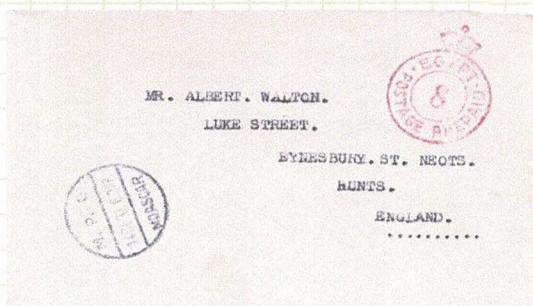


The new postal rates and the seals that were part of them came into effect on 1st November 1932. The notice issued to set out the new arrangements, titled 'Postal Concession', only referred to 10 milliemes stamps but the first 3 milliemes Christmas seals were issued at almost the same time.

Some philatelists consider these 1932 Xmas seals to be the first Christmas stamps, discounting the Canada 1898 issue; although that carries the words 'Xmas 1898', the issue was actually to commemorate a common Dominion postal rate that happened to come into effect on Christmas Day 1898. The Egyptian 10 milliemes seal was designed by Lieutenant-Colonel C. Fraser and redrawn more accurately by the artist Ivor Roberts; the seals were then printed in London by Hanbury Tomsett. On the stamp the currency is shown as 1 Piastre, equivalent to 10 milliemes. The 3 milliemes seal, only to be used for Christmas postage, was designed by Sergeant W.F. Lait of the Royal Army Service Corps and was printed in Cairo by the Amalgamated Press; the difference in quality compared to the 10 milliemes is obvious.

The 1 piastre seal on the envelope below carries a 'retta' cancellation applied by the Egyptian Postal Authorities. The reduced copy of the front shows the correct postal arrangements; the local army handstamp, in this case from the Military Post Office at Moascar, and separately the agreed double circle handstamp with the Egyptian crown on top, supplied by the Egyptian Postal Administration but applied by the MPO; the '8' in the circle indicates that this is a Moascar cancel and aligns with the MPO cancellation.



Reduced copy of rear



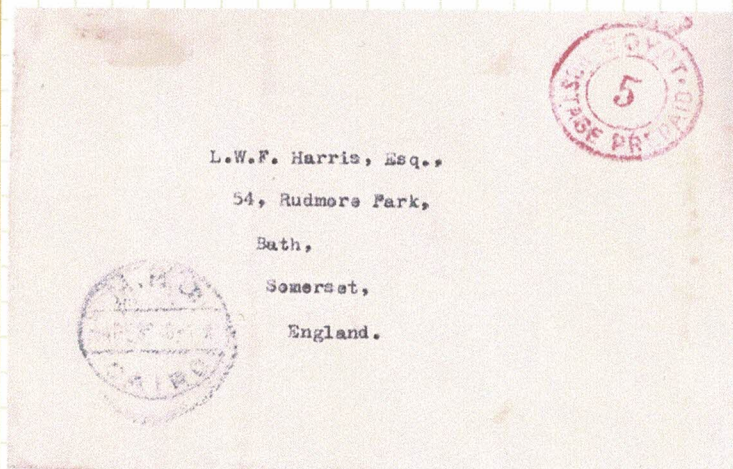
1 Piastre Seal



3 mils Xmas Seal

New seals at both values were issued in 1933. The 1 Piastre seal now carries the words 'Letter Seal' rather than 'Postal Seal'; no one seems to know why this change was made. In all other respects the design remained the same. The design was unaltered on the 3 milliemes Xmas seal, except that it was printed in brown-lake rather than black.

The letter below was sent in December 1933 and carries the brown-lake Xmas seal which unusually has not been cancelled by the Egyptians. It was obviously sent through the correct channels, as it carries a slightly indistinct MPO Cairo cancellation together with the Egyptian Prepaid cancellation for Office 5, one of the designations for Cairo.



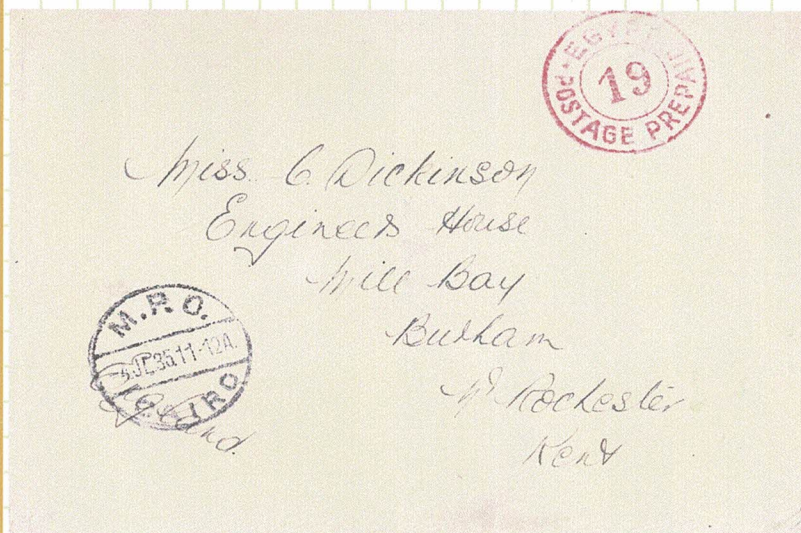
Reduced copy of front



1 Piastre Seal

3 mils Xmas Seal

Again new seals at both values were issued in 1934. The 1 Piastre seal was completely redesigned; instead of the NAAFI logo it now carried a drawing of the Great Sphinx at Giza. The wording was again altered and says 'Letter Stamp' so the seal designation was dropped. The seal or stamp was designed by Miss Waugh, a Cairo resident at the time, and printed by Harrisons in London. Two colours were printed, carmine and green. The cover below has a green seal on the back; on the front it carries a MPO Cairo handstamp and a 19 crown circle, one of the designations for Cairo.



Reduced copy of front



1 Piastre Seal
Carmine

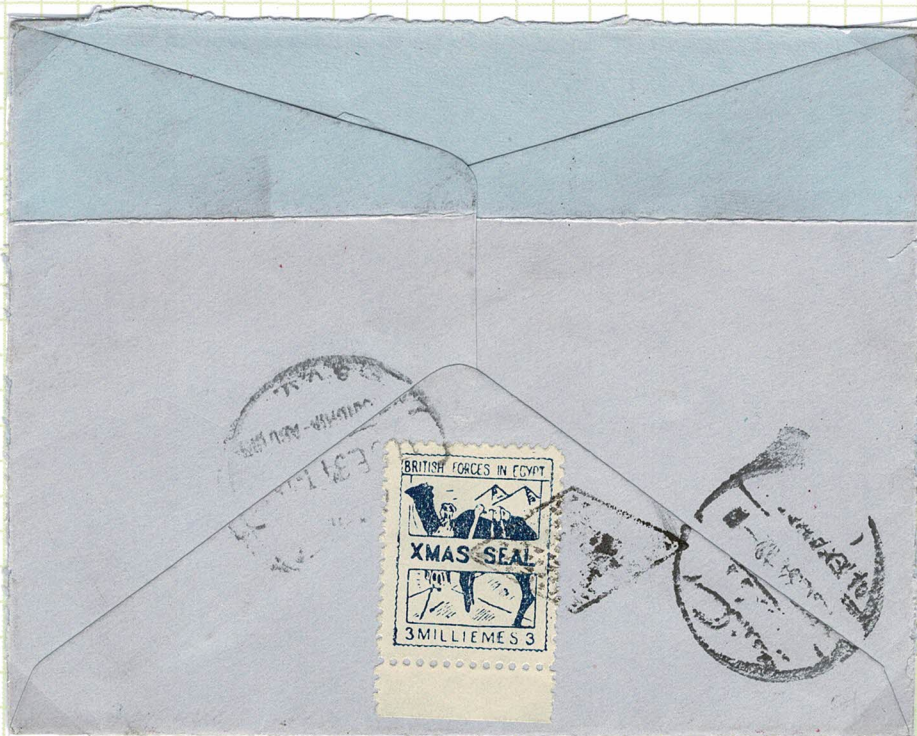


1 Piastre Seal
Green

BFE 1934 Issues (2)

The design of the 3 milliemmes Xmas seal remained unaltered, except that it was now printed in deep blue. Given that the 1 Piastre version carries the word 'stamp' it is interesting that the Xmas version still says 'seal'; perhaps it was felt to be too much trouble to alter the printing plates.

The envelope below carries the 1934 Christmas seal, together with an Abu Qir MPO cancellation and an Egyptian 13 Prepaid cancellation, consistent with Abu Qir.

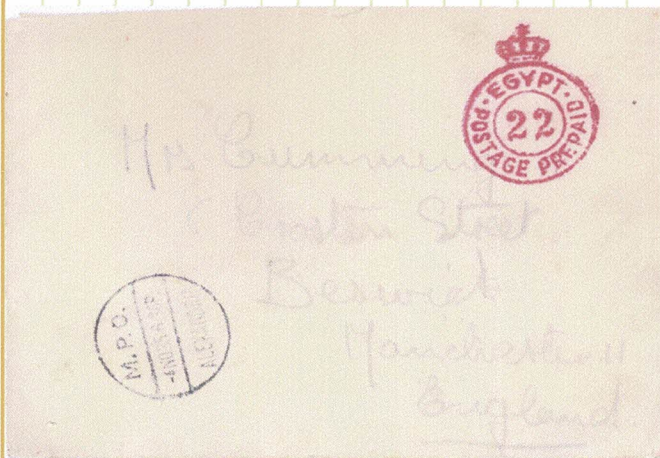


3 mils Xmas Seal

Reduced copy of front

1935 saw a lot of issues. The 1 Piastre stamp was issued in carmine again, with slightly different perforations and the Xmas seal was issued with the same design as in previous years, now printed in vermillion. There were also two overprints, those for the KGV Jubilee and Xmas 1935.

The cover below carries a 1 Piastre stamp and the cancellation is dated 4 November 1935, a bit before the issue of the Xmas 1935 seal on 23 November, so it had to pay the full rate rather than the reduced Xmas one. It has a Alexandria MPO cancellation and a Egyptian 22 Pre Paid cancellation, one of the Cairo designations. As there were no designations for Alexandria in this period, the mail was probably carried to Cairo to be put into the Egyptian postal system there.



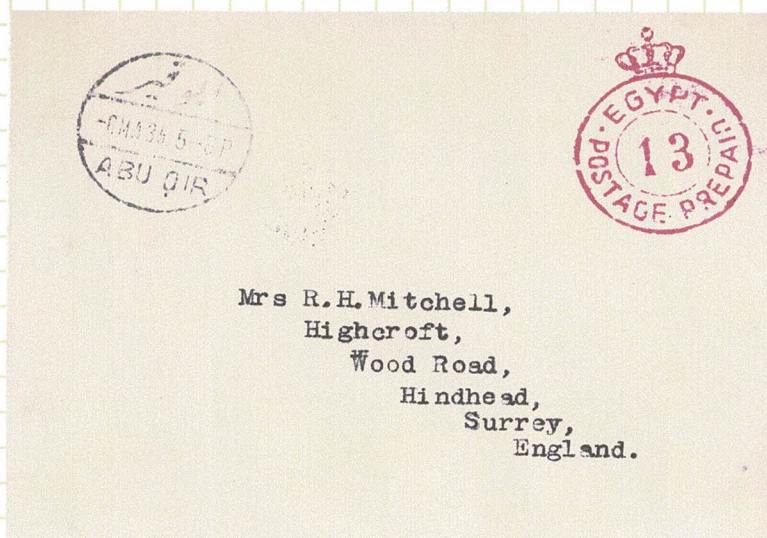
Reduced copy of front



4 x 1 Piastre Stamp

1935 saw two important overprints on the 1 Piastre stamp. First was an overprint commemorating the KGV 1935 Jubilee - this is the only stamp different from the standard omnibus issue of the time and the stamp was a separate printing in ultramarine. The envelope below shows a clear retta cancellation and is a first day cover. These are relatively rare as 6th May 1935, the date of issue, was a public holiday and the military postboxes were apparently cleared only once in the morning and the contents put into the Egyptian postal system. Envelopes posted later in the day were not put into the Egyptian system until the following day.

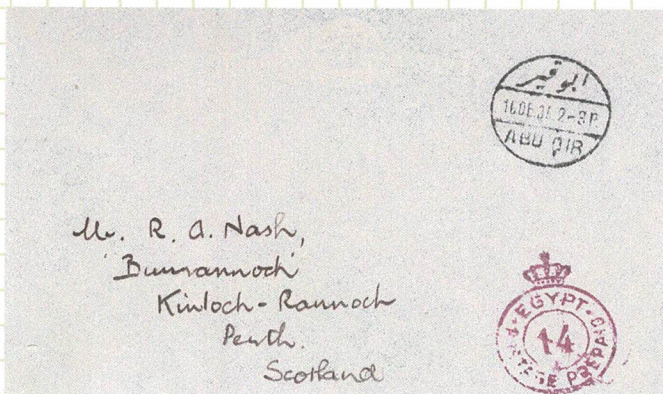
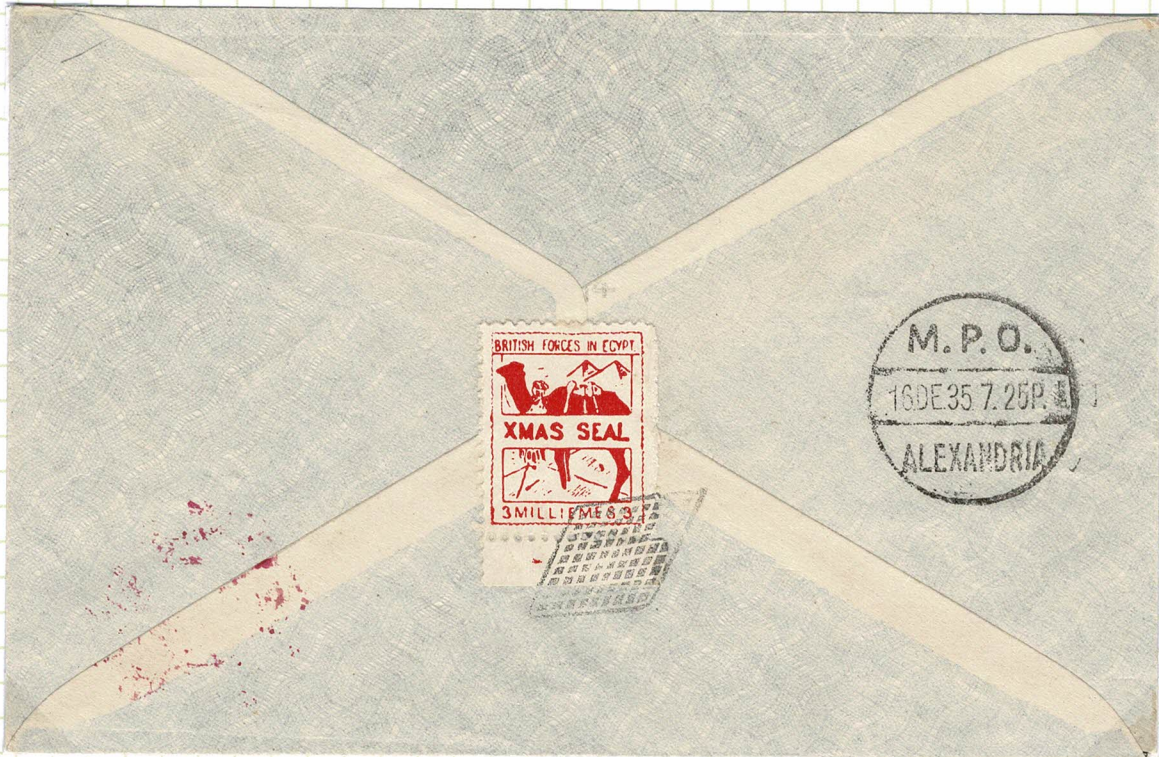
The Crown Cancel 13 on the front indicates that the letter was posted at RAF Station Aboukir and this is consistent with the local Abu Qir handstamp. The latter reads 5-8P, indicating that the cover was posted in the morning and received at the Egyptian post office in the afternoon. The Alexandria local cancellation on the back reads 7-P; the local Abu Qir post would be transmitted onward there if appropriate and in this case reached Alexandria about 7pm.



Reduced Copy of Front

1935 saw two different 3 millieme Christmas seals. There was a build up of British troops in Egypt that year, partly in response to a similar build up of Italian troops in Libya in support of Italy's invasion of Abyssinia (Ethiopia) which started in October 1935. In previous years 40,000 to 60,000 Christmas seals had been printed and nearly all sold, but in 1935 120,000 seals, again with the camel image, this time printed in red, were produced. This was not quite enough and in December a provisional issue, an overprint of the 1 piastre letter stamp, was also made. So in that year one of the Christmas items carried the word 'Seal', the other 'Stamp'.

The envelope below was posted in Abu Qir and carries the Egyptian Prepaid cancellation 14, another designation consistent with Abu Qir. It carries a MPO Alexandria handstamp on the rear and a particularly clear retta cancellation.



Reduced Copy of Front



3 mils Xmas Seal



3 mils Xmas Seal



1935 Xmas Overprint

The 10 milliemes stamps were for normal postage. They were now affixed to the front of the envelope and no Pre Paid cancellation was required as they now carried Egyptian stamps, albeit ones only for Forces use. As the mail went through the Army postal system before being relayed on to the Egyptians, envelopes still carried MPO cancellations. This issue is called the Fouad stamps by collectors, as that was the name of the King of Egypt depicted.

The envelope below was posted in the Alexandria MPO on 22 September 1936 addressed to London.



10 Milliemes Fouad Army stamps

BFE 1936 Issues (3)

As before 3 milliemes stamps were issued for Christmas postage. The stamps were first issued on 1 December 1936 and the envelope below is dated 17 December 1936 and carries APO cancellations from Abu Qir, a coastal town near Alexandria. Although supposedly only to be used for Christmas messages, the envelope is addressed to John Sewell, an Exeter stamp dealer and contained a blank approvals card - perhaps the original card was taken out on receipt and a blank inserted. In any event, not exactly a Christmas usage.



Please quote me for, and send on approval:

Country *	S.G. Nos. or Description.	Country *	S.G. Nos. or Description.

* Egypt, Iraq, or Sudan.

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Place a cross (X) here if you would like to see General Approvals instead of particular stamps.



3 Milliemes King Fouad Army Stamps

King Fouad died in 1937 and was succeeded by his son King Farouk. The Egyptian postal authorities soon issued new definitive stamps, much like the old ones but with the new King's head and in a smaller size. The equivalent Army stamps, however, were not issued until 1939 and were used until they were withdrawn in April 1941. The envelope below was posted airmail in 1940 and has four 10 milliemes stamps to add up to the airmail rate of 40 milliemes; it also carries a nice censor cachet. The envelope is cancelled with the standard APO handstamp. The block of four below the envelope was posted in January 1941 and carries a double ring Field Post Office cancellation.



10 Milliemes King Farouk Army Stamps

10 Milliemes King Farouk Army Stamp
Block of Four with APO Cancellation

BFE 1939 Issues (2)

Although the 3 milliemes King Farouk Christmas stamp shown to the left was issued, it is very hard to find on cover. One reason was that the rules were obviously relaxed for wartime and soldiers could use ordinary Egyptian stamps even if the letters were posted through the Army postal services. This is illustrated on the envelope at the bottom, which carries three 1 millieme Egyptian stamps but an Army FPO cancellation. As it carries no postage due or other unpaid markings, it was clearly delivered as shown. The card inside, also shown, looks Egyptian but carries an embossing saying it was produced by Raphael Tuck & Sons of London.



3 Milliemes King Farouk Army Stamps

