

FOREIGN MAIL RATES & ROUTES OF THE ANGLO-EGYPTIAN SUDAN 1897-1955

BASIC POSTAL RATE TABLE FOR MAJOR RATE PERIODS (IN MILLIEMES)

10 milliemes = 1 piaster. E-to Egypt, I- Imperial rate No letter- international (UPU) rate. Exhibited rates in red.

	1897-1905 SM, 1931-1932 AM	1906-1920 SM, 1933-1937 AM	1921-1930 SM, 1937-1939 AM	1931-1939 SM, 1939-1946 AM	1939-1946 SM, 1947-1952 AM	1947-1955 SM 1953-1955 AM
Unsealed Printed matter	.	1	(2)	4	4	4, 5
Printed matter, comm.	2	2	5	5	5	5
Postcards	5, 4, 3 E	4, 2E, 3 E	3 E, 8 I, 10	3 E, 10 I, 13	3 E, 10 I, 13	3 E, 10 I, 13, 15
First class letters surf.	5 E, 10	5 E, 5 I, 10	5 E, 10 I, 15	5 E, 15 I, 20	5 E, 10 E, 15 I, 20	10E, 15E, 20 I, 25
Military rates	4	—	—	10	10 I, 15, FPO's	FPO's
Registration fee	10	10	10 E, 15	10 E, 20	20	20, 30
Air to Egypt	20	20	5	35	20	20, 25
Air to British Isles	30, 25	25, 45	15	60, 45, 150, 100	30	50
Air to Europe	35, 30	30	30	? , 50	35	50
Air to South Africa	45	30	15	45	30	50 ?
Air to India	30 sea, 25 sea	40	15	45	40	50 ?
Air to Canada	35, 30	35?	25	60, 45, 100	45	90
Air to United States	35, 30	55	50	100, 50	60	90

BASIC RATES— are usually stable within a rate period. Exceptions are decreasing postcard rates 1899-1907 and wartime emergency of 1939. Weight increments are variably 20 or 30 grams surface mail, 10, 15, or 20 grams air mail. Outside this scheme are newspapers, foreign military rates, air letters, air postcards, second class air mail, and variable incremental rate step charges used in the 1930's.

BASIC ROUTES— For surface mail 1897-1949 were the Nile Valley (N.V.) route by rail from Khartoum to Wadi Halfa at the Egyptian border, then by steamer to Aswan (Shellal), by rail to Alexandria or Suez. Mail to Europe was by the extremely efficient route by sea via Brindisi in SE Italy, then by rail through or over the alps, pioneered in 1871 by the tunnel through Mt. Cenis between Italy and France, and to the UK, France, or the low countries. Secondary surface routes were from Suez south-eastward to Ceylon and Australia or the Orient. The basic air route was Khartoum to Cairo or Alexandria, then to Italy and by rail or direct to London, with some mail to North America by scheduled packets. Secondary air routes by Imperial Airways were via Cairo to India or the orient or Australia, or south to East Africa or South Africa. From June 1940 to January 1942 war necessitated first diversion of air mail to Durban, South Africa, then by sea. From then until October 1943 most air mail went by many Pan American routes via Nigeria and Liberia, by flying boats to Brazil, the Caribbean, Bermuda, and either New York or Lisbon, Portugal, en route to North America or Europe. A rarely used secondary route was from the Red Sea ports of Suakin or later Port Sudan. This became the standard surface route about 1950, but was extremely slow and unreliable.

HISTORY AND CULTURE— Each rate period experienced changes in postal history reflecting military conquest or defense, new rail and steamboat transport, the building of a major port or irrigation project, and new types of stamps available, as well as occasional changes in postal rates. There is very little domestic mail available, as very few South Sudanese were literate, and even those from the north using Arabic discarded most of the mail they received. Mail to foreign destinations was exotic, and much was saved by collectors in Europe or North America.

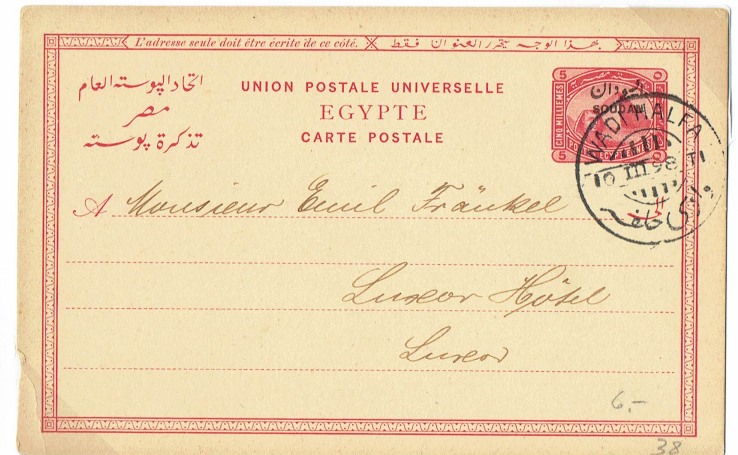
Each rate period or major change in postal history is highlighted in gray, beginning on the upper right with page 2. Key items are identified with a red dot. Many types of mail exhibited, highlight the expatriate community in the Sudan that sent most of the mail that has survived. The military forces, both British and Egyptian, sent most of the early mail from the re-conquest period 1897-1903, later joined by civil servants, travelers, engineers, railway men, Greek and Armenian merchants, missionaries, soldiers and air crews from Britain, India, and the United States Army also sent messages home or to order supplies. Some philatelic mail is exhibited, including from scarce Traveling Post Offices, first flight covers, and two early air mail first day covers, as well as two covers in Arabic only.

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POSTAL HISTORY OF THE 1897-1905 PERIOD

The re-conquest of the rebellious Sudanese province of Egypt began in September 1896, but no special stamps were issued for British and Egyptian troops in the 1896 Dongola campaign. A renewed major military expedition further down the Nile began in March 1897, this time with provisional stamps of Egypt overprinted "Soudan" in French and Arabic, as well as postal stationary, postage dues, and official perfins. The commander of the expeditionary force, Sir Herbert Kitchener admired the artistic talents of Captain E.A. Stanton on the edges of military maps, and asked him to create a suitable design. As the regimental mail came in by camel, the artist had a local leader pose for him with flour sacks to represent the mailbags. The artist had no small brush in the desert, and so a large portrait of the camel postman, complete with mailbags labeled Khartoum and Berber were sent to De La Rue in London. These were printed in large format, and were the most popular design by that firm, beloved of tourists and collectors, often over-franked intentionally. After their issue in March 1898 the main military effort consisted of a narrow gauge railway through the desert to Abu Hamed on the Nile. Victories near Atbara and Omdurman (Sept. 2, 1898) led to the capture of the old capital Khartoum. The railway was extended to Khartoum North, but did not cross the Blue Nile to the capital until 1906. A new Sudanese postal system was set up. A formal agreement to a shared Anglo-Egyptian condominium was signed on January 19, 1899.



Rate— 5 mm international postcard rate (H&G No. A 3)

Route— Nile Valley by steamer and rail to Egypt

1898. Bilingual Arabic/French overprint "Soudan" on Egyptian postal stationary. These were provisional issues dating from March 1897. The stationary is also in Arabic and French, as is the Egyptian cancellation. Wadi Halfa 10 III 98, to Luxor in southern Egypt. Usage is probably philatelic, as there is no message, and the card is well preserved. The new issues of the Sudan were a matter of great philatelic interest, as the Anglo-Egyptian military campaign to liberate the Sudan from the hands of the anti-Western Mahdist rebels proceeded. Wadi Halfa is in northernmost Sudan on the Nile, and was held by the Egyptian forces along with Suakin on the Red Sea from 1885 through to 1898 during the Mahdist rule, using the Egyptian postal system.