Holy Land Postal History

III

60

OFFICIAL BULLETIN OF THE SOCIETY OF THE POSTAL HISTORY OF ERETZ-ISRAEL

מעטפה טרגית ממלחמת העצמאות

A tragic cover from the War of Independence (see note on p. 1115)

AUTUMN 1994

HOLY LAND POSTAL HISTORY

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Editorial

Volume 3 which includes Nos. 41 through 60 comes to a close with this issue. It appears at the end of the 15th year of the existence of the **Holy Land Postal History** Bulletin, and the 17th year of the HLPH Society.

The Editors suggest that those interested in binding the issue await the appearance of the Index to Volume 3 in the near future. Subscribers are asked to understand a certain delay in publication of the opening issues of Volume 4 (Nos. 61/62) as a result of editorial preparation of the Index to Volume 3.

The addition of new contributors to the HLPH Bulletin is a welcome sign of growth of interest in the field. The Editors applaud the new work being done and the writing of new material much as they thank and greet their steady "old-timers" amongst the authors. And yet, there is room to invite further participation of our growing circle of friends. New authors are advised to follow the pattern of material previously published while preparing articles they wish to submit for publication. The Editors will be pleased to answer any questions that may arise.

We wish to congratulate our (now not so) new Chairman, Dr. Yerry Rimon, who was awarded the Dr. Werner Hoexter Medal for 1994 by the Israel Philatelic Federation during its Eighth Congress last Hanukka.

In the Footsteps of History – the Postal Story of the Templar Settlement in Palestine, 1868–1948

Yoel Amir, Kefar Sava

Following a lecture by Alex Carmel, and reading his book[1] on the settlement of the German Templars in Palestine, it struck me that this is an episode in the Holy Land's history which could by closely followed by a non conventional philatelic study.

The Templars were a religious (Christian Evangelic) group based in the area of Stuttgart, Germany, who believed that settlement in the Holy Land would accelerate the creation of "God's Kingdom" on earth. After a careful search they settled outside Haifa (1868), and in the next years in Jaffa (1869), Sarona (1870), Jerusalem (1878), Wilhelma (1902), and Bethlehem and Waldheim in the north (1906–7). Being European, with strong links to their base in Germany, they introduced to the desolate and primitive Palestine a host of "innovations" such as wheeled transportation, paved roads, European styled buildings (with red tiled roofs), modern hotels, metal and cement industry, agriculture tools and methods, banking and international commerce.

The Templar colonies, a model of entrepreneurship and success during a period of eighty years, kept closely to their German roots, a fact that led twice to their exile from their homes in Palestine. The second time (during WWII), whilst showing sympathy to Nazism, most of the Templars were exiled to Australia or returned to Germany (in exchange for Jews related to Palestinians). Only a few were interned by the Mandate authorities in their agricultural settlements. During the War of Independence the last Templars in Palestine were exiled by the Israelis, never to return. As part of the Restitution agreement in the early fifties, the Templars were compensated by the Government of Israel for their lost property in Palestine.

Now back to philately: The story of the Templar settlement in Palestine has all of the ingredients of an exciting postal study: –

(a) Time span 1868–1948 bridging the Turkish rule (including the foreign post offices) and British Mandate.
(b) Intensive postal communication between the Templars and their families and friends abroad, as well as between the Templar colonies themselves.
(c) A lot of inland and foreign postal activity due to the Templars' dominant position in commerce, banking, tourism and industry during the period 1868–1920.
(d) Political conflicts and exile periods, during WWI and WWII.

This was the basis for my postal study which covers the jigsaw presented by the many facets of the Templar settlement in Palestine. The method is schematically shown in Figure 1, which relates to a model Templar colony. Eight such jigsaws are

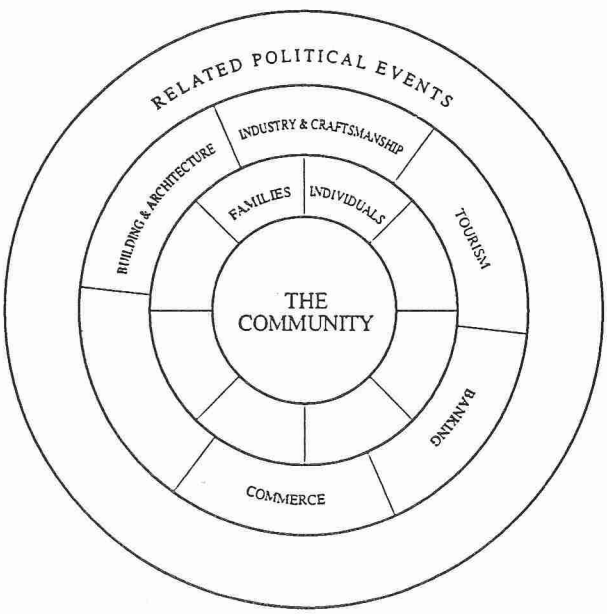

Figure 1

included in my Templar study – seven Templar colonies and one auxiliary, covering individual settlements in Tiberias, Ramleh and Nazareth. Each postal item, fitting the jigsaw is evaluated by a dual standard:

A. Relevance to the story of the Templar settlement in Palestine, and the degree of information revealed.
B. Conventional philatelic yardstick.

This method of collection requires a thorough study of both historical and philatelic sources[2,3,4], combined with some detective work, as any specific postal item can reveal only minute information, part of a greater picture. Such information includes:

★ Family name, personal name, location of addressee and sender.
★ Place and date of mailing, arrival and route markings.
★ Method of communication (surface, marine, airmail, registered, telegram, train, other).
★ Ruling government, currency, monetary situation, political status.
★ Pictorial information (postcards, envelopes).
★ Special information as written on or in the postal item (postcard, entire, letter within envelope).

Following the "dual standard" evaluation method a genuine postal item will be of first choice for the collection, but other items such as legal documents (court fee stamps), commercial documents (official marks and revenue stamps) and unused postcards should not be ignored. An interesting side line includes original documents, newspapers, travel guides and books closely related to the subject.

Samples of the study covering the jigsaw (Fig. 1) related to the Templar colony in Jerusalem (Rephaim Colony) are shown next.

The Community

Figure 2 shows a private postal stationery of the JERUSALEMER WARTE

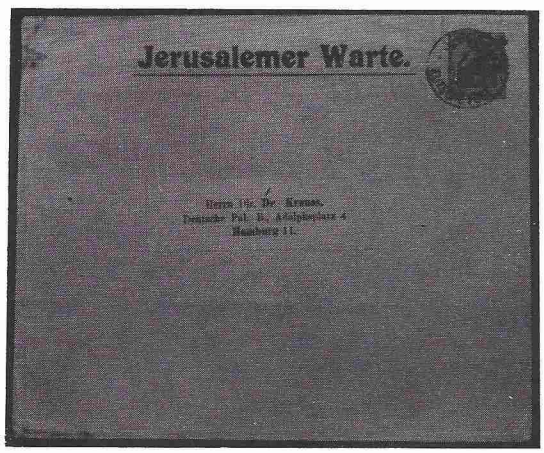

Figure 2

(sentinel), the official Templar gazette published in Jerusalem in the years 1912–1917. The letter is addressed to the manager of the DEUTCHE PALESTINA BANK in Hamburg. The stationery (Steichele #4b, p. 64) was printed in 1913 with a 5pf Germania edition overprinted five centimes. The stationery carries a German Post Jerusalem postmark (Steichele #234).

Figure 3 is a postal stationery card sent in 1902 from Stuttgart to J. Dyck, an officer of the CENTRALKASSE DES TEMPLES (the Templar's central fund) in Jerusalem via the German Post services.

The sender is Dr Jon(athan) Hoffmann, son of Christoph Hoffmann, founder and first president of the Templar community. The postcard reports financial matters related to the WARTE fund and names several local Templar members involved.

The stationery is printed with a 10 pf Germania stamp and carries a 30 May, 1902 Stuttgart No. 3 postmark and a 6 June Jerusalem German Post arrival postmark (Steichele #232).

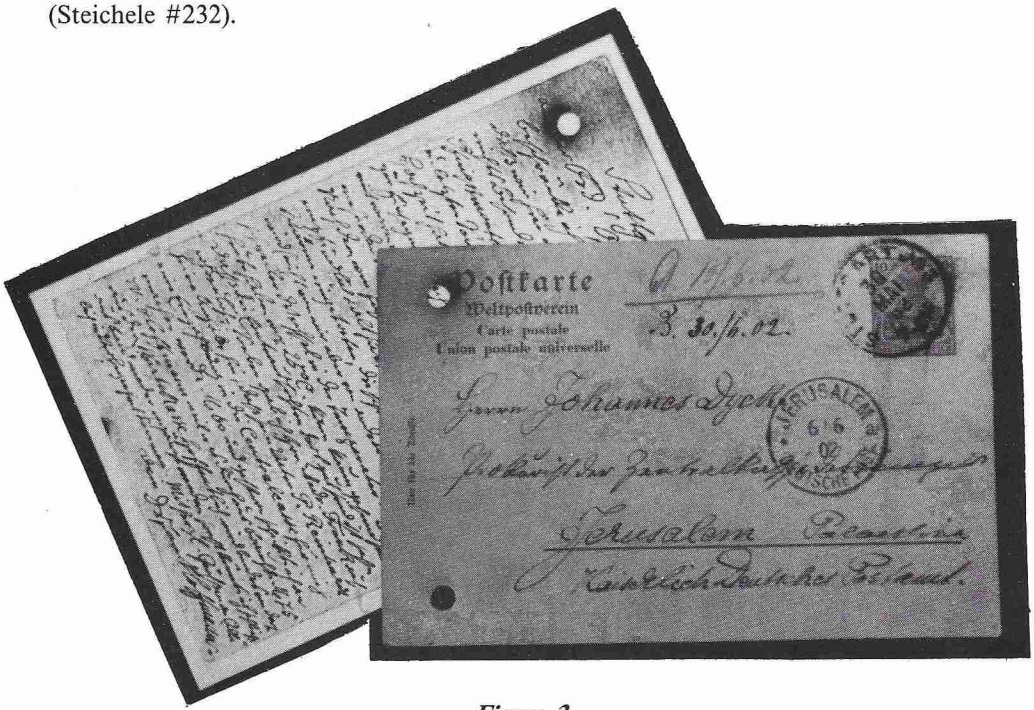

Figure 3

Families and Individuals

Figure 4 is a postal stationery card sent from Jaffa on the 1st March, 1900 to Gottlob Paulus, a pharmacist in Rephaim Colony, Jerusalem. The senders, Templar friends from the Jaffa community, ask in return for a First Day postcard with the German Post postmark.

The German Post stationery with a 20 para overprint was cancelled with a Jaffa (Steichele #221) postmark dated 1st March, 1900. This was the first day of the German Post services in Jerusalem. The Jerusalem arrival postmark (Steichele #232) is dated 2nd March.

Figure 5 shows a cover sent to Dresden, Germany by Christian Eppinger, a member of the Templar community in Jerusalem. The cover carries 1 piaster & 3 mils London II stamps with Glassman-Sacher[4] #B24 (index C) postmarks dated 11 April, 1922.

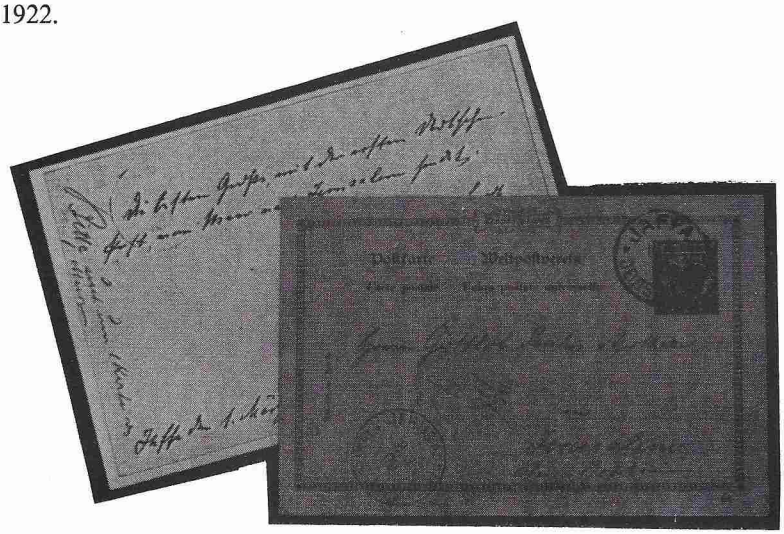

Figure 4

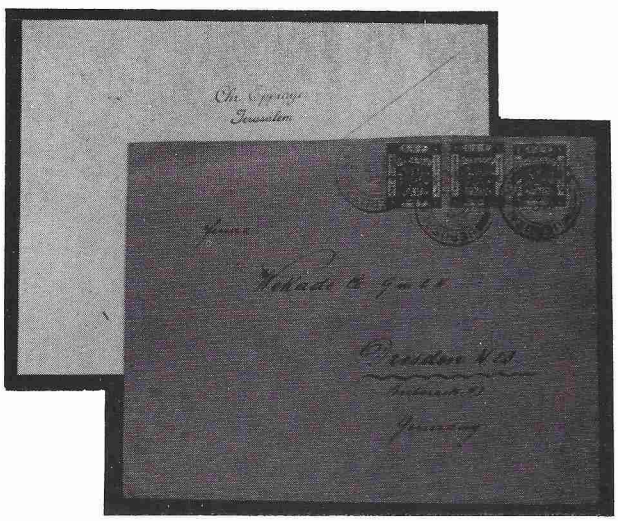

Figure 5

Banking and Tourism

Figure 6 is a private envelope of the DEUTCHE PALESTINA BANK in Jerusalem addressed to its branch in Jaffa. Many Templars were employed by this bank including Christopher Hoffmann, who was also a philatelist. The cover carries a 40 pf Germania stamp overprinted 2 piaster and cancelled by a Steichele #232 postmark dated June, 1904.

The postcard in Figure 7 was sent in 1904 from the FAST hotel in Jerusalem to Austria via the German Post services. The Fast family operated this important hotel

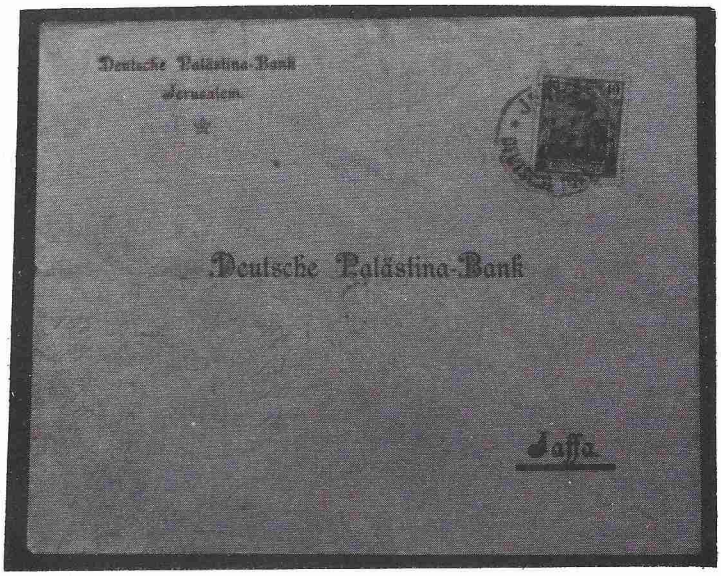

Figure 6

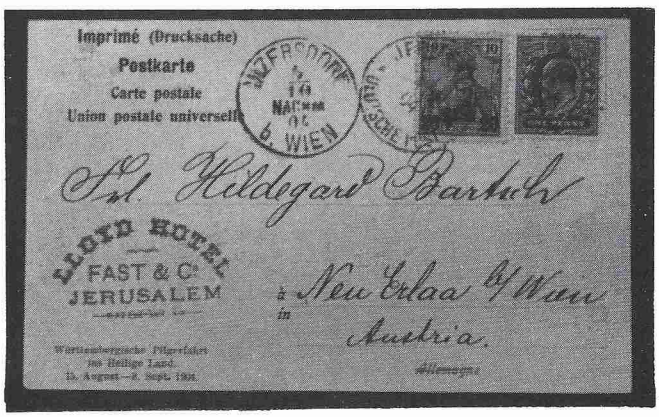

Figure 7

since the beginning of the 20th century up to WWII. The hotel served the Templers for community meetings. This specific postcard was printed for the Württemberg pilgrimage to the Holy Land (August–September, 1904). One can imagine that many Templars from that part of Germany joined this pilgrimage.

The postcard carries a 10pf Germania stamp overprinted 20 para and cancelled by a 4.9.1904 Jerusalem German postmark (Steichele #231). A one penny British stamp was added by mistake. A FAST hotel cachet, Steichele #803, was affixed on the front of the postcard as well as a Vienna arrival postmark.

Figure 8 shows the back of another FAST hotel postcard, sent in 1909 with the Turkish Post. The illustration shows the hotel in Jerusalem next to the Citadel.

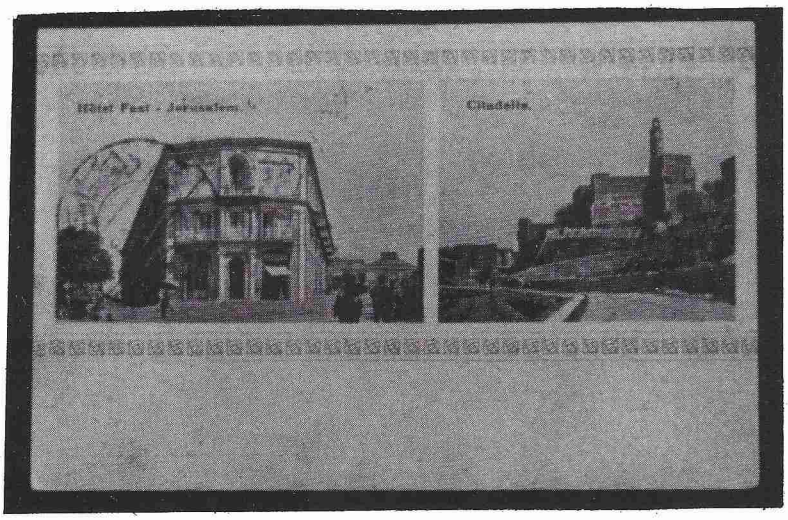

Figure 8

WWI Exile

The censored entire shown in Figure 9 was sent from the Palestine Internees Camp in Helouan, Egypt by J. Bacher, a Templar from Jerusalem, to the Spanish Consul in Jerusalem, acting as custodian to German property in Palestine (1917–1920). The Templars of the southern colonies were exiled by the British occupation authorities and only returned to their homes in 1920.

The entire was handstamped by the British P.O.W. central censorship office. The arrival Jerusalem postmark is Glassman-Sacher #A8 dated 12 July, 1919.

References

(1) Alex Carmel, The Settlement of the Germans in Palestine at the End of the Ottoman Era (in Hebrew).

(2) Paul Sauer, The Holy Land Called – the Story of the Temple Society.
(3) Anton Steichele, Handbook of Holy Land Philately – The Foreign Post Offices in Palestine 1840–1918, Vols. I, II.
(4) E. Glassman, M. Sacher, The Postmarks of Mandate Jerusalem.

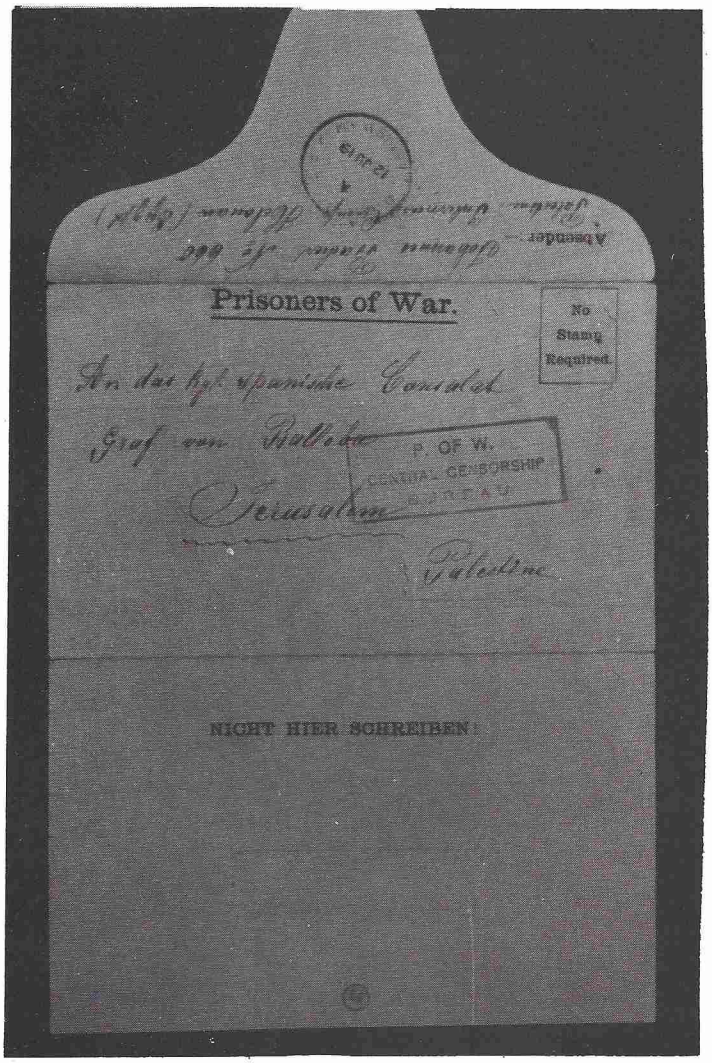

Figure 9

Q.S.L. Postcards from Palestine

Norman Gladstone, London

Of incidental interest to collectors of philatelic material from Palestine, I would like to illustrate four QSL postcards mailed from amateur radio enthusiasts, broadcasting to and from the British Army in Palestine during 1947–1948, and having call signs prefix of ZC6, the international radio call sign of British Overseas territories – this would of course include Palestine at that time.

For those members who are not familiar with amateur radio broadcasting, the QSL postcards are individually designed postcards which can provide details of contacts made by radio. These cards are often exchanged, usually via the various QSL bureaux, so that operators can have permanent records of particular contacts of interest, or so that they may apply for achievement certificates. By sending QSL cards in bulk via the Radio Society of Great Britain (RSGB) QSL Bureau, (one of the most comprehensive services of its type in the world) the cost is very much less than sending cards direct to the amateur concerned.

The abbreviations and code signs mentioned here are well known to all amateur radio enthusiasts and members of the Radio Society of Great Britain, and also to other members of nations who are affiliated to the International Amateur Radio Union*.

It is evident that these four QSL cards have the code signs that were the numbers allocated to different radio transmitters and receivers of the British Forces in Palestine. Similar radio frequencies and call signs of the Police Signals department in Palestine are also shown in the book "Shai – The Exploits of the Haganah Intelligence" by E. Dekel. On page 342 of this book is illustrated the Palestine Police Force Signals Route Map, which shows the signals code numbers which were allocated to Police coastguard stations and police launches. So it is evident that the ZC prefixes were used in Palestine during those years by the British Forces who played a major part in monitoring the whereabouts of the ships that brought in illegal immigrants into Palestine at that time.

Figure 10 illustrates the front and back of one of these cards with the call sign prefix ZC6DD assumed as coming from the 3rd Parachute Brigade in Palestine. Mailed on the 3rd July '47 on Radio G2MF, code sign for Great Britain, and the many

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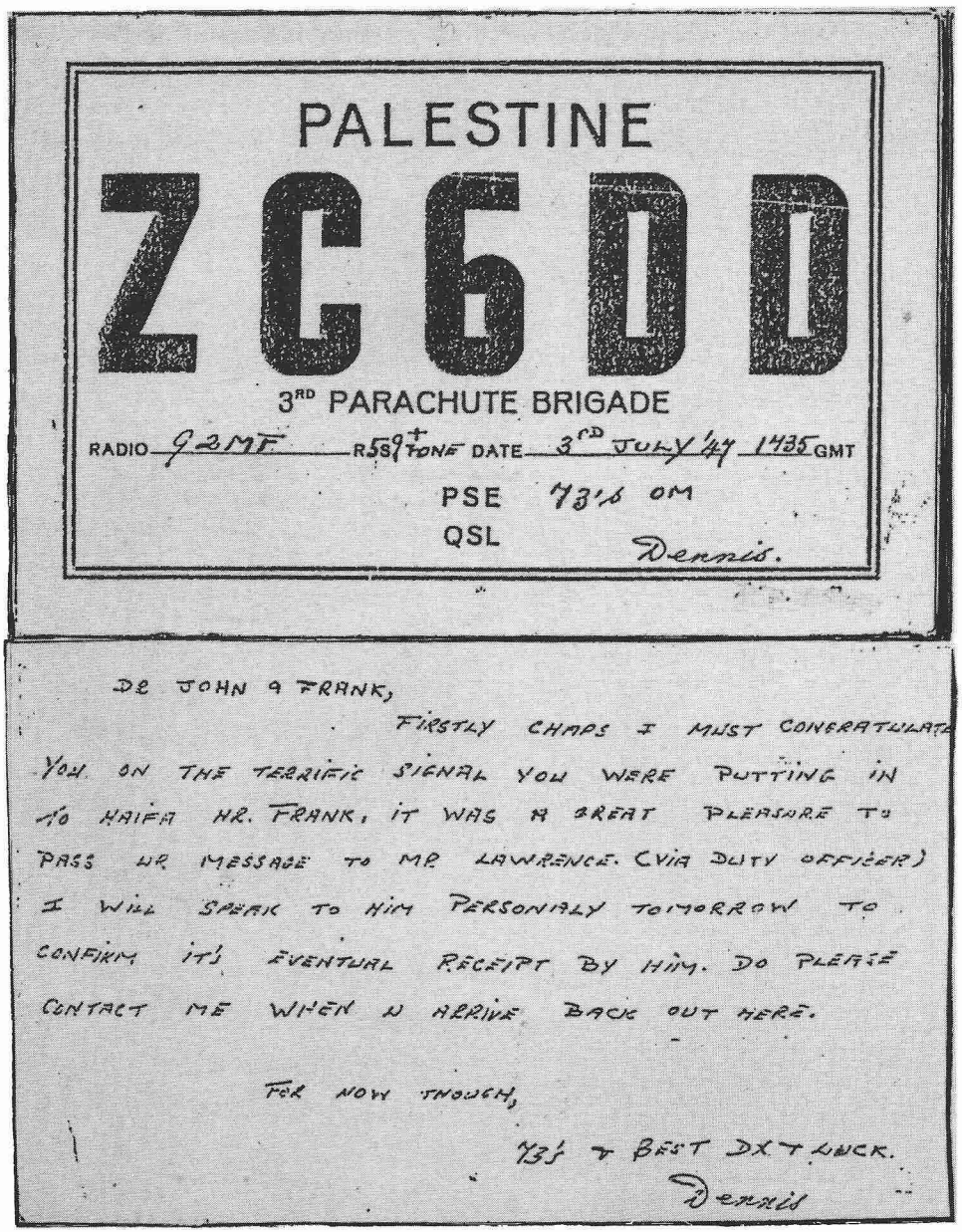
* All of these code signals, prefixes and the International "Q" signals with amateur call signs and abbreviations used are to be found in the very interesting publication entitled, "A Guide to Amateur Radio" by Pat Hawker, published by the Radio Society of Great Britain. My sincere thanks to this society for their kind gesture in letting me quote from their publications.

abbreviations are classed as such: PSE (Please), QSL (Give me acknowledgement of receipt), 73's (Best regards), OM (Old man).



PALESTINE

ZC6DD

3RD PARACHUTE BRIGADE

RADIO G2MF R5S9+ TONE DATE 3CD JULY '44 1435 GMT

PSE 73's OM

QSL Dennis.

DE JOHN 9 FRANK,

FIRSTLY CHAPS I MUST CONGRATULATE YOU ON THE TERRIFIC SIGNAL YOU WERE PUTTING IN TO HAIFA HR. FRANK, IT WAS A GREAT PLEASURE TO PASS UR MESSAGE TO MR LAWRENCE. (VIA DUTY OFFICER) I WILL SPEAK TO HIM PERSONALLY TOMORROW TO CONFIRM IT'S EVENTUAL RECEIPT BY HIM. DO PLEASE CONTACT ME WHEN U ARRIVE BACK OUT HERE.

FOR NOW THOUGH,

73's & BEST DX & LUCK.

Dennis

Figure 10

The following QSL card has the call sign of ZC6JJ (Fig. 11) and is addressed to the Amateur Radio station G2MF (at Dore, Sheffield, England) and mailed on the 9th Nov '47. The typed message reads: PSE (Please) QSL (Give acknowledgement of receipt) VIA "X" Branch, H.Q. British Troops in Palestine.

The George VI 1½d postage stamp has been cancelled with the circular handstamp of Field Post Office 172 (not clear) which was stationed in Palestine in 1947–1948.

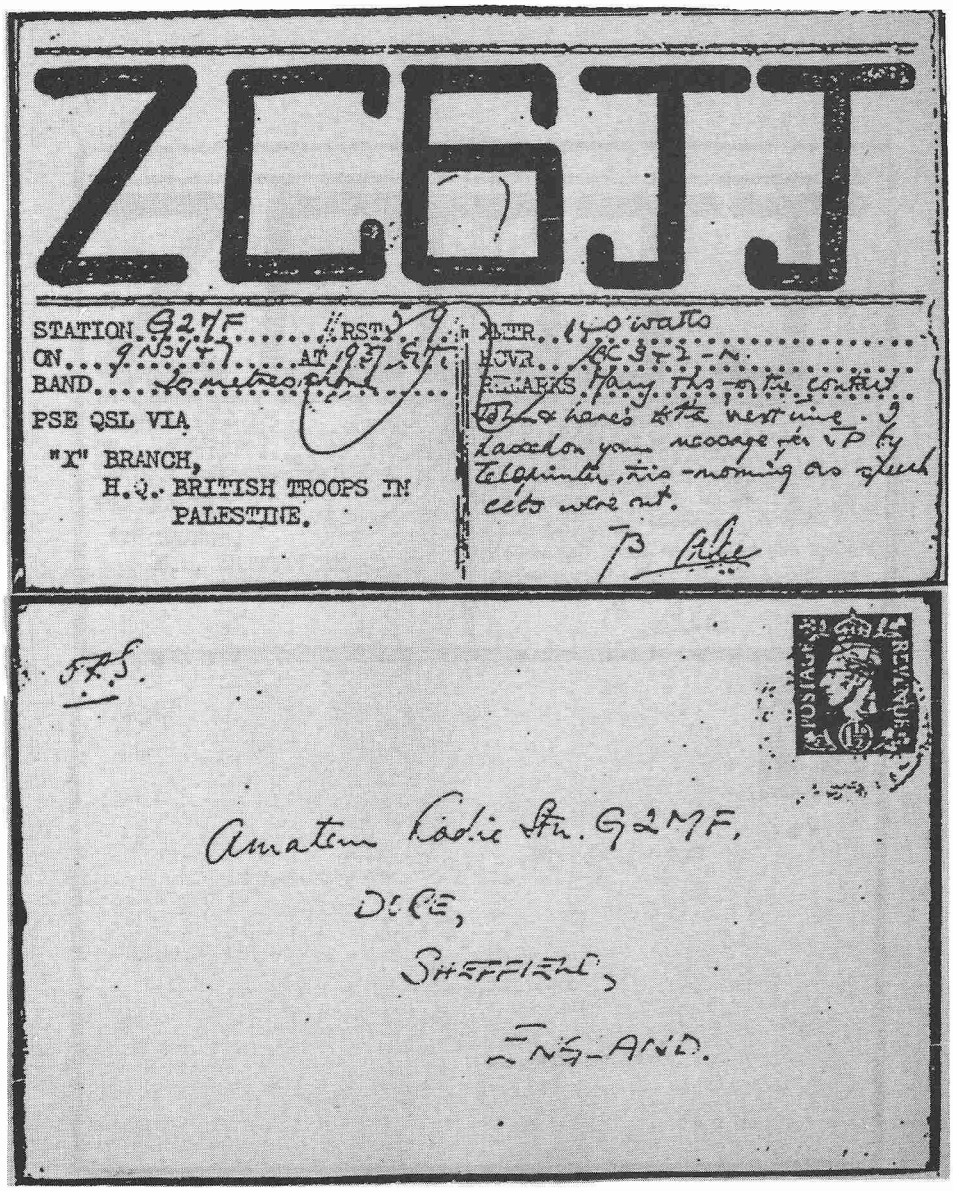


Figure 11

Figure 12 is a very interesting QSL postcard. Here the call sign is ZC6XY, and it shows a map of Palestine and other nearby territories. It gives the name of the radio enthusiast as John H. Swanson, American Consulate, Jerusalem, Palestine, and the initials QSL (Can you give me acknowledgement of receipt) and QTH (location). On the address side we have the following: Radio G2MF for Great Britain; UR (your) sgs (signals) QSA (what is the strength of my signals?... The strength of your signals is...); XMTR (Transmitter); Ant. (Antenna); RCVR (Receiver); and in script: try John for the fd (frequency doubler); QSO (Can you communicate with... direct or by relay?); Johnny, OP (operator). It also has in the lower left

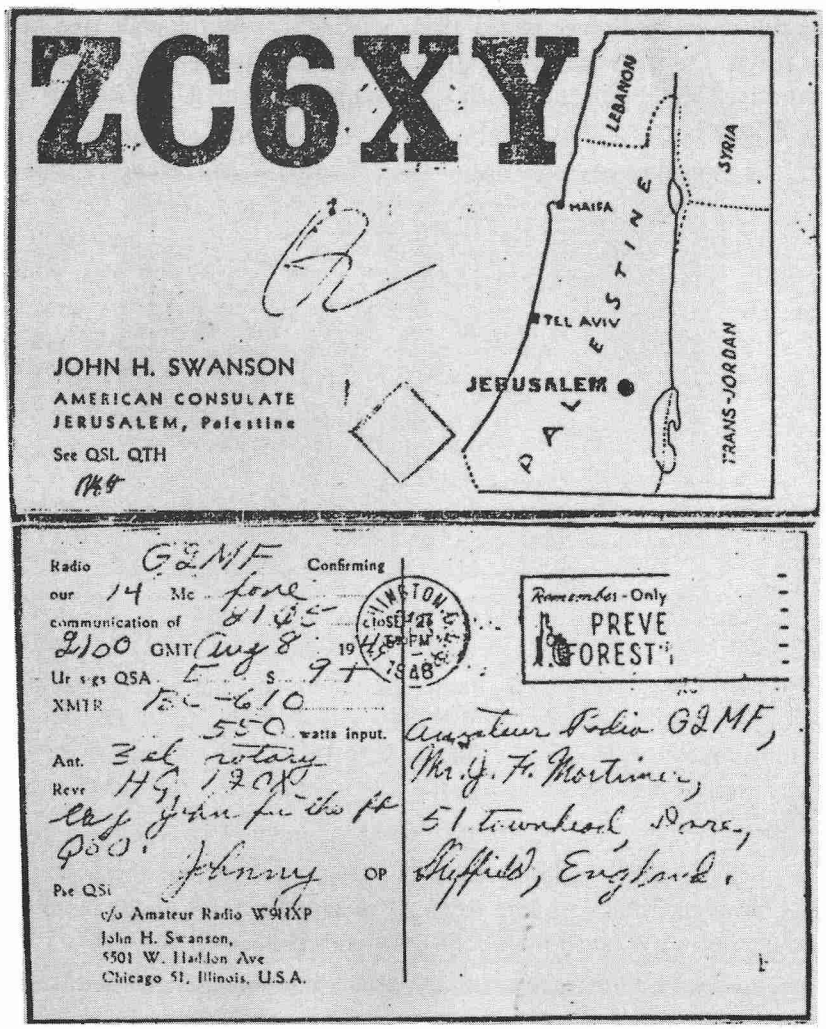


Figure 12

hand corner PSE (Please); QSL (Can you give me acknowledgement of receipt); and the address: c/o Amateur Radio W9HXP, John H. Swanson, 5501 W. Haddon Ave, Chicago 51, Illinois, U.S.A. The call sign prefix W9HXP is the International call signal for Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin in the U.S.A.

This postcard, addressed to Amateur Radio G2MF Mr J.F. Mortimer, 51 Townhead, Dore, Sheffield, England, is dated Aug 8, 1948. It also has the single circle postmark of Washington, D.C., Sep 27, 1948 (The postage stamp has been removed).

The QSL postcard shown in Figure 13 has the prefix of ZC6HB and under it the inituals R.S.G.B. (Radio Society of Great Britain) and R.S.E.A. (Radio Society, Europe, Africa). Amongst the details on this card are the codes: G3ARLex, meaning full radiating licence issued 1946; VQ4HJB, from the code sign of VPA-VSZ for British Overseas territories; QRA is from the code signs QAA-QZZ service abbreviations; 2ASSU is from the 2nd Air Support Signals Unit (Royal Corps of Signals), British Forces in Palestine*.

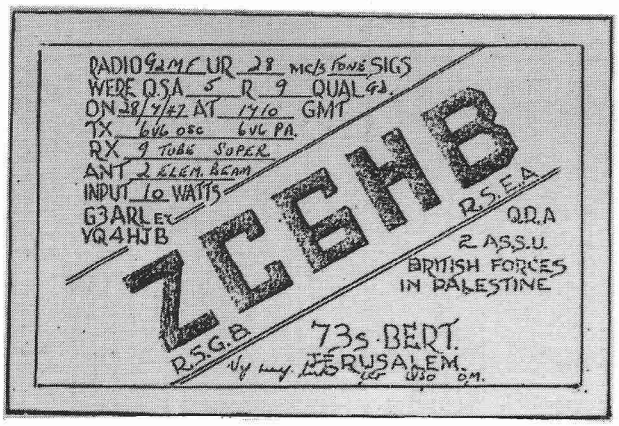


Figure 13

The reverse of this postcard is blank, only showing the word "postcard" in Hebrew and English.

The following call signs are also allocated to the British Overseas territories in addition to those mentioned above: ZBA-ZJZ; ZNA-ZOZ; ZQA-ZQZ and 2AA-2ZZ.

Sincere thanks are due to the publisher, T. Yosellof of London & New York, who gave me permission to quote from E. Dekel's book. Grateful thanks to Mr B.A. Remington, who loaned these four QSL postcards to this writer.

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* Cf. this author's book: "Post War Censorship to and from Palestine" where a full list of the service personnel serving in Palestine during those years is given.

Telegrams to Soldiers in the War of Independence, 1948/9

A. Zakai, Beer Sheva

Marvin Siegel published in HLPH #57–58 an article, describing a telegram sent to a soldier serving in an army unit during the War of Independence. He stated that it was not known to him whether other telegrams were received by soldiers during their service in the War of Independence.

I regret that Siegel was not aware that in my collection are there three telegrams, with three telegram forms and two telegram envelopes, all of which were sent to soldiers during the War of Independence.

Two of the telegrams were sent to members of Kibbutz Mishmar Hanegev and of Sa'ad. At this time all the settlements and their members in the isolated Negev were under the command and administration of the army and all the postal services were given to them by APO 10, stationed at Ruchama, close to the Negev Palmach brigade headquarters. The telegram to Kibbutz Mishmar Hanegev appeared together with the postmarks in HLPH #51, p. 546.

The third telegram was sent to me from Czechoslovakia when I served as reconnaissance officer in the Negev Palmach brigade. The telegram was delivered to me by KBA 279/1 (the brigade headquarters) at APO 1, stationed in Beer Sheva, on 26.12.1948. The envelope of this telegram was shown in HLPH #53–54, p. 710.

Further on the describtion of the three telegrams:

1. (Figs. 14, 15) "To Momos, Army Post 219/24 I.D.F.". Sent from a civilian

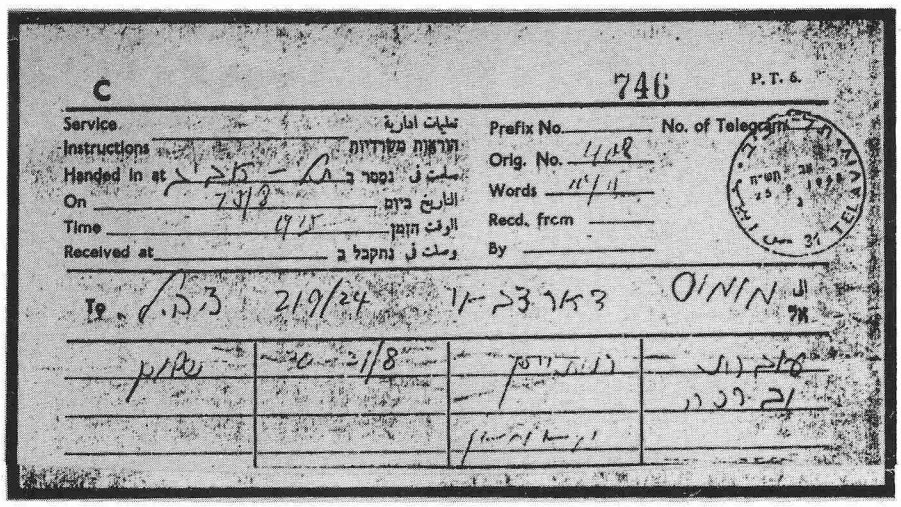


Fig. 14: Telegram to a soldier at army post 219/24, the number for Kibbutz Mishmar Hanegev during June/August 1948.

post office in Tel Aviv (34) on 25.8.1948, the postmark was struck on the Mandate telegram form P.T. #6 (Fig. 14). On the telegram envelope of the Mandate post (P.T. #11; Fig. 15) are the postmarks BAPO A, 25.VIII.48 and APO 10, 28.VIII.48.

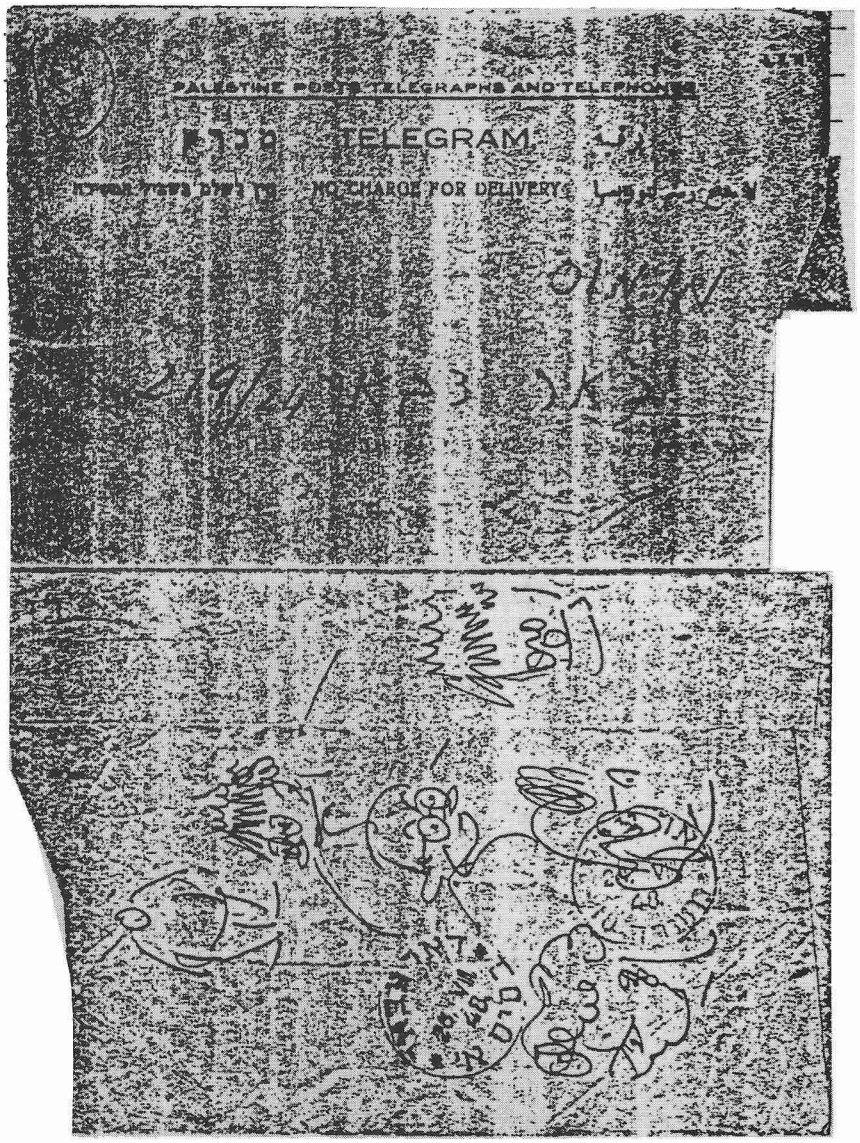


Fig. 15: Front and rear of the Mandatory telegram envelope P.T. #11 in which the above telegram was sent.

This telegram, after it was put in the envelope, was sent to the Negev by the regular army post service. On the night of the 22–23 August, after the Ruchama Airfield was opened, operation "Avak" started, and from then on all the mail items were put into a postal sack and the whole consignment was sent, together with a "Road Voucher" from BAPO A, which was stationed in Tel Aviv, to the Ekron (Tel Nof) Airfield – APO 9. These were then loaded into the aircraft and flown to Ruchama. Here it was transferred to APO 10, stationed next to the Negev Palmach brigade, and from there the mail was sent to the addressees in the army and the settlements. All the mail during this period was sent only by air because the whole Negev area was isolated from the northern part of Israel by the Egyptian army.

2. (Fig. 16) "To Eli Altschuler KBA 219/12 Defence Israel". This telegram was sent from the civilian post office "Tel Aviv 25" on 31.8.1948. KBA 219/12 was the number of Kibbutz Sa'ad during the period July–August 1948. There is no doubt that this telegram made the same way to the Negev as the above mentioned telegram to Mishmar Hanegev.

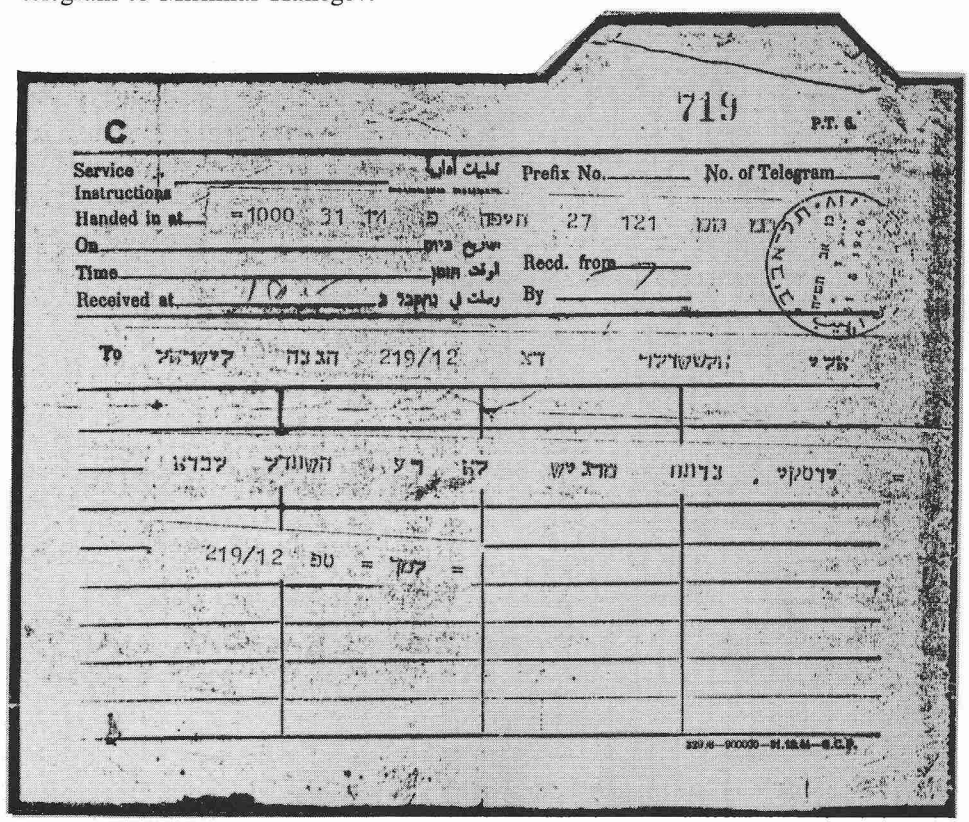


Fig. 16: Telegram to a soldier at army post 219/12, stationed in Kibbutz Sa'ad. The telegram originated from Haifa but as the Military Mail dispatch office, BAPO A, was in Tel Aviv it had to be routed via Tel Aviv.

3. (Fig. 17) "To Avi Sakai 84874, Doar Zwai 279/1 Zwa Israel". A telegram sent from Prague, Czechoslovakia. The telegram form with the cachet "Radio Telegraf Israel, 23 Dec 1948" was transferred the same day to the civilian post office "Tel Aviv 26" and then approved by the army censor T/16. From here it was sent

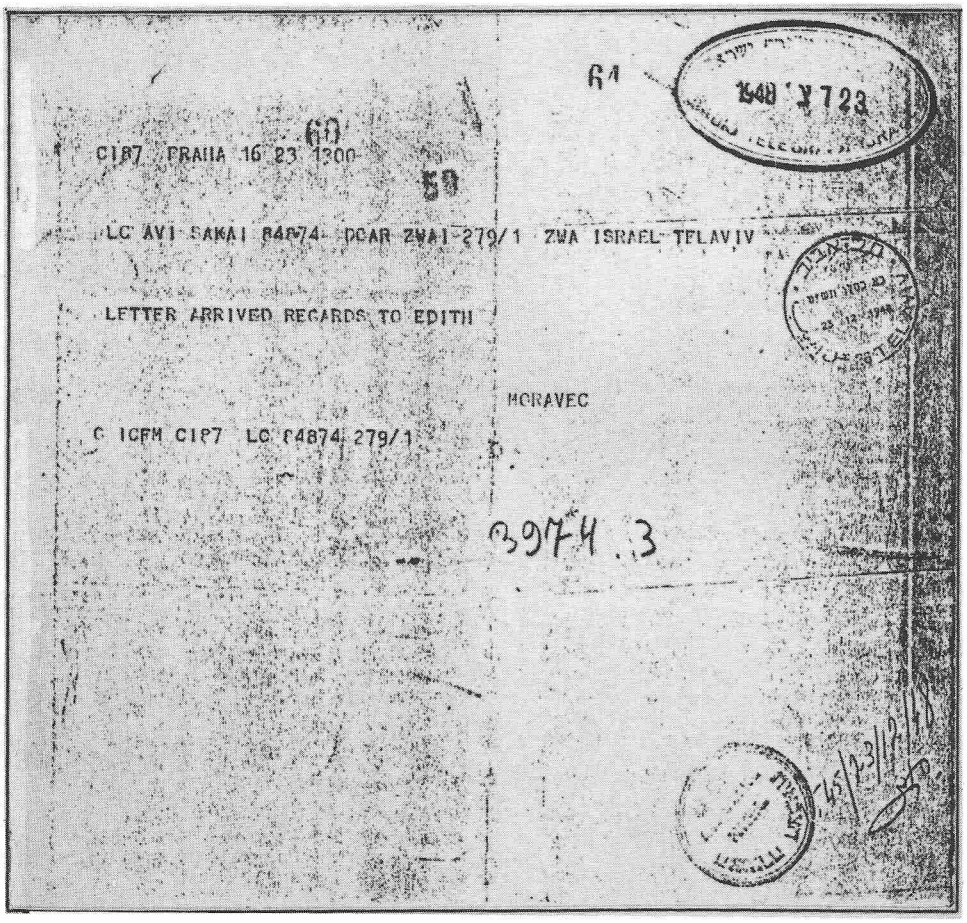


Fig. 17: A telegram from Prague to "Avi Sakai, 84874", Army Post 279/1, then stationed in Beer Sheva.

in a Mandatory telegram envelope (P.T. #11; Fig. 18) to the army base post office at Tel Aviv and received the postmark "BAPO A 24.12.1948". It was sent then further to the army post office in Beer Sheva and there received the arrival postmark "APO 1 26.12.1948". Here it was marked "intelligence" and was then delivered to the addressee (the writer of this article).

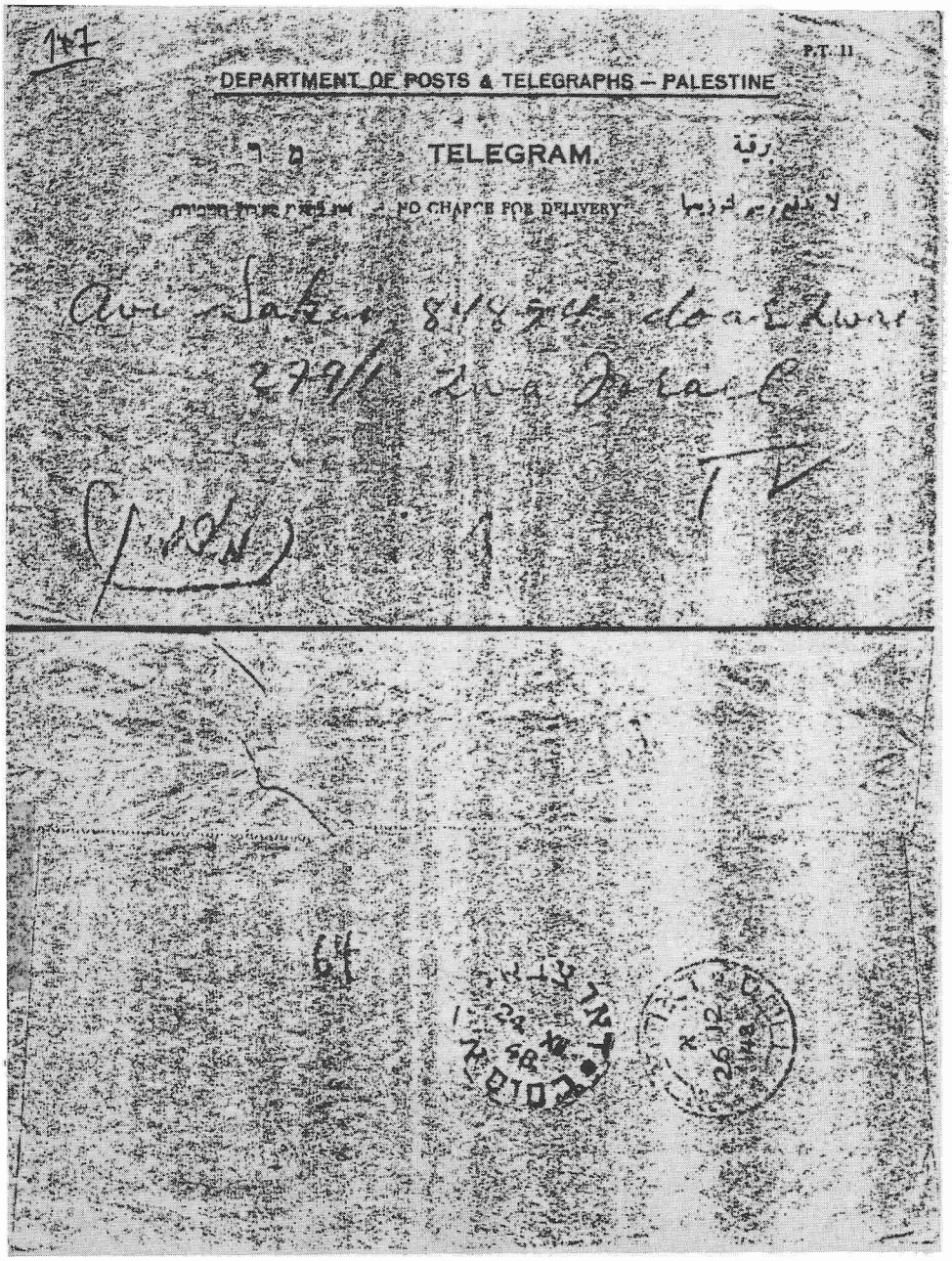


Fig. 18: The front and rear of the Mandatory telegram envelope P.T. #11 of the above telegram.

"Pas de Service"

L. Fisher, Ra'anana

During the British Mandate in Palestine, part of the Palestine-bound mail was routed through neighbouring Arab countries. When the British discontinued postal services in Palestine towards the end of their Mandate, Arab countries stopped service to Palestine. It was deliberately not renewed after the declaration of the State.

Since the establishment of Israel, some mail intended for Israel arrived in various Arab countries due to human errors. This mail was **not passed on to Israel** but was returned to the country of origin to be reforwarded correctly. A "Pas de Service" (No Service) handstamp was applied to mail handled in this way (Fig. 19).

When it eventually arrived in Israel, this mail was treated in a variety of ways, but

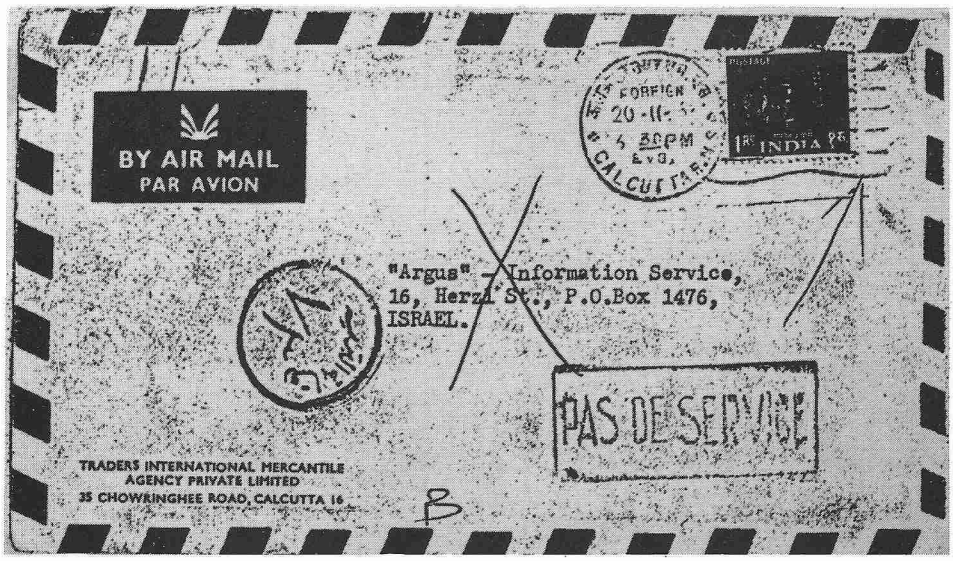


Fig. 19: Cover from India (20/11/64) inspected in Cairo, showing the Egyptian Military Censor and the "Pas de Service" handstamps. The letter eventually arrived in Israel on 8/3/65, four months later!

in general its past misadventure was ignored. In a few cases, a Hebrew handstamp was applied explaining the delay, *"This letter was held up in one of the Arab countries due to incorrect routing"* (Fig. 20). Sometimes an accompanying letter of apology from the Postmaster General was sent to the addressee (see Back Cover). This happened in particular with mail originally sent to Jerusalem, Jordan instead of to Jerusalem, Israel.

In many cases, the mail intended for Israel was inspected when it arrived in an Arab country before being returned to sender. It was often opened, censored and then resealed (Fig. 22). Mail handled in this manner would take several months

Fig. 20: Cover from Poland (13/3/59) inspected in Cairo showing the "Pas de Service via Le'Egypte" handstamp. It also shows the Hebrew handstamp "This letter was held up in one of the Arab countries due to incorrect routing" struck by the Israeli Post.

Fig. 22: Registered cover from Australia to Tel Aviv which was misrouted to Egypt where it was opened, censored and then resealed.

to return to its country of origin. Covers are known which both sides (Arab and Israeli) opened, censored and then resealed them (Fig. 23).

The worst mail-tampering offender was Egypt. Even before the end of the British Mandate, Palestine-bound mail bags, on planes landing in Cairo, were taken off the planes and the mail tampered with (Fig. 24). It was later returned to the sender.

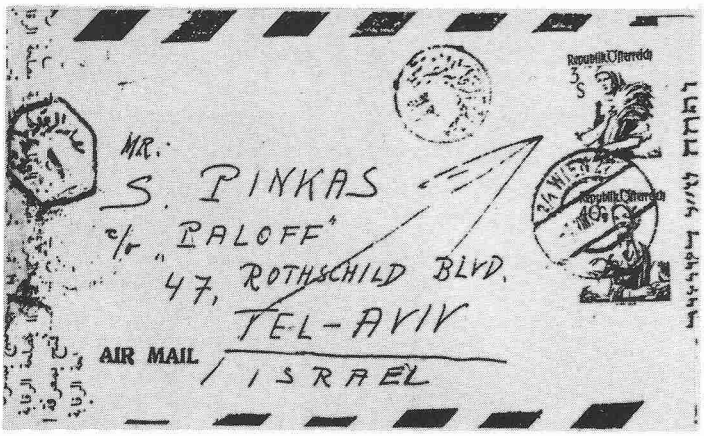


Fig. 23: Cover from Austria (1/8/55) to Tel Aviv which was opened, censored and then resealed by the Egyptian Military Censor (left sticker and mark) and the Israeli Military Censor (right sticker).

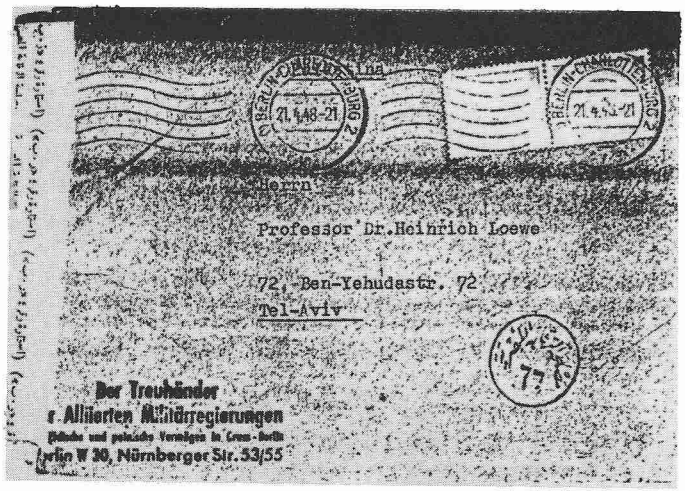


Fig. 24: Cover from Germany (21/4/48) to Tel Aviv, before the end of the British Mandate, intercepted in Cairo where it was opened, censored and then resealed, before being returned to sender.

In September 1950, the Egyptians took this practice to new heights. A TWA Tel Aviv–bound plane was forced down over Cairo. The mail bags were taken off the plane by the Egyptian Military for censoring. The plane was only released as a result of American threats. On the plane were 19 mail bags containing mail from the USA (circa 15/9/50) and reportedly from South America, Italy and France although none have been seen by this author. The mail was eventually returned to countries of origin for reforwarding but only after it had been opened, censored and resealed (Fig. 25). This was the only **known** case of this kind of inspection.

As a result of the War of Independence in 1948, Jerusalem was a divided city, half being under Jordanian jurisdiction. The mail route for the West Bank and Jordanian Jerusalem was via Amman. Many Postmasters erred and sent mail to Jerusalem, Jordan even when it was clearly marked Jerusalem, Israel (Figs. 26, 27).

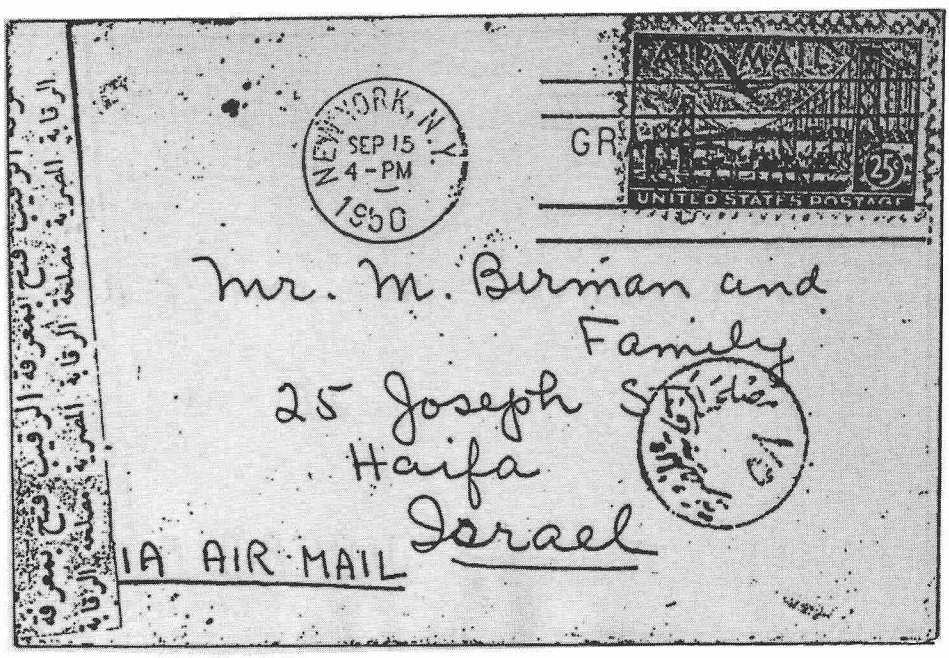


Fig. 25: Cover from the forced-down TWA flight.

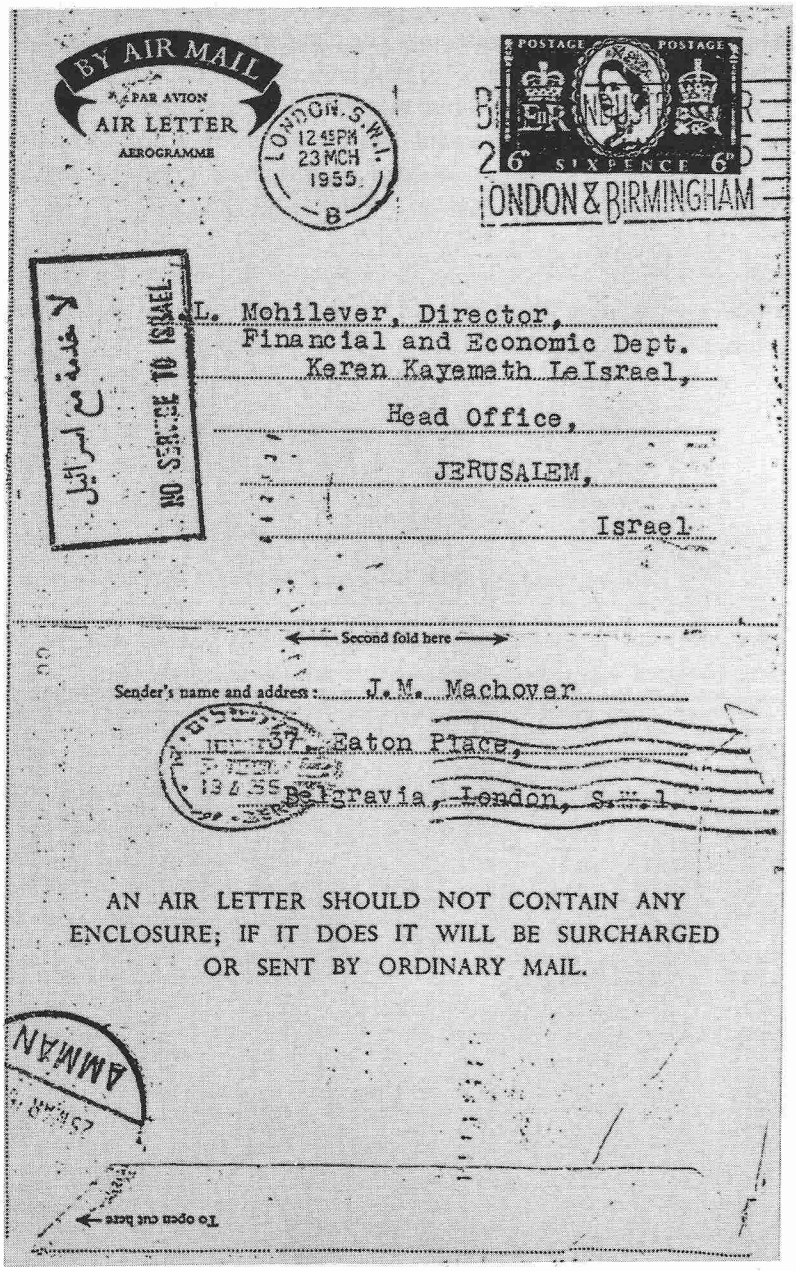


Fig. 26: Cover from London (23/3/55) to the JNF in Jerusalem which went to Amman for transit to Jerusalem, Jordan. There it received the bilingual (Arabic/English) handstamp "No Service to Israel".

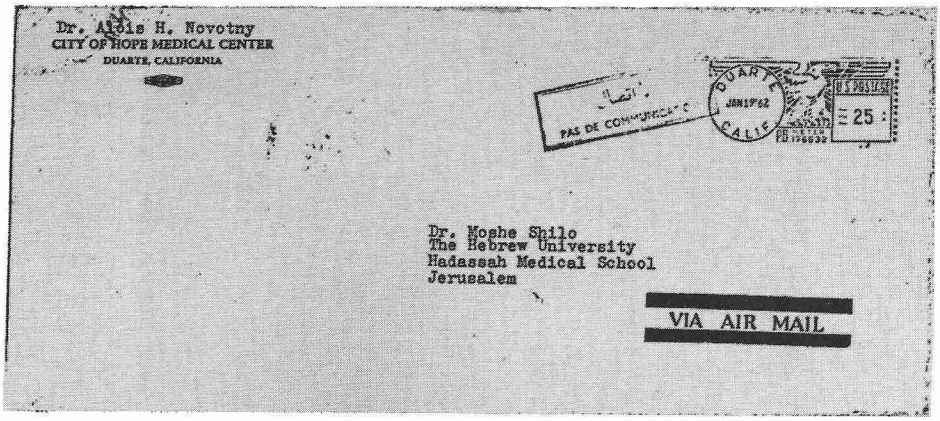


Fig. 27: Cover from California (19/1/62) to the Hebrew University in Jerusalem which went to Jordan in error, where it received the bilingual (Arabic/French) handstamp "No Communications".

The mail route for Jordan-bound mail from many countries was Beirut-Amman and thus much mail sent to Jordan in error landed up in Beirut (Fig. 28). Other Israel-bound mail also ended up in Lebanon (Fig. 29).

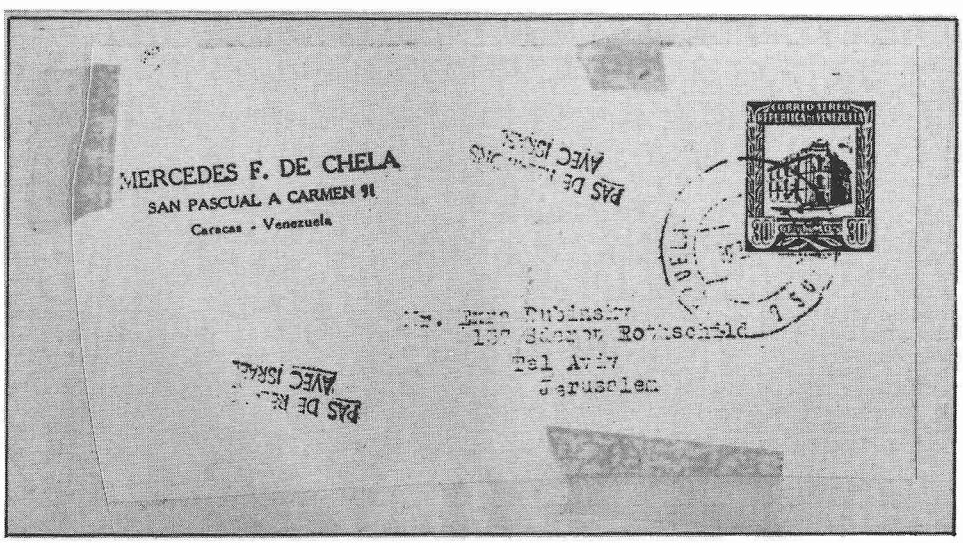


Fig. 28: Cover from Venezuela (22/5/56) to Jerusalem which went to Lebanon in error where it received the French handstamp "No Relations with Israel".

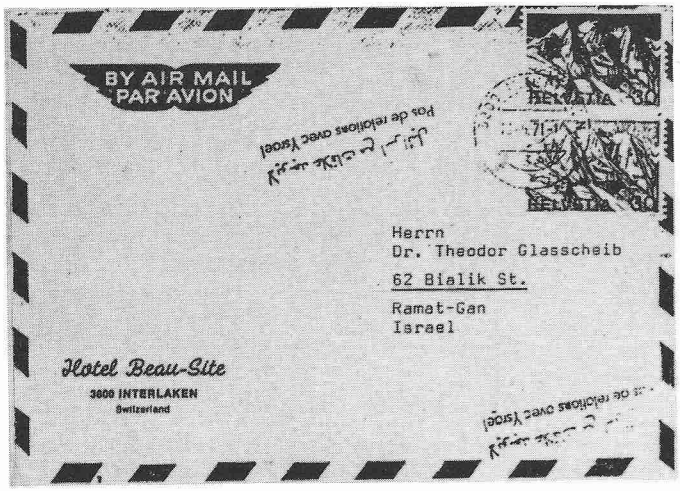


Fig. 29: Cover from Switzerland (13/5/71) which went in error to Lebanon where it received the linear bilingual (Arabic/French) handstamp "No Relations with Israel".

After the Six Day War in 1967, Jerusalem was reunited, under Israeli jurisdiction, but the international community continued to send East Jerusalem and West Bank bound mail to Amman for transfer. The Jordanians could not complete the delivery, so they handstamped all mail, *"Return to Sender / Delivery prevented by enemy occupation of Jordad* (sic.) *territory"* (Fig. 30), and then returned it to

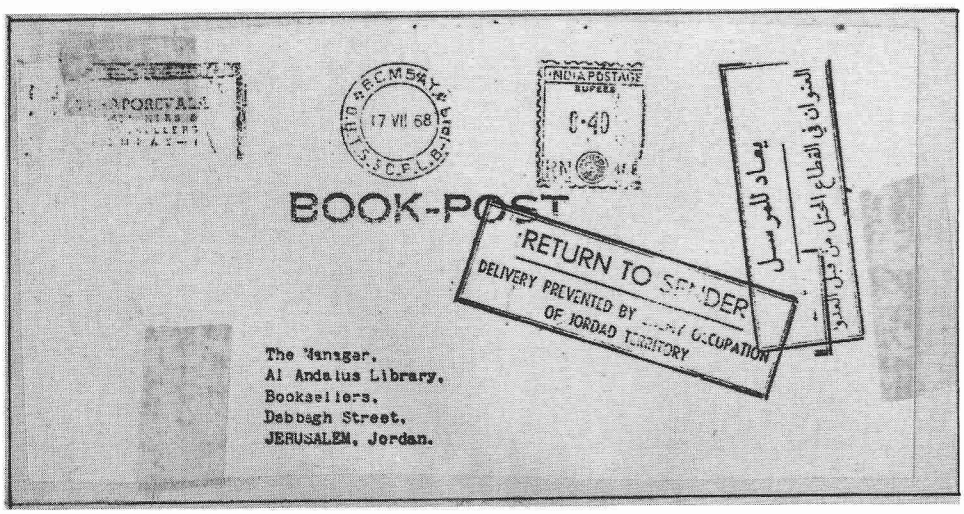


Fig. 30: Cover from India to Jerusalem, Jordan (17/7/68) showing the "Return to Sender / Delivery prevented by enemy occupation of Jordad territory" handstamp.

the country of origin. When the mail arrived in Israel, it often received a bilingual (Hebrew/Arabic) mimeographed label stating *"This letter has just arrived in Israel after being first incorrectly routed. In order to prevent similar delays in the future please notify the sender of the need to specify –* ***Jerusalem, Israel"*** (Fig. 31).

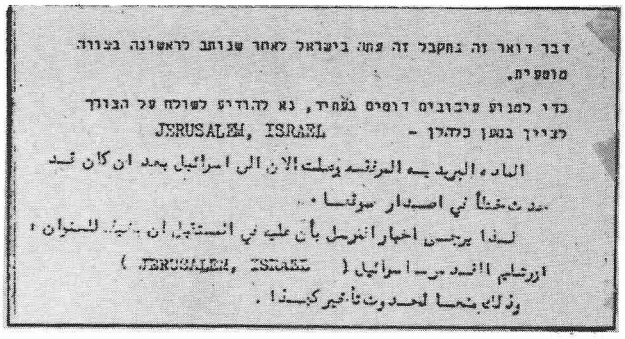


Fig. 31: Mimeographed label from the Postmaster General.

Iran was one of the few Middle Eastern countries that had open diplomatic relations with Israel, and handled mail in both directions. When the Ayatollah Homeini came to power in 1979, all ties were broken off and mail between the countries was no longer handled. Mail intended for Israel, which arrived in Iran, was handstamped, *"There is no postal relations between Iran and Israel"* (Fig. 32). No examples have been found in which mail for Israel was tampered with by Iran.

Fig. 32: Cover from New York misrouted to Iran where it received the handstamp "There is no postal relations between Iran and Israel".

Often no "Pas de Service" type handstamp was applied to the mail and the only evidence of this kind of action was a hand written notation, for example from iraq (Fig. 33), or a postmark from an Arab country who had no relations with Israel (Fig. 34).

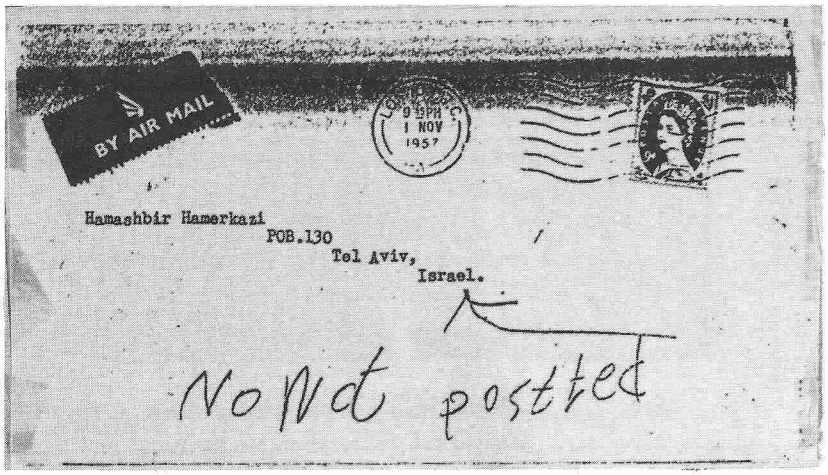


Fig. 33: Cover from London (1/11/57) which went in error to Iraq. Note the funny hand written notation "No Not Postted".

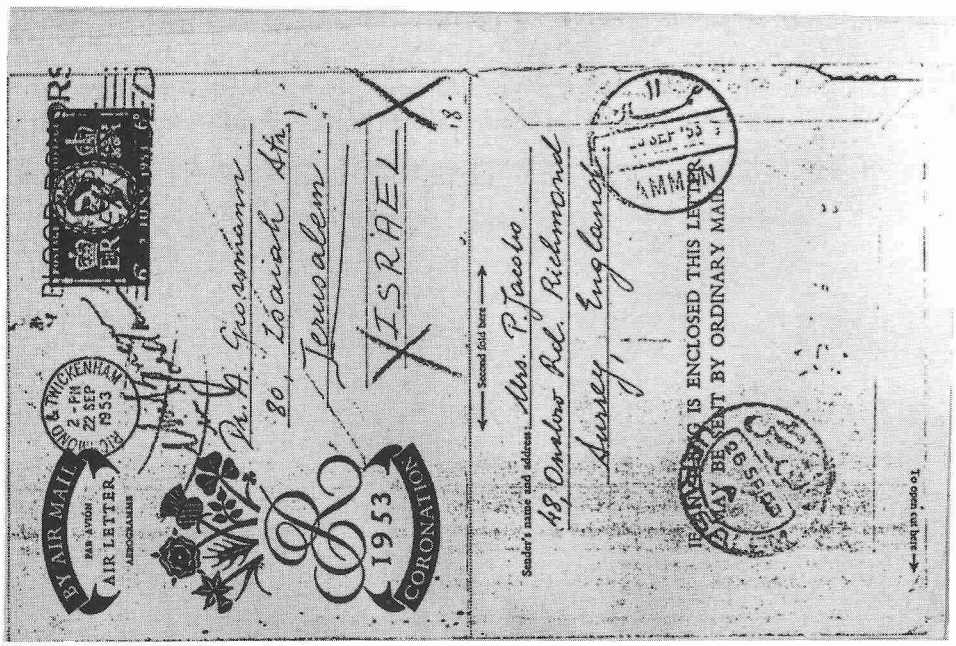


Fig. 34: Air letter from England (22/9/53) with postmarks from Amman and Jordanian Jerusalem, where it went in error.

Figure 35 shows a cover with an unknown bilingual (Arabic/French) handstamp *"No Postal Service with Israel – Return to Origin"*. Due to the lack of a postmark of the transit country, there is no way to ascertain its identity. There are other

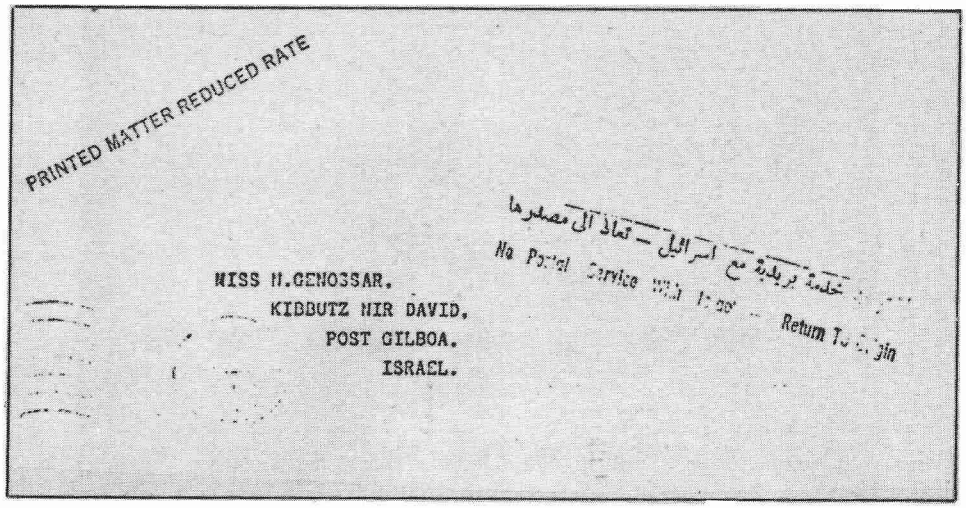


Fig. 35: Cover from England (1961) to Israel showing an unknown handstamp "No Postal Service with Israel – Return to Origin".

inexplicable items such as the registered cover shown in Figure 36, from Hong Kong to Israel, which went in error to Lebanon and Cairo. What makes this cover different is the censor handstamp on face which is a Jordanian censor mark. How and why did this cover land in Jordan?

The "Pas de Service" type handling of mail is known on mail routed through Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Iran and Iraq. It is possible that other countries in the Middle East which received Israeli-bound mail returned it to the country of origin instead of redirecting it, but there is no evidence yet to support this.

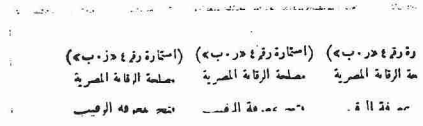
To summarize, the following cachets have been seen by the author on "Pas de Service" covers:

a) Egyptian Military Censor handstamp
b) Egyptian "Opened by Military Censor" label used to reseal mail
c) Egyptian handstamp
d) Seldom seen Egyptian handstamp
e) Iranian handstamp post 1979
f) Jordanian handstamp
g) Jordanian handstamp
h) Jordanian English handstamp 1967–9

Fig. 36: Cover from Hong Kong, which went in error to Cairo and Lebanon, with a Jordanian censor handstamp on face.

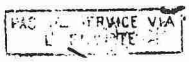
i) Jordanian Arabic handstamp 1967–9
j) Lebanese handstamp
k) Lebanese handstamp
l) Lebanese handstamp
m) Israeli handstamp (seen as cachet or label)

(a)



(b)

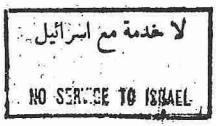
(c)



(d)

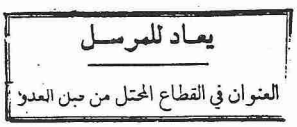
(e)

(f)



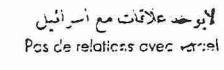
(g)

(h)

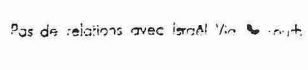


(i)

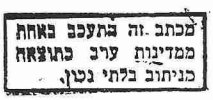
(j)



(k)



(l)



(m)

Last Day of Israeli Postmarks in the Gaza Strip
The (almost) Complete Picture

Gad S. Sheaffer, Haifa

Today, after the complete discontinuation of Israeli postal services in the Gaza Strip, it seems the right time to summarize the cessation of the Israel Post in the Gaza Strip, and to try to provide a full picture.

This write-up will show that the postmarks officially taken out of service on May 17th, 1994, according the Notice to the Public 37/94, may have comprised the majority of the postmarks in **active** use, but a significant number of additional postmarks were never officially taken out of service. Furthermore, they were physically in Gaza, at the office of the manager of postal services, at the last day of service, as the cancellations shown in Figure 37 demonstrate.

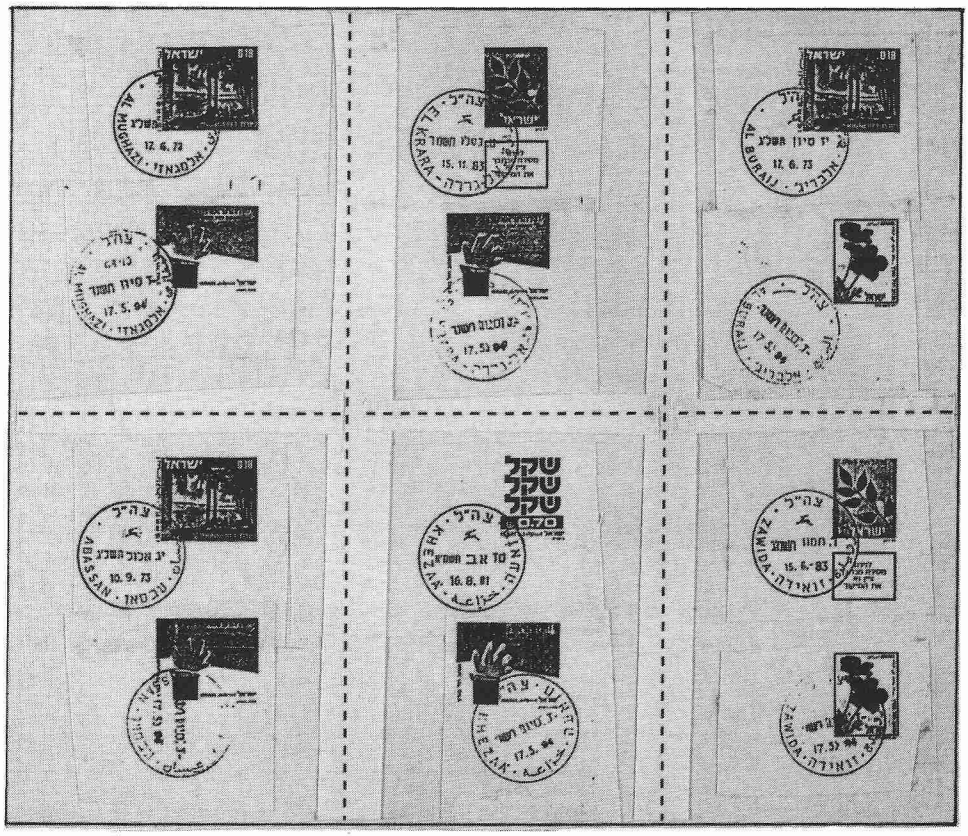


Fig. 37: First and last day cancellations of the postmarks in group 1 that were taken out of service, transferred to the Philatelic Service, and then returned to Gaza before May 17th.

The postmarks missing both from the official announcement as well as from the account provided by Josef Wallach in a previous article[1], can be classed into a number of groups:

Group 1: Postmarks taken out of active service without any official announcement, probably because of the Intifada. Most were kept in the Philatelic Service (marked with * in Table 1 below) where they lay in a drawer until about a month before the last day of service. Figure 38 shows trial strikes of these postmarks at the Philatelic Service.

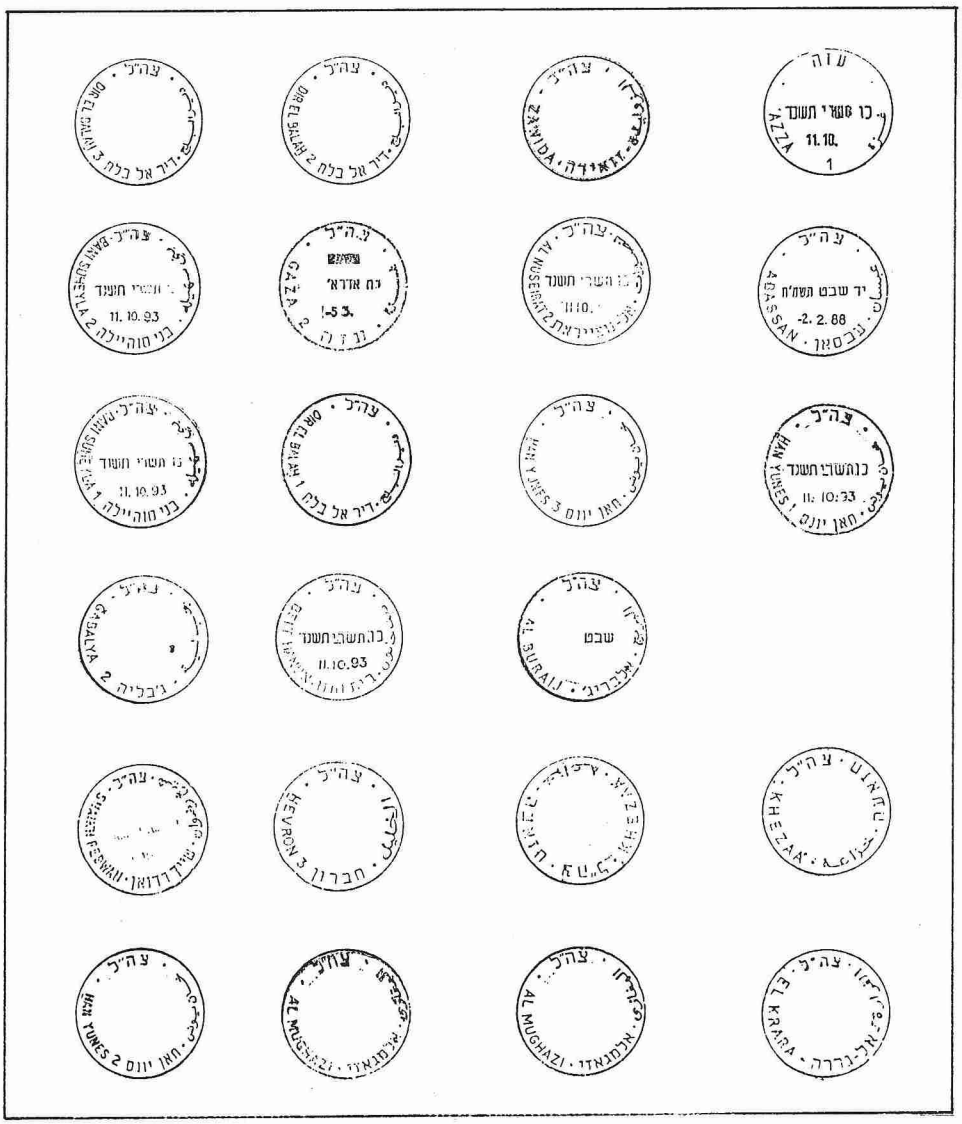


Fig. 38: Trial strikes of postmarks at the Philatelic Service in April 1994.

About a month or two before the last date, these postmarks were sent back to Gaza, so that interested collectors could have last day cancellations of them. All but two (ḤAN YUNES 2 snd DIR EL BALAḤ 3) were available on May 1994, and their first and last day cancellations are shown in Figure 37.

Table 1: Postmarks unofficially taken out of service on 17.5.94

Postmark		Number[2]	First Day	Last Day	Actual Last Day
Gaza 6	עזה 6	435/11	12.4.73	17.5.94	11.10.93(?)
Gaza 7	עזה 7	435/12	7.6.73	?	?
*Al Mughazi	אל־מוגאזי	26/1	17.6.73	17.5.94	?
*Al Buraij	אלבורייג'	20/1	17.6.73	17.5.94	?
*El Krara	אל גררה	21/1	15.11.83	17.5.94	?
*Zawida	זואידה	224/1	15.6.83	17.5.94	?
*Khezaa'	חזאעה	240/1	16.8.81	17.5.94	?
*Abassan	עבסאן	433/1	10.9.73	17.5.94	2.2.88?
*Han Yunes 2	חאן יונס 2	232/4	20.7.67	?	11.10.93
*Dir el Balaḥ 3	דיר אל בלח 3	201/5	20.7.67	?	11.10.93

Gaza 6 and Gaza 7 were probably not returned to the Philatelic Service (as evident from their non-appearance in Figure 38). Gaza 6 probably remained in Gaza, and a last day cancellation exists (Fig. 39). The strike shown in the illustration has a very striking and interesting error. The Hebrew date כ"ו תשרי תשנ"ד is of the 11.10.93 (which apparently was its **actual** last day of use), and was not updated, while the general date was only partly updated to 17.5.**93**, the year left at 93 instead of 94. Gaza 7 was lost at some unknown date.

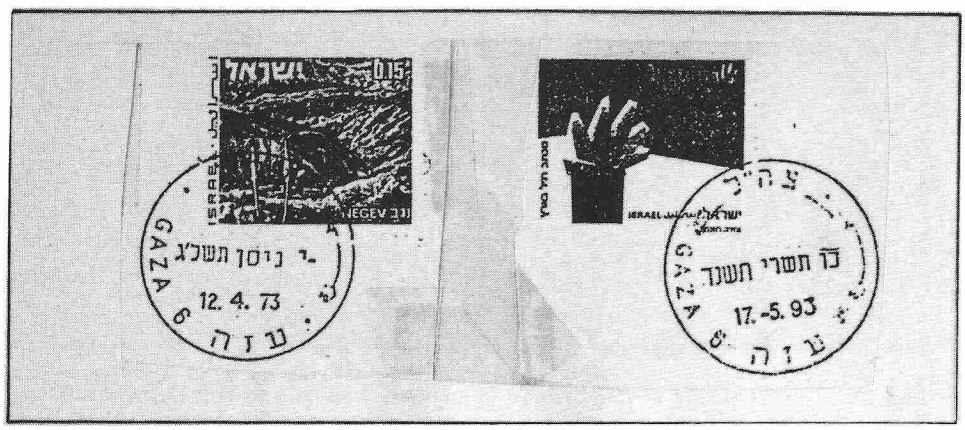


Fig. 39: First (12.4.73) and last (17.5.93 – error in the year 94) day cancellations of the postmark Gaza 6.

The Han Yunes mark existed in Han Yunes in October 1993 (Fig. 40), and was probably returned to the Philatelic Service when KHAN YUNIS 3 was introduced on 12.10.93. It stayed there in a drawer up to April, 1994, and got lost someplace on its way back to Gaza. No last day cancellation of this postmark is known.

Group 2: On the 12.10.93 a number of postmarks were replaced in the Gaza strip. The change was announced in the Notice to the Public No 91/93, and had a number of strange aspects. First and foremost, at that time it was already clear that Israel would cease postal services to the Gaza strip. Due to various delays in the talks with the Palestinians, the last day of postal services in Gaza was actually seven months later, but in October, 1993, most would have assumed that Autonomy is a matter of just a month or two away. Indeed, the first Notice to the Public about the last day in Gaza – 119/93, appeared only two months later, on December 13th. Due to the above, it was an odd time to overhaul to whole body of postmarks in the Gaza Strip.

Even stranger was the process of replacing the postmarks, as demonstrated by the examples below. New numbers were introduced with a total disregard to the numbers of the postmarks in use at that time. Also, both the English and Hebrew transliterations of most place names was changed, without the fact being reflected in the Public Notice.

DEIR EL BALAH 2 (2 דיר אל-בלח)* was introduced, ostensibly as a replacement to DIR EL BALAḤ 1 (1 דיר אל-בלח), despite the fact that DIR EL BALAḤ 2 (דיר

Fig. 40: HAN YUNES 2: the trial cancellation done in the Philatelic Service in April 1994, a probable actual last day cancellation done in Han Yunes on 11.10.93, and the first day cancellation.

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* DEIR instead of DIR, "2 דיר אל-בלח" at the top (with a hyphen) instead of at the bottom, etc.

2 אל-בלח) was active at that time (Fig. 41). Indeed, it would seem that this is the postmark that should have been replaced in the first place, as two postmarks of the same number are typically not used simultaneously in the same place.

Fig. 41: First and last day cancellations of DIR EL BALAḤ 1 and 2

The new postmark replaced in effect not one but **three** postmarks – DIR EL BALAḤ 1 (officially), 2 (being of the same number) and DIR EL BALAḤ 3 (דיר 3 אל-בלח). The last postmark was sent back to the Philatelic Service, as can be seen in the upper left corner of Figure 38. The actual last day of service of both DIR EL BALAḤ 2 and 3 (דיר אל בלח 2 ו3) is probably 11.10.93. The "official" last day could be set at 17.5.94, as that is the only date after which these postmarks could be guaranteed not to be in use, but both were not in Gaza on that day.

BANI SUHEILA 2 (בני סהילה 2) was introduced as the official replacement to the BANI SUHEYLA 1 (בני סוהילה 1), in effect replacing not one but two postmarks – BANI SUHEYLA 1 and 2 (Fig. 42). The last (unofficial) day of BANI SUHEYLA 2 (בני סוהילה 2) is therefore 11.10.93.

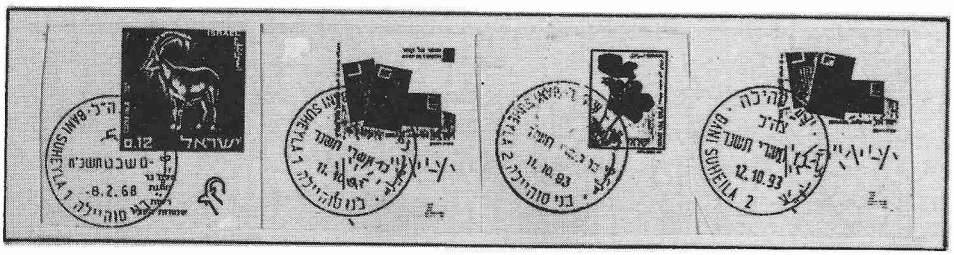

Fig. 42: Last day cancellations of BANI SUHEYLA 1 (also first day) and 2, and the first day of BANI SUHEILA 2.

Table 2: Summary of postmarks unofficially taken out of service on 11.10.93

Postmark Unofficially Replaced	Number	Replaced by	Number
Dir el Balaḥ 2 (דיר אל בלח 2)	201/4	Deir el Balah 2 (דיר אל־בלח 2)	201/6
Bani Suheyla 2 (בני סוהילה 2)	88/2	Bani Suheila 2 (בני סהילה 2)	88/2
Gabalya 2 (גבליה 2)	102/2	Jabaliya 2 (גבליה 2) – (Fig. 43)	102/3
Al Nuseirat 2 (אל־נוצייראת 2)	408A/2	Nuseirat 2 (נצירת 2) – (Fig. 44)	408A/3
Ḥan Yunes 3 (חאן יוניס 3)	232/5	Khan Yunis 3 (חן יוניס 3) – (Fig. 45)	232/6

The whole replacement process of the postmarks on 12.10.93 seems to indicate that the postal authority in charge of replacing postmarks had very little knowledge of the actual situation in the field. This impression is strengthened further by the Notice to the Public No 119/93, announcing the last day of Israeli service in Gaza.

This notice failed to mention 12 postmarks still then officially in use – all of the postmarks in Table 1 plus two others. It also erroneously announced the last day of JABALIYA 1 when only two months earlier this postmark was replaced by JABALIYA 2. Similarly it announced the last days of 'AZZA 2 and NUSEIRAT 1, which were also replaced two months earlier by 'AZZA 10 and NUSEIRAT 2 respectively.

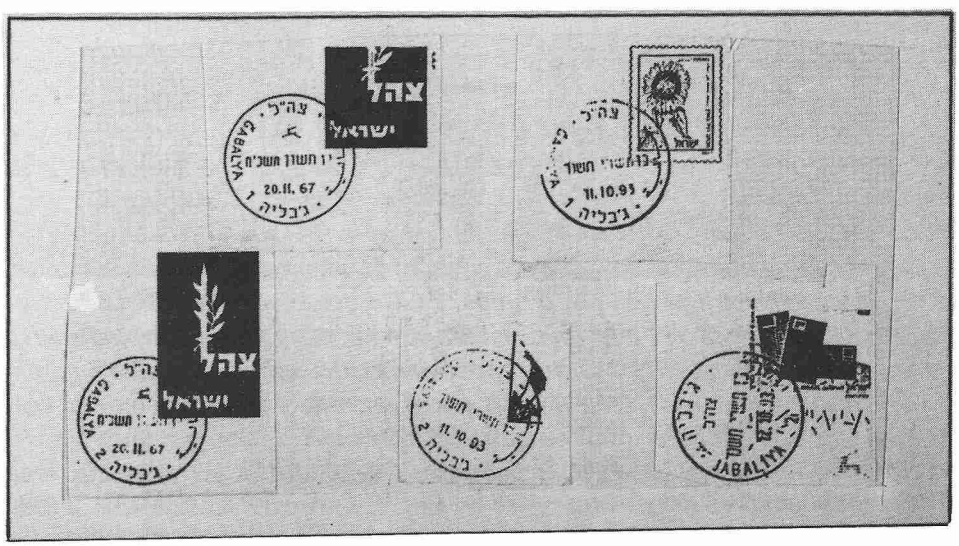

Fig. 43: The first and last day cancellations of GABALYA 1 and 2, as well as the first day of JABALIYA 2. JABALIYA 2 replaced both GABALYA 1 (officially) and GABALYA 2 (unofficially).

Fig. 44: NUSEIRAT 2 (נצירת 2) replaced both AL NUSEIRAT (אל־נוצייראת 1) (officially) and AL NUSEIRAT 2 (אל־נוצייראת 2) (unofficially).

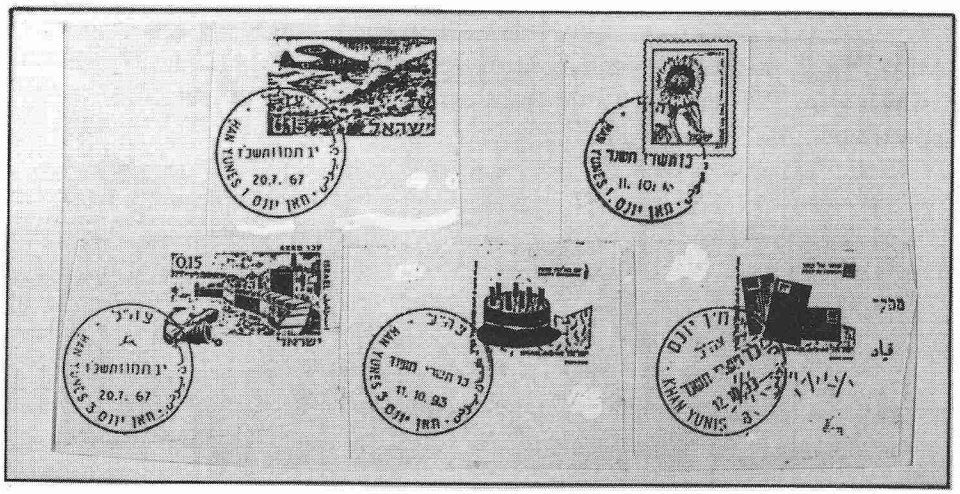

Fig. 45: KHAN YUNIS 3 (חן יונים 3) replaced ḤAN YUNES 1 (חאן יונים 1) (officially), ḤAN YUNES 3 (חאן יונים 3) (unofficially) and probably also ḤAN YUNES 2 (see Figure 40).

Following letters of concerned collectors (the author among them), the Postal Authority published a new notice to the public – 37/94. In this new notice, the above three errors were corrected. Also added in the new notice are two out of the 12 postmarks missing in the previous notice – 'AZZA 9, introduced on the 12.10.93 and RAFIAH 3.

Group 3: As can be seen in Figure 46, the last day cancellation of RAFIAH 2 is very different from the first day cancellation. Sometime between the first day (23.7.67) and the last day (17.5.94) the RAFIAḤ 2 postmark (Type C4 in Nachtigal's catalog – number 534/2) was replaced with RAFIAH 2 (Type C14 in the catalog – number 534/5) without any official announcement.

Fig. 46: First day cancellation of RAFIAḤ 2 (534/2) and last day cancellation of RAFIAH 2 (534/5) – 17.5.94.

Summary and additional comments

Unlike the 1956 occupation of the Gaza Strip, the occupation between 1967 and 1994 was long enough for a significant amount of postal history to happen. Trying to get the full picture by observing only the end points of the period, the first and last days of postal activity in Gaza, is not sufficient. Observing the official Notices to the Public published by the Postal Authority is not enough either. Only by carefully tracking the introduction and removal of postmarks during the whole period, and maintaining an updated list of postmarks in use, can most of the picture be obtained. The accurate status is probably impossible to ascertain in some cases, as in the cases in which postmarks were replaced by others without any official notice, not about the first day of the new postmark and not about the last day of the old one. An example to the above is the case of RAFIAḤ 2.

Some of the uncertainties have to do with the loose interaction between the civil authorities in the occupied territories and the Postal Authority. There is probably less accurate reporting between the two than between the postal branches and the Postal Authority within Israel. The situation is further exacerbated by the hostile atmosphere in Gaza, turning the maintenance of postal services in the last years into a near miracle. However, despite all the mitigating circumstances, some of the more embarrassing cases described in this article could have been avoided by the Postal Authority simply by keeping track of the postmarks it itself introduced. The fact that they were not doing that – not in the territories and neither within Israel, is evident to every collector of postmarks.

As a result of the above situation it can be safely assumed that the same phenomena will also happen if and when postal services in other parts of the occupied territories will be turned over to the Palestinian Authority. There is today a significant number of postmarks in the West Bank that were taken out of active service without any public notice. Furthermore, the Postal Authority does not have a clear picture about which postmarks exist, are in active use or were lost, destroyed or stolen. The only trustworthy information is probably in the catalog of Israel Postmarks written by Nachtigal and Fixler, published by the Philatelic Service. There, through painstaking work and attention to detail over many years, the authors managed to assemble the most accurate account of the Israeli postmarks in the occupied territories (and elsewhere) that can possibly be obtained.

Another conclusion that can be drawn from the examples provided by this article is that it is very difficult to ascertain the actual last date of postmarks. Wallach contends that the 4.5.94 was the actual last date of all the Gaza Strip postmarks, based on the fact that all the postmarks he was aware of were brought to the office of the supervisor of postal services in Gaza at a certain date. However to infer from this that all of them were in actual use up to that date seems a bit tenuous. Six of the postmarks in Table 1 were in the same office, probably on the same day as well, but very evidently not all of them were in actual use at that date or in the period before it. Also difficult to infer is that these postmarks were not in use after that date, and Wallach mentions that three of them were indeed in use after that date. There are many recorded cases were postmarks taken out of service (even officially) were continued to be in use. There were even cases, illustrated by the postmarks in Table 2, where postmarks were officially taken out of service twice! There were cases in which a postmark was taken out of service and later re-introduced in another branch without any notice. Dedicated postmark collectors are acutely aware of this fact, and would typically hesitate in determining dates unless supported by either an official notice to the public or some other unrefutable evidence.

As a side note, it is worth noting that while Wallach in his article makes a distinction between the metal and rubber postmarks used on May 17th, the only visible differences between the two sets are in the date and ZAHAL inserts. These change daily in metal postmarks, and in many cases in the past were wrong dates (Hebrew ant/or Latin) inserted or the ZAHAL insert forgotten. The rubber stamps are the more accurate of the two sets in that regard. The rubber handstamps, while being copies made for philatelic purposes, are also in many ways more "real" than the machine metal postmarks, in reality a printing press, used by stamp dealers to produce large amounts of envelopes.

In summary – the exact picture of how the postal services in Gaza terminated is almost impossible to draw. Unlike the picture drawn by the official announcements of the postal authority, the termination of services in the occupied territories was in fact gradual, with many branches closing during the Intifada without public

acknowledgment. Actual last day of service of each and every postmark cannot be quoted with a high level of credibility. The only safe date is probably the May 17th, and even in that case there is no guarantee that the future will not reveal use of Israeli postmarks in Gaza later than this date. This article attempted to shed some more light on the picture, as seen from the perspective of a postmark collector. It covered some postmarks replaced with new types without notice, but mainly, it attempted to bridge the gap between the postmarks officially introduced and those officially taken out of service.

References

1. J. Wallach, "The gradual termination of Israeli postal services in the Gaza strip and Jericho, May 4–17, 1994: An eyewitness report", HLPH #59 (Summer 1994).
2. The numbers are as per the catalog by Nachtigal and Fixler, "Cancellations of Israeli Post – part 3", published by the Philatelic Service, 1994.

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* SHORT NOTES AND DISCOVERIES *

* *

The Ottoman Period

The Russian Post Office in Jerusalem

(M. Siegel, Ramat Gan)

This writer recently acquired a lot of 25 registered covers and 6 postcard entires sent from various Russian locations to Reb Salant, Jerusalem, between the years 1893 and 1909. All were apparently handled in their entirety by the Russian Post as there are no markings present to indicate otherwise. The registered items all apparently contained cash contributions destined for the good Rabbi's charitable institutions. However, a study of the lot, while revealing some interesting postal practices, raised quite a few questions or inconsistencies which this writer is at a loss to explain.

A. Frankings: 17 of the registered covers (henceforth called Group I) were posted unfranked and thus were prepaid at the counter in the town of dispatch. These were all sent during the period of October, 1901 to March, 1904. The group of franked registered letters (called Group II), all save one, are from a later period of March, 1907 to September, 1909. The solitary exception was posted in March of 1903. A registered cover sent in October of 1893 was also unfranked. On the other hand, the postcards were all franked with imprinted stamps and with adhesives added as required. Perhaps there was a shortage of stamps during the period of 1901/1904?

B. Addresses: All of the registered covers in Group I were pre-addressed with printed Jerusalem addresses whilst five of the seven in Group II were pre-addressed.

C. Arrival Postmarks: All of Group I, although unfranked, were wax sealed and backstamped with various Jerusalem postmarks. All of the postcard entires except the one sent in 1893 were backstamped but only one registered cover in Group II was backstamped. Why were postcards that were not registered backstamped but not the franked registered covers?

Great difficulty (in fact it was well nigh impossible) was experienced in attempting to identify the Jerusalem arrival markings from Steichele's illustrations. Instead, those found on page 1181 of The Holyland Philatelist were used as Pollack wisely differentiated between #641 and #642 of Steichele as well as between #644, 645 and #646 by actual measurements. Pollack's #1/7 corresponds exactly to Steichele's #641/647. Incidentally Pollack did mention blue postmarks as discussed in El below. This writer also cannot accept the rarity designations specified with marks #641a, 642a and #645a, of only one or two such markings known. Such a rarity designation was used in connection with the 546.1 (Jerusalem Oesterreichische Post) mark

referring to the size of its letter "O". Subsequent inquiry and checking of just two collections turned up more than a dozen such marks! Instead, Pollack's remark, as found on page 1181, is much preferred. He stated, "There may be a number of sub-types of the above shown main types since, most of the time, several more or less identical obliterators were in use simultaneously". All cards had #643 arrivals while the covers had either #641 or #643 arrivals. Surprisingly none of #642 were noted. Apparently all arrival markings were made with either a #641 or a #643 device.

D. "X" Marks: We have previously noted some Russian registered pieces of mail that were diagonally "x'd" on their fronts either in pen or pencil or crayon. This "x" shaped mark was always thought to have been done by the Post to call attention to the piece being registered and thus requiring special handling. Later Holyland Postal Administrations used the well known pair of lines – one horizontal and the other vertical – also applied to the front of the piece of mail to "highlight" registered items. Here, while all of the Group I pieces were "x'd" only four of the Group II pieces were so marked. On the other hand four of the five cards were "x'd"... Another mystery? Was there a procedure that only 'top-of-the-pile' mail received an "x" similar to the well known Israel Post practice of applying on the 'top-of-the-pile' cover, the total tax due of the entire group in the pile? It would be difficult to accept that this was the case here since the "x's" logically should have been applied at the time of dispatch in the Post Office and not upon their arrival in Jerusalem. Another far-fetched possibility might be that mail destined for abroad was to be "x'd".

E. Miscellaneous Observations: 1) Two of the covers dated January and April 1903 and backstamped with Steichele #641 double circle marking were in colors he did not list... the earlier piece had a greenish-blue backstamp and the later item a medium blue backstamp. 2) The postcard entires were either of the 3 kopek denomination (inland rate) or 4 kopeks for external destinations. Three of the cards were 3 kopek with a 1 kopek adhesive added. 3) 12 of the 17 in Group I had Odessa transit markings but none of the entire cards or Group II pieces had such markings. Did the route change from that used earlier (1901/1903)? 4) The 1893 pieces were with Odessa transit markings. The postcard is with a "T" mark – perhaps as it is a 3 and not 4 kopek card. It also shows a Ropit Konstantinopel transit mark. Both pieces are with handwritten notations (including numerals) obviously not in the hand of the sender*. Naturally both of these are without Jerusalem arrival marks as the Russian Post Office there did not open until 1901.

I would welcome comments and further information relevant to the matters raised above, especially concerning: (1) registered covers posted without franking; (2) where and when were "x's" used; (3) differentiation aids between the almost identical Jerusalem markings; (4) registered covers not being backstamped and (5) Odessa transit markings.

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* See The Holyland Philatelist p. 1075, as to the probable origin of these markings.

A Turkish Postmark from "Qatiya" (Katia), 1916

(Avraham Zakai, Beer Sheva)

At a recent auction in Israel, a postmark "Katia" (Qatiya) was offered at a starting price of $400!!

The Qatiya Oasis is located in the Northwestern corner of the Sinai Peninsula including Bir er-Rumani, Bir Abu Hamra, Bir Qatiya and Bir el Hamisa.

On a Turkish postcard, with 5 Turkish stamps, were 5 Arabic postmarks "Qatiya 1", dated 19.12.1332 (1916), a negativ seal and a Feldpost Mill. Miss. 1. Expeditionskorps postmark dated 24-10-1916 (Fig. 47). It is obvious that the person who prepared this postcard was not aware of the real dates, the same as with all the other postcards or cutouts of other locations. On this particular postcard the dates are seven to nine months after Qatiya was occupied by the British forces. What is certain is that this postcard was prepared on the 24.10.1916, the date of the German postmark. I do not imagine that this handstamp could have been used on another day, because these handstamps were regularly used in German Army Post Offices, and there could not have been any 'manipulations'.

In my article, "The Turkish postal services in Sinai and the Negev 1915/17"

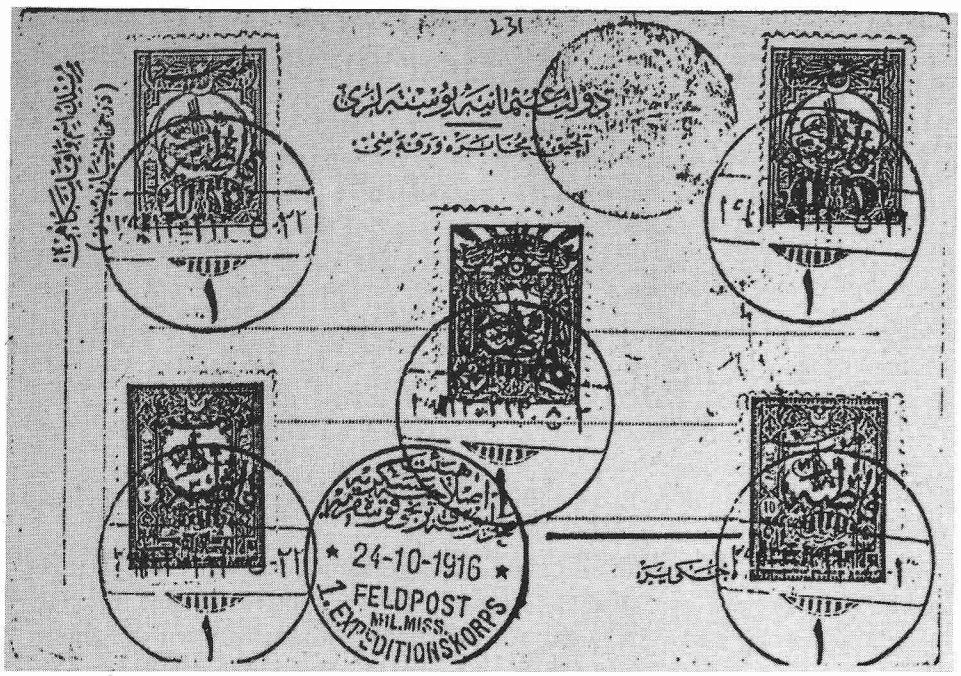


Fig. 47: A philatelic Turkish postcard with made-to-order cancellations "Qatiya 1" (of Sinai) and of the Fieldpost of the German Military Mission of 24 Oct, 1916.

(HLPH #21–22, 1985), I made it clear that nearly all the planned 28 post offices by the Turkish Military admistratioon were set up. It is known that only few of the planned offices started to function. Of two post offices there is no doubt – El Arish and Kusseima, from which genuine postal items are known. It is possible that three to five other post offices had the chance to operate, but this can be verified only if genuine postal items could be found as evidence.

Nearly all of the postcards and cutouts with Turkish postmarks from the Sinai peninsula from 1915/17, which appear sometimes on the Philatelic market, were prepared during or immediatly after the First World War by a Turkish official, who had all of the Sinai handstamps in his possession.

Before the first World War, the Sinai Peninsula was under Egyptian administration. Small British police and army units patrolled the area when the British army was stationed along the Suez Canal to protect the 'lifeline' of the British Empire. When Turkey entered the War on the side of Germany and Austria-Hungary, the British High Command decided to remove these units from Sinai and to concentrate their small army forces only for the defence of the Suez Canal area.

The Turkish army, after they attacked the Suez Canal at Tussum on 3 February, 1915 without success, had to retreat and then stationed their army units in the whole Sinai peninsula.

At the beginning of 1916 Gen. Maxwell, then Commander of the British Forces in the Middle East, decided to expand the range of the Suez Canal Defences and in March, 1916 the British and Australian units occupied the Qatiya Oasis and immediately started work on a railway line. On 19 May the line up to Romani was open and four trains a day were running regularly. In April the Oasis was attacked by the Turkish Army, under German command, but were repelled. In August the Turks tried again to conquer this important location but again lost the battle. This was the beginning of their retreat from the Sinai peninsula.

The British Mandate Period

Airgraph Introduction and Use *(Marvin Siegel, Ramat Gan)*

Like most other innovations and improvements, suitable Press Notices were prepared by the General Post Office (London) to announce the introductions of AIRGRAPH Services both to and from British Forces in the Middle East (including Palestine), during World War II.

On 22 April, 1941, Press Notice #1751 was released specifying the various details of the service **from** The Middle East. The opening paragraph of this notice reads:

> *"The Postmaster General announces that in order to meet the need for cheapening and expediting homeward postal communication from the British Forces in the Middle East, the Post Office is introducing an Airgraph Service – the first of its kind in the world. Under this system a letter will be less than a fortnight in transit. The charge from The Middle East to this country will be 3d ordinary air mail. Letters, owing to the weight involved, have to be carried part of the way by sea and take much longer on the journey. This remarkable change in the speed and cost of letter transmission is being effected by harnessing photographic science to the postal services...*
>
> *The outward service will be started as soon as the necessary technical arrangements can be completed".*

On 13 August, 1941, Press Notice #1786 was released. Its 'triumphant' first paragraph reads:

> *"The Postmaster General and the War Office announce that the necessary technical arrangements having been completed, airgraph letters addressed to personnel of H.M. Forces serving in The Middle East can be accepted on and from tomorrow (Friday) August 15th".*

Also included therein was the following interesting information:

1. The films will be conveyed by air all the way to The Middle East.
2. The original letters, after photography, will be retained by the Post Office and will eventually be destroyed.
3. It is anticipated that the time of transmission to the base in The Middle East will normally be less than a fortnight (two weeks).
4. The corresponding service in the inward direction which has been in operation for several months, has been very successful; nearly a million Airgraph letters having been received from The Middle East.

The system worked very well and provided a vital link for communication to and from servicemen. Its morale building effect was tremendous. It was quickly pressed into large scale use by the American Armed Forces as soon as they entered the conflict in December, 1941. This writer remembers his family receiving and sending such V-Mail (the American name for this service) from and to friends and relatives in Armed Forces in such distant and far apart places as North Africa, South Pacific, Burma, Philipines, Hawaii, England and Continental Europe.

The State of Israel

A Tragic Cover from the War of Independence (brought to our attention by Itamar Karpovsky)

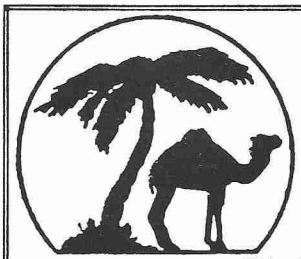
The cover shown on the Front exists today in the archives at Beit Jabotinsky, Tel Aviv.

The letter was sent by an erstwhile member of Etzel (The Irgun), Zvi Shteinman, to a friend of his, also a former member in the same organisation, Yehezkel Lerman – both friends joining Zahal after it has been formed. It was cancelled by Army Post Office 9 on October 20th, 1948.

However, Lerman had been killed on the 15th of that month during "Yoav Operation". A handwritten note to this effect appears on the top left hand corner, signed by the officer of that particular battalion. The letter was therefore returned to the sender, who was serving in Battalion 4. But by the time that the letter returned to Shteinman, he too had been killed in action!

Incidentally, at that time people in Israel were being persuaded to change their "Latin" names to Hebrew ones, so the army cachet recommending this appears on the front at the bottom; it reads: "Soldier – change your Gentile name to a Hebrew name".

It is highly unlikely that other similar letters revealing the tragedy of war as vividly as this one exist.



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* *

* GENERAL NEWS *

* *

New Cancellations and Post Offices

(Compiled by I. Nachtigal)

A. Special Cancellations (see also Fig. 48).

29.9.94: "50 Years of Israeli Theatre: Hakameri of Tel Aviv", Tel Aviv–Yafo.

29.9.94: "50 years to the announcement of the formation of the Jewish Brigade", Avihayil.

Fig. 48: Special cancellations used in Israel in the last period.

Fig. 48 (continued): Special cancellations used in Israel in the last period.

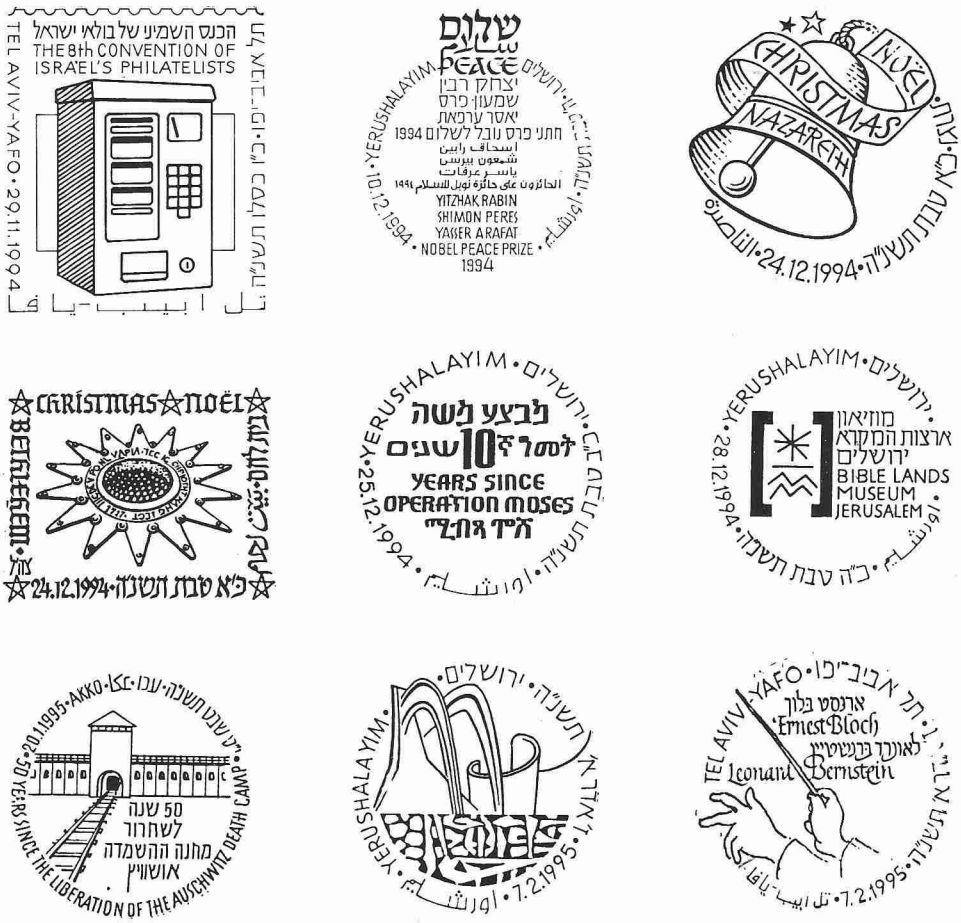

Fig. 48 (continued): Special cancellations used in Israel in the last period.

9.10.94: "Qiryat Motzkin, 60 Years", Qiryat Motzkin.
11.10.94: "Artists send Peace, Eretz Israel Museum", Tel Aviv–Yafo.
13.10.94: "Israel Diamond Manufacturers Association Jubilee", Ramat Gan.
17.10.94: "Fepapost 94 – Greetings from Israel's Philatelists", Tel Aviv–Yafo.
26.10.94: "Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty", Elat.
27.10.94: "Visit of Wiliam J. Clinton, President of the United States of America", Yerushalayim.
30.10.94: "50th Anniversary of the Burg El-Arab Concert", Tel Aviv–Yafo.
31.10.94: "Herzliyya – the Legendary City, 1924–1994", Herzliyya.
1.11.94: "Renouvellement du Service Postal Israel–Maroco", Yerushalayim.
7.11.94: "Opening van het Psychogeriatrisch Centrum", Yerushalayim.

9.11.94: "Ben Gurion University of the Negev", Be'er Sheva.
16.11.94: "60th Anniversary of the Manufacturers Association in Jerusalem", Yerushalayim.
27.11.94: "The Dreyfus Affiar – 100 Years on", Yerushalayim*.
27.11.94: "Public Transport in Erez Israel", Tel Aviv–Yafo*.
27.11.94: "Computerization of the Post Offices – Philately Day", Tel Aviv–Yafo*.
27.11.94: "Hanukka", Rishon Leziyyon*.
27.11.94: "Egged – Public Transport is preferable", Tel Aviv–Yafo.
28.11.94: "Israel Stamp Week, Hanukka 1994, 28.11–5.12.94", Tel Aviv–Yafo.
28.11.94: "Israel Stamp Week, Hanukka 1994, 28.11–5.12.94", Rishon Leziyyon.
28.11–5.12.94: "Israel Stamp Week" (decorated postmark), Tel Aviv–Yafo. This is the same postmark as used in previous years' Stamp Week.
29.11.94: "The 8th Convention of Israel's Philatelists", Tel Aviv–Yavo.
10.12.94: "Yitzhak Rabin, Shimon Peres, Yasser Arafat – Nobel Peace Prize, 1994", Yerushalayim.
24.12.94: "Christmas Nöel", Nazareth.
24.12.94: "Christmas Nöel", Bethlehem.
25.12.94: "10 Years since Operation Moses", Yerushalayim.
28.12.94: "Bible Lands Museum", Yerushalayim.
20.1.95: "50 Years since the Liberation of the Auschwitz Death Camp", Akko.
7.2.95: "Yerushalayim", Yerushalayim*.
7.2.95: "Ernest Bloch, Leonard Bernstein", Tel Aviv–Yafo*.

B. Definitive Cancellations

29.9.94: On this date 26 new or replaced handstamps were put into use in various Post Offices as follows. **Southern Region:** "Ashdod 34", "Ashqelon 25", "Elat 16", "18", "Ofaqim 7"; **Central Region:** "Be'er Ya'aqov 4", "Or Yehuda 5", "Petah Tiqwa 35", "38"; **Northern Region:** "Arraba 1", "Fureidis 1", "Nahariyya 16", "Qiryat Ata 9", "Qiryat Shemona 9–11", "Yafia 1", "Zikhron Ya'aqov 4"; **Haifa** – (Parcel sorting) "144–148", (sorting) "151"; **Tel Aviv–Yafo**: (Disengof Branch) "389", (Yafo Branch) "372".
2.10.94: "Yerushalayim 110", for the new Postal Agency, Grade A, at Shemuel Hanavi St. in Jerusalem.
11.10.94: "Ashqelon 25", for the new Postal Agency, Grade A, in Qanion "Lav Ashqelon" in Ashqelon. (This postmark was used before in Ashqelon Main P.O.).
18.10.94: "Beer Sheva 13", for the new Postal Agency, Grade A, in Ramot Quarter, Beer Sheva. (This postmark was used before in Beer Sheva Main P.O.).

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* These were used as special postmarks for the F.D. of the corresponding stamp issue.

1.11.94: "Elat 13", for the new Postal Agency, Grade A, in Qanion "The State" in Elat. (This postmark was used before in Elat Main P.O.)

20.11.94: "Bat-Yam 527 ד", new Francotype machine in Bat-Yam Branch Office.

19.12.94: On this date 18 New or replaced handstamps were put into use in various Post Offices as follows. **Central Region:** "Giv'atayim 15", "Herzliyya 22", "Holon 35", "Kefar Sava 20", "Petah Tiqwa 36", "37", "Ramat Gan 45", "Yehud 4", **Haifa** – (Ben Gurion Boulevard) "132", (Neve Sha'anan) "133", "134", (Hagiborim St.) "139", (parcel sorting) "150"; **Tel Aviv– Yafo** – (Merkezet Hazafon Branch) "314", (Miqwe Yisrael) "315", "316", "318", "319".

28.12.94: On this date 14 new or replaced handstamps were put into use in various Post Offices as follows. **Southern Region:** "Ashdod 35", "36", "37", "38", Beer Sheva "55", "56", "Hanegev 1 M.P.", "Hanegev 3 M.P."; **Northern Region:** "Iksal 1", "Daliyat Al Karmil 1", "Migdal 1", "Nesher 9".

8.1.95: "Yerushalayim 108" (sorting office), "Yerushalayim 111" (Geulim Branch), "Yerushalayim 112" (Mahane Yehuda Branch), "Yerushalayim 122", (Qiriat Yovel Branch), "Yerushalayim 123" (Rehavia Branch), "Yerushalayim 124" (sorting office), "Yerushalayim 125" (Gilo Branch), "Yerushalayim 126" (Beit Hakerem Branch), "Yerushalayim 127" (Ramat Eshkol Branch), "Yerushalayim 107" (Arnona Branch), "Yerushalayim 88" (the Test Line Branch, Giv'at Shaul), "Yerushalayim 109" (Pisgat Zeev Branch), "Yerushalayim 105" (Naiyot Branch).

22.1.95: On this date 14 new or replaced handstamps were put into use in various Post Offices in the administered zone (Zahal): "Elqana 1" (instead of Elqana without number), "Ari'el 1" (instead of Ariel without number), "Ma'ale Adummim 1" and "Ma'ale Adummim 2" (instead of Ma'ale Adummim without number), "Qiryat Arba 1" (instead of Qiryat Arba without number), "Giv'at Ze'ev 1" (instead of Giv'at Zeev without number), "Qarne Shomeron 1" (instead of Qarne Shomeron without number), "Qedumim 1" (instead of Qedumim without number), "Efrata 1" (instead of Efrata without number).

16.2.95: "Yerushalayim 106" for the new Agripas St. Postal Branch in Jerusalem.

C. Slogan Cancellations (revised)

17.7.94: "מיקוד והמכתב רץ" (Zip Code and the Letter Speeds Up), used with "Tel Aviv–Yafo 1", "3", "4", "5", "8", "45" and "Tel Aviv–Yafo Paye 3" machine cancellations in Tel Aviv–Yafo Post Office.

7.8.94: Ditto, used with "Haifa 2", "3".

21.8.94: Ditto, used with "Yerushalayim 4" "5".

(22.8.94): Ditto, used with "Tel Aviv–Yafo 10".

(5.12.94): Ditto, used with "Tel Aviv–Yafo Paye 4".

The slogan was run with many machine cancellation "heads" intermittently, and frequently without announcement. Many of those noted are still in use, and there may be others. Bracketed dates mean that this is the first date we have found, but there may be earlier ones.

New Stamps, Postage Labels and Postal Stationery

New Stamps and Postage Labels

The following stamps, ATM and CPL were issued during the last period.

26.10.94: Israel–Jordan Peace Treaty (IS 3.50).

27.11.94: Hanukka (Part II – IS 1.50); Hundred years to "The Dreyfus Affair" (IS 4.10); Philately Day 1994 – computerization of the post offices (IS 3.–); Public transport in Eretz-Israel (Ag 90, Is 1.40, 1.70).

A Klussendorf ATM (postage label) was issued for the Christian Holiday Season. This year it was issued in three main types differing in the cliche numbers: without a number (PS machine), 023 (Bethlehem machine), 018 (Nazareth machine). For a detailed report, see article "1994 Christmas Klussendorf Lables" in this issue.

29.11.94: Computerized Postage Label (CPL) of the standard format but "typed" (in Hebrew) "The 8th Conference of Israel Philatelists, T.A.", and (in English) "8th Philately Day" (Fig. 49) was sold in the special PS stand in Eretz-Israel Museum (Ramat Aviv) during the Conference day.

7.2.95: Outdoor sculpture (Ag 90 – "Serpentine" by I. Danziger, IS 1.40 – "Stabile" by A. Calder, IS 1.70 – "Yad Vashem gate" by D. Palombo); Jewish Musicians – Leonard Bernstein (IS 4.10), Ernest Bloch (4.10).

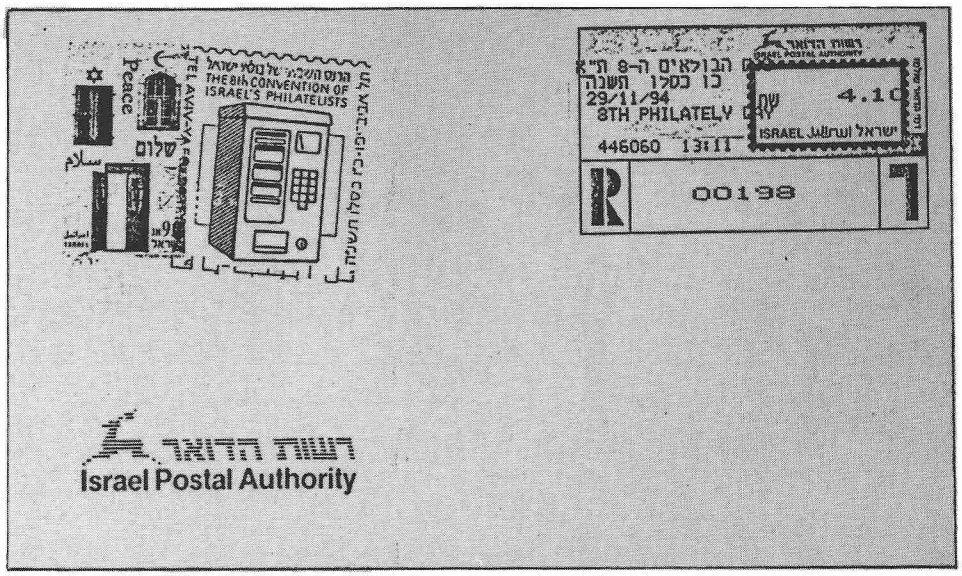

Figure 49

Postal Stationery

27.11.94: Two **prestamped cacheted envelopes** (cm 23.3 x 10.5) for inland mail (non-denominated), illustrating "Autumn" and "Winter" respectively (at IS 1.– each), completing the two issued on 5 April (Cf. HLPH #57–58, p. 982).

In continuation to the "Tourism Set" of **cacheted non-denominated postcards** (Cf. HLPH #57–58 p. 982), another airmail postcard was issued (price IS 2.–), depicting Eilat underwater observatory both on its imprinted "stamp" (Fig. 50) and on its back side.

7.2.95: **Postcard "Tourism Set"** (continued). Two illustrated postcards like the above one, but depicting Acre (Akko) and Massada respectively (Fig. 51).

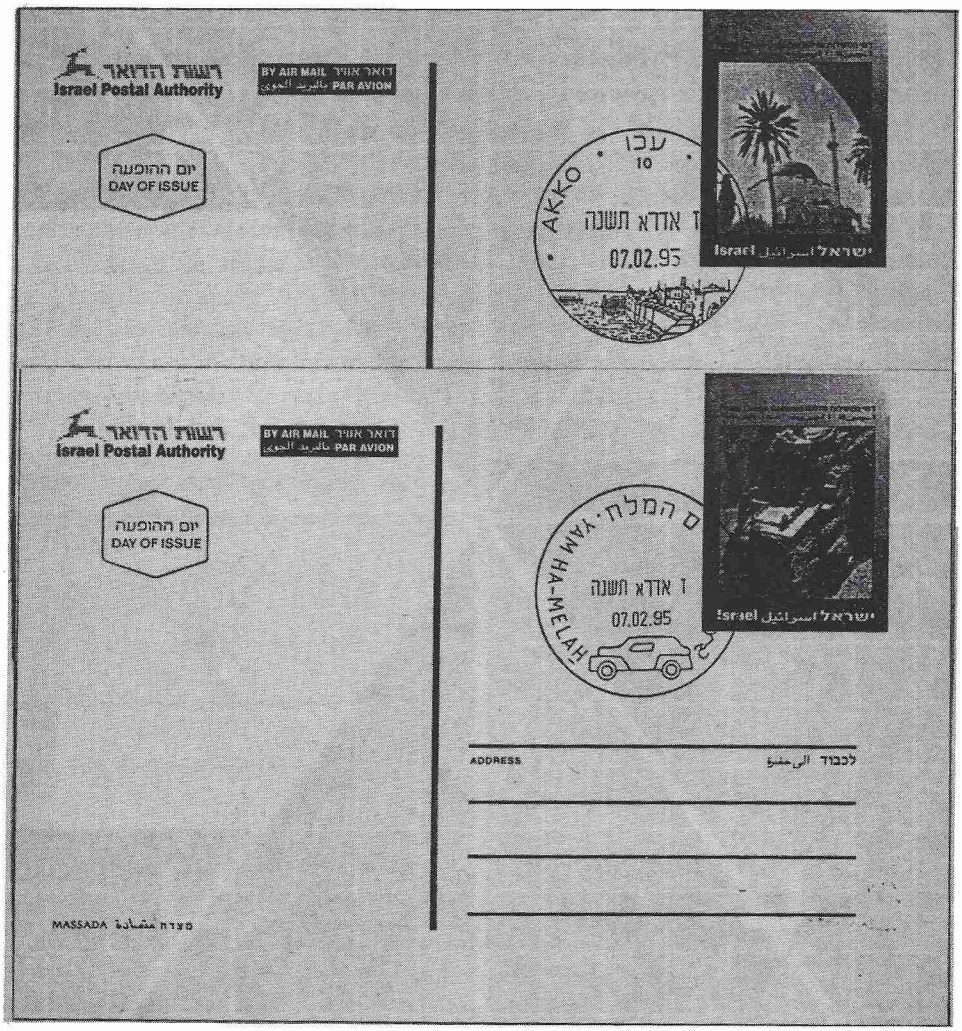

Figure 51

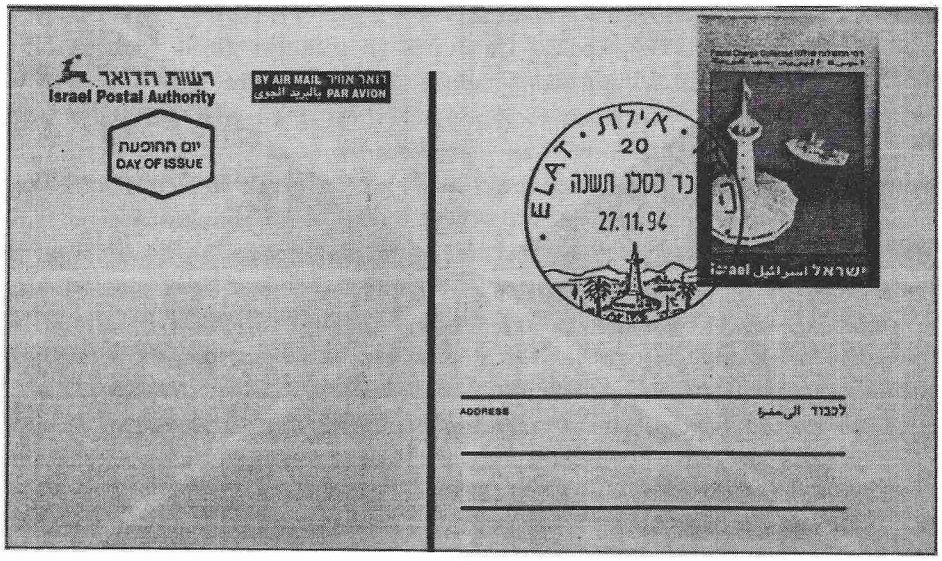

Figure 50

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1994 Christmas Klussendorf Labels *(Nahum Shereshevsky)*

As in 1992[1,4] and 1993[2], special Christmas Klussendorf labels were issued in Israel. The main motif in this year's design is an angel. The label was designed by Yitzhak Granot of the Philatelic Service, who told me that the design is his own creation and not taken from any specific work of art. As in previous years, the formal reason for the issue of these labels was their sale in Bethlehem, issued from a Klussendorf machine installed there during the Christmas Season. And, also as usual, there was a "twin" machine, with the same cliche No (023), at the Philatelic Service (PS) in Tel Aviv, as well as labels issued from the Philatelic Service's "no cliche" machine (also known as the ★ machine, as it prints "★" instead of the leading zeros). But this year there was an innovation – labels from Nazareth, issued from the machine installed there in June (Cliche No 018), in which the Christmas paper replaced the tourism paper during this period. There were also different postmarks, and the reason for this article is to list all of the varieties and their combinations.

Machines

On 27.11.94, machine 023 was installed at Bethlehem. At the same time, another 023 machine was installed at the Philatelic Service in Tel Aviv. This was done in 1992 and 1993, and the reason for this was to enable people (especially dealers) to get "Bethlehem" labels without taking the risk of actually going there; a novel idea resulting from the Intifada. But it was soon found out that the cliches in the two machines are distinguishable, as was mentioned by Josef Wallach[3,4]. There is a difference of only a millimeter in the distance between the zero of 023 and the ★ (measured from the external sides), but as a result the imprint is different in relation to the paper design, and that is more noticeable. This year, in the labels from Bethlehem, the zero left of the "decimal point" touches the outer arc, and the 3 of 023 penetrates into the arc. In the Tel Aviv labels, these two elements do not touch the arc (Fig. 52).

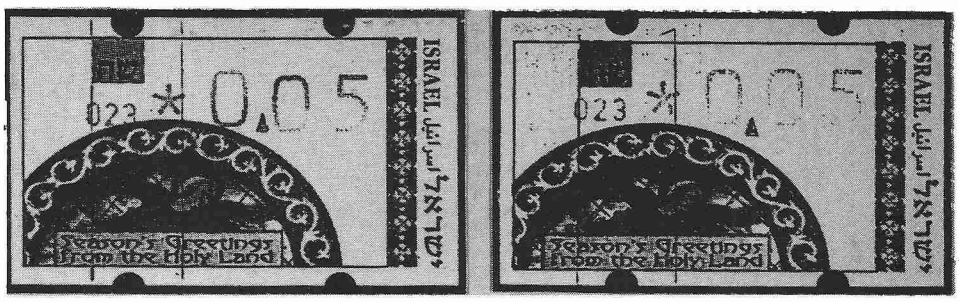

Fig. 52: The two "023" labels: (left) from the Bethlehem machine, (right) from the PS machine.

A third variation is the ★ machine in Tel Aviv, which was used to produce the labels sold at the philatelic counters, on FDC's, and by special order from the PS (Fig. 53). However, only values from the basic rate up (0.90) can be ordered from the machine. The machine at Bethlehem is accessible to the public, which means that "all" values can be produced, including 0.05. Its Tel Aviv twin was placed inside the PS building and not accessible to the general public, but since it was supposed to imitate the original Bethlehem one, once you were allowed to use it you could produce all the regular values. It should be noted that this machine must not be confused with the machine installed outside the Jaffa Post Office, which is the same building in which the PS is located. This machine is loaded with Yafo tourism paper.

The fourth variation is the Nazareth label, which carries the cliche number 018.

FDI Postmarks

The Public Notice that detailed the philatelic items to be issued in November gave the date of issue as 27 November – except for the Klussendorf labels that were to be issued on the 28. The reason – the 27th was a Sunday, and the post offices of Bethlehem and Nazareth are closed on Sundays as these two cities are dominantly Christian. Consequently, I made arrangements to go to Bethlehem on Monday. But on the preceding Friday I had a chance to buy the new items, and I noticed that the official Klussendorf FDC (with ★ label) had a date of 27th! Since it was Friday there was no one to ask at the Philatelic Service, the only thing left was to call the post offices concerned. The postmaster of Nazareth told me that they would

Fig. 53: The standard Philatelic Service F.D.C.: a "★" label and "בית לחם" (Bethlehem)–without-index postmark.

indeed be closed on 27th, and that the Philatelic Service didn't sell any covers with the Nazareth label or postmark. But more on that later.

The postmaster of Bethlehem (who spoke no Hebrew but fortunately some English) told me that on that particular Sunday his post office would be open for two hours (9–11) especially for the purpose of postmarking Klussendorf FDC's. I realized that there was no point in going to Nazareth on Monday, but as I already had a commitment for Sunday, I wasn't at Bethlehem on the day of issue. I later received FDC's that were obtained through the Postal Officer of Judea & Samaria. The postmark on these covers was the illustrated BETHLEHEM 1 postmark, that was introduced in 1992 and has been used at Bethlehem since then (Fig. 54). This is a metal postmarker with a changeable date, and we can see that the Gregorian date is above the Hebrew date, which is unusual. The postmark on the official FDC was a similar postmark but without any index number. These FDC's were made using a machine postmark with a fixed date, and there was also a rubber postmarker. This "no index" postmark was used before on 21.6.94 as FDI postmark for the Bethlehem tourism lable, at least as a rubber postmarker at the Philatelic Service. But it seems that the Philatelic Service made a rubber "copy" of a postmarker that did not exist. Also, it is not listed by Fixler & Nachtigal.

Since I was not at Bethlehem on the 27th, I cannot tell for certain which postmarker was used, but I was told by Mr Y. Geula from the Postal Officer's office that as far as he knew there was no rubber postmarker at Bethlehem.

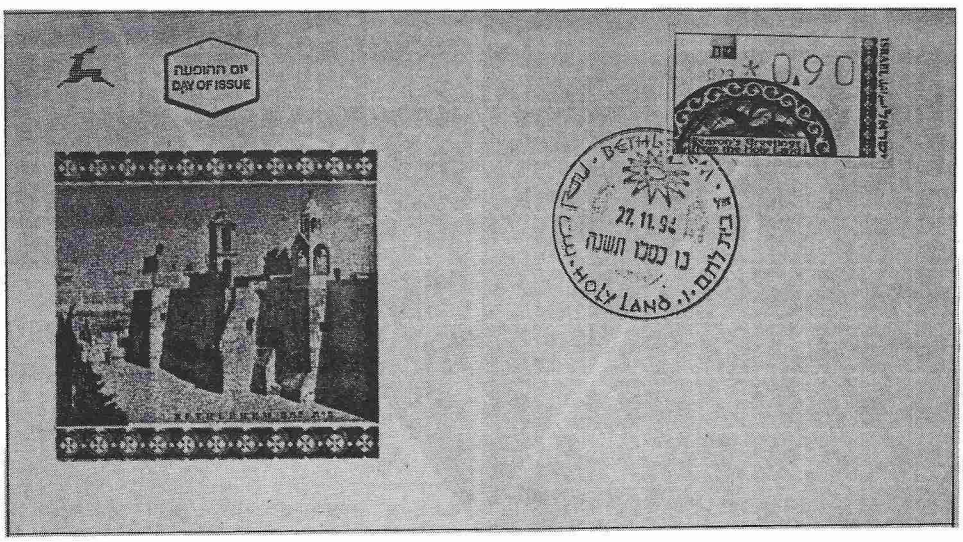

Fig. 54: The local F.D.C. produced in Bethlehem: a local "023" label and "1 בית לחם" postmark.

In Nazareth there was another interesting story, as I learned from my friend Eli Hadash who was there on the 28th. Eli got to the Nazareth post office at around 7:00, and by opening time (8:00) his covers were ready for postmarking. He asked the postmaster for the illustrated postmarker, which was taken out of the safe. This was a regular metal device with changeable dates, and the date on it was 21.6.94 – the day of issue of the Nazareth tourism label. The postmaster wanted to change the date, but there was a problem: the Hebrew year had changed since June, and he didn't have the new year's slug. He checked the other postmarkers and finally found a slug that was fit. However, the letters of that slug are about half the height of the original letters, as can be clearly seen (Fig. 55). Although the Philatelic Service did not make Nazareth FDC's, they did make a rubber postmarker (for dealers?) – but in that postmarker the letters of the Hebrew year are all of the same height (Fig. 56). It should be noted that only covers with the "small year" have actually been postmarked in Nazareth, and they are, I assume, the fewer.

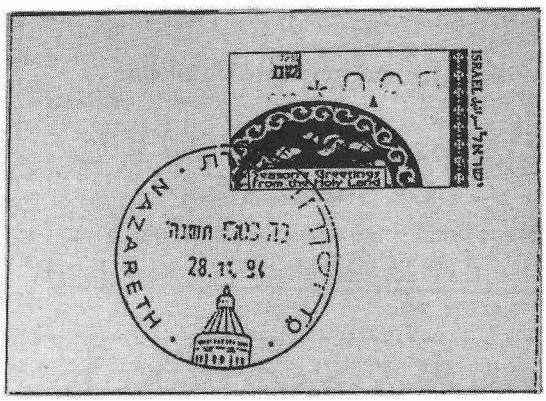

Fig. 55: The local Nazareth F.D.C. (28.11.94): the Hebrew year (תשנה) in a smaller font.

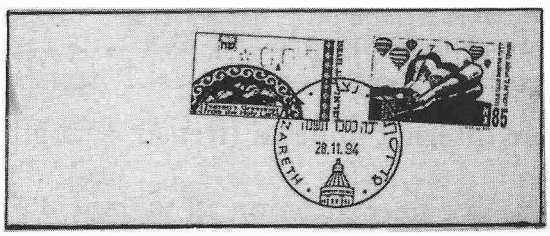

Fig. 56: The Philatelic Service Nazareth F.D. postmark: a rubber handstamp with equal size Hebrew date letters.

To sum up: We have four variations of labels, and two variations of postmarks of each city. FDC's of 023 Bethlehem labels with BETHLEHEM 1 postmarks and 018 Nazareth labels with "small year" postmarks have genuinely been made at the actual site, others were made at the Philatelic Service.

References:

(1) HLPH #52 (1992) p. 662.
(2) HLPH #56 (1993) p. 897.
(3) Dr. Josef Wallach Public Auction Catalog, March 1993, p. 69.
(4) J. Wallach, The Israel Philatelist, **XLIV**, No 7/8 (1993) pp. 6785–6791.

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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

In the article "A Pro-Palestinian Propaganda Cachet on a Sudan cover of 1980" (HLPH #55, p. 809), showing a Sudanese cover photocopy with a cachet reading "Remember the million Palestine refugees evicted from their homes on May 15, 1948", the date was erroneously read as circa 1980. This cover is now in my collection and the Khartoum postmark clearly shows the date as **26th May, 1960**. This cachet thus clearly coincides with the World Refugee Year issues of 1960!

Sincerely,
Lawrence Fisher

Holy Land Auctions' Realizations

Prices are in U.S. Dollars. 10–15% buyer's commission and 1.5–2.5% V.A.T. should be added.

Negev Holyland Stamps, March 1994

* Ottoman Post, 1885 Acre pmk (St 02/05) on a cover franked 2pi –	$1700
* Ditto, 1890 "Jerus" pmk (St 28/04) on a postcard to Bulgaria –	$1250
* 1918, Feb. 16, 5m on 1pi (SG2), unused –	$90
* 1938, Nahariya d.c. pmk (D2) on a reg. cover with handwritten R-label –	$60
* 1948, Nahariya local post, proof of 1st emergency pmk –	$350

Zodiac Stamps, October 1994

* Turkish P.O. Jerusalem telegraph negative seal (St T16) on official telegram –	$390
* 1918, mixed franking: 1p blue (SG3) + 2 x 2m typographed on a reg. postcard –	$105
* Hadera HD, triangular pmk (Dorfman E) on printed matter cover –	$140
* 1948, Rishon LeZion local, F.D. cover 5 April 1948 to Tel Aviv –	$360
* 1948, Doar Ivri 10 + 50m grey paper, mint tabbed –	$150
* 1948, Festival gutter pairs with full colour tabs –	$4400

Tel-Aviv Stamps, October 1994

* Austrian P.O., 1886 "Jerusalem–Gerusalemme" pmk, tying 3sld (1883) to a small printed matter cover to Hungary –	$1900
* Ditto, concessional mail; unfranked cover from Jaffa to Tel Aviv –	$65
* French P.O., 1906 incoming postcard from France, taxed by strip of three 10c P.D. stamps in Jerusalem –	$3255
* Italian P.O., 1909 10pa overprinted Italian stamp on a newspaper from Jerusalem to Torino –	$2500

* Ottoman P.O., 1897 Haifa negative seal (St 19/02) on a postcard written in "Zichron Jacob" to Chicago – $5200
* Ditto, 1910 Gerusalem (Gare) on a postcard to Germany – $470
* British Administration, 1920 "Jerusalem I" 3m transposed error in used pair – $1800
* Ditto, 1922, "London I" complete used set (SG60–70) – $2500
* Interim Period, 1948 double rate wrapper (3 x 2m) Tel Aviv Minhelet Ha'Am pmk – $110
* 1948, Safed large provisional pmk (18 May) on a postcard franked Doar Ivri 3 + 5m – $4300
* 1948, Doar Ivri 250, 500 & 1000m with tabs, Mandate Ramat Gan F.D. cancellation on cutouts – $1200
* 1948, cover franked by demonetized Minhelet Ha'Am stamps, mailed from Tel Aviv and taxed in Rosh Pinna 20m (2 x 10m). P.D. stamps cancelled by Mandate pmk – $1700

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OFFICIAL BULLETIN OF THE SOCIETY OF THE POSTAL HISTORY OF ERETZ-ISRAEL

מעטפה טרגית ממלחמת העצמאות

A tragic cover from the War of Independence (see note on p. 1115)

AUTUMN 1994