

ARABIAN PHILATELIC ASSOCIATION
Dhahran, Saudi Arabia

RANDOM NOTES NO. 5

These notes will be about as "random" as the preceding editions, but some day we hope to put it all together in an official handbook. So many study problems remain unresolved that I fear this endeavour is many years away. In the meantime, we'll keep adding incrementally to your knowledge. All catalog numbers below are Scott's Standard Postage Stamp Catalog, 1974.

Attached is an article on "The Talismanic Numbers", of interest to cover collectors.

Scott L1b. the ¼ pi. green perf 12 x 10, seems elusive. The only copies shown to your editor have been fakes - the gauge of the perforations was not exactly the same as that of issued stamps. Refer to Warin: "The Postal Issues of Hejaz, Jeddah and Nejd", page 15, and you will find the note:

"Note - A sheet of this value, perforated 12 x 10, is in the possession of His Majesty King George, but this sheet is obviously unique".

Further to the point: there was a fabulous sale of the Brigadier Glynn Grylls collection on March 21, 1974, and this collection contained everything; but there was no ¼ pi green perf 12 x 10. Your editor thinks it should not be catalogued. However, does anyone have one he thinks genuine or that has a certificate?

The Grylls sale did contain a 1 pi blue perf 10 x 12 used with BPA certificate. It made 350 Swiss Francs, or almost \$120. Your editor has one, also with BPA certificate, and both the Grylls copy and mine have similar, smudgy cancels; the town name cannot be made out. I'd be interested to know who else has one of these. It should be listed in the catalogs. The ¼ pi green perf 10 was in the Grylls sale in part sheets - it is hoped someone is willing to part with some!

The gold overprints of the two-line Jeddah issues (Scott L61, L62) both exist on red and blue underprinting (not black underprinting as stated in Random Notes No. 4).

In case you doubt Scott 66B, the only copies we own here have inverted overprints that plate against the full sheet. In other words, it does exist as a genuine item.

We have some full sheets now of the third Jeddah overprint, Scott L82 et seq. When we compared our copies of L82 to L131 against this, we ended up with a lot of items with overprints we couldn't find in the sheet. For the time being, pending development of better information, we are excluding copies that can't be plated against these sheets. About half of the editor's appear to be no good based on this criterion. There'll be more on this in later Random Notes.

The Hejaz from 1916 to 1925 were considered a part of the British area of interest. The stamps were listed by Gibbons as part of the "empire" and were eagerly sought after by British collectors. Printings of the genuine stamps were not near enough in quantity to satisfy new issue demand, and it appears that dealers of the time obliged by "creating" some of their own. It will be hard to bring order out of chaos in this item until we can develop our studies further.



Mr. R.J. Thoden, a long-time APA member, has obliged us with some notes, included below. His notes are identified by his initials in parentheses following each. Many of the Jeddah two-line overprints (Scott's L51 - 60) exist with the red overprint in two distinct shades - a clear red and a brown red. These are really different and overprints in both shades are definitely genuine. Explanation? These are not mentioned in any catalog (RJT).

The "blue" Jeddah overprints on the King Ali set (Scott's L177 - 185) exist in distinct shades - dark blue, gray blue, and gray violet. Are all these genuine? Do any correspond to the two separate printing made in Jeddah? (RJT). Your editor has had difficulty finding the second Jeddah overprint in black (Scott L160 - 168). Has anyone any ideas on this?

Scott L75C and L75D have overprints not found on the full sheet of two-line overprints. They do not bear any of the known fake overprints, either. They are probably proofs made up to test the appearance of the overprint (as Warin suggests on page 76). [Note master copy annotated - WRONG! wak]

Scott No. 52 exists in two types. The same variety could presumably also exist on Nos. 27, 28, and J13, since the same basic stamp is involved. The difference is in the value inscription "Qirshaan" in the bottom panel. In type one, the "alif" and "nun" are close together - inscription length 10 mm. In type two, they are widely separated - inscription 11 mm long (RJT).

The perf 11 reported in Scott's for issues of 1930 to 1946 actually includes the products of two different perforating machines - one is perf $10\frac{3}{4}$ and the other is perf 11. These can be very easily distinguished when using a good perforation gauge, such as the "Instanta". Scott Nos. 125-129, 135-137, and 177 are the perf $10\frac{3}{4}$. The Tughra issue (Scott's 161-172) comes in both perfs, $10\frac{3}{4}$ and 11 (as well as $11\frac{1}{2}$; not all values in each perf, however). Perf 11 is the later product about 1946-48. No. RA3 also exists in perf $10\frac{3}{4}$, although Scott shows only $11\frac{1}{2}$. No. RA4 comes in perf 11 as well as $11\frac{1}{2}$. Unfortunately T.P Wood's excellent article on the Tughra, first airmail, and postal tax stamps in Random Notes No. 3 did not make distinction between perf $10\frac{3}{4}$ and 11. Max Mayo's recent book also shows only perf 11 (RJT).

The Heir Apparent sets (Scott 138-149) sold at full retail in the Grylls sale, attaining SF 325 (about \$110) for the perforated set and SF (about \$125) for the imperforate. Scott Catalog is \$165 each set; Gibbons is L52, or \$180. (While we're on the subject, almost everything in the Grylls sale went well over the sale estimates. The collection of 4000 stamps offered as Lot 935 was estimated at SF 3500 and sold for SF 8500; Lot 946, containing eight covers bearing the first 1916-18 types, was estimated at SF 300 and went for SF 900. All the covers made well over the estimates, usually double, showing the strong interest in covers that exists today. Lot 931 contained a copy of Warin and a copy of the Survey of Egypt 1918 book of which only 200 numbered copies were distributed, each to a named individual; this lot made SF 425, about \$140.

Some of the Cairo - printed pictorials (dam, GOSP, and airplane, Scott's 211 - 223, 224-239, C7-21) seem to exist with the frame double. Seen so far are used examples of the 2p Dam (212), the 9p GOSP (223), and the 30p Air (C18). Can anyone report any others? Look through your accumulations of used copies. (RJT). Further, two different perforating methods appear to have been used. The first was a comb perforator that did one horizontal row of stamps at a time; the top tooth in the vertical rows is very slightly wider than the rest (most easily seen in joined copies). This is the more common method of the two. The second involves a comb that

2021 Note: *The value in SF (now CHF) for the imperforate Heir Apparent set was omitted in the original text.*



did two horizontal rows at a time; the top tooth is quite wide and appears in every other row. So far, Scott 233, 234, 235 and 237 are reported. The only plate variety that I am aware of in the Cairo printings is on position 78 of the 1p dam; the "Qaf" next to the Arabic numeral of value has only one dot over it instead of the required two, making it read "f" instead of "Q".

Our member, Mr. M. D. Schreuder of Hilversum, Netherlands, has found out a lot of interesting things, and I'll deal with them in a bunch. Attached is a listing of inverted watermarks on the definitives (Dam, GOSP, and airplane), some of which are pretty scarce. Mr. Schreuder also reports a 3p Expansion of the Prophet's Mosque, Type I, Watermark 2, with watermark upright instead of right or left; also very scarce. He points out that the plate used for Riyadh printings of the frame of the 10p Faisal stamps contains a number of positions (eight to ten in the sheet) that have the "Qaf" next to the value with three dots instead of two. I had no trouble finding some among my duplicates. On the Expansion of the Prophet's Mosque, the redrawn center has one position (position 5) in the plate showing a white blotch between and toward the top of two close-together pillars. The redrawn centre, Mr. S. points out, can be distinguished by the fact that the pillar-like structure seen vaguely inside the first arch on the right is more clearly visible in the first printing, much less so in the redrawn. He reports also a variety of the 10p expansion Type 1 in which the horizontal bar connecting the arches is partly or fully missing.

Mr. Schreuder is also interested in the wide tooth that occurs in the De la Rue printings of the definitives. His report is attached.

To supplement Mr. Schreuder's information, here is some more. On the 3p Expansion of the Prophet's Mosque, first centre, there is a "grape cluster" hanging from the top (position 2). Position 59 shows a damaged "T" in "Prophet's" - the "T" is missing the top stroke. Position 100 of the frame (both Prophet's Mosque and Expansion) shows a small dot to the top right of the "p" in the value.

No. 461 (4p Prophet's Mosque, WMK 361, redrawn frame) has been found in brown and green instead of ocher and green. The color is virtually the same as that of the 10p value of this design. These were found in the recently issued SR2 stamp booklets. This may be just a shade, or it may be an error of color. (RJT).

Scott's No. 610, the 3p Traffic Day commemorative, exists in two color types. In the common one, the green of the traffic light is a bright blue green. In the scarcer one, the color is gray green (like the 4p and 10p values). These are distinctly different. Only used examples of the 3p gray green (with illegible cancels) have been seen so far. (RJT).

A purple handstamped "T" has been found on a 1g blue-green Tughra stamp (of the original 1934 printing). Mayo lists this handstamp on the ½ g (Mayo No. T818). Nothing is known about these "T" handstamps. They are definitely not common. (RJT).

A 100p green official of design O3 has been found in used condition. In addition to the values listed in the 1974 Scott Catalog, values of 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 23 and 50p were printed, but have not yet been seen in use. The 7, 8, and 9p were seen recently in the hands of the local postmaster. APA members saw all of these at the Security Press in Riyadh during their 1971 visit. Postmasters advise us that sale of mint officials is not legal. (RJT).



A used copy of RA5 with a double impression has been found. (RJT).

Proofs, etc exist of many of the issues printed by DAR AL-ISFAHANI of Jeddah during the early 1960's. Examples are:

- (a) Type A24, 8p in orange brown & black or purple & black, Imperf. on unwatermarked paper.
- (b) Type A29, imperf 6p on unwatermarked paper in 5 color combinations.
- (c) Scott 255, perf but on unwatermarked paper.
- (d) Scott 261, perf frame only on watermarked paper.
- (e) Type A30, Imperf 3p on unwatermarked paper in each of the colors of the issued values.
- (f) Type A31, imperf 7½p in issued colors, but unwatermarked paper, also 6p emerald only and 9p vermilion only (perf. watermarked).
- (g) Type A32, imperf 3p on unwatermarked paper in five color combinations.

Can anyone report any others? (RJT).

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Vice President
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Retyped May 1987
W. A. King.

THE TALISMANIC NUMBERS

In recent issues of OPAL, the journal of the Oriental Philatelic Association of London, the editor, Major E. C. W. Stagg, and Mr. H. Hibbert, a well-known collector, have written articles about the so-called talismanic numbers that appear on old covers. The most common is "8642" written in Arabic script. Mr. Hibbert lists also 2468, 4825, 6284, 4444 and 6666. Your editor has a number of covers with 8642 and one with 4444. The articles say that a magic square 3 x 3 must have even numbers in the corners to work and that these even numbers make up the 8642 talisman. The authors then tie these numbers in Arabic letters; this has to be done using not the modern alphabet, but the old "abjad hawwaz" counting alphabet still known to every Arab: abjad hawwaz HuTTY keliman s'afs qarashat thakhadh DaDhagha. In this alphabet, the letter corresponding to the talisman are:

2	ba
4	dal
6	waw
8	Ha (the hard "h")

This is the preferred order, according to OPAL. This gives "buduwH", not B'duh as stated in OPAL. Since the numbers are found in reverse order, possibly "Hawadab" is a reading, but "buduwH" seems to be the only reading used. This "8642" is found on many covers from 1850 to about 1930 from the Middle East. For the benefit of those who aren't familiar with Arabic, there's what the talismanic numbers look like:

8642	
4444	scarce
6666	rarest of all

The other permutations of 8642 are also scarce. These relative scarcities are those given by Hibbert from an examination of 175 covers.

J. M. Wilson
30 August 1974

INVERTED WATERMARKS

GOSP, DAM, AIRPLANE

<u>Scott No.</u>		X = Known <u>Inverted</u>	S = Scarce <u>C = Relatively Common</u>
256	½ p Dam		
257	3p		
258	4p		
259	5p	X	S
260	20p		
263	½ p GOSP	X	S
264	1p		
265	3p		
266	4p	X	S
267	5p	X	S
268	6p	X	S
269	8p		
270	9p	X	S
431	1p Dam (Faisal)		
432	2p	X	S
433	3p		
(434)	4p		
435	5p		
436	6p		
437	7p		
438	8p		
439	10p		
440	11p		
441	12p		



<u>Scott No.</u>		<u>X = Known Inverted</u>	<u>S = Scarce</u> <u>C = Relatively Common</u>
442	1p GOSP		
443	2p	X	S
444	3p		
445	4p		
(446)	5p	X	S
(447)	6p	X	S
449	10p	X	S
450	11p		
451	12p		
C22	1p Air	X	S
C23	2p		
C25	4p		
C27	6p	X	S
C28	8p		
C29	9p		
C71	1p Air (Faisal)	X	C
C72	2p	X	C
C73	3p		
C74	4p		
C76	7p		
C77	8p	X	S
C78	9p	X	
C79	10p		

J. M. Wilson
30 August, 1974

FIRST SAUDI ARABIAN STAMP BOOKLETS

The first Saudi Arabian stamp booklets known to the APA became available at the Dammam Post Office in December, 1973. The post office receives the booklets from Riyadh in packs of 50, held together by two pieces of cardboard and rubber bands.

The booklets measure approximately 66 mm. by 61 mm. They contain (normally) two panes of 4 qirsh stamps and one pane of 2 qirsh stamps. The panes consist of marginal blocks of 4 stamps torn from the right or left hand two rows of normal sheets. Thus they exist in the booklets in other normal or upside-down position, depending which side the selvage is on. The total face value of the stamps is two riyals, and the booklets are sold for this price.

The panes are interleaved with sheets of thin white paper. The booklet cover and its contents are stapled together at the right side. The booklet cover is light green in color and has 5 lines of Arabic inscriptions on the front and one line on the back.

The inscription on the front reads:

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Ministry of Communications
Directorate General of Posts
Postage Stamps
Value two riyals

The inscription on the back reads:

Government Printing Press, Riyadh.

Various "tourist" issue stamps appear in the booklets. They all have the redrawn frame and are on paper with watermark II (Scott's type 361). The designs are as follows:

Expansion of the Prophet's Mosque (abbreviated Expansion)
Prophets Mosque (abbreviated Mosque)
Holy Ka'aba (abbreviated Ka'aba)

Normal booklets containing the following combinations of stamps have been seen:

4q. Ka'aba	+ 4q. Ka'aba	+ 2q. Expansion
4q. Ka'aba	+ 4q. Ka'aba	+ 2q. Mosque
4q. Mosque	+ 4q. Mosque	+ 2q. Expansion
4q. Mosque	+ 4q. Mosque	+ 2q. Mosque
4q. Expansion	+ 4q. Expansion	+ 2q. Expansion
4q. Expansion	+ 4q. Expansion	+ 2q. Mosque

A few booklets have been seen containing 2 different 4 qirsh blocks, as follows:

4q. Ka'aba	+ 4q. Mosque	+ 2q. Expansion
4q. Ka'aba	+ 2q. Expansion	+ 2q. Expansion
2q. Expansion	+ 4q. Mosque	+ 2q. Expansion
2q. Expansion	+ 4q. Mosque	+ 2q. Mosque



Booklets have also been noted which contain only one block of 4 qirsh stamps (and two blocks of 2 qirsh stamps), or three blocks of 4 qirsh stamps (and no 2 qirsh stamps). These are:

2q. Mosque	+ 4q. Mosque	+ 2q. Mosque
4q. Ka'aba	+ 4q. Ka'aba	+ 4q. Mosque

Other variations may well exist. The above were found among the contents of 3 packs of 50 booklets each examined. No great value should be attached to these errors, as obviously, anyone could unstaple a booklet, insert any combination of blocks he desired, and re-staple the booklet.

R. J. Thoden
2/17/74.

RN

Position of wide tooth perforation
on De la Rue stamps of Saudi Arabian
definitive issues 1965 - 1973.

De la Rue write that the printing of these issues was effected in sheets containing four panes of 100 stamps each.

They are not sure whether those sheets were perforated in their entirety or that they were first cut in half before being perforated: that will have depended on the perforating machine available at the time.

In the first case the full sheets may sometimes have been placed left margin first into the perforating machine and sometimes right margin first as the operator of the machine may have paid no particular attention to the direction in which he fed the sheets into the machine. In that case the wide tooth would appear on the right side of all stamps on the entire sheet placed left margin first into the machine and on the left side of the stamps in the sheets placed right margin first into the machine.

Consequently the position of the wide tooth would be accidental.

However De la Rue state that in case the sheets were halved before being perforated, the left hand half would be gripped by the perforating machine on the left hand margin and accordingly the wide tooth would appear on the right side of all stamps of the two panes printed on the left side of the sheets. The situation would be vice versa for the right hand half of the sheet.

Therefore in that case the position of the wide tooth would not be accidental but would be due to the pane having been printed on the left or on the right side of the sheet.

As I said, De la Rue are not sure which procedure was followed, but they think the first method was the more likely one.

However I have good reason to believe that the second method was used.

If the sheets were perforated in their entirety, the margin between a left pane and a right pane would show a continued line of perforation and therefore stamps bordering that middle margin and with part of that margin still attached, would show the marginal, continued perforation for the left pane as well as the for the right pane, irrespective of the question from which side the sheet had been placed into the perforating machine. In that case we would come across marginal stamps with the wide tooth at left and with the perforation continued in the margin, either at left or at right of the stamp. The same would be true for stamps with wide tooth at right.



If on the other hand the sheets had been halved before being perforated and the left halves always been placed left side first into the perforating machine (as De la Rue say), a stamp with the wide tooth at right would invariably show the perforation continued in the margin, when that margin is attached to the right of the stamp. Vice versa for stamps with the wide tooth at left.

Now I have only a limited number of De la Rue stamps with margin attached, to be exact only 14, but the above reasoning is applicable to each of these examples.

Of course, 14 examples do not prove conclusively that all sheets were halved before being perforated and that accordingly all stamps with wide tooth at left are from the right hand panes in the sheets and stamps with wide tooth at right vice versa, but I believe it is a pretty strong indication.

I suppose that you and other members of the Association have at your disposal more examples of marginal De la Rue stamps and I would be grateful if you would check your material in this respect and let me know the result.

For your information I give here a specification of my findings:

	<u>Margin at left of stamp</u>		<u>Margin at right of stamp.</u>	
	<u>Perforation continued in margin</u>	<u>Perf. Not continued in margin</u>	<u>Perforation continued in margin</u>	<u>Perf. Not continued in margin</u>
Wide tooth at left	1	-	-	3
Wide tooth at right	-	4	6	-

November 2, 1973

M.D. Schreuder

Retyped May 1988
W. A. King