 6 Piaster is valid if the letter weighed 160 gr? Registered label Gerusalemme Poste Italiane 1795.

## CONCLUSION

Special Delivery (Express) registered letters are extremely rare. It looks that people were not prepared to pay the extra for this service which was believed to be inefficient.

## Reference:

Anton Steichele (revised ed. Collins and Dickstein) Vol.II 1991  
 Zvi Alexander Milestones in the Holy Land postal History 2008  
 BALE – Holy Land Catalogue 2008  
 Itamar Karpovsky collection

# Public Notice of Ottoman Postal Rates 1871 in the Jerusalem Post Office

Zvi Aloni, Soham, Israel

In the Alexander Collection which is housed in the "Alexander Museum of Postal History & Philately", in the section of Negative Seals of the Turkish Post in the Holy Land, a very interesting document was found. It is a notice written in Arabic that according to markings which appear on the paper, it was hanged on a board in the Post Office of Jerusalem in 1871. At the top and the bottom of the manuscript are notations in French: "*Tarif Poste Turqui*" and "*certified copy, Jerusalem 30 June 1871, the director of the post, Charlez*", and a negative seal "QDS POSTA SHUBESI 1287" (Jerusalem Branch Post Office 1871) alongside.

A short description of the Ottoman system of postal rates is necessary. The determination of postal rates between 1840 and January 1877 (pre UPU period) (is)[in the-cancel] depended on the route/hour charts that took into consideration the distance and difficulty of terrain between origin and destination and between Istanbul. There were several different distance charts in effect during those years.

By 1846 there were only 43 regional post offices in the Ottoman Empire; increasing to 80 by 1862. Government employees who were at locations where there were no regional post offices, collected the fees from the public and passed the mail to the Tatars (couriers) as they crossed certain postal routes, the postal fees were extremely high. The postal system was used almost exclusively by government employees, foreign merchants, and Ottoman merchants, who dominated the commerce within the Empire. There were very few people of the public who could afford to use the postal system.

For example the basic rates in effect in 1871, the year of the Jerusalem document shown in fig. 1 were:

Short distance up to 100 hours of riding – 60 Para for each 3 Dirhem  
Between 100 & 200 hours of riding – 3 Gurus for each 3 Dirhem

Over 200 hours of riding – 6 Gurus for each 3 Dirhem

1 Piaster = 1 Gurus = 40 Para

1 Dirhem = 3.2 gr.

1 Okka = 400 Dirhem = 1280 gr.

In general, there had been a steady decreases in postal rates between 1840 and 1888. In 1888 the rates between Istanbul and the provinces were reduced from one fifth to one tenth of their levels that was in 1840. This enabled the majority of the public to use the postal service more frequently towards the end of nineteenth century.

All the rates except one in the notice published in Jerusalem are previously known and published by the field researchers like Andreas Birken and Erkan Esmer in their works, about the distance hour based rates, the "to port" reduced rate from Jerusalem to Jaffa and the registration fees. **The only rate that we find here for the first time is a "semi local" rate, Jerusalem to Hebron** which does not {correspond} to the known rate system at that time. Till now no such letter between Jerusalem and Hebron franked 30 para had surfaced.

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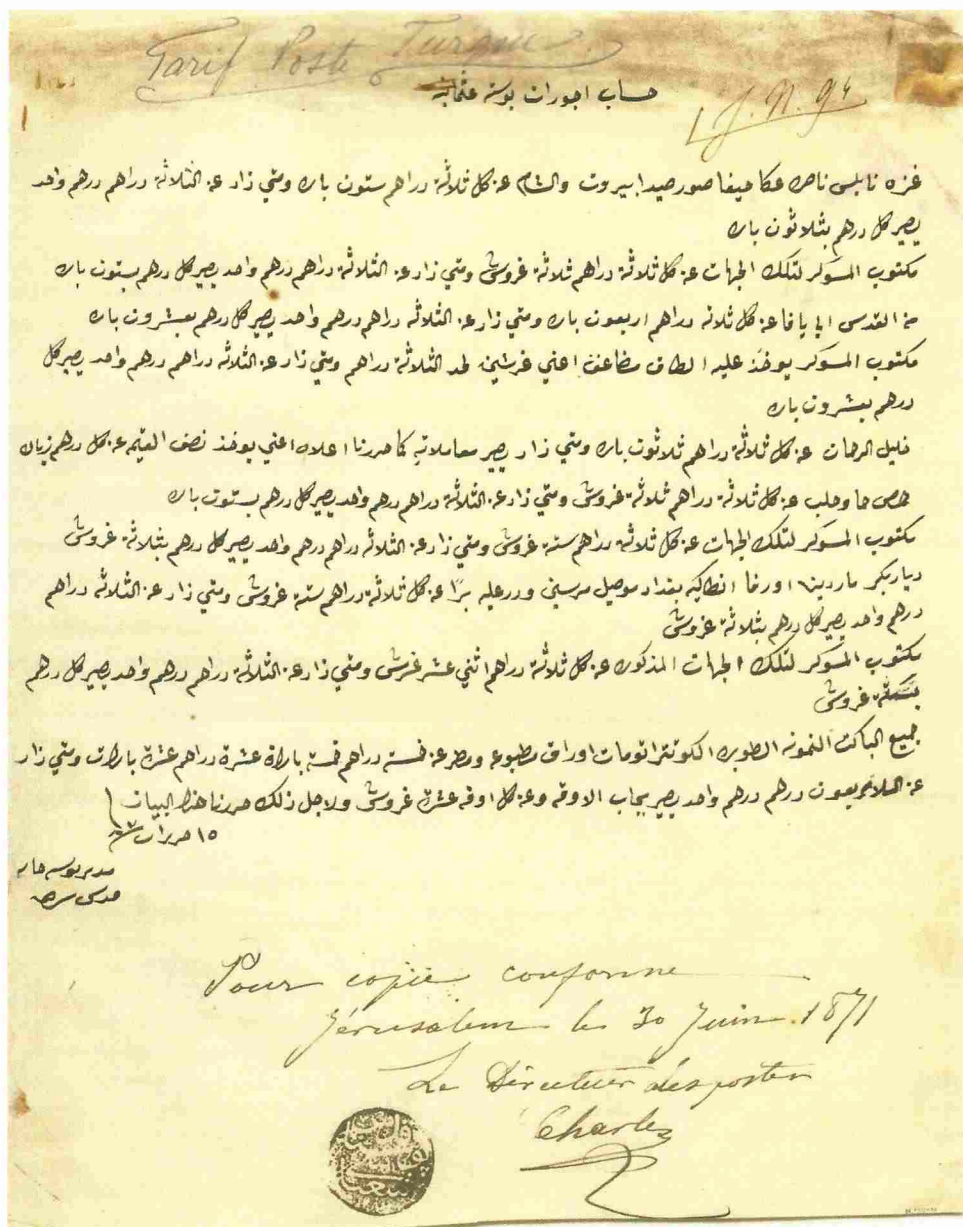


Fig. 1: List of postal rates of the Ottoman Post (Translation next page).

## Translation

*Gaza, Nablus, Akka, Haifa, Tor, Saida, Beyrouth and Damascus, for every 3 Dirhem 60 Para, every additional Dirhem 30 Para*

*Closed letter (Registered) to the above places, for every 3 Dirhem 3 Gurus, every additional Dirhem 60 Para*

*From Jerusalem to Jaffa, for every 3 Dirhem 40 Para, every additional Dirhem 20 Para*

*Closed letter (Registered), double the fee, 2 Gurus for 3 Dirhem & every additional Dirhem 20 Para*

*Hebron (Halil Ul Rahman) for every 3 Dirhem 30 Para, every additional Dirhem will be charged as above, 1/2 of the value*

*Homs, Hamah & Haleb (Aleppo), for every 3 Dirhem 3 Gurus, every additional Dirhem 60 Para*

*Closed letter (Registered) to the above places, for every 3 Dirhem 6 Gurus, every additional Dirhem 3 Gurus*

*Dirbikar, Mardin, Urfah, Baghdad, Mosul, Mersin & Dir Ali, for every 3 Dirhem 6 Gurus, every additional Dirhem 3 Gurus*

*Closed letter (Registered) to the above places, for every 3 Dirhem 12 Gurus, every additional Dirhem 6 Gurus*

*Printed papers & certified contracts, for every 5 Dirhem 5 Para, 10 Dirhem 10 Para & so on, 1 Okka 10 Gurus.*

*For this the notice is published  
15 June 287*

*Pour copie conforme  
Jerusalem la 30 Juin 1871  
La Directuer des poste Charlez*

## New Book

### The Postal History of the Transition Period in Israel, 1948

#### Vol I: Official Postal Services: Postal Administrations of British Mandate, Minhelet Ha'am and Israel

Zvi Aloni



Published by the Israel Philatelic Federation  
A project of the Society of the Postal History of Eretz-Israel

This work is the fourth in the series of the Postal History of the Transition Period in Israel 1948, after three previous publications: Vol. II part 1 – Jerusalem and Safad Postal Services in the Transition Period Vol. II part 2 – The Emergency, Local and Private Postal Services Vol. III – Israel Foreign Postal Links. Although the research covers similar subjects as the previous ones an effort was made not to duplicate what has been published before, however some repetition was unavoidable because of the wish to make this volume independent and stand alone.

The subject is a complex one due to the political, military and social conditions; war, siege lack of security on the roads, the uncertainty of the newly created governmental procedures, thus it is a worthwhile move by the author to include in the beginning of the book two sections: *General Background* and *Political Background* in which a full description of the events is given so that the implications of the historical conditions on the postal history of the period can be understood. The book is divided into 20 sections:

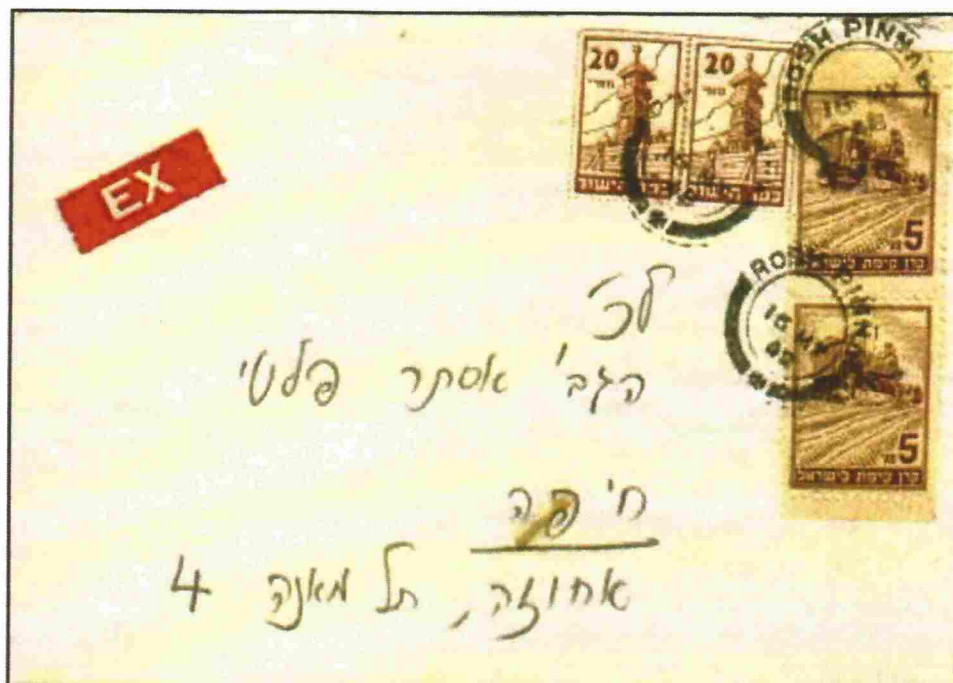
- 1+2. General and Political Backgrounds.
3. Foreign Postal Links Deterioration and Suspension.
4. Stamps in use during the Transition Period.
5. Postmarks.
6. Postal rates, fees and services.
7. Official Mail.
8. Taxed Mail.
9. Mail to Foreign Destinations.
10. Domestic Flown Mail.
11. The Minhelet Ha'am Post Offices.
12. Taxi Post.
13. Government Tohuwabohu.
14. Favors and CTO's.
15. Fakes and Forgeries.
- 16-20. Appendix, Abbreviations and Acronyms, Index, catalogue of stamps, Calendar April-July 1948.

We present the list of the content of the book to show the comprehensive coverage of the subject of the book. Furthermore each of the chapters is subdivided into very detailed sub sections. For instance in the Minhelet Ha'am chapter all the 80 Minhelet Ha'am post offices are named. In



the Forgeries chapter all the known forgeries of the Transition Period are outlined. The Domestic Flown Mail chapter is divided into five sub sections according to the place of origin: Jerusalem, Gus Etzion, Negev, Sdom, Ben Shemen.

The detailed index allows to quickly finding the specific topic in which the reader is interested. Many illustrations of interesting covers are shown such as the two presented below.



*g. 4-17: An Express letter sent from Rosh Pinna to Haifa, May 16, 1948, franked with 50 mils mixed franking of Kofer Hayishuv and Minhelet Ha'am stamps.*



*An official registered express letter sent from the Provisional Government, from Tel Aviv to Nathanya, on 23 July 1948. As official mail it was exempt from basic letter postage (10 mil) but still charged 40 mils with a pair of Doar Ivri stamps.*

A soft cover book of 550 pages, available from the Israel Philatelic Federation, 2 Pinsker st. Tel Aviv, Israel, Price: \$65 or 250 Shekel, 220 Shekel for members of the IPF. For details please write to: Lilach Gilad at [lilachgilad@netvision.net.il](mailto:lilachgilad@netvision.net.il).

## Items of Interest



Fig. 1: October 20 1870, Letter sent from Paris to Jerusalem with BALLON MONTE (Le Garibaldi) to Marseille and with ship via Alexandria and Jaffa to Jerusalem. Postage 40 Centimes the normal rate for foreign letter. The addressee was Meyer Rothschild.

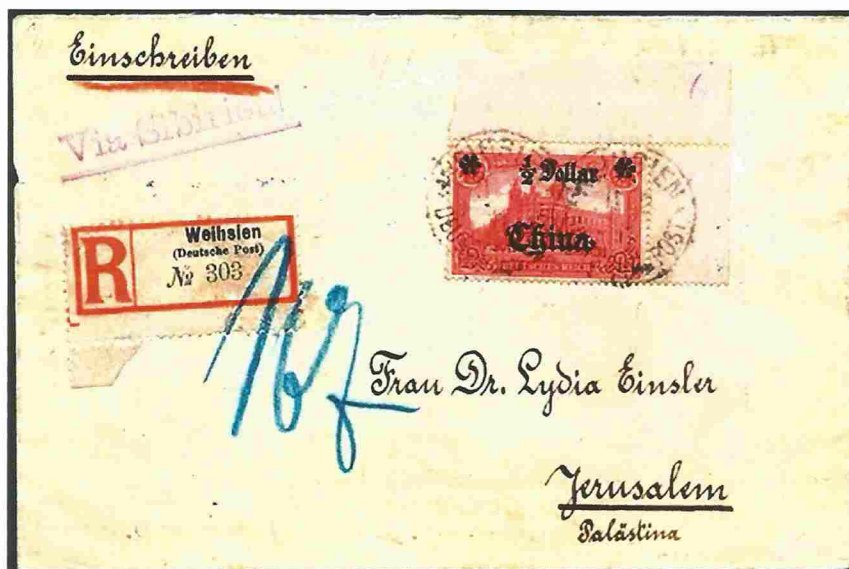


Fig. 2: Registered letter from German post office in Weihai, China to the German post office in Jerusalem via Siberian railroad. Postage 1/2 Dollar for a registered letter dated 11/12/1901. Letter from this place of origin to Jerusalem at that time is unusual.

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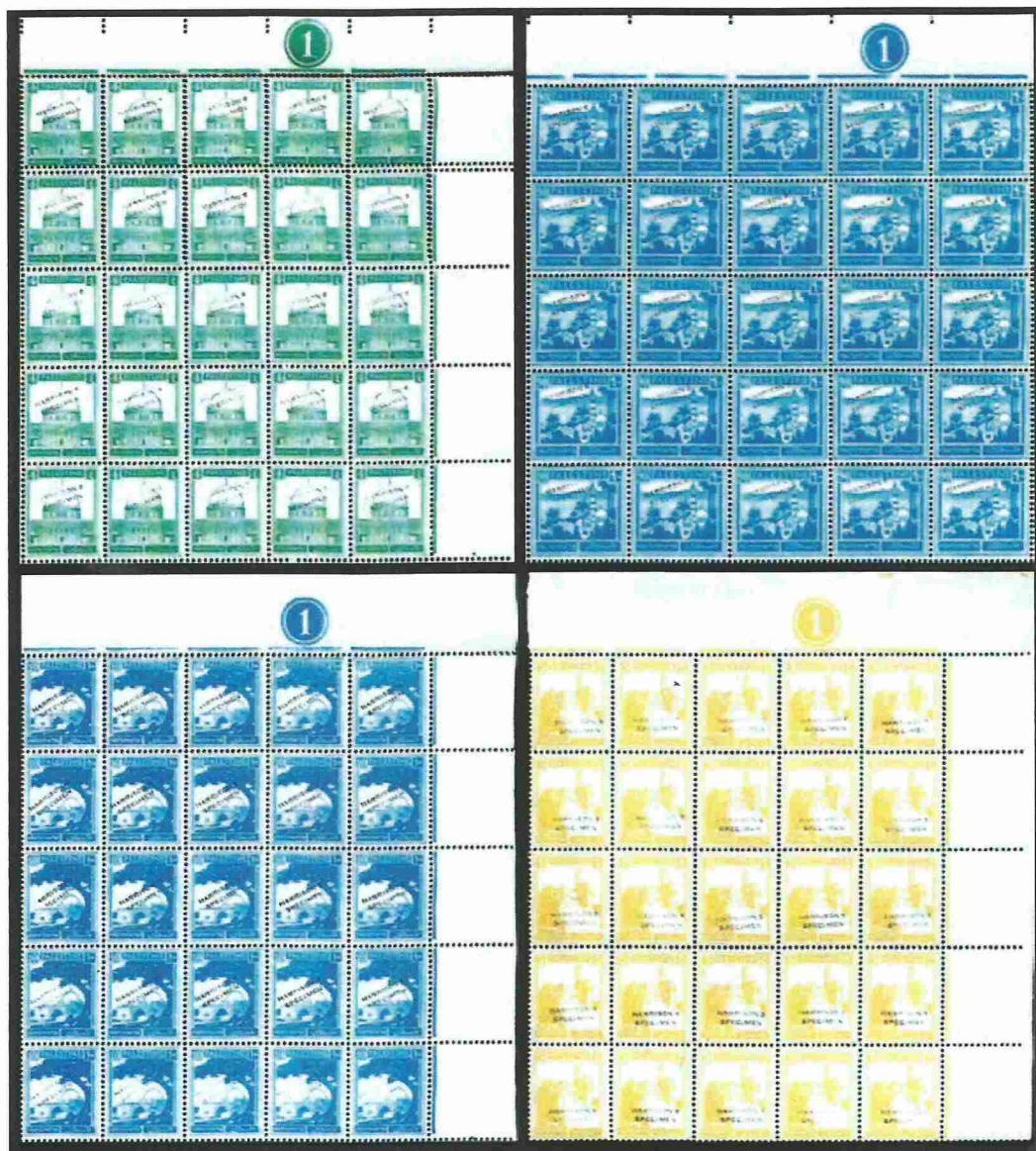
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