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ملاحظات عابرة

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Random Notes

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## THE ARABIAN PHILATELIC ASSOCIATION

The Association was established in 1968 in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia by a group of Aramco employees particularly interested in Saudi Arabian philately. Membership is open to all interested Aramco employees and their dependents eligible to use Aramco facilities. Annual dues are SR 10. Others may subscribe to A.P.A. publications and participate in the A.P.A. new issue service and auctions. Annual subscription fee is SR 10 in Saudi Arabia, \$5 (U.S.) in Europe, and \$7 in the U.S.A. There is a one-time initiation fee of SR 25 or U.S. \$7.50 for both members and subscribers. Annual fees include all publications for the year (by airmail).

Applications for membership or subscriptions, together with dues or fees, should be sent to the treasurer. Checks should be made payable to The Arabian Philatelic Association. All changes of address should be sent to the secretary.

All of the following A.P.A. officers may be addressed c/o Aramco Box 1929, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

B.H. Walthall, President.

A.E. Sonntag, Vice President	R.J. Thoden, Forgeries Manual
G.F. Leonhard, Secretary	W.L. Latshaw, Past President
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A.P.A. meetings are held the second Saturday of each month at 7 P.M. in Aramco facilities in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

The A.P.A. provides a new issue service for Saudi stamps to its members and subscribers. This is handled by:

R.J. Thoden - for members attending meetings in Dhahran.

J.M. Wilson - For subscribers in the U.S.A. Mr. Wilson charges a fee for his services. His address is: P.O. Box 3054, Humble, Texas, U.S.A. 77347-3054.

J.I. Kearney - for subscribers elsewhere, including Saudi Arabia.

### RANDOM NOTES

The A.P.A.'s publication, RANDOM NOTES, is issued four times a year. The editor is Mr. R. J. Thoden, Aramco Box 1802, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

Contributions for publication in the RANDOM NOTES are solicited and should be submitted to the editor. Short items from subscribers in the U.S.A. may also be submitted to Mr. J.M. Wilson for incorporation into his regular article. The right to edit or reject all submissions is reserved.

## JOHN WILSON'S RANDOM NOTES

1. Yes, I did exhibit at ROMPEX. I showed stamps and covers of The Hejaz, including the fee paid items, but not including anything from the Turkish period. I won a vermeil, which is somewhere between silver and gold, and was quite happy with it, considering that I am not by any means experienced in this level of show. The grand award winner was Warren Latshaw's old friend Hubert Skinner and his collection of New Orleans postmarks on cover. It was indeed a wonderful exhibit. Last week, I went down strictly as a spectator to TEXPEX at Corpus Christi, Texas, and again the level of exhibits was very high with many gold medals being handed out. It is truly tough to compete against the better collections nowadays.

I am still working toward a price list, and I am at the same time adding to my stock, so the result ought to be pretty good. I will be in Saudi Arabia from July 7 to about the middle of August on a consulting assignment with the Arabian Oil Company up in the Neutral Zone, and if I get a chance to come down to Dhahran, I certainly will. They have warned me not to expect a lot of such trips, as they will need me up there, but I ought to be able to get away at least once or twice.

2. Frank Patterson sent me an item about the Tourist Issue. He says that "to those collectors of Saudi Arabian stamps who find the so-called Tourist Series a fascinating field for specialization, the following data on its genesis will be of particular interest. It appeared in the official government publication "News From Saudi Arabia", Vol. 1, No. 51, dated March 23, 1965." I quote it here as it appeared in Frank's letter.

### "New Postage Stamps

"Riyadh - March 17. The Philatelic Department has sent eight pictures depicting prime attractions in Saudi Arabia to Messrs. Thomas De la Rue in London with a request to design appropriate postage stamps of these sites in accordance with an agreement concluded between the Ministry of Communications and the British firm in question.

"The pictures involved cover Holy Places in Mekkah and Medina, antiquity sites in Mada'in Saleh, the oil fields and natural sceneries (sic) of desert life."

Frank goes on to say: This matter-of-fact announcement, while informative, raises two more questions suitable for further philatelic research. Eight pictures were sent to De la Rue for incorporation in the new stamp designs, but only seven appeared on the stamps that were finally issued. What was the subject of the eighth picture, and why was it not used?

The second question, says Frank, was one of time. Why did three years elapse between the placing of the order and the issuance of the first Tourist Series stamps? De la Rue already had a long-term contract to produce postage stamps for the Saudi Arab Government. No new printing or perforating equipment was needed to carry out the supplement agreement, so the firm could easily and probably did produce the specified new stamps in less than a year at most. Was the release of the new Tourist Series definitives delayed for two years for possible objections to the use of pictures, or, more prosaically, did the Post Office have large stocks of existing stamps and decide to use these up before releasing the Tourist stamps? Can anyone provide some answers?

3. Frank sent me another item, this time about the dated plate markings of the 1960-63 definitive issues. Here it is:

From time to time, the writer has noted questions appearing in "Random Notes" about the dated plate markings found on most sheet corner blocks of the Dam, GOSP, and Convair definitives of the 1960-63 period. For no particular reason, the writer was fortunate enough to have regularly picked up blocks of such material at the Dhahran Mail Center (Aramco) during the extended period of issue. On the basis of an almost complete collection of these imprinted blocks, the following information can be made available.

The combined series were produced by photogravure at the Survey of Egypt Press in Cairo under contract from the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Finance. The stamps were originally printed on a medium soft unwatermarked paper with a yellowish gum and issued to the post offices in sheets of 100 (10x10) beginning in the spring of 1960. The sheets of most of the denominations had dated plate markings in the selvage of the lower right corner, composed of a letter and year date. The indication A/60 appeared in the right hand selvage and the same in Arabic script was in the bottom selvage. It is interesting to observe that the Arabic used the Gregorian year date!

These markings were added to the printing plates by hand and two variations will be found for each value. This would seem to indicate that the stamps were printed from a large plate of 200 subjects divided into two panes of 100 each and guillotined into sheets of 100 for post office use. (Editor's note: This was found to be the case when late in 1982 a few imperforate sheets appeared on the philatelic market consisting of two unseparated panes of 100 each separated by a vertical gutter.)

Five exceptions exist to the broad statement that all values of the initial Dam, GOSP, and Convair series exist with corner blocks with the markings of A/60. For reasons unknown, the plates of the 7p Dam, the 7p GOSP, and the 9p Convair were never marked and their corner selvages are blank. The Convair 15p and 30p plates were the last ones laid down and, accordingly, were inscribed with the marking of A/61.

As the stock of certain stamp denominations became depleted, additional supplies were ordered from Cairo by the Ministry of Finance. Following precedent set with the early issues of The Hejaz, the Survey of Egypt Press changed the markings on the new plates to read A/62, the date of the second printings. These plates were first used for the Dam 6p, 9p, and 10p values (and possibly the 2p) and these were printed on the same medium soft unwatermarked paper with yellowish gum used for the 1960 printings, with color variations as noted in Scott's.

For security reasons, in 1961 the Saudi Government adopted a new type of paper watermarked with a multiple design of a palm tree over crossed swords and with white gum. Controlled supplies of this paper were sent to Cairo, and all of the subsequent printings of stamps from the A/62-marked plates were made on this watermarked paper. These include the Dam 1/2p, 3p, 4p, 5p, and 20p; the GOSP 1/2p, 1p, 3p, 4p, 5p, 6p, 8p, and 9p; and the Convair 2p, 4p, 6p, 8p, and 9p. A subsequent and final printing was produced by the Survey of Egypt of the Convair 1p from plates marked A/63. Thereafter, the printing plates were returned to the Saudi Government together with the unilaterally cancelled contract as a result of the breaking off of diplomatic relations as the civil war in Yemen developed.

The Survey of Egypt plates were never again placed in use since they were incompatible with the lithographic printing equipment used by the new contractors, the Dar al-Isfahani Press of Jiddah, and the firm of De la Rue in London.

4. We have a few illustrations of fakery courtesy of David Graham.

1. Purportedly L18b, but Type 8 forgery of the unframed overprint, with variation of thin "1" at left and very fat "3" at right.



1

2. Also purportedly L18b with indistinct part cancel - probably L12 used with fake overprint added. Unlisted type of fake with these characteristics:
  - "Alif" at far right leans back slightly.
  - Upper diagonal stroke of the three strokes near center not parallel to other two.
  - "3" at left has deep double indentation.
  - "1" at left has very wide slanting top.



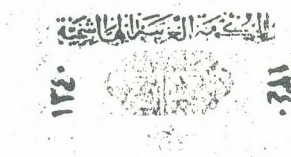
2

Some details are partly obscured by the cancel.

3, 4, and 5. Fakes of L18b, L19 variety overprint inverted, and L23 variety WAHID QIRSH. All have the same fake overprint. No. 5 was illustrated in Random Notes No. 27. No. 4 has slight double strike of text at right, otherwise all three look identical.



3

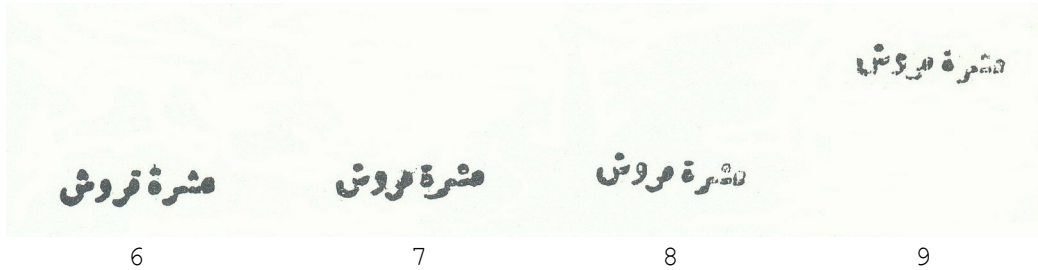


4



5

6-9. No. 6. is a genuine surcharge plated as Position 21. It has oily ink visible from the back. Nos. 7, 8, and 9 are fakes of L41b, L41, and L41b, respectively. Ink on No. 7 has violet tint, while that of Nos. 8 and 9 is grayish. All have no dots over "qaf". Triple dot of "shin" at left and right is just a blob, while that of the genuine type has a clearer triangular form. "Ra" in "'Ashrah" has a distinct bump in the corner (barely visible on No. 9, which has a light impression). No. 7 has a much longer "ra". Someone has plated it as ovpt 12 on stamp 25, and No. 8 is marked 32, but "I don't like the look of any of them", says David.



Next from David Graham are three covers with two-line Jiddah overprints on top of framed (and in one case unframed) overprints. These all bear bogus DJEDDA 5 cancels dated 10/11/1917 and 24/1/326 - the Hijra date corresponds to early 1908. All are addressed to "Monsieur Kazimaly Hussein Djaffar, Rue Colbert, Diego Suarez, Madagascar" and are in the same handwriting, but with some spelling variations, e.g., "Col Bert". There are no transit markings. Taken as a whole, there is a complete run from L67 to L75 on these three covers. The covers are illustrated on the next two pages.

The overprint types are as follows:

"L67" Unframed overprint T3 fake (short 'l' var.0. Two-line is T1A fake with variations of thin stroke instead of full dot over 'zaa' and single dot instead of pair at far left in Line 1.

"L68" Framed overprint apparently genuine; two-line as above.

"L69" Framed overprint T2 fake. Two-line is a rather crude unlisted type fake with distinctive top to "kaf" and clearly separated dots over diagonal stroke near center of Line 1. Poor lettering in Line 2.

"L70" Same as "L69"

"L71" " " "

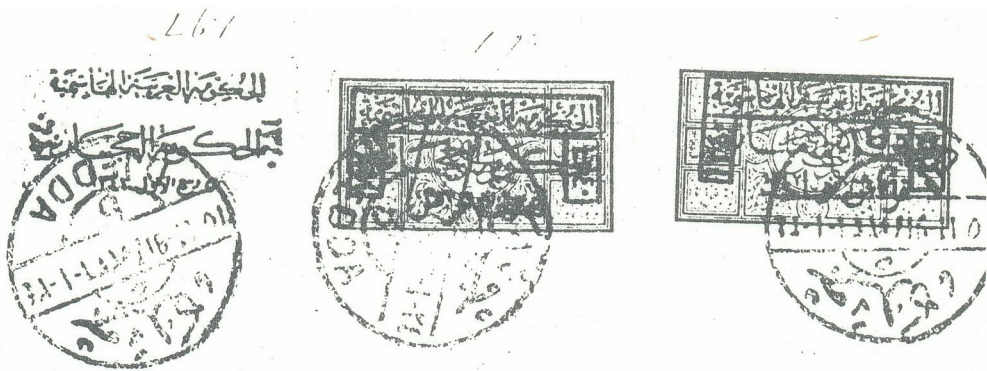
"L72" Framed overprint apparently genuine; two-line overprint as "L69", but with the two dots joined.

"L73" Framed overprint T2 fake; two-line as "L72".

"L74" " " " " " " "

"L75" Framed overprint genuine (Position 11). Two-line overprint similar to "L69/72" types but with the two dots farther apart and second "3" in year with a deep V-shaped indentation in the top.



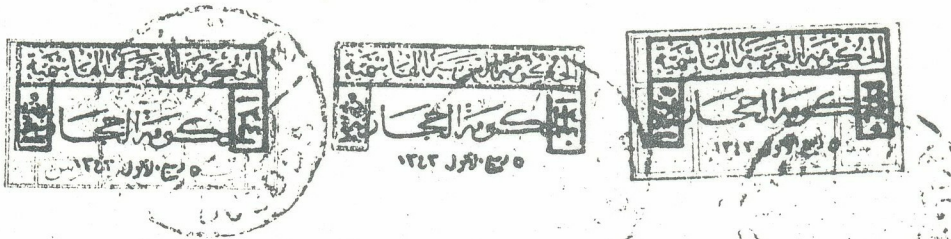


Monsieur

Kazimaly Hussin Djaffa

Rue Colbert

Diego Suarez  
Madagascar



Monsieur

Kazimaly Hussin Djaffa

Rue ColBERT

Diego Suarez  
Madagascar





Mumkur

Kazim Hussein Daffar

Rue Elberk  
Diego Suarez  
Madagascar

On the next two pages are copies, sent by David, of two airmail covers of interest. These also have the bogus DJEDDA 5 cancels, and are unaddressed and without other cancels or transit marks.

The large three-line overprints are all the same forgery, Type 4, but without break in center of "kaf" noted in the APA Reference Manual.

The TWA cover (the larger one) contains several genuine stamps as well as the fakes. This circumstance may indicate which of the stamps were most difficult to obtain at the time.

Details of the Nejdi stamps, taking both covers together, follow:

37 Framed overprint T2 forgery; handstamp is T2 forgery in carmine red instead of the correct orange red shade.

38 Framed overprint genuine (Position 5) with genuine handstamp.

38A T2 handstamp forgery on lake-brown reprint or color trial of the 1/8q.

38B T2 forgery on normal 1/8q.

39 Genuine.

39B T2 fake handstamp. I have always maintained (says David) that 39B in mint condition is a very tough stamp to find - it took me several years to get, though used and imperforate versions are easier to come by.

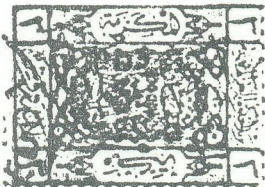
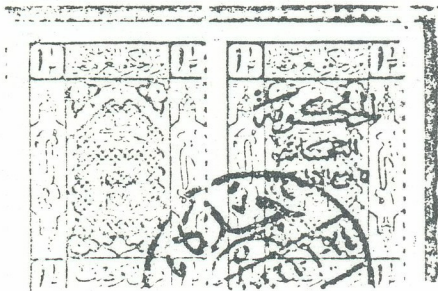
40, 41a Genuine.

42a Handstamp is T2 fake.

43 Genuine.

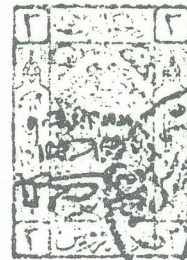
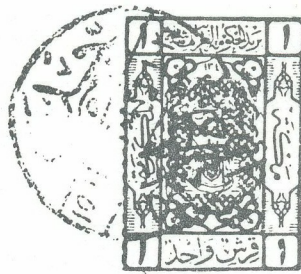
44 Handstamp is T2 fake on vermilion reprint/color trial of the 3q red.

45 Genuine.



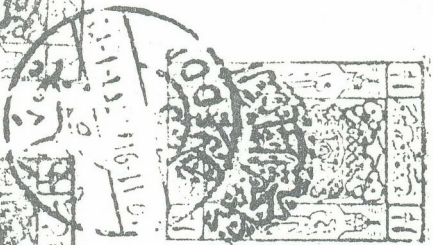
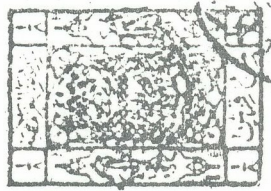
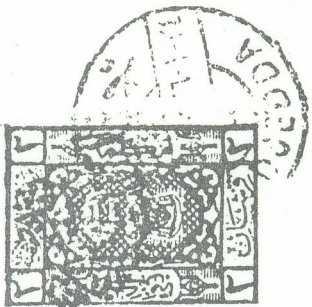
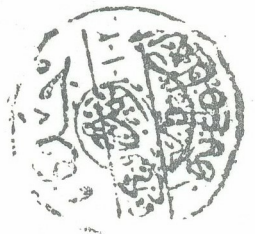
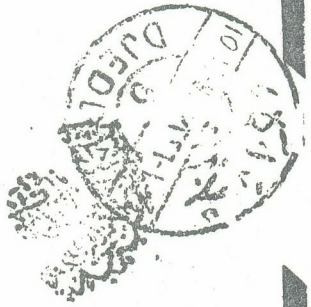
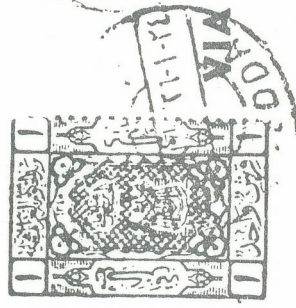
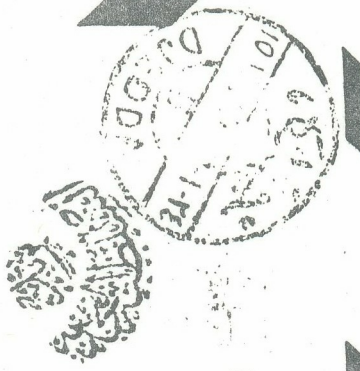
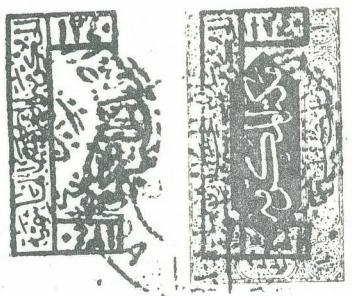
4276

VIA AIR MAIL  
CORREO AEREO



PAR  
AVION

TRANS WORLD AIRLINES, INC.



RANDOM NOTES FROM DHAHRAN

By: R. J. Thoden

1. Copies of Filatco's "Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Postage Stamps" album have arrived in Dhahran. All A.P.A. Members and subscribers should have received provisional literature from Filatco by now. Gene Alley has put together one great order for local members and will coordinate a second if there is enough interest. Contact him directly.
2. Photography for Part III of "The Reference Manual of Saudi Arabian Forgeries" has been completed at last. Part III should be ready before year-end. Copies will be sent automatically to all members and subscribers who previously requested Parts I and II.
3. The annual A.P.A. Exhibition, APEX-13, has been set for November 29 in the Intermediate School Gymnasium in Dhahran. The show chairman is Ken Quarfoth. Prospective exhibitors and vendors should contact him as soon as possible.
4. Through the courtesy of the Dammam Postoffice, we have obtained a limited number of copies of the official seal illustrated in the Spring 1982 RANDOM NOTES. Those who would like one, contact the editor. First come, first served. Delivery to non-residents of Dhahran will be with the Fall 1984 RANDOM NOTES.
5. The editor urgently solicits articles on all aspects of Saudi philately. Contributions are needed from others in order to be able to continue to provide a publication of about 30 pages per issue. Two or three people can't do it all.
6. When the Wahhabis conquered the Hejaz in 1925, stamps of Hejaz were initially handstamped "Posts of the Sultanate of Nejd". These were followed by definitive issues for the combined Kingdom of Hejaz and Nejd. Despite these inscriptions, the editor has never seen any of these stamps cancelled anywhere except from postoffices in the Hejaz. No cancellations from postoffices in Nejd have been seen. Who can furnish data on the establishment of the postal system in Central and Eastern Saudi Arabia? When and where were postoffices opened and stamps used? The editor has stamps cancelled in Riyadh, Katif, Hassa and Okair in 1934. Who can report earlier cancellations?
7. Complete sets of the last officials have come on the market. These are Scott's 048-062, plus unlisted 12p and 23p denominations. The set being offered also includes 053a, but not 059a.
8. Your editor is aware of the latest letter sent out by a disgruntled former subscriber who was expelled because of his failure to pay for auction lots in accordance with the terms of the auction. The statements made about the A.P.A. (he calls us the A.P.S.) are so ridiculous they are not worthy of further comment.

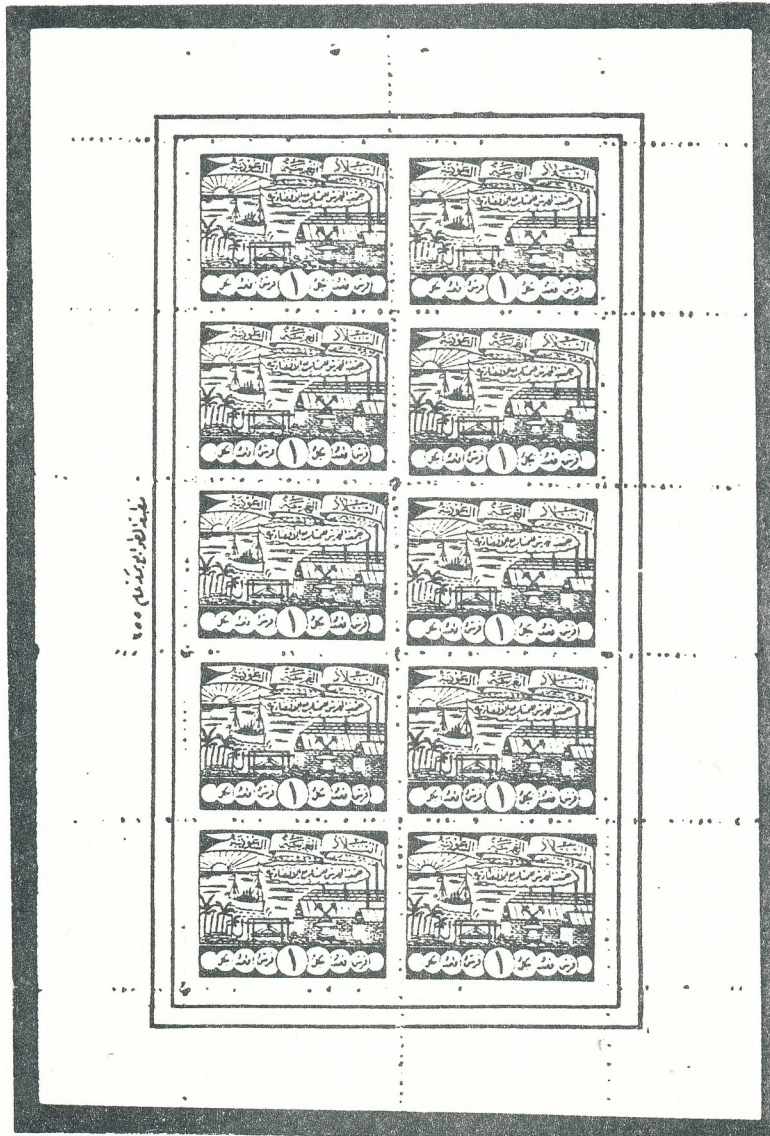
WHAT IS IT?

By: R. J. Thoden

The editor has owned the illustrated sheet of 10 stamps for several years, but has been unable to get any information on the purpose or usage of these stamps.

The stamps are inscribed "Al-Bilad al-Arabiyah al-Sa'udiyah" (The country of Saudi Arabia), in contrast to all other postage and revenue stamps which are inscribed "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia". The inscription in the smoke is "Jam'iat al-Qirsh lil-Mashari' al-Iktisadia" (The Qirsh Society for Economic Projects). The meaning of this is not obvious to the editor. The denomination is "one qirsh nickel". The use of the word "nickel" is also unknown on other stamps. The color is red. The marginal inscription at the left indicates the stamps were printed by the Stamps Printing Press, Mecca in 1936-37. This is where all postage and revenue stamps of that period were printed.

Bob Jung reports a similar sheet, but in blue, and with marginal inscriptions at the right instead of left. Who can help?



# SAUDI ARABIA:

## Stamps of Hejaz and Nejd

BY DAVID GRAHAM

THE capture of Medina and Jeddah in December, 1925 (SG 244-53) by the Nejd forces of Sultan Abdulaziz al-Saud brought the end of Hashimite rule over the Hejaz. Most of the Arabian Peninsula was now reunited under the House of Saud, as it had been in the early 19th century, when the reforming zeal of the Wahhabi sect had first inspired this relatively minor tribe to expand its domains.

Now that the principal cities of Jeddah, Mecca and Medina, centres of trade and pilgrimage for centuries, were under its control, the new government had to provide a modern postal service, which had not been necessary for its original territory in Central and Eastern Arabia. The interim issues of captured Hejazi and Ottoman stamps with "Nejdi Sultanate Post" handstamps continued to circulate, with SG 218b, 225 and 239-42 apparently more frequently used commercially than other types.

However, new stamps were ordered from Whitehead, Morris in Alexandria, and a set of six in two designs was issued in February 1926, bearing the inscription "Hejaz and Nejd Post" in Arabic (SG 254-60). Probably to conform with U.P.U. agreements regarding the colours to be used for various inland and overseas rates, the set was reprinted almost immediately in different colours (SG 261-66). Three postage due stamps were added at the same time (SG

D267, 270, 272). The designs of these issues (SG Types 38, D40) are interesting in that they were the first, other than Ottoman or Railway stamps, that were not purely abstract, in accordance with Islamic principles. The definitives show a somewhat stylised flower in the side panels while the dues have palm trees, sand dunes and a tent. Imperforates of all these sets were released; those of the first set are very rare, whereas those of the other two are fairly common. A large amount of proofs on assorted paper, in a wide variety of colours also appeared, including miniature sheets and perforation varieties using a gauge of 14 instead of the normal 11. Max Mayo's specialist catalogue of 1973 lists a few hundred varieties, and more may exist; although all can be classified as printers' waste or the work of weekend printers, the few that appear on the market from time to time fetch fairly high prices in spite of their illegitimate status. As well as all these extras, forgeries of SG 264 and 265 were made, although the genuine stamps have never been scarce. The fakes, similar to those of several Nejd Sultanate and Hejaz issues, are crudely printed on fairly thick ivory paper, and perforated 11 also. These two forgeries also have very wide margins at top and bottom.

In June, 1926, an Islamic Congress was held in Cairo in order to regulate pilgrimage and

other affairs, and a commemorative overprint (SG Type 40) was applied to the current definitive and postage due sets. A skilled counterfeiter decided to increase the supply and produced stamps on a very white paper and better-printed, probably from cleaned original plates, with a neat overprint, also superior to the true article. These fakes can be detected easily by their clean fresh appearance, as well as details in the overprint; in any case they are not a serious problem to collectors as they seem to be much scarcer than the genuine stamps. These, as far as is known, were the last of a steady spate of forgeries of early Saudi stamps and especially overprints, apart from the bogus overprints on the 1962 Malaria Eradication set.

A new set of definitives and dues (SG 284-91, D292-3) was issued in January, 1927, and featured the "toughra" or cartouche of Abdulaziz as the central part of the design, with the family name of al-Saud to the right. This royal cipher appeared on all stamps issued up to 1945.

The only printing variety found in this issue is on the 1q postage due, in which the upper right corner value tablet has "two qirsh" in Arabic (SG D292a). It is not known if this error occurs more than once per sheet. Abdulaziz was proclaimed King of the Hejaz in Mecca after his victory over the Hashimite forces, and became King of the Nejd on his return to Riyadh. His position received international recognition after the signing of the Treaty of Jeddah with Britain in 1927, although he still had to cope with dissident tribes and border disputes.

The first anniversary of the establishment of the newly united kingdom was marked by a commemorative overprint reading "Commemorating the Kingdom of Nejd and its Dependencies" with the Islamic date "25th Rajab, 1345". This was put on all the definitives of the previous issue and the set (SG 294-301) seems to be commoner in mint condition than the former.

Stanley Gibbons mentions an Ottoman pictorial of 1914, surcharged 1q, which is also listed in Scott at \$150; this may have been used as a provisional around 1928-9 but there seems to be no record of its having been authorised or genuinely used postally. It is also surprising that such a stamp would not have had a Hejaz and Nejd overprint or handstamp, unless it had been prepared by the Ottoman authorities, possibly in besieged Medina during the 1916-18 Arab Revolt. A 6q surcharge is listed by Mayo and mentioned by Gibbons and Scott, while the latter also refers to a 20q; the author has some of the 1q type, including three with errors, as



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

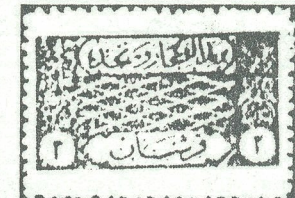


Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8

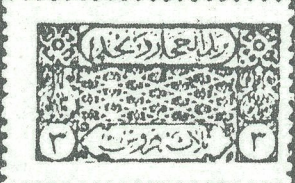


Fig. 9

Fig. 1 essay of 1926 1/2q showing flower design; Figs. 2 and 3 first and second issues with changed inscription; Fig. 4 proof of 2q; Figs. 5 and 6 second issue 2q with forgery; Fig. 7 3q with Jeddah cancel; Figs 8 and 9 second issue 3q with forgery.



Fig. 10 essay of postage due ¼q with desert scenes; Fig. 11 issued version with 1/20 value bottom left; Fig. 12 1926 Islamic Congress overprint; Fig. 13 forgery of Fig. 12; Fig. 14 SG 275 with double overprint and partial third strike; Fig. 15 1927 Toughra ½q definitive; Figs. 16 and 17 postage due 1q with error variety; Fig. 18 Establishment of Kingdom overprint; Fig. 19 1928-9 Ottoman "Provisional" variety — inscription reads "many" instead of "one" qirsh.

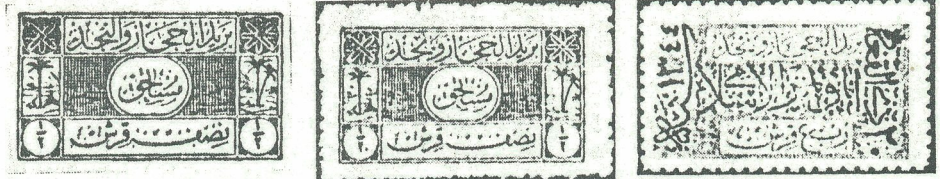


Fig. 10

Fig. 11

Fig. 12

well as the 6q and a similar 5q on a different pictorial, but the status of all is doubtful. Nevertheless, the 1q value occasionally changes hands at around the Scott figure, and the others are so rare as to make their owners unwilling to part with them in case evidence of their authenticity may yet turn up.

The next issue, in 1929, was a definitive set of three values (SG 302-4), one for a new overseas postal rate and two high values, in a very similar "toughra" design to the 1927 set. For the first time, Saudi stamps bore the name of the country "Hejaz & Nejd" in the English form and the values expressed as 1¼, 20 and 30 garch.

In the following set of five stamps commemorating the fourth anniversary of the King's accession (SG 305-9), the non-Arabic inscriptions were changed to French, the official language of the U.P.U., and this continued until 1950 when English began to be used again. These stamps, which showed the national emblem of crossed swords and palm trees, symbolising justice and prosperity, were the country's first true commemoratives without overprints, and as such were featured on the 1979 anniversary issue (SG 1220-MS 1223). They were perforated either 11 or 11½, and a local dealer also supplied them stuck to ruled paper with Jeddah favour cancels of the first day of issue, 8/1/30.

Another short definitive set of three values, again bilingual and with the "toughra" in a central circle, was issued in 1931-32 (SG 310-12). The design was modified to a less ornate form in 1932 when two new values were added and one repeated (SG 313-15). The former set was only perforated 11, while both gauges were used for the latter; the 11½ type



Fig. 13

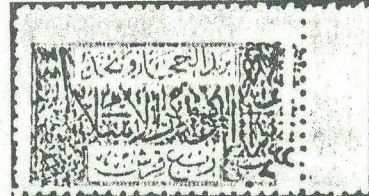


Fig. 14

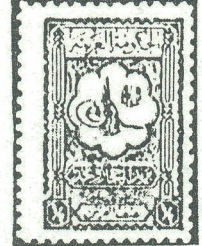


Fig. 15



Fig. 16

Fig. 17



Fig. 18

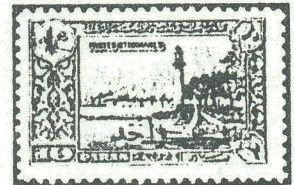


Fig. 19

seems to have been used more frequently while the ½q perf. 11 is very rare.

In both sets, the currency is written as "guerche", which was used for many subsequent issues — "qirsh" is the nearest transliteration to the Arabic. The "piastre" used for both early and modern stamp values is not Arabic but a French derivative of a Latin word; it may have originated with the Italian postal service established in Egypt in the 1860's, which had a branch office in Jeddah, or from

Ottoman usage.

It is of interest to postal history enthusiasts to note that during the 1933-34 Saudi-Yemen border war, the Saudis occupied Hodeida, and a few Hejaz and Nejd stamps were used there as well as values of the new "Proclamation of the Heir Apparent" set. However, it seems that favour cancels were made and only stamps on postally used covers with the Hodeida cancel can be regarded as authentic.

From the time that the Government Press in Mecca took control of the printing of postage stamps in 1927, the flood of errors and varieties often created for the philatelic market came to a halt. Apart from the postage due error of 1927 noted earlier, the most difficult items to obtain are various perforation and "imperf. between" varieties, and the top values of various sets. Because quantities printed were essentially for postal use, all these issues except the 1930 commemorative set are quite plentiful used, but becoming scarcer mint as the growing number of Saudi philatelists increases the demand for limited stocks of material. Collectors with an eye on profit should thus look for mint issues of the Hejaz and Nejd at any kind of discount from catalogue prices; those seeking enjoyment at little cost, yet with investment potential, should concentrate on getting fine used stamps cheaply and looking out for scarce cancels and other unusual features.

Covers of this period are quite rare — it would appear that after the issue of the sets printed in Egypt in 1926, strict controls were enforced regarding errors and waste material, and dealers such as the well-known Albert Eid could no longer get fancy covers with assorted varieties more or less made to order. So the few covers of 1927-34 that occasionally come on the market are usually very ordinary-looking and somewhat dog-eared items with a fair proportion from the correspondence of H. St. John Philby to his mother in England. Because of their scarcity, these are quite highly priced, yet may still be picked up from dealers' shoe boxes and attic lots.



Fig. 20



Fig. 21

Figs. 20 and 21 1929 bilingual definitives, the 20q with 1934 Hodeida cancel; Fig. 22 1930 King's Accession commemorative pair with Mecca first day favour cancel.



Fig. 22



Fig. 23

Fig. 24

Fig. 25

Figs. 23 and 24 1931 new definitive with 1932 version; Fig. 25 larger 1932 definitive.

(Continued on page 165)

# SAUDI ARABIA:

(Continued from page 161)

The Hejaz and Nejd period thus has interest for every type of collector, from beginners to specialists who enjoy the pursuit of the unattainable and the occasional triumph of a well-informed amateur over a professional who may not be aware of an item's true value; all without the major problem of the forgeries that bedevil the collector of early issues.

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RANDOM NOTES will publish as many free adlets in each issue as will fit on one page. Maximum five lines per adlet. Send to either the Editor or to Mr. J.M. Wilson (in the U.S.A.). If more adlets are received than there is space available, a priority system will be used whereby repeat adlets by the same A.P.A. member will be put at the bottom of the waiting list.

.....

Wanted - 1926 Hejaz-Nejd issue perf. varieties. Perf. 11x14: Scott's 79, 80, J16 to J18. Perf. 14x11: 75, 77, 78, J16, J18. Write to J.I.Kearney, Aramco Box 5060, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

.....

Wanted - Revenue stamps RG33, 35, 37-43 per RANDOM NOTES #27 and RP38, 40, 41, 45 per RANDOM NOTES #28. Also other revenues, accumulations, documents. Please write to R.J. Thoden, Aramco Box 1802, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

.....

Wanted - Unmounted mint - Scott's 177a, 177b, 184a, 185a, 196a and Dammam Port miniature sheets set of 3. Please write with asking price to: C. Bourne, Graphics, S.A.P.L., P.O. Box 30167, Yanbu al-Sinaiyah, Saudi Arabia.

.....

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We periodically publish price lists of stamps and postal history from countries throughout the Islamic World. For a copy of our latest list contact Patrick Riggs, P.O. Box 5082, Santa Fe, N.M. 87502, U.S.A.

.....

Wanted - F-VF used Heir Apparent Scott's 140,141,144-148.  
R.J. Thoden, Aramco Box 1802, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

.....

Wanted - Non-philatelic cover bearings Scott's 196 and/or 197.  
R.J. Thoden, Aramco Box 1802, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

.....

Wanted - Scott's C69B mint or used.  
R.J. Thoden, Aramco Box 1802, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

THE HEJAZ RAILWAY

By: R. J. Thoden

Around the turn of the century, the Ottoman Empire was in dire straits. It was bankrupt and heavily in debt to the European powers. It was militarily weak, having been defeated in war. Its control over much of its territory in Arabia was purely nominal due to the difficulty of transporting troops. It had the reputation of being unable to do anything substantial on its own. The number of pilgrims to the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina was declining.

Sultan Abdulhamid II's program for overcoming some of these problems was to build the Hejaz Railway from Damascus to Medina and Mecca. It was to be the first railroad financed, constructed and operated by the Empire alone. The order to build the railroad was given on May 2, 1900 and construction started on September 1, 1900, the 25th anniversary of the Sultan's accession.

The project was presented to the Ottoman people as a work of religious charity dedicated to improving the pilgrimage and to the protection and economic betterment of the Holy Cities of Islam. They were asked to contribute on this basis. Although the contributions (voluntary and coerced) were substantial, it soon became obvious they would not be sufficient to finance the project. Various other revenue-raising steps were instituted, including the imposition of a Hejaz Railway stamp tax on documents, starting in 1904. These stamps are illustrated in Figures 1 to 7.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7

Construction, mostly by Turkish troops, and under the direction of a German chief engineer proceeded steadily, following the ancient pilgrim caravan route. The Damascus-Zarqa section was opened on 9/1/02. The Railway reached Ma'an in 1904. A branch from Dera'a to Haifa in Palestine was built in 1904-06. In September 1907, a celebration was held in Al-Ula to mark completion of 1000 kilometers of track (on 8/17/07). Turkish 20 para postcards received a special cancellation to mark the event (Figure 8). They are quite scarce today, an example bringing \$900 (plus 10%) in the Mayo auction in 1980. The opening ceremony for the final Tebouk - Medina section was held on September 1, 1908.



Figure 8

The railroad largely achieved its objectives. An uprising in the Mecca-Medina area in late 1908 was quickly put down by troops rushed in via the railway. The travel time for the pilgrimage from Damascus to Medina was reduced from 40 days by camel caravan to 3 days by the railroad. Economic development along the railroad progressed. However, the planned extension to Mecca was never built due to the opposition of Sharif Husain of Hejaz and the bedouins of the area.

The railroad was also used to transport mail and postoffices were built at some of the stations such as Tebouk, Al-Ula and Hadiya (Hedye). Cancellations reading "DEMAS-MÉDINE" (DAMASCUS-MEDINA) were used (see Figure 9), but it is not known to the author whether they were applied aboard the trains or at one or both terminals. They are rare today, two covers in the Mayo sale going for \$2600 and \$2200, and a piece for \$800, (all plus 10%).



Figure 9

After the start of World War I, the railroad was used increasingly for troop movements. After Hejaz declared its independence in 1916, an Arab Army led by the British Col. T. E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia) systematically sabotaged the Hejaz Railway in northern Hejaz and southern Jordan. Passenger service was suspended on January 2, 1917, and the last train to Medina arrived in April 1918. Supplies received via the railway and stockpiled enabled the city to hold out until January 10, 1919. Ottoman control of the railway ended.

The northern part of the line in Syria and Jordan remained in operation with little or no interruption, and indeed, still operates today. The southern part in Hejaz, however, was not rebuilt, although some temporary repairs were made enabling several trains from Ma'an to reach Medina in 1924-25 during the war with the Nejdis.

The Hejaz, financed by British subsidies during World War I, saw these subsidies reduced and finally withdrawn after the war. It was thus in no position to finance reconstruction of the line on its own and demanded a Joint Arab effort. However, Britain and France who assumed League of Nations mandates in Syria and Transjordan, found it not in their interest to re-establish fast and easy communication between Damascus and Medina, as this would tend to unite what they had just split apart.

Hejaz, under the Ottoman Empire, enjoyed exemption from taxation. After independence, taxes were not imposed until the financial situation became desperate after withdrawal of the British subsidies. Several kinds of stamp taxes were imposed in 1921, including a Hejaz Railway tax on documents. Eleven denominations ranging from 1 qirsh to 5000 qirsh are known (Figure 10). During the Saudi siege of Jeddah in 1924-25, they received two kinds of handstamped overprints (Figures 11 and 12). Provisional 1 qirsh values were also prepared at this time by handstamping postage stamps of the King Ali issue (Figure 13).



Figure 10



Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13

When the Wahhabis captured Mecca, where the Stamp Printing Press was located, they found quantities of the Hejaz Railway stamps. These were put to use in 1925 with various postage, commemorative and postage due overprints. The 1 qirsh was also handstamped at Medina after the surrender of that city. These are not shown here as the standard postage stamp catalogs describe them fully.

After the final defeat of the Hejaz, the new Kingdom of Hejaz and Nejd continued the Hejaz railway tax with stamps inscribed "The Arabian Government" (Figure 14). With the proclamation of The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1934, the inscription on the railway tax stamps was changed accordingly (Figure 15). This tax continued until the mid-1940's, when, perhaps reflecting the lack of progress on reconstruction of the railway, it was dropped and replaced with a road tax.



Figure 14



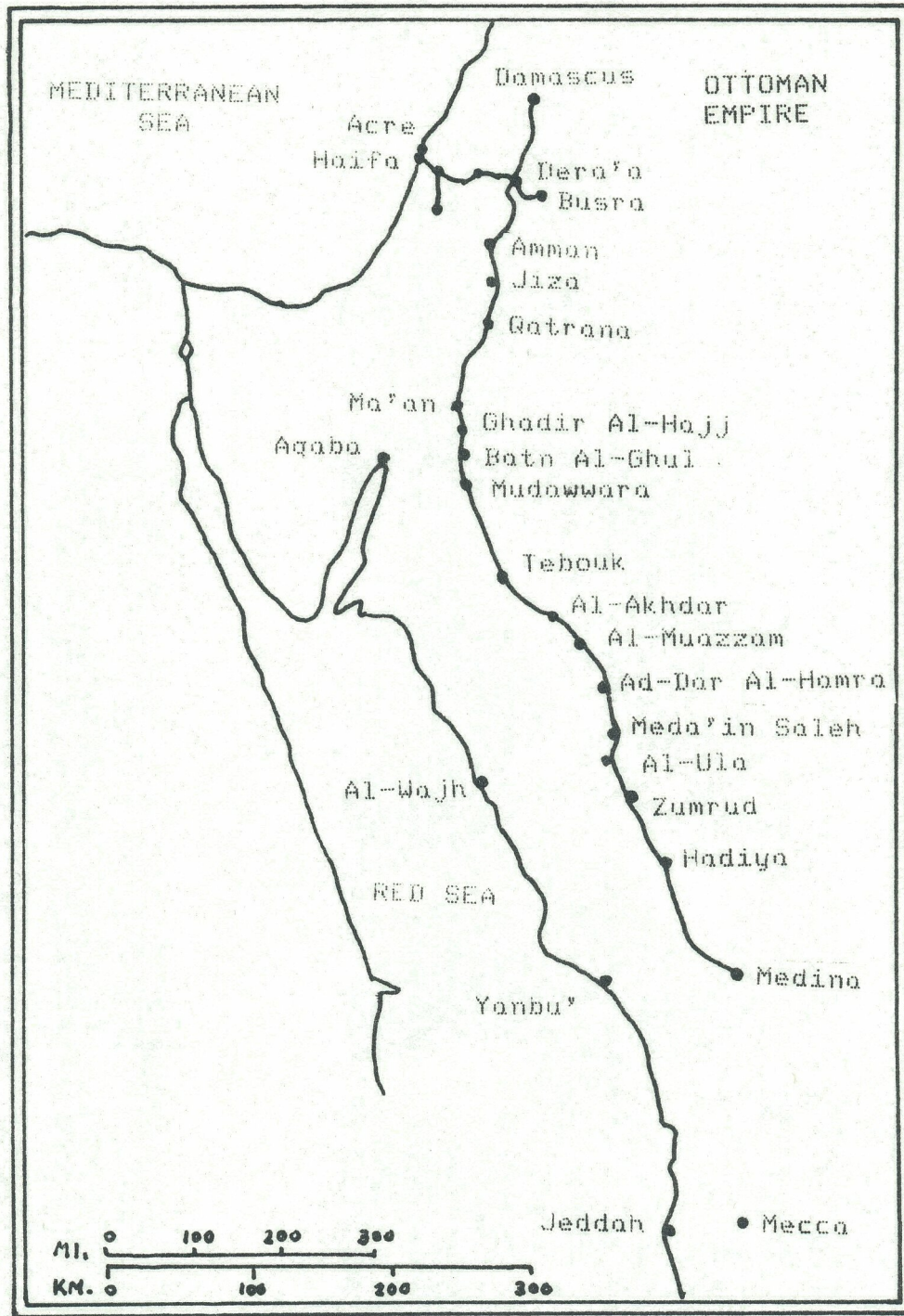
Figure 15

When Syria and Jordan became fully independent after World War II, serious efforts to rebuild the railway began. An Executive Committee for Recommissioning the Hijaz Railroad was established. In 1956, it awarded a contract to an American Firm to make a survey. It was declared that reconstruction was feasible. A contract for the job was awarded to a consortium of British engineering firms on December 6, 1963. Despite this, the project was not carried out, probably due to the realization that improved roads and booming air travel had made the railroad superfluous.

Large stretches of the original trackbeds and even railroad cars can still be seen today in the desert, particularly in the area around Medain Saleh, where the repair yards were located.

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## THE HEJAZ RAILWAY

SAUDI ARABIAN REVENUE CATALOG PROJECT

By: R. J. Thoden

Surprisingly, no comments have been received on the tentative listing of General Documentary stamps in RANDOM NOTES No. 27. I thought that surely someone would have stamps not listed, or could supply additional information.

This time, there is a tentative listing of passport stamps. Please write if you can report even one new stamp, or can provide additional data on usage of these stamps.

PASSPORT STAMPS

Usage: Used to indicate payment of various fees in connection with passports, visas and residence permits. Stamps were affixed directly in the passports and residence permit booklets. Some of these stamps are still in use.

Issues of Hejaz



P1

1922?

Perf. 11-1/2

Unwmkd.

RP5 P1 50q dark blue

Inscriptions: top oval "Abdu" (God's servant) "Al-Husayn bin Ali"; curved panel "Al-Hukumah al-Arabiyah al-Hashemiyah" (The Hashemite Arab Government); lower panel "qism al-jawazat" (passports division).

Stamp of 1922  
handstamped



1925

Perf. 11-1/2

Unwmkd.

RP10 P1 50q dark blue

Provisionally issued in Jeddah during its siege by the Saudi forces. The handstamp reads "Al-Hukumah al-Hejaziah 1344" (The Hejaz Government 1925).



Issues of Saudi Arabia



P3

1937?		Perf. 10-3/4, 11, 11-1/2		Unwmkd.
			A. Perf.	B. Perf.
			11-1/2	10-3/4
			C. Perf.	11
RP20	P3	20q dark blue		x
RP21	P3	22q dark blue		x
		a. ultramarine		x
		b. grayish paper	x	
RP24	P3	110q violet	x	
RP25	P3	220q green		x

The top inscription reads "Al-Mamlakah al-'Arabiyah al-Sa'udiyah" (The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia). The bottom inscription is "tabi' rusum al-jawazah" (passport fees stamps).

RP21 is on thin soft yellowish paper, while RP21a is on medium rough grayish-white paper.

RP21 paid the exit visa fee. RP25 paid the (Saudi) passport renewal fee. The usage of RP20 and RP24 is unknown. Other values may exist.



P4

1937?		Perf. 10-3/4, 11, 11-1/2		Unwmkd.
			A. Perf.	B. Perf.
			11-1/2	10-3/4
			C. Perf.	11
RP27	P4	110q dark violet		x
		a. grayish paper	x	
RP28	P4	440q brown		x

Inscriptions: in the circle "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia"; in the curved panel "tajdid al-iqamah" (renewal of residence).

RP27 paid the initial three-month residence permit fee and RP28 the renewal for one year.



P5

1956 Perf. 11 Unwmkd.

RP29 P5 110q red violet

This stamp apparently replaced RP27. Top inscription is "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia". At the lower center is "ta'shirat al-iqamah" (residence visa).



P6



P7



P8

1959 Perf. 11 Unwmkd.

RP30 P6 110p brown (transit visa)  
 RP31 P7 220p violet (entry visa)  
 RP32 P8 220p red violet (return visa)

Top inscription is "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia". The central Arabic inscriptions read: on RP30 "ta'shirat murur" (transit visa); on RP31 "ta'shirat idkhul" (entry visa); on RP32 "ta'shirat 'awadah" (return visa).

RP31 and RP32 exist on thin soft and medium hard papers. Most copies are very roughly perforated.

1965 Perf. 11 Unwmkd.

Passport fees type of 1937, with values in riyals.

RP33 P3 2R indigo  
 RP34 P3 20R green

1965 Perf. 11 Unwmkd.

Residence permit types of 1937-56, with values in riyals.

RP35 P5 10R red violet  
 RP36 P4 40R brown



P9

1969 Perf. 13-3/4 Wmk. 361

				Watermark			
				R	L	U	D
RP37	P9	2R	olive (exit visa)	x	x	x	x
RP38	P9	2R	dark brown (a country addition)				
RP39	P9	10R	brown red (residence permit)	x			
RP40	P9	10R	color unknown (passport)				
RP41	P9	10R	color unknown (transit visa)				
RP42	P9	20R	dark green (entry visa)		x		
RP43	P9	20R	dark violet (return visa)	x	x		
RP44	P9	20R	orange (passport renewal)		x		
RP45	P9	31-1/2R	brown (general services tax)				
RP46	P9	40R	gray (residence permit renewal)		x		
RP47	P9	63R	dark blue (general services tax)	x	x		

RP45 and RP47 have the Arabic inscription at the top in white on a colored background. RP37, 38, 41(?), 42, 43, 45 and 47 have an additional English inscription below the Arabic showing the purpose of the stamp.

All usages seem clear except "a country addition" and "general services tax". Meaning of "a country addition" is unknown. "General services tax" was charged on all expatriate arrivals into Saudi Arabia for about six months (late 1969 to early 1970), then limited to foreign pilgrims until December 19, 1974 when it was cancelled by Royal Decree M/68.

Nos. RP38, RP40, RP41 and RP45 were seen at the Security Press, Riyadh during a visit there in 1971, but copies have not been seen in use.

Watermark positions are as seen from the front of the stamp (R=right, L=left, U=up, D=down). Watermark refers to Scott's type.

1973 Perf. 13-3/4 Wmk. 337

Similar to 1969 issue, but on luminescent paper with changed wmk.

				Watermark	
				R	L
RP48	P9	2R	olive (exit visa)	x	x

Watermark positions are as seen from the front of the stamp (R=right, L=left, U=up, D=down). Watermark refers to Scott's type.



P10

1980

Perf. 13-1/2 x 13-3/4

Wmk. 361

RP52 P10 20R orange (return visa)  
a. brown orange

It has been reported that RP52 replaced RP43 when forgeries of the latter originating in India were discovered.

Watermark refers to Scott's type.

NEW ISSUES OF SAUDI ARABIA

By: Abdul Aziz Sa'id

Mar.-Apr. 1984: Two additional values, 20h and 65h, of the current Holy Ka'aba definitives in the small format were issued in sheets of 105 stamps (7x15). Wmk. Scott's 361 (S.G. 95) up. Perf. 12.

20h	black & turquoise blue	Mar. 16, 1984
65h	black & azure	Apr. 23, 1984



The Government Security Printing Press, Riyadh, was instructed early this year not to print any more stamps of the Al-Khafji design. The available stocks of this issue will be used until they are exhausted. This issue is to be replaced by a new regular issue called "Saudi Cities Series". The Holy Ka'aba series will continue to be printed and used.

June 27, 1984: The first stamp, a 20h value, of the new regular Saudi Cities depicts two views: Old Riyadh on the left and modern Riyadh on the right (buildings on King Faisal Street and Bat'ha Street). Designed by Ibrahim Turki. Offset printing by the Security Press, Riyadh. Sheets of 52 stamps (4x13). Wmk. Scott's 361 (S.G. 95) up. Perf. 12.

There will also be a 50h stamp in this design. The second view will be of Shrobra Palace, Taif, and there will be two values also.



July 28, 1984: A 20h stamp was issued on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Estate Development Fund. Designed by Ashfaq Ghani. Offset printed by the Security Printing Press, Riyadh. Sheets of 54 stamps (9x6). Unwmkd paper. Perf 12. Quantity: 800,000 sheets.

Aug. 13, 1984: Two stamps of 20h and 80h and two souvenir sheets of 100h each were issued to mark the "Solar Village", which was built near Al-Eyenah village, 45km. northwest of Riyadh, and inaugurated by Prince Salman ibn Abdul Aziz on October 18, 1983. Designed by Ibrahim Turki. Offset printed by the Security Printing Press, Riyadh. Sheets of 54 stamps (9x6). Unwmkd paper. Perf. 12. Quantity: 800,000 sets of stamps and 50,000 sets of souvenir sheets.

