

SYNOPSIS

FOREIGN MAIL FROM THE ANGLO-EGYPTIAN SUDAN

This 6 frame exhibit of the postal history of the British and Egyptian colonial regime in the Sudan was inspired by my childhood experiences there from 1952 to 1961 as the child of a missionary printer, who helped me make a hand-set printed Sudan stamp album. My initial effort at Calvirt 2022 covered most of the major postal history events and stamp issues, but did not have a firm back-round of research, especially as to postal rates. The current exhibit draws on 8 printed volumes as well as exhibits and advice from members of the Sudan Study Group.

Virtually all of the major postal issues from 1897 to 1955 (provisionals, permanent issues, commemoratives and types of postal stationary) are represented in the exhibit, but are secondary to the postal history. The stamps are usually quite common, although some are rather scarce. The covers exhibited display a fairly complete representation of the major postal rates are generally arranged by postal rates in ascending rate order, and in time by time-bound rate periods of essentially stable or declining postal rates. Most covers are from the expatriate community working in the Sudan as soldiers, administrators, merchants, missionaries, or occasional tourists, and a few are in Arabic or partly in Greek. Some covers are of philatelic origin, including several early air mail first day covers and first flight covers. Many are of unusual origins, especially those of commercial papers and military mail from foreign field post offices in WWII. The major changes in each of the historical periods are explained in text with light gray highlighting. Interesting cultural or historical information not relevant to the details of postal history is in blue script.

There is no definitive work on the postal rates of the Sudan. The exact dates of most postal

rate changes are not known, but mostly the postal rates were stable for long periods between challenges of wars or rapid inflation. The general outline of rates has been established by consulting the annual almanacs published by the Sudan Postal Service, but no information is available for some years. Proud has published some of the postal regulations from a number of years, with information on commercial mail and many early air mail rates to 1950. Some types of mail, such as newspapers sent abroad or unsealed printed matter, are not described although I have exhibited them and attempted to explain them. Military rates exist although they are not documented. Surface mail to Europe after 1931, or worldwide after 1945 is very scarce due to exceptionally poor service and falling competitive air mail rates, and many of the covers shown are philatelically inspired. Mail to Egypt had special rates equivalent to domestic rates, and is difficult to obtain or entirely in Arabic. The British Empire had subsidized rates from 1906 to 1952. These basic surface postal rates and air mail rates to major destinations are summarized in a rate chart on the title page, with those exhibited in red type. Some of the obscure rates are difficult to find, although the stamps used are quite common. In others, such as first flight covers or censored mail, the material is quite common but avidly sought after by specialists.

Surface postal routes were generally straight-forward for most mail from the Sudan to Britain or Europe, going by the Nile Valley and southern Italy. The early air routes were similar, being those of Imperial Airways to Britain or also to East and South Africa, or India. During WWII extreme and largely undocumented changes in foreign mail routes occurred, due to German and Italian forces in North Africa. From 1942 to 1944 much of the air mail was carried by Pan American Airways. The full story and documentation of the routes was only revealed about 2013, and is best summarized by a 2020 publication Pan Am Wartime LATI Substitute. Only a few of these covers have arrival markings, and only a few can be

definitively documented, such as a 1943 missionary cover from the Sudan to Toronto.

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The exhibit is on double-size pages to accommodate the large European envelopes that dominate Sudanese mail. Each item is displayed: Rate, route, date and postal markings, discussion of route and postal usage, additional historic information (in blue). Key items identified by red dots.

EXHIBIT HIGHLIGHTS

- P4 Postcard to India, route via Suez.
- P6 1897 provisional stamp to Egypt
- P7-8 3 military letters, 1898
- P10 Route covers to Kenya, Transvaal
- P 12 1 mm rate unsealed to Austria
- P17-18 Taxed PC, unlisted WWI censor
- P19 Empire rate to Austria
- P 25 Registered postal stn. to Germany
- P29 Commercial papers, official perfins
- P30 Overweight, rate steps 1936
- P33 First flight to Canada 1931
- P36 First flight to S. Africa 1932
- P37 Commercial air mail to Switzerland
- P42 Registered air mail to US 1932
- P43 Overweight Gordon commemoratives
- P44 Scarce provisional air, first day cover
- P47 Taxed air letter to Germany
- P49 Late pre-war transatlantic to Canada
- P51 1942 Censored printed matter Brazil
- P53 Wartime by sea to Australia

P58 Re-usable OAS military mail

59 Emergency war air rate, Irish censor

P 61-62 Use of wartime provisional issues

P63 Short-lived transatlantic air rate to UK

P66 Track-able transatlantic mail to Toronto

P72 Privately printed Christmas air letter

P74 Two military covers to India, UK & Indian postage

P75-76 Four foreign military wartime covers

P86 Air letter from Gambeila, Ethiopia 1951

P88 Air mail to Italy with Egyptian censors

P91 6 piaster air mail issue to US 1951

P96 Quadruple weight registered air letter 1954

