

Reference Manual of Saudi Arabian Forgeries (2024)



Part 1 - Postage and Revenue Stamps

***** Development version 3 *****

Arabian Philatelic Association International

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Reference Manual of Saudi Arabian Forgeries



A Weatherings Book

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eVersion

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Section 1

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Introduction

Forgery Types

Introduction

The existence of forged overprints on Hejaz and Nejd stamps appears to be well known in collecting circles, but forged stamps less so. The 1985 edition of the Arabian Philatelic Association's Reference Manual of Saudi Arabian Forgeries mentioned only two sets of forged stamps as well as the bogus triangular stamp and this book is designed to describe and illustrate all known forged stamps for the area. Having stated that, with the popularity of personal computers and laser printers, it is now possible for anyone with such equipment to produce reasonably realistic copies of stamp and in the light of that fact, only a few such stamps will be mentioned and even those will have only brief notes.

There are some important forgeries and perhaps none have a greater impact than the so-called 'reprint' forgeries. Some Hejaz stamps were overprinted for use in Transjordan and it seems as though many, or perhaps most, collectors of that country studied the overprints but failed to study the Hejaz stamps themselves. It is probably true that many collectors, authors, and catalogue editors have treated realistic overprints on Hejaz forgeries as genuine with the result that much written work cannot be trusted.

From time to time details of forgeries appear on the internet, but websites come and websites go and quite a lot of useful information has already disappeared. It is important that the information is recorded in book form, either printed or electronically, in order to preserve our knowledge of the subject.

The forgery type identifiers are listed and explained. It was necessary to devise a numbering system that could be implemented on a computer database; the 1985 manual had a 'forgery type 1' for everything which was not very helpful when compiling forgery descriptions.

It is suggested that this book is first read from cover to cover without concentrating too much about the detail, just to get a feeling for the subject. When knowledge about a specific stamp or set of stamps is required, that is the time to read in detail. The images used in this book are usually high resolution and may be copied and pasted into image manipulating software and enlarged.

Much of the information contained in this book has already been published in 'Random Notes', the journal of the Arabian Philatelic Association and its successor The Arabian Philatelic Association International, but there is a lot of new material and at least it is now in one place! The main references to Random Notes are noted in some sections of this book, but for a full list please use the Random Notes index.

Readers are free to make a hard copy of this book if they wish and margins and pagination have been set with that in mind. Please note though that any such print is for personal use only and that the ISBN shown on page ii is for the electronic eBook version only.

Alternative Definitions

A **genuine stamp** is one, whatever its true status, for which an 'expert' has paid a lot of money.

A **forgery** is a genuine stamp, but which an 'expert' does not have in his/her collection.

Forgery Types

Forged basic stamps mainly fall into distinct groups to which have been allocated names that other collectors and dealers seem to have used: 'Cairo', 'Hialeah' and 'Tel Aviv'. Identifiers have been allocated to these stamps in such a manner as to be able to determine the type of forgery from the number. Thus 'Cairo' forgeries start with SC, 'Hialeah' with SH and 'Tel Aviv' with ST. SR has been allocated to the 'Reprint' forgeries and other miscellaneous forgeries begin SM, although other letters will be used if all of the SM series become allocated.

Within each of these stamp groups, another letter is allocated to represent each different set and a further 2 digits for each face value that is forged, but note that these numbers do not represent an exact monetary value - the digits 01 may be 1 qirsh in one set and 3 qirsh in another in order to keep the system flexible. Where a forgery type has two different forgeries of the same value in a set, the number will have to be further qualified and additional numbers have been used, e.g. SMP-01-02.

Cairo

Group code	Stamps
SCA	Hejaz Survey of Egypt
SCB	Hejaz Sherifian Arms
SCC	Saudi Heir Apparent

Hialeah

Group code	Stamps
SHA	Hejaz Survey of Egypt
SHB	Hejaz Sherifian Arms
SHC	Saudi Heir Apparent
SHD	1936 Medical Aid Society

Tel Aviv

Group code	Stamps
STA	Reserved for Hejaz Survey of Egypt
STB	Hejaz Sherifian Arms
STC	Hejaz Railway Tax
STD	Hejaz Flat Rate Documentary
STE	Hejaz Proportional Documentary
STF	Hejaz-Nejd 1926 Definitive

Re-print

Group code	Stamps
SRA	Hejaz Sherifian Arms

Miscellaneous groups

Group code	Stamps
SMA	Hejaz King Ali
SMB	Hejaz-Nejd Essay
SMC	Hejaz-Nejd 1926 Definitive
SMD	Saudi Arabia Small Kaaba Definitive
SME	Saudi Arabia Radhwa Commemorative
SMF	Saudi Arabia 1934 Tughra Definitive
SMG	Hejaz Sherifian Arms (1)
SMH	Hejaz Sherifian Arms (2)
SMI	Saudi Arabia 1963 Freedom From Hunger
SMJ	Saudi Arabia Airport Tax
SMK	Saudi Arabia 1934 Railway Tax
SML	Saudi Arabia 1944 Road Tax
SMM	Saudi Arabia 1949 Air
SMN	Hejaz Sherifian Arms (3)
SMO	Saudi Arabia 1968 Entry Visa
SMP	Khedivial Mail Interpostal Seal, GEDDA
SMQ	Genuine Makkah Arms 10p with inverted genuine centre attached
SMR	'Maryland' 1977 Dammam – Riyadh Railway

Bogus Triangular Stamps

Group code	Stamps
SBA-01	Value 1
SBA-02	Value 2
SBA-03	Value 5
SBA-04	Value 50
SBA-05	Value 75

Section 2 - 'Named' Forgeries

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The 'Reprint' Forgeries	
The 'Rel Aviv' Forgeries	

The 'Cairo' Forgeries

References

Random Notes #58. Article - Forged Stamps of Saudi Arabia.

Random Notes #62. Two articles - The Cairo Forgeries.

The 'Hialeah' Forgeries

Random Notes #68 contained some notes about the Hialeah forgeries; an updated version follows:

In 2002 'reproductions' of the Heir Apparent stamps and a few other Hejaz stamps were being sold on eBay by 'ATDINVEST'; these are known as 'Hialeah' forgeries. Much has been written about these stamps, in fact they have been quite controversial, but to my knowledge they have never been sold as genuine items, so cannot be classed as a fraud. The stamps have been produced by modern printing methods and on stiff gummed paper. Subsequently these stamps have been sold on eBay by other sellers. The entire stock was purchased from the eBay seller and appeared on the web at <http://www.worldstampreplicas.com> but that site is no longer available. At the time I made a simple enquiry about the new organization and received the following reply:

Yes we are the purchasers of AtDInvest stock and equipment. As our name states we make it clear that we are not selling reproductions as original stamps. We also make this clear on our site. We believe that everyone should be able to enjoy the little works of art and the historical representation that stamps provide. As you know purchasing original classic stamps can be costly. Many people are shut out because of the cost. Major works of Art are reproduced and sold as reproductions and so are coins. Why not stamps? We think offering reproductions can improve the industry by allowing more people to participate. Regarding our process, all we will say is that we have several thousand stamps that we will be adding to our inventory and our site. We will also add hundreds of Cancellations and their postal history. As a novelty we will be offering coffee mugs and computer mouse pads. The customer will choose the stamp from our inventory to have printed on these items.

As far as I am concerned, the standard of reproduction of the Saudi stamps is so poor as to not pose a threat. But there is a twist. In Random Notes #58, details of the 'Cairo' forgeries of Heir Apparent stamps were given and the differences between the numerals on these stamps and the genuine ones. These Hialeah forgeries appear to be reproductions of the 'Cairo' forgeries! However I have seen several values that match the genuine stamps, thus giving rise to there being two type of Hialeah forgeries of the Heir Apparent stamps.

There are some Hialeah forgeries of overprinted stamps, but it should be noted that the 'overprints' are actually part of the design and included in the digital file from which the stamps are printed.

At the time of writing (December 2023) some information is available at https://stampencyclopedia.miraheze.org/wiki/Hialeah_forgeries.

The 'Maryland' Forgeries

References

Stamp Encyclopedia - https://stampencyclopedia.miraheze.org/wiki/Maryland_forgeries

Random Notes #72. Item 5.

The 'Reprint' Forgeries

It might be helpful to reproduce a precis of an article written by Rudy Thoden in Random Notes #45:

Reprints and forgeries of this issue also exist. Firstly, there are the official reprints in new colors from the original plates made by the Najdis after the fall of Makkah. They were then overprinted with the first and second "Sultanat al Najdiah handstamps. Some of these are also known without handstamp, and are scarce.

Secondly, the full set of these stamps exists as outright forgeries. These are the 'Tel Aviv' forgeries.

Finally, there are the printings of uncertain status. These printings often differ in shade and paper from the originals, and they also differ in several other respects.

These suspect stamps are rarely found "used", and then only with the bogus MEKKE cancel, or the equally bogus all-Arabic Makkah al-Mukarramah 20 Ramadan 1343 cancellation. They are never found with a genuine Jeddah or Najd overprint. In fact, if a collector can learn to recognize these variant basic stamps, he need not bother checking any overprint or surcharge which may be on them; the overprint or surcharge will invariably be a forgery. (Of course, forged overprints were also made on basic stamps of the original genuine printings).

The A.P.A. has referred to these stamps as "reprints", but they may well be forgeries instead. The stamps in question do show the same plate varieties as the normal stamps, such as the "10" for "1" varieties on the 1p. They were printed in the same sheet format, 36 stamps arranged 6x6. The reprints of the 1/4q have the lower three rows tete-beche, the same as the originals. If they are forgeries, the plates must have been photographically copied from the originals. If they are truly "reprints", they must have been prepared under different conditions than the originals since their quality is noticeably inferior. Since they do not exist genuinely used or with genuine overprints, they must be unofficial reprints rather than government reprints.

Since that article was written the 'reprint' theory has been disproved. The 1/8p 'reprint' plate is a copy of an early state of the genuine plate and the stamps are now designated as forgeries.

These forgeries were extensively overprinted with not only fake Hejaz overprints but fake Transjordan overprints as well. Scholars of Hejaz philately have learned to recognize them but unfortunately most Transjordan collectors have not and that has led to much misinformation in Transjordan catalogues and books.

References

Random Notes #44, page 8 (MEKKE cancel)

Random Notes #45. Article - Reprints and Forgeries of the Makkah Arms Issue.

Random Notes #91 item 11.

The 'Tel Aviv' Forgeries

It has been documented in Random Notes and the 1985 version of the Forgeries Manual that the Makkah Arms stamps, as well as the Hejaz railway fiscals and Hejaz revenues overprinted by the Nejdīs, exist as 'total forgeries'. That is the stamp, any overprint, and cancellation are all forged. The perforation is recorded as being 10¾, although perhaps closer to 10.9, and it would be better to refer to them as perf 11. It has also been recorded that the print quality and colour for these stamps are usually both poor. Most of the used stamps of this group are cancelled by the fake DJEDDAH 10-6-21 as illustrated on page W-2 of the 1985 edition of the Arabian Philatelic Association's Forgeries Manual, but many also exist with an equally fake all-Arabic cancel "Mekka Al Mukarrama" dated 18 Sha'aban 1345 and a diameter of 34mm. It is also thought that about half of these forgeries are perf 11.5 - the same as the genuine stamps, so do not rely on the perforation to identify these forgeries. Just to complicate matters, some imperforate examples also exist.

Dr. Elias Kavar kindly supplied an explanation of how these forgeries came to receive the 'Tel Aviv' label:

David Graham acquired the "Tel Aviv" forgeries from a dealer in London who claimed he bought them at a Tel Aviv stamp show.

The link with Tel Aviv is thus somewhat tenuous, but at least it provides us with a label something more useful than the vague term 'total forgery'. There are other forgeries of the basic stamps, perhaps from the same stable, but the look and feel of them is completely different to these crude items.

References

Random Notes #66. Article - The 'Tel Aviv' Forgeries.

Random Notes #91 item 11.

Section 3 - Forgeries of Genuine Issues

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1926 Hejaz-Nejd Definitive	
1934 Proclamation of Emir Saud as Heir-Apparent	
1977 25 th Anniversary of Dammam-Riyadh Railway	

Khedivial Mail Interpostal Seal



Type III



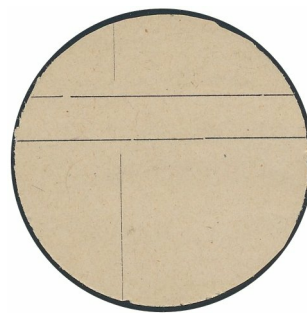
Type Vb

Designs used for genuine interpostal seals used in GEDDA

The two types of interpostal seal usually seen from Jeddah (GEDDA) were the Kehr types III and Vb. Forgeries of the type III have not been recorded, but the type Vb being an expensive item has been forged. One of the fake type Vb seals has been described as a facsimile, but all will be treated here as forgeries.

Type SMP-01-01

A very accurate reproduction of the original with only minor differences. As usual with items produced from photographs of the genuine item, loss of detail is present, but nevertheless a dangerous forgery. One example seen has lines printed on the back.



Printed lines on back



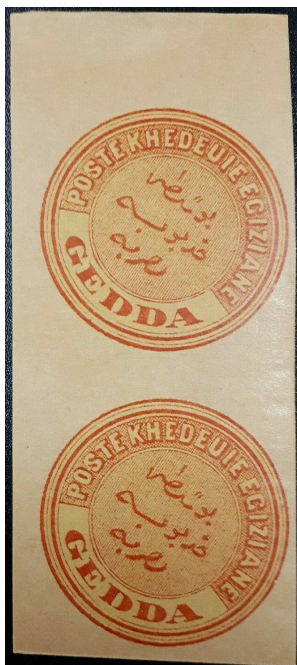
Clear print - genuine



Less clear - forgery

Type SMP-01-02

In November 2020 an imperforate pair was offered on eBay, but without a guarantee. Although the APAI has not examined this item, it can be seen that it is a good imitation of the genuine item but can be easily identified as a forgery because the thin outer circle is missing.



Thin outer circle on genuine

Note

If forgeries of the type III seal are found, they will be allocated forgery type SMP-02.

References

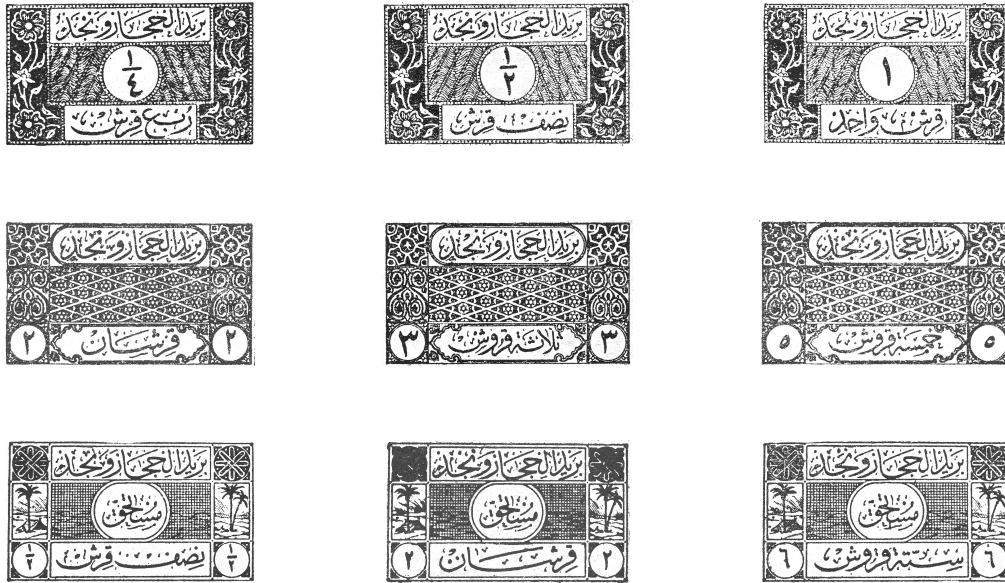
The Posta Europea and 1984 Kehr Catalogue of Interpostals, Ernest A. Kehr and Philip Cockrill (Cockrill Series Booklet No. 33)

Les Vignettes de Franchise d'Egypte, Georges Chapier.

Egyptian Interpostals or Official Local Stamps, O. May.

Random Notes: #59 "Posta Eurpoea Interpostal Seals"
#96 item 6.

1926 Hejaz-Nejd Definitive



Designs used for genuine stamps

Two types of forgeries have been recorded for this issue: The 'Tel Aviv' type STF and a much more realistic type, the SMC series.

'Tel Aviv' Type STF

No doubt produced from photographs of the genuine stamps but poorly reproduced and the colours are not correct. They exist imperforate, and perforated 11 or 11½. They probably exist in colours meant to represent both the original colours and the final colours of the genuine stamps, but not all have been recorded.

'Tel Aviv' forgeries of the postage due stamps have yet to be recorded.

It is thought that sheets of stamps are produced by multiple applications of a single-cliché printing forme.

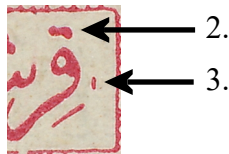
The stamps also exist with the forged Pan Islamic Congress overprint.

Code	Face
STF-01	¼ qirsh (not yet recorded)
STF-02	½ qirsh (not yet recorded)
STF-03	1 qirsh
STF-04	2 qirsh
STF-05	3 qirsh
STF-06	5 qirsh

STF-03 - 1 qirsh postage



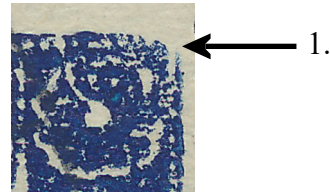
1. Top right corner damaged.
2. Second dot over ق almost missing.
3. Vertical stroke omitted.



Genuine



Forgery



1.

STF-04 - 2 qirsh postage



Very poor quality print. Characters lack clarity and some touch the frame, lines not well defined and line thickness inconsistent.



Genuine



Forgery

STF-05 - 3 qirsh postage



As with other values in this forgery series, there has been much loss of detail. The examples below show missing dots, commas changed to dots or straight lines and dots which should be just touching have become solidly joined.



Genuine



Forgery

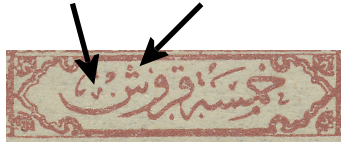
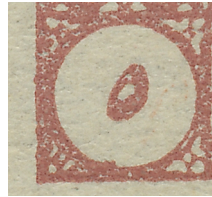
STF-06 - 5 qirsh postage



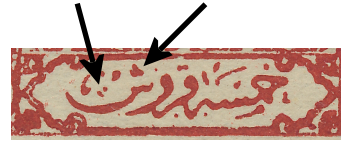
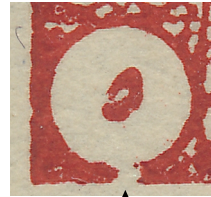
The main identification point is the forgery shows a break in the design at the bottom of the circle containing the Arabic 5 in the bottom left corner.

As with the 3 qirsh value, there has been much loss of detail. The examples below show broken characters and dots which should be just touching have become solidly joined.

Genuine



Forgery



Type SMC

No doubt produced from photographs of the genuine stamps. The main distinguishing feature of the forgeries is that they are perforated 11½ with good centring whereas the genuine stamps are perforated 11 with variable centring. The paper and gum also differ; the paper used for the forgeries appears to be of better quality, but different papers and gums were used for the forgeries. The better quality paper has resulted in the lines of the forgeries being sharper and sometimes thicker, but the reproduction process has led to a loss of detail. As with the STF type forgeries, commas have become dots, closely separated dots have become joined etc.

The 1985 Forgeries Manual suggested that the stamps originated from a photograph of a single cliché, but two minor variations of the 3 qirsh have been seen.

The stamps also exist with the forged Pan Islamic Congress overprint.

SMC-01 - ¼ qirsh postage



In addition to the perforation check, the forgery of the ¼ qirsh value has differences in the border surrounding the stamp. The genuine stamp has larger white squares in the border strip than the forgery where they sometimes show as small circles.



Genuine

Forgery

SMC-02 - ½ qirsh postage



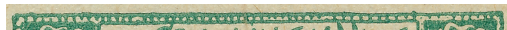
In addition to the perforation check, the forgery of the ½ qirsh value has differences in the border surrounding the stamp. The genuine stamp has larger white squares in the border strip than the forgery where they sometimes show as small circles.

The forgery also has a short coloured line joining the diagonal line above the Arabic Nejd to the comma-shaped character above the Arabic 'noon'.

Genuine



Forgery



SMC-03 - 1 qirsh postage



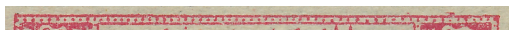
In addition to the perforation check, the forgery of the 1 qirsh value has differences in the border surrounding the stamp. The genuine stamp has larger white squares in the border strip than the forgery where they sometimes show as small circles.

The forgery also shows, despite clearer lines, a lack of detail in the ornament in the top right corner.

Genuine



Forgery



SMC-04 - 2 qirsh postage



Apart from the perforation check, the easiest way to identify this forgery is to examine the design in the centre of the stamp. In genuine stamps the curved vertical lines in most cases are not joined to the white diagonal lines, but in forgeries most of them are joined.



Genuine

Most curved vertical lines are not joined to the straight white diagonal lines.



Forgery

Most curved vertical lines are joined to the straight white diagonal lines.

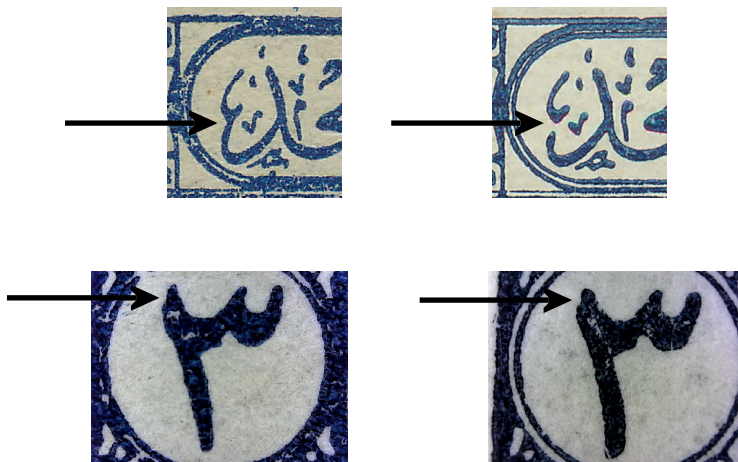
SMC-05 - 3 qirsh postage



The forgery of the three qirsh value has a flaw in the Arabic 'Nejd'; the curved line does not connect to the Arabic letter 'dal' in the forgery but does in the genuine stamp. The Arabic numeral 3 has a notch in the top which is not so prominent in the genuine.

Genuine

Forgery



A variety of this forgery exists where there is a break in the ornament in the top left corner.



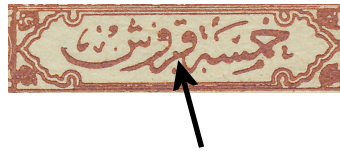
SMC-06 - 5 qirsh postage



The 5 qirsh value also suffers from loss of detail in the small characters but does have one easily recognized feature; there is a small projection at the junction of the Arabic letters 'qaf' and 'reh'.

Genuine

Forgery



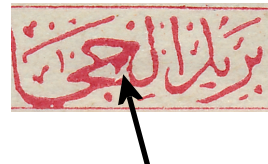
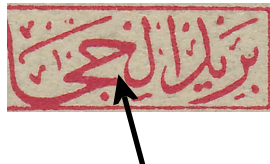
SMC-07 - ½ qirsh postage due



The main identification feature of the design is a projection of ink below the 'hah' of Hejaz.

Genuine

Forgery



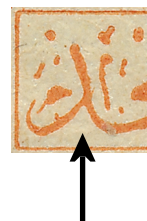
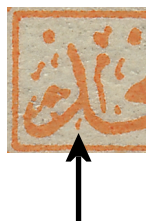
SMC-08 - 2 qirsh postage due



Apart from the perforations there is little to assist in identifying this as a forgery. It does suffer slightly from the loss of detail in the Arabic text, but fortunately there is a minor detail omitted; it is a short line just underneath the Arabic 'dal'.

Genuine

Forgery

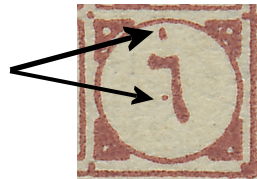


SMC-09 - 6 qirsh postage due



The 6 qirsh postage due has very useful features to assist identification, or perhaps it should be lack of features. The genuine stamps have two dots, one large and one small, in the value circle in the bottom left of the stamp.

Genuine



Forgery



SMC Summary

The forgeries are perforated 11½ and the genuine stamps 11. No perforation 11 examples of this forgery have been seen, YET.

Examples are usually well centred, but there are exceptions.

Several papers and gums have been seen with colours ranging from white to cream for both paper and gum.

1934 Proclamation of Emir Saud as Heir-Apparent

Designs used for genuine stamps

Two types of forgeries have been recorded for this issue: The 'Cairo' type SCC and the Hialeah SHC series.



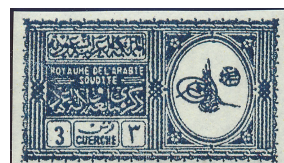
Cairo forgery



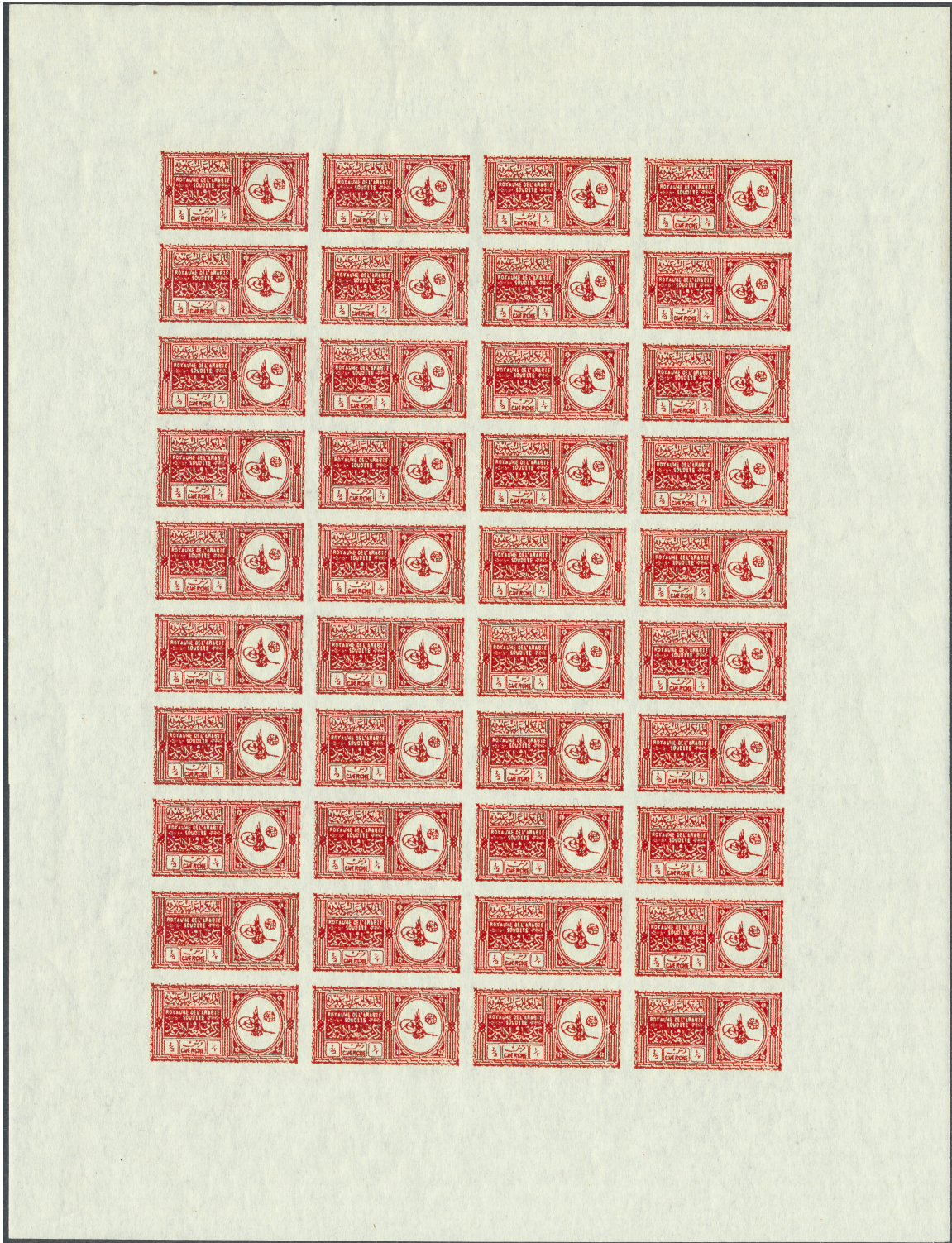
Hialeah copy of
'Cairo' forgery



Genuine



Hialeah copy of
genuine stamp



1977 25th Anniversary of Dammam-Riyadh Railway

'Maryland' Type SMR-01

Examples of this forgery normally come with a descriptive note which clearly indicates their purpose as being a reproduction rather than a forgery although they have a backstamp 'FORGERY' in green. Comparison of the detail shows a quality of print similar to the Hialeah reproductions - poor, although there are no deviations from the genuine design. There is even some doubt as to whether these stamps ever went near Maryland. Just a convenient label, maybe.

The stamps are perforated 11; the genuine are perforated 14.



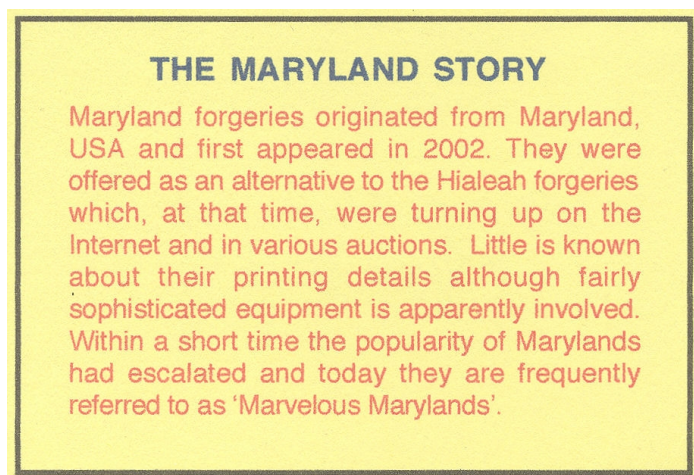
Maryland 'forgery'



Genuine



Detail from genuine



Detail from reproduction



Backstamp

A search of the web in 2006 produced this:

A "Maryland forgery" Encouraged by the apparent success of the "Hialeah forgeries", the Nottingham, UK, dealer Roger West has recently been offering a range of new worldwide "forgeries". While these are said to be produced in Maryland, USA, their primary sales appear to be mainly via outlets associated with Mr West. So far only one Burma item has appeared, the 1938 3 annas (SG26), presumably chosen for its thematic appeal. These computer-generated reproductions are on ungummed papers without watermark, rubber stamped "forgery" on the reverse. Perforations are line, gauge 11, and "sheets" are apparently usually A4 size – probably some 30 to 40 stamps. Printing is probably by laserprinter. Mr West has written to The American Philatelist arguing strongly for the collectability of these "forgeries". He offers the Burma item at £14.50 for a single copy. The real stamp is priced by Gibbons at £14 mint.

Section 4 - Revenue Stamps

Chapter

Page

1936 Medical Aid Society

1936 Medical Aid Society

Type SHD

Accurate design but poor quality reproduction in a colour varying considerably from the genuine. The stamps were printed on thick gummed paper in sheets of unknown size. Examples of imperforated stamps seen and perforated stamps have been seen on eBay. A low resolution image from eBay, July 2003, is shown below.

Also from eBay is an illustration of a stamp with 'repro' in red.



Genuine stamp



Imperforate Hialeah forgery

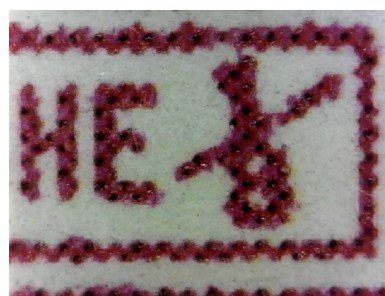
Comparison

One easy way to identify the forgery is by measurement. The genuine stamp is 37 x 20 mm and the forgery is 40.5 x 21.5 mm.

Under magnification the differences are most noticeable; the genuine has a 'clean' look and shows the 'ink squash' associated with typography, but the forgery is messy and flat in appearance.



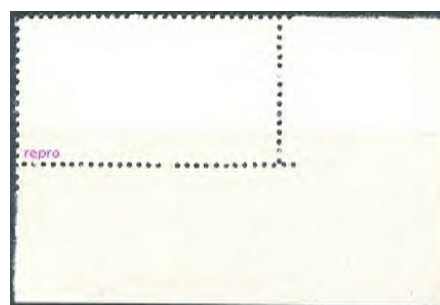
Genuine



Forgery



Perforated Hialeah forgery block
eBay July 2003



'Repro' in red

Section 5 - Bogus Stamps

Chapter

Page

Bogus Triangle

Bogus Triangle

Type SBA

This set comprises five triangular 'stamps' either imperforate or perforated 11½. The stamps exist mint or cancelled with a bogus postmark in either black or red (very scarce). The paper is normally off-white, but a copy of the 75 para has been seen on a thicker, buff paper.

The 50 and 75 values appear to be denominated in 'para'.

SBA-01 (Value 50)



SBA-02 (Value 75)



This value is also known in brown with a 5 para surcharge. (Reported by Dick Tjaden).

SBA-03 (Value 1)



SBA-04 (Value 2)



SBA-05 (Value 5)



Bogus Cancel



References

Les Timbres de Fantasia, Georges Chapier, published by Emile Bertrand, Lucerne.

Chapier reports these as imperforate triangular stickers printed in Muslim characters but were unable to gather any information about them.

False Impressions, Tarik Alireza and David Graham, Gibbons Stamp Monthly, June 1990.

Completely bogus stamp, apparently printed in Poland in the early 1920s - neither inscriptions nor 'cancellation' is really Arabic.

Further references appear in Random Notes:

Random Notes #65, Triangular Bogus Issue

Random Notes #75, Note #3.

Random Notes #98, Note #10.