

## **EXHIBIT SYNOPSIS**

### **FOREIGN MAIL FROM THE ANGLO-EGYPTIAN SUDAN**

Donald Wilson (“Gordon Pasha”)

This is a novice exhibit in a new area from an experienced exhibitor. This is the sixth major exhibit I have done since 1982. I am currently exhibiting some postal history of Australian mail to the UK to 1891 as an 8 frame in Hunfilex, and hopefully Capetown in November.

I am winding down my collections of worldwide classics and early Australia, and have gone back to my early roots as a missionary child in the southern Sudan 1952-1961. There I began collecting and printed a hand-set stamp album of all the issues to date. Since 2015 I have added to my early collection, and have recently begun to assemble an exhibit of the postal history of the colonial period of the Sudan.

I have recently joined the Sudan Study Group out of London, England but have not had much contact with them yet. I have purchased a copy of the most important reference, Sudan The Postal Markings (Stagg) which has a voluminous amount of information on the early period from 1867 onward, with listings of all the cancellations to 1974, including TPO, military and civilian censor markings. There is no information on postal rates and routes, and there is nothing of note in the society’s bibliography. I have one partial reference, very vague, and partly in clear error as to postcard rates. I have recently received information on a few possible philatelic contacts, on which I will later follow up.

Most of the generalities of the colonial postal history are covered in the title page. I have divided the exhibit into two parts, surface mail

and air mail, largely chronological. I have not attempted to describe the stamps, but concentrated on the apparent postal rates. These have been deduced from the available covers and a few others on eBay, as well as what references I have been able to obtain. It may be that the complete story of postal rates and regulations is in either London or Khartoum official archives. Route information is based on transit markings, as well as my knowledge of contemporary Australian mail routes, as well as preliminary inquiry into routes by Imperial Airways and Pan American Airlines.

Cancellations from around 1920 onward are notoriously difficult to read. Commercially described dates are often 30 years out of historical context of the period of stamp use and mail rates, and have to be carefully re-interpreted. Some knowledge of the Arabic alphabet can be useful in identifying the departure and transit markings.

I have made some use of the internet in understanding the broader pattern of airmail usage, as well as interesting historical back-grounds of some of the towns in which the letters were mailed. Some of the fascinating social and commercial origins of the mail come from careful observation as well as my early experience living in the colonial Sudan.