



By C. A. HOWES, F. R. P. S.

A convention signed between the British and Egyptian governments on January 19, 1899, provides for an Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, with a Governor-General appointed by Egypt with the assent of Great Britain, the use of the British and Egyptian flags together, etc. Of course, during the preceding period, while hostilities were in progress, the government was military, advancing with the conquerors and under the direction of the Sirdar, or Commander-in-Chief, Gen. Lord Kitchener. As various towns were captured and occupied as stations, and the postal needs of the army of occupation increased, a special series of stamps was deemed expedient and the following notice of such issue was published in the *Journal Official* (Cairo) of March 8, 1897:

"From 1st March instant, correspondence posted at the camp Post-Office, Wadi Halfa, and at places south of Halfa, will be prepaid by postage stamps of the present issue bearing the surcharge 'Soudan'. These stamps will be receivable for postage only at the places indicated above."

From this it will be seen that the issue took place on March 1, 1897, the stamps employed being the then current Egyptian set of eight values, viz.: 1, 2, 3, 5 millièmes and 1, 2, 5, 10 piastres. The surcharge is printed in black in two lines, the lower being SOUDAN, the French form of spelling the name, to correspond with the inscriptions on the stamps, and the upper being Arabic characters reading (from right to left) *As-Sudan*.

There are six well known varieties of the Arabic overprint which may be described as follows, as we unfortunately have no cuts of them: Over the UD of SOUDAN are a vertical line and two comma-like characters, while at the right end over N is another vertical line. In what may be termed the normal variety, or type 1, the bottoms of the first three characters named are on a level, while the end line has its top level with the preceding elbow-like character. In type 2 the end line is dropped down somewhat; type 3 is very similar to type 2 but the end line is spaced further from the preceding character; type 4 has the second "comma" dropped below the two preceding characters and the end line dropped as well; type 5 is similar to type 2 again, but is defective, the second "comma" having lost its tail; type 6 is also defective, having the central dot in the first character lacking, but being otherwise like type 2.

The Egyptian stamps used for surcharging were printed in sheets of 120, divided horizontally into an upper and lower pane of 60. Each pane had six rows of ten stamps each, and it is evident from examination that the surcharging was done in panes. Of the six varieties just described, five appear regularly on each pane, and each horizontal row of stamps shows but one variety. They are arranged thus:

- 1st row: type 1, normal.
- 2d row: type 4, comma and line dropped.
- 3d row: type 2, last line dropped.
- 4th row: type 3, last line dropped and spaced.
- 5th row: type 2, same as 3d row.
- 6th row: type 5, second comma tailless.

Of course all these varieties are found on all the eight values surcharged, so it is unnecessary to repeat the list here. Of type 6, however, without the dot in the first character, there is but one to a pane, this being the first stamp of the fifth row, number 41 in the pane. As it does not usually appear and is known so far only on the 2m, 3m and 2pi values, it would seem to be a defect that appeared early in the surcharging and was

corrected, or one that happened when the work was nearly done and so appears on relatively few sheets.

One pane of 60 of the 1m was found with the surcharge inverted, and copies of the 5m have also been found in this condition. The whole issue is stated, on the authority of an officer connected with the Sudan Government, to have amounted to but £700 worth in face value, though the numbers of each denomination printed are not given.

The same officer, just quoted, whose name we unfortunately lack, writes further: "I have just designed a new Sudan stamp to the Sirdar's order, which has been approved by the Khedive, and will, I hope, in the course of a few months, make its appearance. It has gone home for estimates to be made as to its cost, etc. The design I made was a camel trotting fast across the desert, with an Arab on its back, holding a rifle and two spears, and the mail bags on the saddle." The announcement of the new issue was made in the *Journal Official* of February 28, 1898, as follows:

"New postage stamps of 1, 2, 3 and 5 mill., 1, 2, 5 and 10 piastres, will be issued on 1st March, 1898, for the prepayment of postage of letters, etc., originating in the Sudan.

"A stock of these stamps will also be kept at the Financial Secretary's Office, War Office, Cairo, where they may be purchased."

It is hardly necessary to describe the well known "camel stamps" further than the above quotation from their designer. Yet it may be well to make a slight correction here for the sake of accuracy. The beast depicted is not the usual camel but a *dromedary*, the former being the slow beast of burden of the caravan, while the latter belongs to a specially bred race of camels akin to our thoroughbred race-horses, and almost as swift. They have been used for centuries by the Arabs for war and courier services. A clever conceit of the engraver, probably, rather than the designer, will be seen on looking with a glass at the mail bags beneath the rider. The upper one will be found plainly labelled in microscopic letters "Khartoum", and the lower one "Berber", places still beyond Kitchener when the stamps were issued.

The stamps were engraved and printed by Messrs. De La Rue & Co. of London and perforated 14, like their surcharged predecessors. They are also in sheets of 120, there being two panes of 60, one above the other, but the stamps are arranged in five rows of twelve. Each pane is surrounded on the three outer sides by double "Jubilee" lines, the one next the stamps having the color of the centers and the outer one the color of the frames. The inscription is in English instead of French this time, which accounts for the spelling SUDAN. It is repeated in Arabic beneath the dromedary, reading *Posta Sudanieh*. Arabic figures occupy the lower corners and the denomination appears in the frame between as *mlym* (millième) and *girsh* (piastre).

Messrs. De La Rue had already employed a paper, watermarked with a rosette-like ornament, variously described as a lotus-flower, a quatre-foil, or a Maltese Cross, and printed the new Sudan stamps upon it. Johore and Zanzibar had both been favored with it for at least two years previously, but had voiced no protest; after the Sudanese had received it, however, there appeared the following in the *Egyptian Gazette*:

"A good instance of the scrupulous manner in which the feelings of the faithful are respected by British authorities has lately been exemplified in the Sudan. Most people have failed to observe that the present Soudan Telegraph stamp is watermarked with a Maltese Cross. The symbol has, however, not escaped the keen eyes of certain Soudanese sheikhs. They spotted it at once, and forthwith brought the matter to the notice of the Sirdar. Lord Kitchener thereupon gave immediate orders that the Star and Crescent is to figure in the next issue, and that the philatelic scruples of the Soudanese Moslems are no longer to behold the Maltese Cross in the stamps."

Though directed specifically against the telegraph stamps, the above held good for the postage stamps as well. The telegraph stamps appeared in December, 1898, with the new watermark, but there must have been a very large quantity of postage stamps on hand to be used up, as was the policy, for the first value to appear on the crescent and star paper was the 2m about November, 1902! The 3m appeared next in the summer of 1903; the 5m followed about December of the same year; the 1pi was chronicled in June, 1904; the 1m came in August, 1905; the 5pi about March, and the 2pi about May, 1908. The 10pi has not yet been heard of.

Of course it is impossible to get along without provisionals once in a while, and the Sudan Government found it so. The post office at Khartoum, the capital, found the supply of 5m stamps was running short in September, 1903, and consequently surcharged 50,000 of the 5pi stamps to do duty until a new supply arrived. The provisionals lasted about a month. Naturally one sheet of 120 was found with the surcharge inverted.

The readjustment of the Egyptian letter rate to more nearly conform to Imperial Penny Postage led to the replacing of the 5m stamp in 1906 by a 4m value, the exact equivalent of the British penny. The Sudan followed suit and issued a 4m stamp in blue and olive brown about January 1, 1907. Evidently no thought of Postal Union requirements entered into the color scheme, but about October, 1907, the same stamp appeared with the center in red and the frame in a reddish brown. It is stated that 180,000 were printed in the first colors.

POSTAGE DUE STAMPS.

At the same time that the provisional postage stamps were issued, Mar. 1, 1897, the four values of the Egyptian postage due set were likewise surcharged, and consequently we find identically the same varieties repeated on them, save that there has been no report of any value appearing with the sixth type, the dot missing from the center of the left hand Arabic character.

In January, 1901, the provisional set was replaced by a permanent one of like values in a very pretty little pictorial design. It represents one of the armored gun-boats used in the Sudan campaign for river work. These were flat-bottomed stern-wheel steamers which could push in close to the shore and proved very effective. The Egyptian flag can be seen at the stern, and beyond is a native dahabeyeh. The Arabic inscriptions are simply those of the regular set—*Posta Sudanieh* at the bottom and *mlym* (millième) at the right side. They are watermarked with the multiple crescent and star, and perforated 14.

OFFICIAL STAMPS.

About April, 1900, a special stamp for official correspondence was made by perforating the 5m of the 1897 issue with the initials S.G. The letters are 10 mm. high, the S being made with 14 holes and the G with 12. They stand for "Sudan Government", and, being perforated one at a time, apparently, are found normal (reading on face of stamp) and inverted, and reversed (reading on back of stamp) and inverted.

At the beginning of 1902 the 1m "camel" stamp was likewise perforated with these letters, and later the 5m

"camel" stamp. But *Der Philatelist* says that only 1000 of the 1m were prepared and only 500 of the 5m, and that most of the latter were burned.

On January 1, 1903, a change was made, the 1m and 5m, and 1, 2 and 5pi stamps being issued with the surcharge O. S. G. S. These letters stand for "On Sudan Government Service", though some other curious renderings have appeared, doubtless due to French translations. The 1m was surcharged at Khartum and had the rosette watermark. The other values were surcharged in London and had the new crescent and star watermark, which had not then appeared on any of them unsurcharged. The two surcharges are very similar, the most noticeable difference being that the G and S's are more "open" in the local type, with the ends cut off on diagonal lines, while the London type has these letters closed up more and the ends cut off on horizontal lines. The London surcharge was applied to the entire sheet of 120 at once, and shows square periods throughout; but the Khartum print was applied to blocks of 30, five rows of six, and though the first four rows had square periods, the last row had round ones. 40,000 of the 1m were surcharged at Khartum and lasted until September, 1904, when the 1m with London surcharge appeared, on crescent and star paper of course. One pane of 60 of the 1m local surcharge is said to have been issued inverted.

Two additional values have since appeared, both with London surcharge, the 3m on crescent and star paper in January, 1904, and the 10pi with the old *rosette* watermark about March, 1906. The 2m has never yet appeared. These stamps were at first jealously guarded, but were suddenly put on sale to the public in January, 1904.

ARMY SERVICE.

In January, 1905, the army was provided with a special stamp. It seems that all the army correspondence was carried at 1m per letter or packet, regardless of weight, so that but this one value was needed. Again we have a Khartum surcharge, the word ARMY reading up at the left side of the stamp, and OFFICIAL downward at the right; and as before it was applied in blocks of 30, five rows of six. The surcharge occurs in two sizes,

(a) ARMY 9¼ mm. OFFICIAL 15¾ mm.
(b) ARMY 8 mm. OFFICIAL 13½ mm.
the smaller size occurring on the last stamps of the first and second rows (Nos. 6 and 12) in each block, while the fifth stamp in the last row (No. 29) has an exclamation point (!) in place of the first I in OFFICIAL. The surcharge is known inverted. 80,000 are said to have been printed, but the stamp was withdrawn at the end of 1905, after being in use one year, and the remainders destroyed. According to Ewen some 30-35,000 were used. The regular issue was on the crescent and star paper, but two sheets (240) are said to have been found on the old *rosette* paper. These of course had the varieties noted above.

Evidently the army was placed on the same footing as the other government departments as regards postal rates, for on January 1, 1906, the regular set, including all values, was issued surcharged "Army Service." The first five values, from 1m to 1pi, were on the crescent and star paper, but the 2, 5 and 10pi had the old *rosette* watermark. The surcharge was printed at Khartum again, but this time in entire panes of sixty. The first setting had the two words spaced 14 mm. apart, with the result that one or the other of them, allowing for variation, would be sure to be printed over the legend "Sudan Postage" or its

Arabic equivalent. The distance between was therefore shortened to 12 mm. Only the 1m occurs with the wide spacing, and Ewen hazards a guess at 300 for the number printed. One sheet of the regular 1m has been found inverted.

NOTES BY EUGENE KLEIN.

1897, March, 1.—The current 1, 2, 3m and 1, 5 and 10pi stamps of Egypt (of the De La Rue printing) were surcharged SOUDAN in Arabic and French. The over-printing was done on panes of 60. A vertical row of surcharges was set up by hand. Each type of this row differs in the relative position of the Arabic letters. The lowest (6th) is most readily recognizable by the third character from the left which originally is comma shaped, but the lower portion of which was broken off and is, therefore, dot shaped. This vertical row was repeated ten times on the plate. All surcharges of the horizontal row are, therefore, similar and have the same characteristics as the first of the row. In early printings misplacements of the surcharge sometimes took place; as a result of this we find all the values with French surcharge at top and Arabic at bottom of stamp. Owing to wear of type, various errors occur: Inverted V caused by missing bar in A. Also dotless first Arabic letter. This makes the word read Sudal.

May.—The values 5m and 2pi were similarly overprinted. All varieties exist in these as above. Five panes of 60 of the 1m were surcharged inverted; also two panes of the 5m. One pane of each was contained in a big collection that was sold in London lately. The stamps of this issue are much scarcer than catalogue prices would indicate. Forgeries of the surcharge are commoner than suspected. The writer has seen them in some of the most carefully compiled collections.

1898.—This beautiful issue, prepared by De La Rue and Co., has done much to stimulate stamp collecting among beginners young and old. The picture is essentially characteristic of the country. It shows the dromedary carrying mailbags and postman across the desert. The upper mail bag has KHARTOUM written across it, while the lower one is inscribed BERBER. Two important commercial cities. Occasional colorless dots occur in the framework. These are due to uneven inking. The watermark of this issue is a cross and not a flower as stated in some catalogues. Soudan being a Mohammedan country, the population objected to handling stamps with a cross and prevailed upon the Governor General to change the watermark. Paper with multiple crescent and star watermark was then introduced and the set including 1, 2, 3, 5m and 1pi issued in

1902-3.—Considerable supplies of the higher values being on hand, these were not issued until later when the supply was used up. The center of the 1pi stamp was printed from a second plate in 1904. This is much fainter in the upper parts than plate I.

1903.—The 5m having become temporarily exhausted, the 5pi value was surcharged 5m locally. Two sheets of 60 were surcharged inverted. These fell into the hands of a postal official who cancelled most of the stamps, having heard that a cancellation will make them more valuable. He miscalculated himself, as he found very scant sale for his cancelled stamps. The few unused he had sold readily.

1907.—Inland postage was reduced to 4m. This necessitated a stamp of corresponding value which was issued in dark brown and pale blue. Plate II, with the faint background, was used for

printing the central portion of this stamp. This stamp was in use but a short time, when the colors were changed to brown and red to conform to the Postal Union colors.

1908.—The 2 and 5pi stamps of 1898 having been used up, the new supply was printed on the Multiple Crescent and Star watermark paper.

POSTAGE DUE STAMPS.

1897, May.—The surcharges having been printed with the same type as the postage stamps show the same characteristics.

1901, January 1.—The permanent issue bears a picture of a Sudanese Gunboat and is printed on Multiple Crescent and Star watermark paper.

OFFICIAL STAMPS.

1900, February 8.—The 1m of 1898 and the 5m of 1897 were perforated S. G. (Sudan Government). Several rows were folded and the perforating done at one operation thus creating tête-bêche pairs. Inverted, reversed and inverted perforations are therefore no rarer than the regulars.

1902.—The 1m of 1898 was surcharged locally O. S. G. S. (On Sudan Government Service). The surcharging was done on panes of 30. The first stamp of the top row having an oval O; the entire first row circular periods. The other 24 stamps of the pane have square periods. One sheet of this stamp was issued with inverted surcharges.

1903.—The 1, 3, 5m, 1, 2 and 5pi stamps of 1902 were similarly overprinted in London. The letters are a trifle smaller, S. and G. more closed, and the printing ink very shiny. No varieties occur.

1906.—The 1m of 1902 was surcharged: "ARMY" reading up and "OFFICIAL" reading down in panes of 30. The setting shows the following varieties: Stamp No. 6 ARMY 8 mm., OFFICIAL, 13½ mm. long. The O is slightly below the level of the word. Stamp No. 12 measures the same but has O level. The other stamps have ARMY 9¼ mm., OFFICIAL 15¾ mm. long. Stamp No. 29 has exclamation mark in place of first I. This surcharge exists inverted and also sideways. The latter especially rare. Four sheets of this surcharge were found on Cross Watermark paper, eight of which have small surcharge, two are of the "exclamation mark" variety; while the remaining 108 stamps have the ordinary large surcharge. This issue was discontinued to make place to a whole set and the remainders sold to a London dealer.

1905, December.—Surcharged "ARMY SERVICE" in two horizontal lines. This was applied to the 1, 2, 3, 5m and 1pi multiple watermark and 2, 5 and 10pi Cross watermark stamps. The following quantities of the high values were overprinted: 2pi, 2,200; 5pi, 400; 10pi, 250.

The printing, as usual, was done in Cairo. The relative position of the words vary slightly. The setting changed with each printing of which there were three. Army and Service are 11 mm. apart. A few used copies of the 1m were found spaced 14 mm. These came from the early printings. The 1m used is known with inverted and also double surcharge. The latter very rare. The 1pi ARMY SERVICE is found on both pales I and II. One sheet of the 2m is known without surcharge on the lowest row; the surcharge having "slipped up" to the sheet margin at top. This makes six vertical pairs or strips, one stamp (the lowest) of which is without surcharge.

1908, December.—The 2 and 5pi on Multiple Crescent and Star watermark paper were surcharged in the following quantities: 2pi 1,000 and 5pi 120.