



T H E

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CONTENTS

PAGE

43	Editorial	
43	Meetings	
44	Hungarian FPO Privelege Card, 1917	N.J. Collins
45	The El Tor P.O. in Sinai	
45	Port Taufiq Location	J.F. Cousins
45	A Christmas Card from Bethlehem	Jacques Kaufmann
47	Palestine: The Jerusalem III Issue	Jacques Kaufmann
54	A Postally used and censored "Palestine News"	Maurice Hesselberg
55	Palestine: The Plate Varieties of London II	Dr. A. Kaplanian
58	Unusual Postal "Notices" of the Mandate	A. M. Hochheiser
61	The Interim use of Postal Materials	A. M. Hochheiser
66	An earlier Date for the Jaffa M.O.O. Cancel	A. M. Hochheiser
67	A "Comet IV-B" Crash Cover	Harold Wilson
68	The Israel Stamp Lover' Column	
71	Book Review: Postal Markings of Palestine 1917-1948 by Michael Sacher	

PALESTINE: THE PLATE VARIETIES OF THE LONDON II (WATERLOW) ISSUE

by Dr A Kaplanian

A few years ago I had the fortune to be able to buy the whole Robert J Sheffler collection of the London II issue. This collection is magnificent in range, depth, study and wealth of material. Every aspect of the issue in both plates A and B is abundantly represented there, from the setting clichés to the plate and overprint varieties. Plus all, and I mean all, of the major and minor errors, misprints, perforations, stamp size, inverted watermark, etc... are there. The sheet reconstructions from used stamps of all the values (again for both plates A and B) which are almost complete (except for the 9, 10 and 20 Piastres of plate A and the 2 Piastres of plate B), must have taken thousands of hours of work and research. But before these reconstructions were compiled, they were preceded by a thorough study of the plate and overprint varieties. The plate A overprint varieties were first published by Dr H H Hirst in the BAPIP bulletins numbers 48 and 49 in 1965. The plate B overprint varieties were published for the first time in 1989 in Mr David Dorfman's book "The Postage Stamps of Palestine 1918-1948". In fact, the chart of these overprint varieties in Mr Dorfman's book was based upon the drawings made by Mr Sheffler himself.

And while the plate varieties of the blues, the typographed issue (which formed the basic stamps for the Jerusalem I, II, III and London I issues) and the pictorials were all amply studied and published during the course of years, the plate varieties of the London II (Waterlow) issue were never published. So in this article, I would like to fill that gap by showing all the plate varieties of all the values which were partly compiled and drawn by Mr Sheffler and partly by myself.

Now when we look at the excellent drawings that Mr Sheffler made of the plate varieties of each value, one thing strikes us, viz., there are no depictions of the varieties of the 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 Milliemes; while those of the 7, 8, 13 Milliemes and 1, 2, 5, 9, 10 and 20 Piastres are all there. Why not? My theory is that Mr Sheffler worked in a very systematic way, starting from the 20 Piastres and going down to the higher Millieme values (i.e. the 13m), and worked his way down to the lower values, stopping abruptly at the 7 Milliemes. When I wrote to him in 1990, he explained to me that because he had bought a house on the Island of Kauai in Hawaii, he got interested in the unique history of the islands. He started to collect stamps and covers of Hawaii. So he stopped studying and collecting the stamps of this issue and decided to sell the collection intact.

Since then, I have been thinking of completing the varieties of the missing values. But, although I had the material, I lacked the time needed to complete such an enormous task.

Then last year, I got motivated after purchasing a second smaller collection of this issue with a reasonable study of the plate varieties of the lower values, followed by an attempt to reconstruct the sheets from mainly used stamps. So using this new collection, I began to work to complete the plate varieties of the values missing in the original Sheffler collection. So here is the first part of this publication which is divided into three parts due to its length. This first part, presented here, covers the high value varieties, viz., those of the 1, 2, 5, 9, 10 and 20 Piastres.

The second part to be published in the next issue will cover the plate varieties of the 7, 8 and 13 Milliemes. Each value will be represented by two pages, as these denominations have a large number of varieties.

The third and final part of the study will show the plate varieties of the 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 Milliemes. These are my own work and are based on the drawings I found in the second collection I purchased.

The difference in the drawings between the first two parts and the third part is obvious, but that does not make these studies less fascinating. If any of the readers or students of this issue has any questions and if things are unclear, they can always write to me c/o The Editor of BAPIP.



