



الجمعية الدولية للطوابع البريدية العربية
ملاحظات عابرة

Arabian Philatelic Association International
Random Notes



JUNE 2003

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CONTENTS

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| The Arabian Philatelic Association International | 2 |
| Random Notes #61 | 3 |
| The Rudy Thoden Sale - W. A. King FRPSL | 8 |
| Framed Mustahiq Overprint Forgery Summary - Marwan Nusair | 11 |
| World Refugee Year : 1960 - W. A. King FRPSL | 14 |
| Printing Plates of the Makkah Arms - Martin Lovegrove | 15 |
| DGA Frame Printed Twice - Martin Lovegrove | 29 |



The Rudy Thoden Sale
(see page [8](#))

The Arabian Philatelic Association International

The Arabian Philatelic Association (APA) was established in 1968 in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia by a group of Aramco employees particularly interested in Saudi Arabian philately. The APA had over 300 members and subscribers worldwide during most of its existence. Its journal (*APA Random Notes*), and *Reference Manual of Saudi Arabian Forgeries*, auctions and new issue service contributed to the large increase in the popularity of Saudi Arabian philately in the 1970s and 1980s. However, interest declined in the 1990s. An initial attempt to start up a conventional Saudi stamp society in the USA failed in the late 1990s. Since then, we have realized that an Internet-based society has a better prospect of success and we have founded the Arabian Philatelic Association International. (APAI). An APAI website www.arabian-philatelic.com and an e-mail address arabphilassocin@aol.com are being set up by Willie King, but they are not yet functional. A *Catalog of the Fiscal Stamps of Saudi Arabia* has been written and published by Rudy Thoden. A limited number of copies of *APAI Random Notes #57* is available for free distribution to all who request an APAI Membership Application.

Longer range, we hope to prepare a second edition of the *Reference Manual of Saudi Arabian Forgeries* to cover the issues not in the original edition, plus the many new forgery discoveries, including very dangerous ones created by modern computer technology.

The following members are currently serving the APAI in the capacities indicated:

Membership secretary: Marwan Nusair
USA representative: John Wilson
European representative: Willie King
Middle East representative: David Jessich
USA Distribution Manager: Beverly Swartz
Treasurer: David Jessich
Editor, Random Notes: Martin Lovegrove
Webmaster: Willie King

Random Notes

The APAI's publication, *Random Notes*, will be issued four times a year, assuming sufficient material is available. The editor is Mr. M C Lovegrove, e-mail: weatherings@aol.com, (The Weatherings, East End, Gooderstone, KINGS LYNN, PE33 9DB, United Kingdom.) Articles on all aspects of Saudi Arabian philately are urgently needed for publication in *Random Notes*, and can be submitted in manuscript, as a text file, as an e-mail or a MS Word document. The right to edit or reject all submissions is reserved. Opinions expressed are those of the authors only. Material from this publication may be reprinted provided credit is given to "Arabian Philatelic Association International" and the author of the article. Please send a copy of the reprint to the editor.

Scott's (2003) and Stanley Gibbons (1996) catalog numbers are used with the kind permission of the copyright owners.

Reference may be made in this publication to the following books by their authors' names:

HAWORTH, W.B. and SARGENT, H. L.- *The Postal Issues of the Hejaz* (1922)
WARIN, D.F.- *The Postal Issues of Hejaz, Jeddah and Nejd*. (1927)
MAYO, M.M. - *Barid Al Sa'udiyah wa al Hijaz wa Najd* (1973)
DONALDSON, N- *The Postal Agencies in Eastern Arabia and the Gulf*. (1975)
WILSON, J.M.- *The Hejaz - A History in Stamps* (1982).
COLES, J.H. & WALKER, H.E – *Postal Cancellations of the Ottoman Empire Part 2* (1987)
THODEN, R. J- *A Catalog of the Fiscal Stamps of Saudi Arabia*, (2001)
VON UEXKULL, J.- *The Early Postal History of Saudi Arabia* (2001).

Random Notes #61

Assembled by the Editor

This edition is being published a little later than I would have liked, but I hope it will be a case of 'better late than never'. We are still very short of articles, short notes, comments or complaints. If you have anything that has not appeared in Random Notes, please send it in; I would like to make this journal one of the main sources of information about Saudi philately. The questions posed in items 6 and 10 of the notes in RN60 have yet to be answered.

Now for this edition's 'notes'....

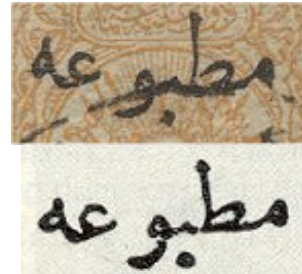
- 1 **The first 'matbua'.** Is this the first 'matbua' used in Saudi Arabia? I get my information on Ottoman cancels from *The Early Postal History of Saudi Arabia* by Jakob von Uexkull and also from *Postal Cancellations of The Ottoman Empire* by Coles and Walker. The cancellation is a C&W type 9, in use from 1891 - 95 (Uexkull type Jf) and the stamp is a 2pi from the 1892 issue overprinted 'matbua' (Scott P33, SG N158). Although Uexkull mentions a later printed matter issue, I can find no references to this one.



Further investigation reveals some interesting facts. As so frequently happens, the illustrations in Scott and Gibbons are at variance, in this case the representations of the 'matbua' overprint differ, and are shown below:



Scott



Gibbons

It would seem that the overprint on the subject stamp and enlarged above the Gibbons image, is similar to the one illustrated in that catalogue. However, inspection of an example with an unidentified postmark, illustrated above at left and enlarged above the Scott illustration, looks more like that illustrated in Scott, but neither is a perfect match with any catalogue illustration! Both overprints are relief-printed, presumably from stereotypes; they are definitely not from composed type. Finally, shown at right, is an illustration from the 1949 edition of the Whitfield King Catalogue part 2. Although it is difficult to separate the overprint from the stamp, the overprint matches the Gibbons version.



So, I have no idea whether the postmark or 'matbua' are fake, but from the evidence I have, it looks ok, and maybe the Scott version is from a different overprint plate or a fake.; perhaps someone can help? (MCL 3/03)



- 2 **RN57 update.** Random Notes #57 contained an excellent article by Rudy Thoden on the cancellation on the 1925 Jeddah Issues. A recent purchase from eBay contained two separate examples of the large 3-line overprint (genuine) in black on the Makkah Arms 5 qirsh value (Scott L97, SG 122). These stamps were a separated vertical pair and although cancelled, they had full gum and were both backstamped 'RS'. The cancellation is not one mentioned in the article, but looks like a type H10 DJEDDA 3 in deep reddish violet and is probably fake. The date is clearly wrong; it is well before the issue date and 10 June 1916 corresponds to 8-8-1334, whereas the month and year of the visible part of the Arabic date are 3-32. Has anyone any further information?



I have several copies of King Ali stamps with the type FK-1 ('dealer') cancel, and amongst these are two showing more of the design than was illustrated in RN57.18. One shows the complete Arabic 'Khartoum' and the other shows the year. Whether the year is 1955 or 1555, it is obviously incorrect for King Ali! (MCL 4/03)



- 3 **Octagonal postmark.** Paragraph 14 of RN43.7 illustrated an octagonal DJIDDE 1 postmark. It was suggested that as it had been seen on unplateable Jeddah 2-line overprints, the postmark could be fake. I illustrate here an octagonal postmark on a genuine 2 qirsh Caliphate issue. The Arabic writing shows it to be a Jeddah 1 mark, but only the initial letter D can be seen in the lower part of the mark. Is this a copy of DJIDDE 1? Although the stamp is genuine, it is still not proof that the cancellation is not a fake, but it looks bad enough to be genuine! Has anyone any information on octagonal Jeddah postmarks? (MCL 4/03)



- 4 **Zeppelin update.** A Zeppelin cover appeared in the Harmers of London sale 4708 on 24th February 2003 as part of lot 279. The cover was almost identical to that listed as cover #2 in Random Notes #59 page 14, except that the registration number was 746. Unfortunately, in the catalogue, the cover was only illustrated in part, and is reproduced below.



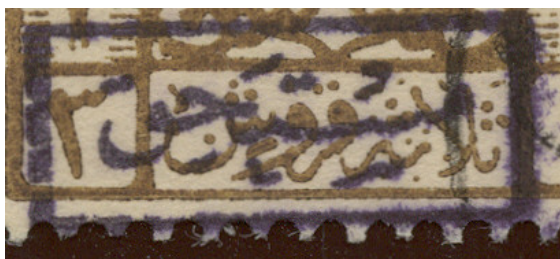
Part of lot 279

For those of you keeping details of these covers, cover #12 appeared in the 1st April 2003 Cherrystone auction as lot 2591. The cover had an estimate of \$4500 and apparently sold for \$3500.

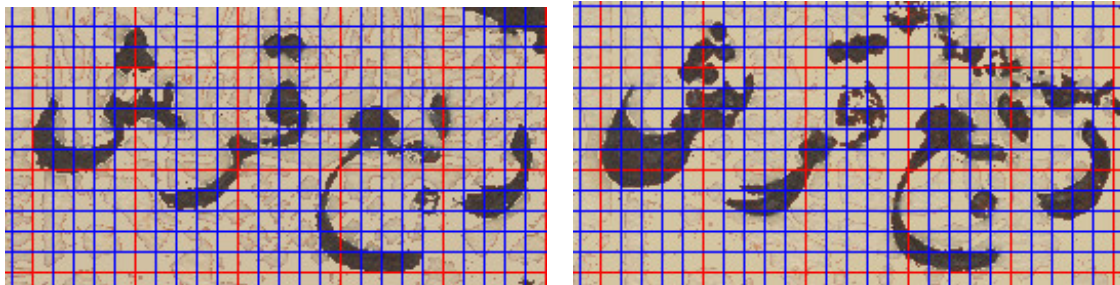
- 5 One item in Rudy Thoden's collection has revealed some useful information. Up to now, I have seen no estimates of the number of sheets of the large 3-line Jeddah overprint in red on the 1½ qirsh lilac that had the postage due handstamp in violet (Scott LJ 36a, SG D148). Rudy had an example from position 33 and mine is from position 27, immediately above Rudy's. As can be seen when both are placed together in their correct relative positions, the vertical perforations do not match, indicating that at least two sheets must have been involved. There is, of course, no indication as to whether they were complete sheets. Despite the fact that the number printed may be 72, these stamps do not appear in auctions very often; my only other auction reference is Harmers 15th December 1999 lot 4681, and that copy was position 3 - the same vertical column as those illustrated here!



- 6 **A new find?** Here is a stamp for which there appear to be no catalogue references. It is the 3 qirsh Makkah Arms with large 3-line Jeddah overprint in black and with a postage due handstamp in violet. The example illustrated is from position 32. As it stands it is Scott LJ38 var and SG D152 var, but deserves an entry of its own. The overprint plates ok and the handstamp looks good to me; the cancellation is the fake 'KHARTOUM', probably a 'dealer' cancel, referenced in RN57.18. (MCL 4/03)

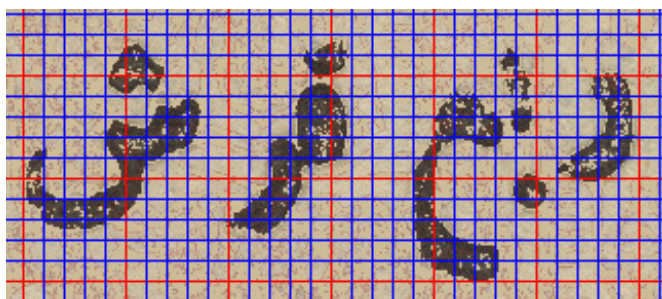


- 7 **1923 Surcharge Forgeries.** In Random Notes 46, Rudy Thoden wrote about the 1/4 on 1/8 qirsh surcharge of 1923. On page 26 he mentions a thin, clear forged surcharge; I have two 'used' stamps with this overprint. Because the surcharges are slightly different, I have reproduced them both below. A grid has been superimposed on the images to assist comparison; the small squares represent 0.5mm. These forgeries are shorter (22mm) than other forgeries and genuine ones (30mm).

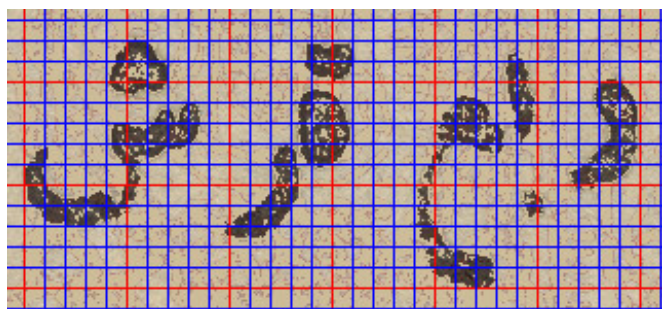


Thin and clear forgery. Position 13 (left) and position 21 (right)

A purchase on eBay included two surcharged stamps that are a separated vertical pair. Of interest here is the fact that the lower stamp is a replacement cliché for position 13. I do not believe that this state existed at the time that the surcharges were made. In fact, I don't think it was even in existence in 1924 when the Caliphate overprints were made. These overprints are therefore candidates for listing as forgeries and are shown below, together with the rejoined pair.



Position 7



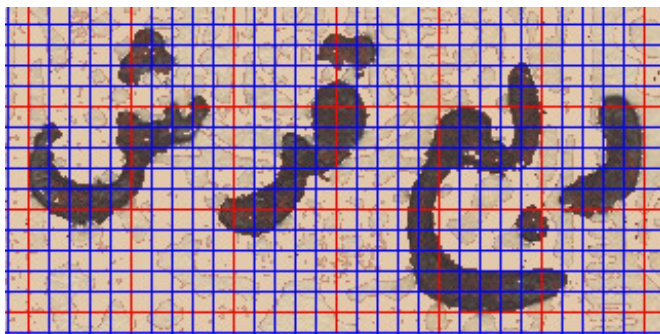
Position 13



Rudy also mentions Gibbons #48; this is no longer listed but was *1/4 on 1/8 pi scarlet*.

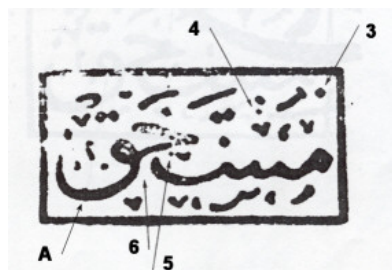


Finally, I include an illustration of a genuine overprint. This is from position 27 and is one with a long-tailed 'ain'. (MCL 4/03)



Genuine overprint from position 27

- 8 Marwan Nusair's article in this issue refers to the type 4 forgery of the 1923 Postage Due framed overprint. Illustrated here is what is probably a variant of this forgery rather than a new type. It matches the illustration of this forgery on page F-3 of the forgeries manual (1981 edition) except that the dots mentioned in notes 4 and 5 are missing. The missing dots are a feature of forgery type 8, but this one is on a genuine stamp. Note that the stamp does have the small bulge inside 'qaaf', annotated 'A' in the illustration from the forgeries manual. I believe that the forgery type 8 could be another variation of type 4. (MCL 4/03)



- 9 An interesting note at the end of the (very short!) HEDJAZ listing in the 1920 edition of the Stanley Gibbons British Empire catalogue:

Mecca stamps are no longer sold by the Alexandria P.O., and their export is forbidden from the Hedjaz, so they are likely to become very scarce.

The stamps listed are SG 1 - 16 (still the same numbers!) and postage due SG 51 - 53, now SG D17 - 19. The current Scott numbers are L1 - 13 and LJ1 - 3.

- 10 **Hejaz-Nejd Proofs.** Can anyone help with this one? The paper is the normal gummed paper used for the Hejaz and Nejd 1926 definitive issues, but the colour is not one of the colours used for the second issue, neither is it one of the proof colours listed in Mayo. The nearest colour in the Gibbons Colour Key is brown-red. It is certainly unlike the 'brick' colour used for many of the proofs of the second issue, but is close to the colour used for the 5 qirsh value of the first issue (Scott 74, SG 260). Is this perhaps a proof or colour trial for the first issue? (MCL 3/03)



The Rudy Thoden Sale
At Greg Manning Galleries, March 31st 2003

By W. A. King FRPSL

Rudy Thoden's three major collections of China, Germany and Saudi Arabia were consigned to be sold by Greg Manning. The Germany and Saudi Arabia on March 31st 2003 in New Jersey and the China on 26th April in Hong Kong. The Saudi Arabia auction had the misfortune to take place during the latest conflict in the Middle East and the China sale during the SARS epidemic in Hong Kong and China. However these sad events did not apparently materially impact the sales.

Rudy Thoden Collection of Germany : As Rudy had already sold a substantial amount of his Germany through Michael Rogers in Florida I was surprised to find a further 584 lots appearing at this auction. Rudy had never ever shown or displayed his Germany (or China) collections even at club level. Yet this 'secondary' part of his Germany realized almost \$140,000 before addition of the 15% buyers premium. Although I knew Rudy had collected Germany I never knew him to work on the collection apart for a short period before the first sale and I never saw any of his German stamps in Dhahran.

Rudy Thoden Collection of Saudi Arabia : I was rather disappointed when I saw the listing of Rudy's Saudi collection. It was broken into 314 lots but many of his important items I could remember were missing from the itemized listing. Rudy unfortunately did not keep any notes with most items in his collection. He knew what each item was but this is clearly a major disadvantage if a stranger is responsible for sorting your collection.

Listing Errors : No notes meant that, apart from important items being missed, some basic listing errors were created in the listing of individual lots. None of the items with erroneous descriptions were sold at the auction. Some of the errors were not important but a few were serious.

Lot 6615 : A minor problem. The Powder Blue Proof – was SG 10 (Scott L7) and not SG 3 as listed.

Lots 6646-8 : The Caliphate Dues. All were said to be from a single sheet of 36 yet APAI members have long been aware of multiple sheets. (*Since 1989 following an article was published in Random Notes No. 46 recording stamps from 4 or 5 different sheets of each. Recent work indicates perhaps 8-10 sheets of which only part survive.*)

Lot 6649 : An obvious forgery which was withdrawn.

Lots 6709-6711: Listed as the 16mm large 3 line overprint and as blocks of great rarity when in fact they were the normal 14mm small 3 line overprint. Note lot 6708 was the correct 16mm



Genuine SG 94a with 16mm 'Large' 3 Line Opt



Genuine but SG 90 with 14mm 'Small' 3 line



overprint and 6710 purports to be a horizontal version but is not recorded by APAI and I suspect was held by Rudy for reference purposes only. The buyer (GR) is to verify status.

Missing Items : Examples of what really should have had individual listings :

Gold Two Line on Roul 20 (SG 62 Scott L61) used on a commercial front – Only known cover. This item was included in lot 6613.



Newspaper Stamp : SG N208a : One of the many scarce stamps in accumulation 6898 which rated individual listing.

150h Ibn Saud University on Grey paper : The largest remaining block – 12. The only known sheet was sold at an APA auction and Rudy bought a quarter sheet. The remainder of the sheet were broken and dispersed and another sheet has never been found. Rudy's still retained a corner block of 12 (6 x 2) + 3 stamps and these were in lot 6895 – again in a Hagner sheet with no indication that these were special.

Unframed on Roul 20 : SG 20a. Rudy had the complete set of six of these scarce issues and also the perf 10 variety. These were not offered individually and I did not locate them in any of the collections. In case I missed it the 1pi, was position 31 and the stamp shows the damaged triangle in the top right corner which confirmed the plating of the overprint. Several other of the values were in also position 31.

Individual Stamps : However positively a great many interesting lots were available and found new homes. A very rare example of the Gold Two Line on Roul 20 but on a blue base **SG 62var (L61a)** went to Ghassan Riachi (lot 6659) at \$1,667 whilst the same overprint on the red base (lot 6658) achieved \$1,045. Equally rare was the 20p Official **SG 0529a (O39A)** of which only two used copies are known. Rudy picked this copy up very cheaply from a dealers box in Chicago several years ago. This stamp was estimated at \$150-200 (lot 6792) it was fiercely contested and sold at \$835 on the floor. Another scarce item was lot 6830 the unlisted imperforate tourist **SG 860 variety (494a var)**. This, the only recorded multiple, was originally reported in RN 18 p3 and originally formed part of the Beavis collection. I was very pleased to acquire that lot at what I consider a bargain at just \$207 against the \$150-200 estimate.

Sets : Two major 'sets' went for high prices in strong competition. A mint set of the Faisal airmails SG 716/44 (C59/87) but missing the 5p and the 31p values sold for \$3,105 against a Scott catalogue value of \$2,993 (lot 6815). Note the 31p is listed only in Scott and I have never even seen one – and as you see Rudy didn't have one either!



Rudy's complete 'set of 10' of the Tourist booklets (as listed in Gibbons - SG SB1-10) Lot 6869 sold at \$1,495. Gibbons list at £170 per booklet. These booklets are not listed by Scotts and this is the only time I have seen a complete set offered. Clearly the bidders agreed and the complete set achieved a premium of 50% over the few examples of individual booklets which sold at just under \$100 per booklet.

Collections & Accumulations : There were many large lots, some were collections Rudy had bought at auction and picked out a few items. These sold at close to estimate. The large but basically unsorted accumulations were examined by a number of knowledgeable collectors and the realization reflected this. Lot 6613, which included Rudy's Casoc collection as well as hundreds of other interesting items, realized \$9,775 against the estimate of \$4-5,000. Note the cover collection also contained over 50 of Rudy's collection of forged covers. The last lot 6898 contained not only the remainder of his collection but a treasure trove of complete Hejaz sheets sold for \$12,075 as against the pre-sale estimate of \$2-3,000.

Forgery Collection : Rudy's Forgery collection was bought by the APAI at \$2,300 (\$2,645 with premium) against the estimate of \$500-750. Note we had budgeted to go to \$4,000 to secure this collection for the Arabian Philatelic Association International.

Rudy's accumulated collection will be used to create a major revision to the Reference Manual of Saudi Arabian Forgeries using modern technology. The key master collection will be retained by the APAI but copies of the revised manual together with duplicate forgeries will be provided to the principal philatelic societies such as RPSL, APS and SAPS for their reference collections of forgeries. In this way we plan to create a lasting tribute to Rudy Thoden and all the work he has done for Arabian Philately. Revision of the Reference Manual will begin shortly and immediately draft pages are available they can be emailed out to any member who wishes to have them available and also to contribute to the information that we have on forgeries.

Overall Review : The sale was successful but indicates that however knowledgeable you are about your material, you must write-up your collection and/or keep notes with your interesting items. Items or covers stored in stock books or in Hagner type pages without any notes can easily be misplaced and the significance lost.

The collection was written up rather quickly and the catalogues issued rather late which impacted the time available for bidders to review in depth. However I doubt if that made a significant difference to the result. I think however I would have preferred a more leisurely sale with more of the 'interesting' lots featured as a lasting tribute to a knowledgeable collector.

Request for Lot Information : The collection has now been dispersed into many collections but we would appeal to any buyers to register their buys with the APAI. Note Greg Mannings correctly will not divulge names of the successful buyers. However if you wish to register which of Rudy's lots are now in your collection it will enable provenance when and if you sell and more importantly if someone wishes to research a particular stamp or variety then that information will be available. Already we have identified the new collections for over 120 of the 314 lots. This information can be kept confidential if you prefer and known only to the author.

Never Too Late : If you did not have time to bid or were more interested in minor used items that did not merit a listing in a major sale then all is not lost and you can obtain a piece of the Thoden collection. A group of us combined together and picked up Rudy's used accumulation of stamps and also some unsold and incorrectly described lots. These are now being listed and will be made available to members by means of an email listing. Details will be sent when the first list is available.

Framed Mustahiq Overprint Forgery:

A Summary



By Marwan Nusair


The following is a "recipe" summary allowing an initial determination of whether framed "Postage Due" overprint is a forgery. In many cases, the type of forgery is found very quickly and that is the end of the line. In some, positive identification is not possible and more detailed methods, including plating against a known genuine sheet, will be necessary.

All illustrations are taken from the APA Forgery Manual with the permission of the publisher. It is recommended that any matches found with the help of this article should be checked carefully against the corresponding entry in the Forgery Manual.

- Any stamps not perforated $11\frac{1}{2}$, such as those perforated $10\frac{3}{4}$, are forgeries, and any overprints on such stamps are, of course, forgeries.
- There is a dividing line between overprints on most genuine overprints, and not between any known forged overprints (figure below shows a typical genuine overprint):




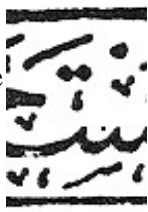
- Dot at top right corner of Type 1 forgery  compared to genuine 

- Extra dot at center below v-shaped character of Type 1 forgery  compared

to genuine

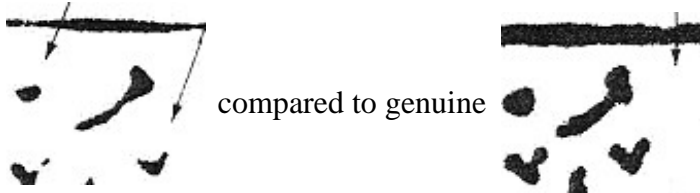


- Distinctive notch at bottom right frame of Type 1 forgery 

- Pair of dots more separated in Type 2 forgery  compared to genuine 

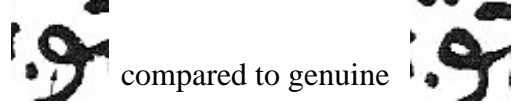


- Comma and v-shaped characters less distinctively shaped in Type 2 forgery



compared to genuine

- Larger opening in "qaf" in Type 2 and 6 forgeries



compared to genuine

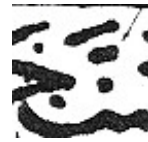
- Comma and v-shaped characters are just dots in Type 3 forgery

to genuine



compared

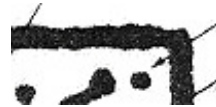
- Pair of dots solidly joined in Type 3 forgery



compared to genuine



- Extra dot in top right in Type 3 and 4 forgeries



compared to genuine



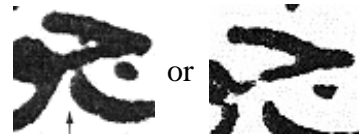
- Points of "siyn" less sharp in Type 3 forgery



compared to genuine



- Tail of "taa" doesn't touch "haa" in Type 3, 4 and 8 forgeries



or

compared to genuine



- Extra dot at right center over v-shaped character in Type 4 forgery



compared to

genuine




- Extra dot under "haa" in Type 4 forgery

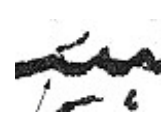


compared to genuine



- Loop of "qaf" slightly more oval in Type 5 forgery  compared to genuine




- Thin line protruding up from "taa" in Type 5 forgery  compared to genuine.



BUT NOTE that two cliches of the genuine overprint have a feature very similar to this

- Protrusion on top of "haa" in Type 6 forgery  compared to genuine



- Different dots, comma and v-shaped characters in Type 7 forgery  compared to genuine



- "Taa" joins "haa" at an angle to the left in Type 7 forgery  compared to genuine



- Re of character at bottom center of Type 7 forgery is horizontal

compared to genuine



RN

World Refugee Year : 1960

By Willie King

First released on October 11th 1960 this is the first of many sets that Saudi Arabia has devoted to the predicament of Palestinian refugees. The design by H. H. Hussanain it shows storm clouds over a map of Israel and refugee tents. The set was lithographed in Jeddah by Dar Al Asfahani and originally printed in sheets of 100 in two panes of 50, later divided for issue. No gutter pairs have ever been reported. However there are imperforates, printing flaws, also different papers, gum and shades.



Varieties

Imperforate : It is reported that 4 panes of 50 were produced of each value.

Printing Flaws

Two Qirsh : The most significant flaw is from position 12 but it is not known if on both panes. As shown on the right the flaw links the Arabic number to the letter within the value square.



Variety Normal

Eight Qirsh : The 'flag' in the cloud flaw and is fairly easy to pick out without a magnifying glass just above the rays to the left is recorded in positions 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10, also 31, 33, 35, 37 and 39.



Variety Normal

Ten Qirsh : A damaged 1 is reported in the western value 10 position 48. Has anyone got an example to show?

Gum & Papers : The normal gum is a very light yellow but all values also exist with a slightly deeper yellow gum which does not appear to be caused by climate or adverse storage. The paper with the light gum is white but the deeper yellow is associated with a paper with a slight cream tinge and appears to be thicker. These differences are very slight and difficult to separate until you have examples of both AND correct lighting conditions

White paper : The 8 and 10 qirsh also exist with a quite distinctive clear white gum associated with paper which has a light grey tinge. Readers are requested to verify if they have any examples of the 2 qirsh value with clear white gum. Reaction to UV light is identical for the different papers.

Colour shades : The 2 qirsh and 10 qirsh show minor light to darker variations of blue and green. However the 8 qirsh shows a large range of shades – but definition is a problem. Using the Gibbons colour key I find none in the reddish violet as noted in the Gibbons catalogue, nor of lilac as listed by Scotts. Comparison with the colour key shows colours vary from deep mauve to mauve, with magenta on some examples on the deeper yellow gum.

References : RN 11 page 3, and RN 13 page 1.

Stamps listed as SG 393-5 & Scott 208-10



Printing Plates of the Makkah Arms

By: Martin C. Lovegrove

Part 1 - Overview of Study

This series of articles describes the layout of the printing plate used for the various values of the Makkah Arms Series. In many ways it describes the logical layout of the plates rather than the physical. It attempts to identify any relationships between the stamps either as rows or groups of rows, and when found, lists some features that are common in order to prove the relationship.

It was probably inevitable that such a study would reveal physical characteristics that would identify the plate construction and therefore printing technique used. The results may not be surprising, but because I have been unable to find any previous work on the subject, I hope these notes will be useful and provide the foundation for further research.

Background to the Makkah Arms Stamps

This series of stamps were the first postage stamps produced in the Hejaz and were in use from 1922 until 1926 by which time the country was known as Hejaz and Nejd. There were initially five values with two new values and a colour change introduced in 1924. All values, apart from the 10 qirsh, were printed in a single pane of thirty-six stamps, comprising six rows of six. The 10 qirsh was bi-coloured and printed in two panes of eighteen stamps; the panes were printed in different operations, as were the colours, thus taking four operations to complete one sheet. Warin¹, however, suggests that this value was also printed as a single pane of 36 stamps, but nothing has been found to substantiate this. The printing method has been described as either typography or lithography depending on the catalogue being used. This confusion was one reason for starting this study, but was easily resolved when several of the sheets inspected showed the design pressed through to the gummed side of the paper; this does not happen in lithography.

Techniques

Extensive use of computer driven image manipulation was used. In order to compare images, one image is superimposed over another, and this is achieved by making the top image transparent and changing the colour of the printed lines to black in order to provide a contrast. Once there is this colour difference, variations in stamp design are easy to see.

When using this technique, allowance must be made for the possibility of paper shrinkage. If the difference between layers is progressive across and down the sheet, it is likely that the images are the same and the paper has changed size. For non-progressive differences, it is most likely that the images are different. This technique is an excellent method for comparing stamps and overprints.

The Study

The study began with the two values showing the most promise for producing results. These values were the 1/8 qirsh, a value that had two cliches replaced, and the 1/4 qirsh that had, perhaps surprisingly, the lower three rows of the sheet inverted in relation to the top three. These two values were studied in great detail. Other values have either been studied to the point



where it can be shown that they are similar to these first two, or have received only a superficial inspection and may be studied in detail later.

Results

The results of this initial stage revealed that the plates for the first two values studied, were constructed from two stereotypes, each comprising eighteen clichés. No evidence was found to suggest that these stereos had been built from smaller ones such as row stereos, but it cannot be ruled out. The printing method was therefore relief (typography) and this applies to all values in the series. The size of the stereos for all values was not consistent; the 2, 3, 5 and 10 qirsh used the same format as the 1/8 and 1/4, the 1 qirsh appears to have used a twenty-four cliché stereo for the top 4 rows of the sheet and a twelve cliché stereo for the remaining rows. The ½ and 1½ do not show obvious signs of using anything other than a single thirty-six cliché stereo, but an in-depth study has still to be completed on these values.

The use of stereos provides us with an explanation for the inverted lower three rows on the 1/4 qirsh; it was caused by the accidental inversion of the lower stereo when attaching it to the base plate.

Several values show signs of having more than one state, presumably caused by repairs, but none of the values are known to have had more than one plate or to have had a complete stereo replacement.

I have yet to form an opinion about how the stereos were made, but the papier-mache technique would seem to be the most likely.

References

1. Warin – The Postal Issues of Hejaz, Jeddah and Nejd

Part 2 - Printing Plates of the 1/8 Qirsh

Stamp Arrangement

The stamps are arranged in 6 rows of 6 stamps; the 36 stamps are surrounded by a marginal rule. In this article, the stamp position numbering follows convention. Stamps are numbered from the top left of the sheet (position 1) moving from left to right and top to bottom down to the bottom right (position 36).

State 1

This is the original state of the plate. It is found without overprint (Scott L32, SG 39), surcharged ¼ qirsh (Scott L40, SG 47), and overprinted in gold for the Caliphate issue (Scott L42, SG 50).

During the investigation, it was found that there is a relationship between the top three rows and the lower three; the proof of this will be shown in two ways. Firstly, it will be shown that some flaws are common to stamps in the same relative positions in the two halves. Secondly, by superimposing the image of one half over the other, it will be shown that the two halves are of identical size and have the same stamp spacing. Furthermore, by placing the top half of the sheet over other three-row groups, it will be shown that there is no other common grouping of rows.





State 1



Common Flaws

This section describes some flaws that are common to the same relative position in the two halves of the plate and forms the basis of the theory that the bottom half of the plate had the same source as the top.



Position 4



Position 22

Positions 4 and 22

The main flaw to be observed in these two positions is the large dent in the bottom frame. There are also several other minor frame flaws common to both positions.



Position 13



Position 31



Positions 13 and 31

For these positions, the common flaw is just outside the basic stamp in the form of a small dot.

Features not Matching

This section describes just a few of the features that are not common to the two halves of the plate. The illustrations relate to a single sheet of stamps, other sheets may show different characteristics. It is thought that this anomaly is a feature of the physical construction rather than the logical derivation of the two halves; in other words, flaws introduced during the casting of the stereos.

Rather than describe each position, only the panel containing the Arabic value for the first six positions are considered. This is sufficient to show that minor differences do occur. Just a few of the differences in each panel are mentioned.









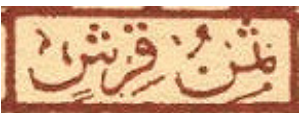



| Relative position | Top half | Bottom half | Description |
|-------------------|---|--|--|
| 1 |  |  | Many small dots missing in bottom half. |
| 2 |  |  | As above. There is also a break in the Arabic character 'N' in the top half. |
| 3 |  |  | Many small dots missing in bottom half. |
| 4 |  |  | Some dots are missing in the bottom panel, but not as many as in the previous |
| 5 |  |  | As with position 5, a few dots are missing. |
| 6 |  |  | The character indicated is 'L' shaped in the top half but just a dot in the bot- |

Image Matching

In order to confirm the suspicion that the top three rows were logically the same as the bottom three, an image of the top three rows was firstly superimposed on the lower three to show the similarity, and then on rows 2,3,4 and rows 3,4,5 to show that there was no match for those combinations. The fact that the top three rows fit exactly on the lower three, but not on other row combinations, confirms the fact that the origin of the lower three rows was the same as the top three. The following series of overlays shows the top three rows of state 1 superimposed on various positions of the plate. Stamp position 1 is used as the key for the overlays.





Overlay 1





Overlay 2





Overlay 3



Key to Overlays for State 1

| Overlay | Description |
|---------|--|
| 1 | Top half of state 1 (in black) over lower half. |
| 2 | Top half of state 1 (in black) over rows 2, 3 and 4. |
| 3 | Top half of state 1 (in black) over rows 3, 4 and 5. |

State 1 Conclusions

The study of flaws common to related positions in the two halves of the plate shows that there is a strong possibility of the two halves being related. Supporting this theory is the fact that such flaws are seen on related positions and nowhere else. There are, however, features that are not common to both halves; these far outnumber the common features described, but are probably attributable to the method of production of the plate from the 18-cliché master. More research is required on the physical construction of the plate.

Overlay 1 shows that the top half matches the lower half perfectly. Overlays 2 and 3 show that overlay 1 is unique; there is no other combination of 3-row matching.

It is therefore concluded that despite the fact that the two halves are not identical, they have the same origin.

State 2

At some stage positions 13 and 19 were replaced. It can be shown that most other respects the plate did not change. One important difference, other than cliché replacement, which may have taken place at the same time, can be found in the gap between rows 3 and 4. In the observed sheets of state 2, the rows are further apart. This dividing gap is illustrated later.

This state of the plate is known in the following conditions:

- No overprint
- 16mm 3-line Jeddah overprint
- 'Illegible' overprint
- First Nejd handstamp, and although the author has not seen a copy, presumably the second Nejd handstamp.

Image Matching

The following series of overlays shows the top three rows of state 1 superimposed on various positions of state 2 of the plate in order to illustrate the differences between states 1 and 2. Stamp position 1 is again used as the key for the overlays.

| Overlay | Description |
|---------|--|
| 4 | State 1 (in black) over state 2 with top three rows aligned. |
| 5 | State 1 (in black) over state 2 with lower three rows aligned. |





State 2





Overlay 4





Overlay 5



Replaced Cliches

The original and substituted cliches at positions 13, 19 are shown below:



Original cliches

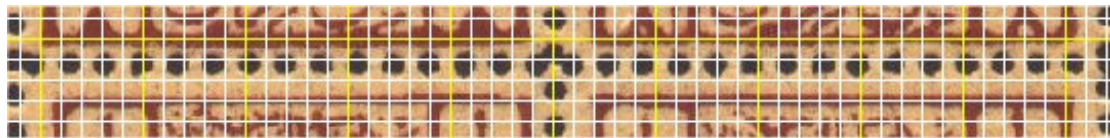


Replacement cliches

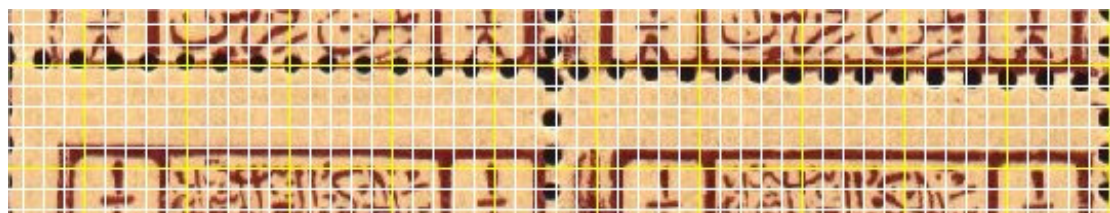
Note that the replacement of these cliches affected the frame lines of the adjacent stamps, in particular the bottom frame line of position 7 and the left frame line of position 20.

Dividing gap

The illustrations below show that the gap between rows 3 and 4 in state 1 is approximately 3mm and for state 2 approximately 4mm. The small squares in the grid represent 1mm.



State 1



State 2



State 2 Conclusions

Overlays 4 and 5 show that apart from the two replaced clichés, the two halves of the plate are the same as state 1. This can be confirmed by studying flaws on individual clichés of state 2 and comparing them with the equivalent position on state 1, but that is beyond the scope of this document.

The different spacing of the two halves, also clearly shown on overlays 4 and 5, indicates quite strongly that the plate was dismantled or split, probably at the time of cliché replacement.

Summary

There is sufficient evidence to show that the top three rows of the 1/8 qirsh Makkah Arms sheet shared their origin with the bottom three rows.

It is also probable that the printing plate was split horizontally between rows 3 and 4 when the clichés in positions 13 and 19 were replaced.

RN



Another Tughra perforation variety; this one is perf $7\frac{3}{4}$. I believe the date to be 1-10-1958 (17-3-1378H). (RAE 3/03)



In Random Notes #58 page 30 item 6, I reported the existence of the Caliphate overprint 'missing raa in tidhkar' on the 5 qirsh value. The example shown was from position 14, and I suppose it was inevitable that an example from position 17 would be found. Well here it is, and presumably confirms that the same state of the overprint plate was used for the 5 qirsh as for the other values showing this variety. Once again, I will state my view that the character was not missing from the plate, but was not set 'type high' and therefore did not receive ink. Has anyone seen this variety on values other than 1, 2 and 5 qirsh? MCL (4/03)



DGA Frame Printed Twice

By: Martin Lovegrove

This is indeed a rare venture for me into the realms of relatively modern Saudi stamps. Willie King referred to these double frames in an article in Random Notes #57, and the information I offer here is what I see as a matter of fact and is no way based on any expertise in this area.

I have a used pair of the 8p Dam with Faisal cartouche on watermarked paper with watermark upright (Scott 468, SG 785), see figure 1, and have examined the stamps using not only low magnification but also with a 60x microscope.

The points I wish to make about this pair are:

1. The colours of the two frames are slightly different.
2. The two frames were printed by the same plate.
3. The two frames were printed by the same printing technology.



Figure 1. The DGA pair



Figure 2. Frames printed in different colours

Figure 2, produced from a scanned image, shows that the two frames are printed in different shades of blue and that the centre of the design, printed in agate, is aligned with the frame printed in the darker blue.

The second point, that of the frames being printed by the same plate is more difficult to show using the facilities that I have at my disposal. There are several common flaws that can be seen under magnification, but are not clear in scanned images. Figure 3 shows a break in the frame. This break can be seen in the lighter frame (A) and in the same position in the darker one (B).

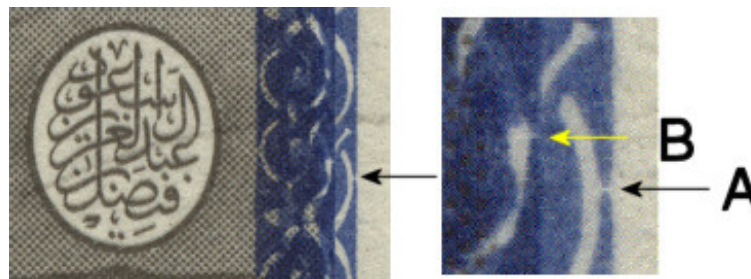


Figure 3. Flaw common to both frames



The final point relating to the method of printing, I hope to show using figure 4.



Figure 4. Both frames printed in lithography

This illustration has to be large in order to show that the quality of printing of both frames is essentially the same. At the top of the illustration is an enlargement of a line printed using a laser printer. This shows that the line is surrounded by minute drops of ink; these are not apparent in the double-frame stamps thus eliminating laser technology. Without reproducing examples of the other printing methods, they were shown in Random Notes #60, the conclusion is that both frames show the even ink coverage of lithography without any of the features associated with other printing methods.

There is one other point that is relevant. Although not clear from the illustrations, both frames are printed in a single colour, whereas laser and ink-jet prints will display mixes of colours, usually cyan, magenta, yellow and black or more unusually red, green and blue.

No attempt has been made to identify the printing as genuine or a forgery, or if genuine, why it happened. I can only say that I believe that the frames were printed by the same technology and from the same plate, although in slightly different colours. I will leave the experts to decide the exact status of the stamps.

RN

Computer Projects. I currently have two computer projects in progress. The specialized catalogue of Saudi Arabian stamps has been in progress for over a year. The software is essentially complete and data capture is well under way but is slow, and information on watermark varieties has, in some cases, been difficult to locate. The second project is a Random Notes browser. As with the first project, the software is almost complete and I am currently indexing the Random Notes issued in PDF format. Other issues will have to either be scanned or re-typed. To prove the concept and to get some idea of the difficulties that are bound to occur, I have re-typed RN13 and scanned RN44; both look good in the browser. One final point for now: Microsoft no longer support Windows 95 and developer tools are appearing that produce programs that will not run on that operating system. I will have to upgrade soon and that will affect both my projects. Will this cause anyone a problem? If anyone intends to keep using Windows 95 please email me at weatherings@aol.com. *Martin Lovegrove.*