

NUMBER 74

CONTENTS

| The Arabian Philatelic Association International | <u>2</u> |
|--|-----------|
| Random Notes #74 | <u>3</u> |
| The Best Forgery? - The Answer and more Martin Lovegrove | <u>19</u> |
| From the Auctions - Martin Lovegrove | <u>26</u> |



A new double overprint See <u>page 10</u>

Random Notes #74 - Page 1

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 late1990s. 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). The APAI e-mail address <u>arabphilassocin@aol.com</u> is no longer in use, please contact Willie King at willieking@btinternet.com

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 and Random Notes distribution: Marwan Nusair

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

Random Notes

The APAI's publication, *Random Notes*, will be issued three times a year, assuming sufficient material is available. The editor is Mr. M C Lovegrove, e-mail: <u>weatherings@aol.com</u>, (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.

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Several organizations and individuals have granted permission for their work to be reproduced in this journal; our thanks go to them and their details are given on the final page of this edition.

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'udiyyah 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 theFiscal Stamps of Saudi Arabia*, (2001) VON UEXKULL, J.- *The Early Postal History of Saudi Arabia* (2001).

Random Notes #74

Assembled by the Editor

Most of my spare time since finishing *Random Notes #73* has been spent on the update to Rudy Thoden's revenue manual. The technical work is almost complete but there remains the copyright and printing issues to resolve. I hope to have it finished by the end of the year, but I cannot promise.

A recent Sphinx auction in Cyprus revealed a lot of interesting material, mainly described as printer's waste. Several of the interesting items are described and illustrated in this issue with some more in the next. The status of the material ranges from genuine to uncertain to forgery, but even the forged items have revealed information not yet recorded in *Random Notes*.

From Jeddah I have been sent a scan of what appears to be a genuine double overprint on a Hejaz postage due; genuine in that the overprint process may have been accidentally done twice as opposed to the possibly philatelic doubles that are normally seen. I have a block of four taken from the one illustrated later in this issue and it looks very good.

Now for the notes.

1. My copy of Mayo 1008W, the 3 qirsh GOSP Cairo print on watermarked paper, imperforate, shows litho-printed marks in the frame colour, possibly guidelines, close to the lower corners of the stamp. From this I have deduced that these four imperforate stamps listed by Mayo are proofs; can anyone confirm this fact or at least confirm that the guides did not appear on the issued perforate stamps?



Mayo 1008W with guidelines.

One stamp or three?

2. In RN66.3 item 3, I mentioned the 5 qirsh Makkah Arms printed on top of inverted ochre Hejaz Railway fiscal stamps and overprinted for use in Transjordan. I have recently seen a copy of a similar stamp but it also included an inverted ½ qirsh Makkah Arms. The 5 qirsh stamp and the overprint are from position 23 and the ½ qirsh from position 19, so what I assume to be the main stamp here, the 5 qirsh, is printed 1½ columns to the right of the ½ qirsh.



An old friend has re-appeared. A copy of the ¹/₂ qirsh 1934 tughra SG 331B perf 11.1, imperf margin block from double-pane sheet, paper Woods type 5, appeared in a recent auction. This was illustrated in Random Notes #55.6 item 6 but the Woods paper type was not mentioned.



4. In his book 'The Early Postal History of Saudi Arabia' Jakob von Uexkull lists the Hejaz Railway 1909 1 pi grey with the 'muayeneli' handstamp as JvU 3c and states that only one copy is known. Here is part of a document showing two copies! I have also seen a similar document showing a single copy of this elusive stamp.



5. Zahid Islam has kindly written to me from Dammam with information correcting that published in Random Notes. The following is an edited version of Zahid's letter:

In RN # 45 (April-June 1989) entitled Early ARAMCO Postal History - The Ohliger Correspondence by F.C. Benedict, on page 8 we have the following sentences: "An early letter of his (Mr. Floyd Ohliger) is... postmarked 5 January 1936. It has the By Air circular handstamp used by the Bahrain post office until 1936". This is actually incorrect; such transit handstamps were only applied at Karachi (now in Pakistan) on those covers that were carried via the weekly air service between Karachi and London of Imperial Airways that

was introduced effective 7th April 1929. Any cover with such circular handstamps only confirm that Mr. Ohliger's early letters to his wife in California were carried on the Karachi/London flights before crossing the Atlantic by sea mail. These circular handstamps on covers flown from Karachi in the early 1930's have always been much sought after by advanced collectors. See example below:

IR MAI

Another example of the Bahrain - Karachi connection, which was quite common during World War II, is illustrated by the next cover. This ARAMCO cover was mailed from AlKhobar, most probably in 1944, and has the Morenweiser Type 5 (DHB 147) and the octagonal Morenweiser Type 6 (DHB/16) censor marks indicating that the cover was censored/examined at Karachi. (The code letters for Bombay censors were DHC while those of Calcutta were DHA, ref: Postal Censorship in India 1939-1945 by Brigadier D.S. Virk). After the fall of Singapore as well as the Dutch East Indies to the Japanese in 1942, mail bound for the US from Saudi Arabia was also carried on the Karachi - Calcutta - Durban route. Steamers at Durban forwarded this mail to Lagos for onward transmission to Miami.

Zahid's second cover is shown on the next page.

My own contribution to the subject is a letter from Richard Kerr to his wife, cancelled Bahrain 5 February 1935 and with the 'BY AIR' circular handstamp. This cover went to Paris (11 February) before its sea voyage to USA. Note the Arabic 'Dick Kerr' seal on the reverse.

AHREIN ISLAND, ANDIN GULF. NCO. DHB 147 IA BOAT MAIL derick John n. 2 3107 BOAT MAIL Sheet and I. Orego J.S.

Bahrain to U.S.A. via Karachi





Arabic 'Dick Kerr' seal

By Air via Karachi to Paris before sea voyage to the U.S.A.

Thank you very much Zahid for the information; he finishes his letter to me with a note:

Incidentally, there is a splendid photograph of the petroleum engineer, Floyd Ohliger, who was given the task of building the AlKhobar Pier in 1935 in a recent book published by ARAMCO, entitled The Energy Within - A Photo History of the People of Saudi Aramco. Former employees of ARAMCO would find the photos of the period 1930-1939 a real treat! The book is still available at the Dhahran commissary for only SR.60.

6. There has been much recent activity concerning Saudi fiscal documents, enough to reveal several stamps not listed in Thoden and justify a new version of that catalogue. Perhaps the most important discovery was that of documents showing the use of the 1 and 5 qirsh Medical Aid stamps (RM6Z and RM7Z). Here is part of a Ministry of Education salary document showing multiple usage of the 1 qirsh stamp.



7. In an article in Random Notes 58, Rudy Thoden discussed some of the mysteries of Saudi Arabian official mail. I can add another mystery and, as usual, without an explanation. This relates to the use of official stamps on newspaper wrappers and envelopes for the Muslim World News (MWN) and Muslim World League (MWL); mine date from 1971. Stamps are from the 1970-72 series; a brief description of the covers follows:

| Cover # | Description | Franking value (qirsh) |
|---------|--|---------------------------|
| 1 | The earliest, a wrapper complete with newspaper and dated 3 June 1971, is from Makkah to Cairo and bears a 3 qirsh stamp; the newspaper is dated 25 May 1971. This was illustrated in RN72.12. MWN, air mail. | 3 |
| 2 | Wrapper from Makkah to Indonesia bearing a 1 qirsh stamp and dated 24 April 1973. This was undelivered and returned to Makkah. Of further interest is the Makkah cancel. It is type SD170 but not listed in Kenneth Knight's articles (RN48.9). MWN, air mail. | 1 |
| 3 | Wrapper from Makkah to Turkey and also bearing a 1 qirsh stamp. This is dated 24 June 1973 and cancelled by a type not listed by Knight. MWN, surface mail. | 1 |
| 4 | Envelope from Makkah to Turkey cancelled 17 September 1973 MECCA 8 type S90, MANISA (Turkey) arrival 24 September 1973 and returned to Makkah where it was received 9 February 1974, MECCA 11 type S90. | 37 |
| 5 | An un-addressed envelope from Makkah cancelled 28 November 1973, MECCA 8 type S90, with a BAWEAN (Indonesia) receiving mark dated 16 April 1974. Returned to Makkah where is was received on 6 May 1974, MECCA 11 type S90. MWL, surface mail. | 141 |
| 6 | Wrapper from Makkah to Paris, was undelivered and re- turned to Makkah, arriving back on 1 May 1974. The stamp, a 1 qirsh, was not cancelled. MWN, surface mail. | 1 |
| 7 | Wrapper from Makkah to India bearing a 2 qirsh stamp, undelivered and returned. This cover is dated 20 Apr 1974 and arrived back in Makkah on 28 Jun 1974. MWN, surface mail. | 2 |

These covers have an extraordinary range of franking value. Considering the nature of the items, newspaper or magazine wrappers and envelopes, what can justify values like 141 qirsh especially for surface mail? Perhaps these items were put into bundles according to their destination and the wrapper at the top of the pile received the postage for the entire bundle. If anyone knows the answer, could they let the editor know. Cover 4 (see next page), is somewhat the worse for wear, but nevertheless a most interesting item. Note that the MECCA 8 and 11 type S90 cancels are not listed by Knight (RN48.7). The earliest date on these (17 September 1973) precedes that quoted by Knight (22 December 1975) by a significant amount.

Unlisted cancels



Cover 2







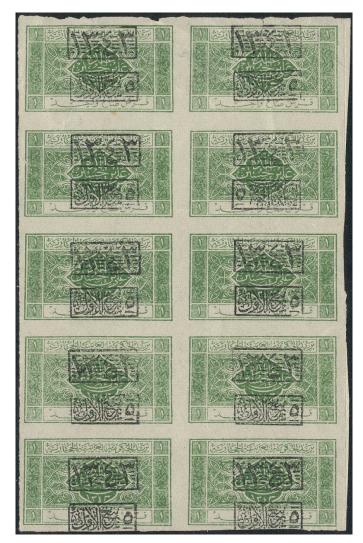
Un-addressed and high franking value, MECCA 8 cancel, type S90, on front



8. The Mayo catalogue contains many King Ali varieties, but not one that occurs in this block. The basic stamp is Mayo 390M, but stamp position 4 in the block has an inverted date tablet. The stamps in the block can be plated and the inverted tablet occurs on stamp position 9 in a complete sheet.



Double overprint



Mayo 390M var

9. A part sheet of 1 qirsh Hejaz postage due with unframed Hashemite overprint in red (Scott LJ5, SG D33) has been found with some stamps showing a double overprint. At first it was thought that this could have been the result of the sheet accidentally touching the plate either before or after the intended overprinting process, but examination of the back of the stamp shows equal relief impressions of both overprints. The doubling varies from 2mm at one edge of the sheet to virtually nothing at the other and was probably caused by the sheet being rotated slightly before receiving the second overprint. This appears to be a genuine accidental double rather than the somewhat dubious ones that are not too uncommon. A certificate from the Royal Philatelic Society London will be sought and hopefully that will be followed by catalogue recognition.

Willie King has studied an image of the block of 30 (10 rows of 3) and has concluded that the sheet was rotated by 0.3 degrees between overprint application. All stamps in the block are double overprints, the most desirable being those that show clear doubling. This block of thirty has been split into five blocks of four, a strip of eight and a pair; it remains to be seen if the remaining twenty stamps from the sheet are still in existence. Images of the intact block and Willie's relative positions of the overprints as would have been seen on the complete sheet follow on the next two pages.





The original block of thirty

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| | | | KALLAN CALL | |
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| ** | 90 | | | |

The relative positions of the two overprints as they would have been on a complete sheet.

10. A couple of copies of the 100 rival re-entry visa stamp, Thoden cat. no. RP59 (type P12), came into my possession recently. It was apparent that they were different shades, one Indian red and the other red-brown and close inspection showed that there were differences in the design. There were no other differences noted; paper and perforation remained the same. Comparison with the 200 rival re-entry visa stamp shows that this new version of the 100 rival is the same design as the higher value and would suggest that the initial design was unsatisfactory for some reason. This type will be referred to as P12a in the forthcoming update to the Thoden catalogue and the redrawn version of the 100 rival will have a catalogue number of RP59A. The type assigned to the 200 rival in the catalogue will be changed from P12 to P12a.

Type P12

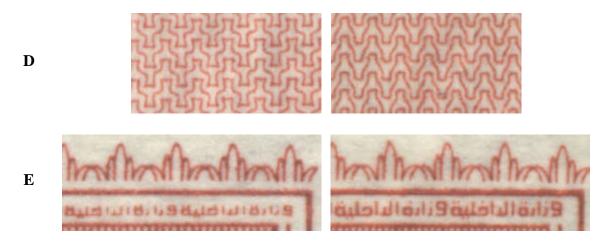




A

B

D



Summary of changes:

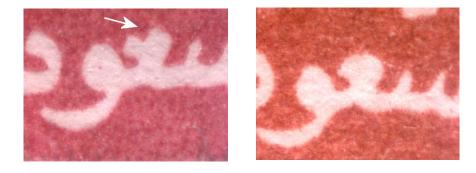
- A P12 has large coloured shape at base of tree.
- B P12a has more white around tree.
- C Alignment of SAUDI ARABIA with respect to design is different.
- D Background design different.
- E Arabic Text *wazarat al-dakhliyat* (Ministry of the Interior) larger in P12a.
- 11. RN67.7 reported the existence wide tooth perforations on a 20 Riyal Entry Visa stamp. I have found a pair of 40 Riyal Residence Visa renewal stamps with the wide tooth at top variety. These stamps are perforated 13.6 x 13.8 instead of the usual 13.6 x 14.1 and been allocated new numbers in the forthcoming revised edition of Rudy Thoden's revenue catalogue.

No doubt more of this series will be found with this type of perforation.



40 Riyal Residence Visa renewal with wide perforation tooth at top.

- 12. Member Burl Henry sent me some varieties of the Tourist series and wants to know if they are constant flaws. I have added a couple more that I don't think have been illustrated in previous editions of Random Notes.
 - a. 'ain' flaw. (shown with normal)



b. 'chandelier' or 'bunch of grapes' flaw.



c. Extended 'taa marbutah' flaw.





d. Malformed 'sin' flaw.



<u>Summary</u>

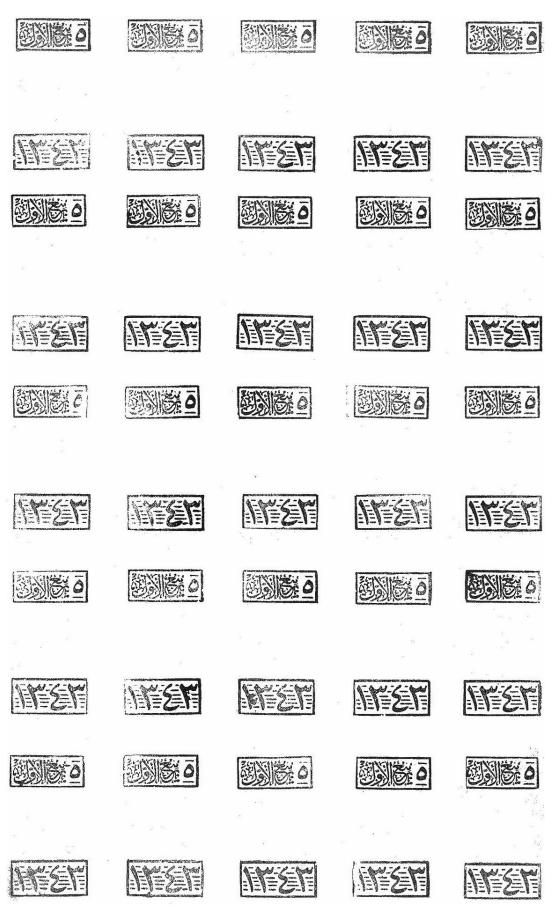
- a. Original frame, 10 qirsh. Seen on more than one stamp.
- b. Centre plate flaw, Expansion of Prophet's Mosque, stamp position2. Seen on more than 1 stamp.
- c. Redrawn frame, 3 qirsh. (I have not seen this one ed.)
- d. Redrawn frame, 2 qirsh. Seen on more than one stamp.
- 13. At the time of writing (2 October 2007) I notice that there are listed on eBay several forgeries of inverted and sideways printed Nejd handstamps. I recently acquired three genuine examples. These were all c.t.o. with the familiar Makkah cancel, but it was certainly a surprise to see genuine copies. These varieties do not appear in auctions very often; the only ones I have seen in old auction catalogues had very high prices and may not have been sold. Although I am certain that these are genuine, I am equally sure they must have been produced for the philatelic market.



Nejd first handstamp varieties

14. In Random Notes 38 an article by Fred Benedict referred to, and illustrated, the setting B version of the King Ali Cairo overprint. My copy of RN38 is not very clear so illustrated on the next page is the twenty-five cliche plate in a size that I hope will be of greater help for plating enthusiasts.





King Ali Cairo overprint, setting B (shown sideways)

15. Also from Burl Henry were some copies of the 150h Saudi Cities 'Jeddah' with colour and perforation variations. One of the stamps appeared to be perf 12.5 instead of 12. Placing the stamps together did indeed show that not only were the perforations different but so were the sizes. The design of one measured 51mm in width, the other 52mm. Reducing an image of the longer one by this ratio and placing the images together caused the perforations to match. A mint copy of this stamp in my collection measures 51.5mm I can only conclude that the used stamps changed size when soaked off their envelopes. I also understand that climatic conditions can also cause paper size instability, so beware. I have also noticed colour variations on this series, perhaps also cause by water immersion, but I can't be sure.



Apparent perforation variation



Perforations match after size correction



APPEAL

It is becoming increasingly difficult to fill enough pages to make an issue worthwhile and I would like to appeal to readers to search their collections for items that have not previously appeared in random Notes. For those of you without earlier issues, let me know what you have and I will check on your behalf.

Your contributions do not have to be complete articles; this journal was founded purely on notes. The notes can be handwritten although I prefer text that I can 'cut and paste' and images do not have to be scans. Some of the recent contributions have been good quality colour photocopies and they have reproduced well in these pages.

There is so much information not yet recorded here that I am sure you will be able to help in some way.

To those who have contributed, I offer my thanks, and please keep up the good work!

Martin Lovegrove Editor

The Best Forgery? - The Answer and more.....

By: Martin Lovegrove

The original article on a good forgery of the 1/8 qirsh Makkah Arms stamp appeared in *Random Notes* #66. One observation made was that it was likely that the plate size was smaller than 36 cliches. Confirmation of this fact has now been found.

A selection of items described as "Printer's waste" appeared in a recent Sphinx auction; some of the lots related to this forgery. There were several other similar items of interest, some of which are discussed in this article.

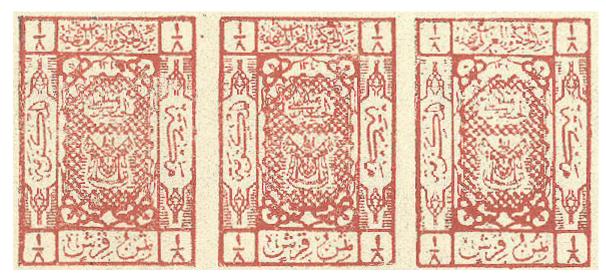
Two lots were blocks of 12 of these stamps and with outer margins large enough to suggest that this was the plate size. Flaws on both blocks corresponded, thus enhancing this assumption. The 'dot after value' flaw illustrated in *Random Notes* #66 occurs in position 9 and the 'sloping line' and 'horizontal line' flaws also illustrated occur in positions 10 and 12 respectively. The 'ink squash' mentioned in that article only appeared on row 2 of the sheet illustrated below.



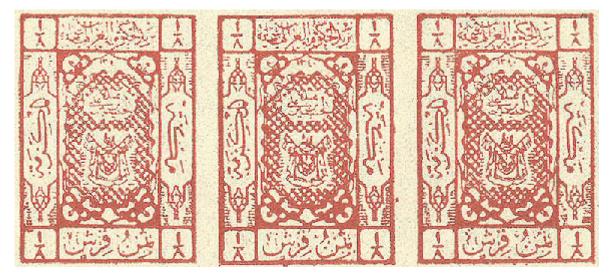
Complete sheet of twelve

The sheet shown above has the stamps printed in the usual chestnut colour, another sheet of 12 in the auction was printed in dark brown with the flaws noted above all present except that there was no 'ink squash' on the lower row. That feature therefore cannot be relied upon for identification purposes. Although the genuine stamp is of little monetary value and the occasional purchase of a forgery is probably not too embarrassing, illustrations of each position of the forgery is shown for the benefit of readers collecting such material.

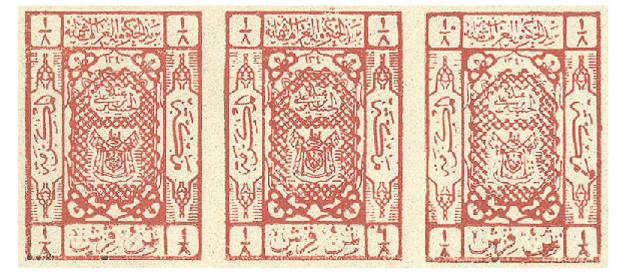




Positions 1, 2 and 3

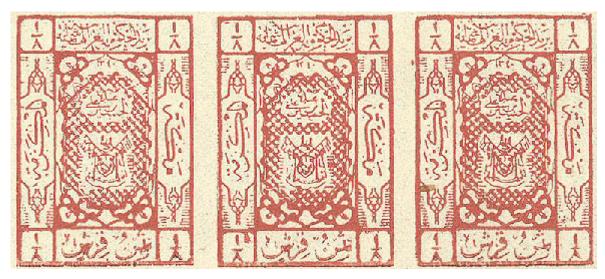


Positions 4, 5 and 6



Positions 7, 8 and 9



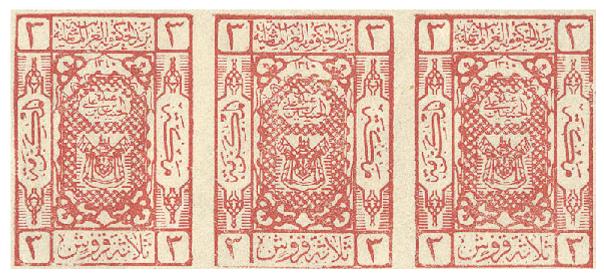


Positions 10, 11 and 12

Another lot in the auction solved a problem I was having with some 3 qirsh red-brown stamps. These have turned out to be another very good forgery, and as with the above were produced in sheets of 12. All of the stamps are 'good-looking' but cannot be accurately plated against the genuine sheet. For the same reasons as for the 1/8 qirsh, all twelve cliches are reproduced here for reference purposes.



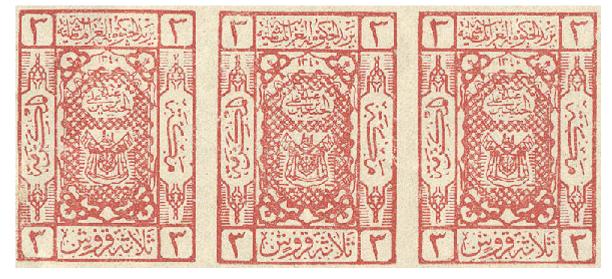
Complete sheet of twelve



Positions 1, 2 and 3

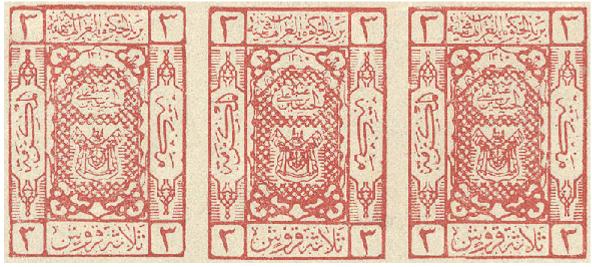


Positions 4, 5 and 6



Positions 7, 8 and 9



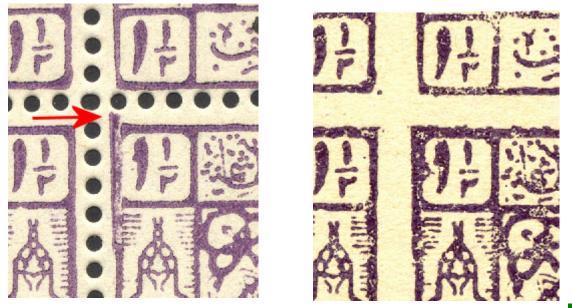


Positions 10, 11 and 12

Another group of stamps in my box of suspect stamps is the $1\frac{1}{2}$ qirsh on off-white or cream paper and with brownish gum. The quality of printing is not as good as the genuine, but single stamps are quite realistic, hence my reluctance to consign them immediately to the forgeries box. However, all of the overprints I have seen on these are forgeries, so the total stamps are not genuine.

Some imperforate sheets of this type, but on buff coloured paper, were in the auction and were described as printer's waste. The sheets were the same 6x6 format as the genuine and the position 9 flaw indicated that the printing plate for these had been prepared from a copy of the genuine. This is the same procedure that was used for the 'reprint' forgeries but the look and feel of these stamps is different. None of my perforated copies show the missing perforation found in the 'reprints' and it is possible that these were the work of a different forger, however the forged overprints used on these stamps were also used on 'reprints' and there may therefore be a connection.

A comparison of the position 9 flaw is shown below; it is interesting to note that the top of the flaw is not present in the forgery. Perhaps it was removed when the evidence of perforations on the copied image was removed. A complete sheet of the forgery is on the next page.



Genuine position 9 with corner flaw

Random Notes #74 - Page 23

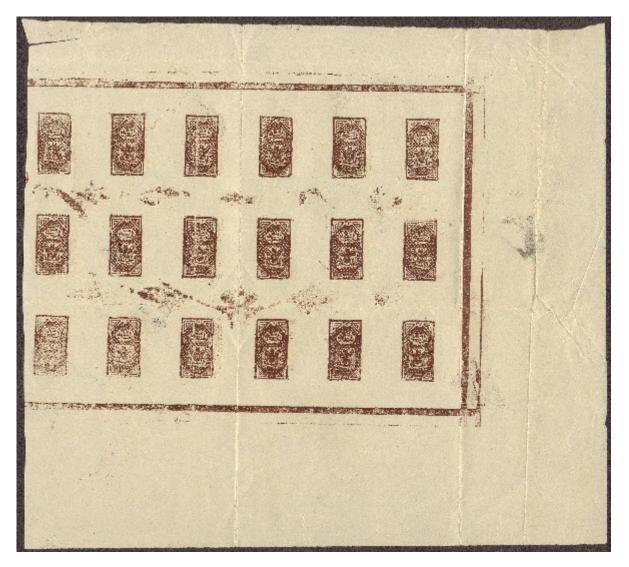
Forgery



Forgery on buff paper

Note that there is no marginal rule around the stamps.

Another item offered, and the last for this issue of Random Notes, really does look like printer's waste, but is it genuine? Illustrated on the next page is a pane of twelve centre vignettes from the 10 qirsh Makkah Arms series. I find that many forgeries of this stamp are difficult to detect; a missing perforation on perforated values is always a help, otherwise study of the paper used may be the best approach.



The paper used in this example is the same as that used for known 'reprint' forgeries and as a result I am convinced that this is printer's waste from the production of a forged plate. One interesting point about this sheet is the marginal rule. In this example it can be seen that the lines cross at the corners (see below); the genuine does not. Also, the genuine lines are indistinct, the forgeries are straight and clear. However there is no reason why the genuine plate was not like this during its manufacture.



Forgery Genuine



Random Notes #74 - Page 25

From the Auctions

Compiled by: Martin Lovegrove

Just three items this time.

First is a set of Hejaz Caliphate dues, each stamp offered as a separate lot on eBay. The $\frac{1}{2}$ qirsh was badly damaged, the other two values appeared good and each had a certificate issues by the Royal Philatelic Society London. I include these here to illustrate how large a gap there can be between prices paid and the catalogue price. The stamps appear as a footnote in Scotts, but they are priced in Stanley Gibbons. The catalogue values have been converted to USD at the rate of 1 GBP = 2 USD.

| Face | SG | Cat value (USD) | Realized (USD) |
|-----------|-----|-----------------|----------------|
| ¹∕₂ qirsh | D57 | 6000 | 20.50 |
| 1 qirsh | D58 | 6000 | 228.50 |
| 2 qirsh | D59 | 6000 | 103.51 |



Images from eBay (these were 3 separate images and obviously not to scale!)

These stamps are nowhere near as rare as the catalogue price suggests; plating studies have shown that several sheets of each value were produced. I believe that Gibbons have a set of these in stock and am I being cynical in suggestion that we won't see the catalogue price reduced while this is the case?

Auktionshaus Gartner included in their September 2007 auction as lot 2211, a group of plate proofs of the 1952 Dammam - Riyadh stamps. The starting price was EUR 1600; they were not sold.

1952, Railway set in imperforate marginal PLATE PROOFS including Master Proof from American Bank Note Co. Archives on thin white paper affixed on thin cards (Scott #187-91)





Auktionshaus Gartner lot 2211

Harmers of London had two lots of 'Artists Essays' included in their sale held on 31 July 2007; neither was sold.

| Lot | Description |
|-----|-------------|
|-----|-------------|

1217 1963 Moslem League Conference, Mecca. 10p. Holy Kaaba, oversize preliminary hand 300 painted Artists Essay in the issued colours on board; fine. *A unique piece*.

1218 1984 Cities 150h. Jeddah, oversize original Artists Essay in colours on board, a little 500 soiled but beautiful. *A unique piece of artwork*.



Lot 1218



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| | The Saudi expert is Gregory Todd who can be con- tacted at <u>todd@corinphila.ch</u> |
| Filatco | http://www.filatco.com |
| Magan Stamps (Gordon Bonnett) | http://www.maganstamps.co.uk A 10% discount is offered to APAI members. If you order from this site, let Gordon know you are a member. The discount applies only to the website price list. |
| Nutmeg Stamp Sales Inc | http://www.nutmegstamp.com |
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| http://www.arabianstamps.com | Good information on Saudi new issues |
| http://www.mnagim.com | Rare and unusual stamps and proofs from the Middle East. |

RN