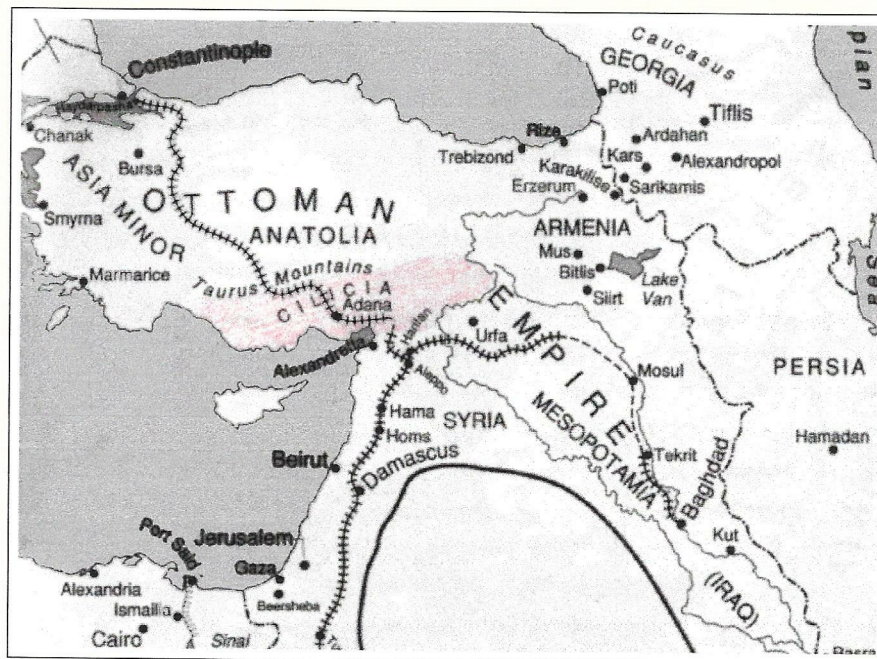


The French Occupation of Cilicia

Overprints on Turkish and French stamps

In 1916 when an Allied victory against the Turks seemed possible, two very professional statesmen, England's Sir Mark Sykes and France's Georges Picot, worked on a secret agreement as to how best to mutually divide the Ottoman Empire. The Sykes-Picot Agreement (16 May 1916) became quite controversial when its content was put to the press.

It was agreed basically, that to Britain goes the protectorate or mandate influence of Egypt, Palestine, Trans-Jordan, Mesopotamia, and as much of the Arabian peninsula as she could hold. To France the possession, or influence of the major portion of the Province of Syria, including the sandjaks and valeyets of Alauoites, Alexandretta, Damas, Adana, and Beirut. Thus leaving both powers to this participating agreement with a petroleum source, strongholds on the Mediterranean, and also importantly Russia would get nothing.



Cilicia was the name of an area that did not exist as an entity before this agreement. It is made up basically of the province of Adana and the sandjaks of Tarsus and Mersine, bounded by the Tarsus mountain range and the Iskenderoun gulf. The territory was occupied by French troops under the terms of the Armistice with the Turks from 30 October 1918 until it was returned to Turkey in December 1921.

By order of Colonel Bremond, the Administrator in Chief, the Turkish stamps on hand were overprinted in order to distinguish them from those circulating in other parts of the Ottoman Empire.

The display is divided as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| 1 The large CILICIE handstamp | 4 The T.E.O. Cilicie overprint |
| 2 The small CILICIE handstamp | 5 The Occupation Militaire Francais overprint |
| 3 The script <i>Cilicie</i> handstamp | 6 The O.M.F. Cilicie & Sand.Est surcharged issues |

Principal reference sources:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Mayo, M. M. | Cilicie, Occupation Militaire Francais |
| Field, D. | Allied Postage Stamps of the Great War and after |
| Bright & Son's | Priced catalogue of War and Armistice stamps |
| Armstrong, D. & Greenwood, C. | War Stamps of the Allies 1914-1920, an historical record |
| Stanley Gibbons | Stamp Catalogue, Part 6, France |

The large CILICIE handstamp

Overprinted in tall black sans-serif capitals 18mm long x 4½mm tall
Released on 1st March 1919

This handstamp is found on a large variety of the current Ottoman stamps. It was applied individually to each stamp and the black ink being quite thin in texture gave the appearance of bleeding into the paper.

On the Ottoman pictorial issue of 1914



25,000 handstamped



handstamp inverted



27,350 handstamped



800 handstamped



20,402 handstamped



handstamp double



handstamp inverted

On six pointed star and crescent issues of 1915



Handstamp inverted in pair with normal handstamp

68,100 handstamped



11,200 handstamped



41,400 handstamped

The large CILICIE handstamp

On five pointed star and crescent issues of 1916



68,100 handstamped



11,200 handstamped

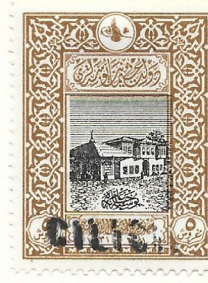
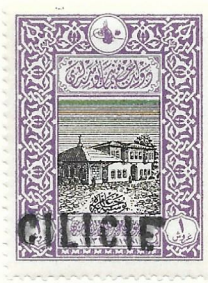
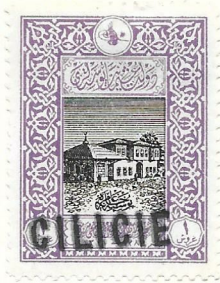


27,450 handstamped



24,875 handstamped

On the post office commemoratives of 1916



Perf. 12½

Perf. 13½

On the pictorial issue of 1916



21,016 handstamped



5,232 handstamped



25,360 handstamped

The large CILICIE handstamp

On the Ottoman victory stamps of 1917



11,800 handstamped



1,700 handstamped

On the Achir Kapu lighthouse stamp of 1918



25,371 handstamped

On the Ottoman armistice overprint commemoratives of 1919



2,000 handstamped



2,000 handstamped

On the Ottoman postage due issue of 1914



3,300 handstamped



7,710 handstamped



4,211 handstamped

The large CILICIE handstamp

1 pi post office and 25pi pictorial commemoratives of 1916 on a Parcel Card addressed to Smyrna.



Cancelled Adana 23.3.19 backstamped Smyrne 7, 5.4.19

Large CILICIE handstamp, inverted, on 10pa Ottoman printed postal newspaper wrapper of 1914
With additional 20 paras on 10 cent rose French Offices in Levant, Mouchon stamp of 1902



Cancelled Adana 25.4.20

The large CILICIE handstamp

On the Ottoman postage due issue of 1914



handstamp double on four of the eight stamps

The small CILICIE handstamp

Overprinted in black sans-serif capitals 15mm long x 3½mm tall
Reported to have been released on 1st April 1919

The reason for this smaller size handstamp is not evident, it may have been cut to fit the smaller format stamps but it appears to have been used indiscriminately.

On the Ottoman postage due issue of 1914



handstamp double on three of the six stamps

The small CILICIE handstamp

On the Ottoman pictorial issue of 1914



40,350 handstamped



13,500 handstamped

On the star and crescent issues of 1915 and 1916



32,700 handstamped



6,900 handstamped



15,000 handstamped



53,766 handstamped

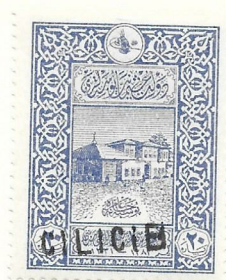


handstamp double

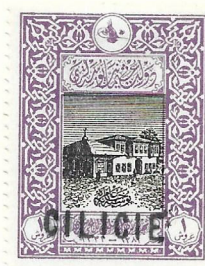


30,000 handstamped

On the post office commemoratives of 1916



12,000 handstamped



43,500 handstamped

The small CILICIE handstamp

On the five pointed star and crescent issue of 1916



handstamps inverted – centre column

On the Ottoman victory stamp of 1917



14,800 handstamped

On the Ottoman postage due issue of 1914



6,200 handstamped



5,400 handstamped

The script *Cilicie* handstamp

Overprinted in script characters 16mm long x 6mm tall
Reported to have been released on 1st May 1919

This handstamp appears to have been brought into use to satisfy the demand for stamps.

On the Ottoman pictorial issue of 1914



18,900 handstamped



handstamp inverted



60,000 handstamped

On six pointed star and crescent issues of 1915



59,200 handstamped



36,900 handstamped



2,000 handstamped

On five pointed star and crescent issues of 1916



21,570 handstamped



5,700 handstamped



handstamp inverted



16,200 handstamped



double handstamp one inverted

The script *Cilicie* handstamp 16mm long x 6mm tall

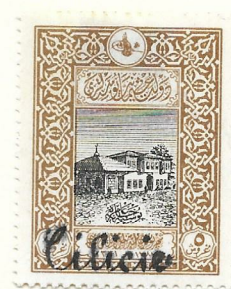
On the post office commemoratives of 1916



43,100 handstamped



48,950 handstamped



17,700 handstamped

On the Ottoman victory stamps of 1917



5,900 handstamped



15,500 handstamped



2,000 handstamped

On Ottoman postage due issue of 1814



7,200 handstamped



double handstamp



handstamp inverted

7,300 handstamped

In mid May 1919, probably on orders from Beirut, it was decreed that "Territories Enemis Occupes" be required on all postage stamps. Presumably to signify to the world that mails from this region were not from an independent province of the Ottoman Empire but from an occupied territory.

This explains why there is so little used, and so much mint, handstamped material available.

The script *Cilicie* handstamp

20 para strip of three and single on a 1 piastre brown Registered Envelope addressed to Tarsus.



Cancelled Adana 12.6.19 backstamped Tarsus, 14.6.19

Script *Cilicie* handstamp on 20pa Ottoman printed mosque post card of 1918



Cancelled Adana 23.5.19

The script *Cilicie* handstamp 16mm long x 6mm tall

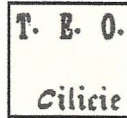
Block of stamps clearly showing variation caused as a result of using thin textured ink.



Stamping once on the ink pad then twice or three times on the stamps gives sloppy then clean impressions.

The T.E.O. Cilicie overprint

In May 1919 it was decreed that "Territories Enemis Occupies" was required on all postage stamps.

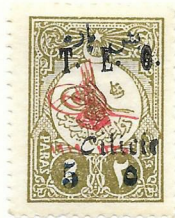


The Ottoman Press in Adana was contracted to overprint various obsolete and current Turkish stamps in two lines of type in black or blue ink. The printer set the type to form twenty individual type blocks of the initials "T.E.O." and another twenty blocks of "Cilicie".

The printer used the stock of Old English style type, kept for bi-lingual business cards. To produce the block of twenty subjects required the use of sixty letter 'i's, of which there were only fifty one available.

The nine missing letters were fabricated from three 't's, three 'l's and three 'f's.

The two sets of overprints "T.E.O." and "Cilicie" were intermingled in the various different setups of twenty subjects, which were changed almost with each change of adhesives. The settings have different vertical measurements, depending on the height of the adhesives to be overprinted.



iti



tll



tff



tff

The 't's were filed horizontally to take away the cross bar, leaving a short letter 'i'.

The 'l's were filed across the upper ends creating three very straight 'i's without serifed tops on the vertical lower bases.

The 'f's were filed diagonally, lopping off the hanging heads just above the cross bars, creating three 'i's with the dots sitting much to the right of the vertical bases.

The T.E.O. Cilicie overprint

On Ottoman Newspaper Stamps of 1919, 500,000 overprinted.

The modified letters are always found in the combinations 'tff', 'fil', 'til' and 'iti'.

'tff'

'iti'



'til'

'fil'



double overprint

inverted overprint

Dropped stop after 'O' of 'T.E.O.'

dropped
stop



'fil'



'fil'

dropped
stop

dropped
stop



The dropped stop appears twice on each setting of twenty overprints.