



الجمعية الدولية للطوابع البريدية العربية
ملاحظات عابرة

Arabian Philatelic Association International
Random Notes



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Dammam Port - Mystery Perforations
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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). The APAI e-mail address arabphilassocin@aol.com 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: 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 (2008) and Stanley Gibbons (2005) catalog numbers are used with the kind permission of the copyright owners.

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'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 #76

Assembled by the Editor

This edition, which should have been completed by the end of June 2008, came very close to not being produced at all. Thanks to late submissions from Willie King and Lucien Toutounji I have managed to get something produced for you. Lack of items for publication is nothing new to this journal, but without them it will cease to exist.

Willie's articles will get us thinking about the 1934 Tughra series and about strange perforations and perhaps postal forgeries, and also Philby. Lucien describes a rare cover to the Colonial Photo Stores in Alexandria from Turkey. It is not the usual cover to that business and has no marking linking it with our area, but it would have travelled on the Hejaz Railway.

I need anything you can offer, from short notes to full articles. Please help me to keep Random Notes alive.

Now for the notes.

1. In the past few editions of Random Notes, I have been illustrating postmarks not included in the series of articles by Kenneth Knight, the first appearing in RN44. I have recently been in touch with Ken and I am pleased to report that there are now plans to produce a book on the subject.

I would like to broaden the scope to include other types of postal markings, such as AV2 and OAT marks applied to outgoing mail, and would very much like to hear from anyone who has ideas on the subject. My contact details are on page 2.

2. Covers from ANAIZA are not too common. This is dated 20 December 1961 and is to the BBC in London. The photograph is one I took in 1965 and the sign above the door reveals that the building is a (or perhaps 'the') post office in Anaiza.



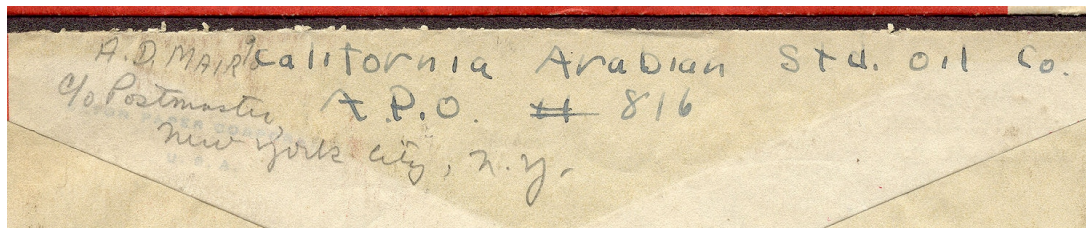
Has anyone got any photographs of other post offices? If you have, could you send me a copy?



- In Random Notes #35 there appeared an article 'Early Aramco Postal History' by Rudy Thoden. The article described the introduction of the Army Post Office service to CASCO and BAPCO and their employees. It was stated that the service for incoming mail started in May 1943 with agreement by the Saudi authorities for outgoing mail following in May 1944.

Illustrated below is an outgoing cover dated October 23, 1943. It would appear that APO 616 was used for outgoing mail before official approval was granted.

The CASOC address had been crossed out and the APO return address added in manuscript on the reverse. The sender, A.D. (Don) Mair, was one of the early CASOC replacement or additional employees sent in one of the 2nd, 3rd, 4th or 5th waves (Aramco World).



- A challenge for the correct chronological usage of postmarks is not exactly made easy by items such as this:



With one part of the cancel showing 23.7.64 and the other 23.7.65, we could easily be lead astray if only one of the dates was visible.

(continued on [page 32](#))

Reviewing the Tughras

SG 329-42 : Scott 159-72

By W. A. King FRPSL

It was in 1981 that Thomas Wood published his monograph on the Tughra issue with Random Notes No. 19. 25 years later, in 2006, Stanley Gibbons agreed to finally improve their listing to separate the two main perforation groups. The Tughra design was first issued in 1934 and remained in service for 26 years until it was replaced in 1960 by the Dam, GOSP and Air definitives. Since the original work was published many advances have taken place in technology and also new findings made, so over the next 4-5 issues of Random Notes the individual values of this issue will be presented and readers are invited to bring up questions and observations for discussion. Then perhaps we can re-issue the monograph.

It is proposed that the 'varieties' for each value are grouped or ranked by overall significance into major and minor varieties.

'Key' or Major Varieties are those, which are reasonably practical to distinguish from the front of the stamp i.e. on cover or on an album page.

'Minor' Varieties are those, which can only be identified by detailed examination of the back of the stamp or knowledge and available examples of colour shades.

Tughra Issue – One Eighth Qirsh



Variety shown is Dc on Type 9 paper : Dimensions : Stamp Design – 2.92 x 2.04 cm

Stamp to perforations : 3.2 x 2.3cm Sheet 20.55 x 14.95cm





A : Perf 11.5 B : Perf 11.5 Orange



C : Perf 11 (10.9) D Perf 11 (11.1)

Scan showing Gibbons SG 329A, 329Aa and 329B and 329Ba

Thomas P. Wood detailed 11 different varieties of this value in his listing with three colours. Mayo lists seven stamps with 5 colours with two on grey paper, Gibbons list five stamps 3 colours with one being an imperf between and Scotts - a single stamp! The Wood's monograph of 1981 is still the key listing but two entries appear to be a duplication i.e. paper 2A and perms 10.9 and also 10.75 which are now considered to be the same perforation.

With the Wood listing, from Rudy Thoden's notes and my own collection I have produced the listing below which defines the one eighth qirsh into **four major** varieties. Note these four main varieties do match the new Gibbons listing for this value – this does not follow for other values!!

Perforations : The key is perforations – not only by precise measurement but also by the condition and size of the perforation hole. Basically **three different** perforations exist, firstly 11½ (exactly 11.5) and two 'nominal' 11 perforations. The first perforation "11" has large perforation holes and actually measures 10.9 and the second has small holes and measures 11.1. The latter then deteriorates into typical 'pin' holes. Note you do need a graduated perforation gauge like the Gibbons 'Instanta' to measure the perforations precisely.

Colour : Shades do vary and are subject to light, scanning, washing, ageing and 'opinion'. The colours 'named' by Woods and especially Mayo are a dilemma, which I propose is avoided. However these are normally related to a particular type of paper and thus printing. Once the perforation and paper are identified the colour variations within that variety appear quite small.

UV (Ultra Violet) Light : Does not assist to differentiate any printings.



The 1/8 Oirsh Tughra Varieties

Classification : The degree of specialization that you collect is a purely personal matter and one of the joys of collecting stamps. However I have chosen to classify the tughra varieties as follows – if you want to collect more than a single example!

‘Key’ Variety : A, B, C, D etc : Designated by a Capital letter are those which are ‘face’ different ie can be classified with reasonable certainty by eye when on a cover or on an album page. Note colour variations must be very significant to rate as a ‘key’ variety.

Colour : I have long learned that arguing about or trying to name a colour is fraught with problems – ask my wife!! Martin and I spent a year trying to get the scanner to give us a ‘number’. We believe it can be done with a scanner costing thousands of \$/£ but none of us are yet prepared to go to that expense. So we will try to avoid colour as a classification wherever possible – but it will be discussed.

Minor Variety : This is a variety that can only be determined by **close physical examination** of the stamp. This can mean using magnification or specialist equipment or in most of the Tughras by examination of the reverse of the stamp. Minor varieties are related to a “key” variety and are therefore designated by a lower case letter in position 2 to emphasize the link to the key variety. Note, on an album page, you would need to explain this ‘variety’ as it could not be observed by the viewer – or by a judge if you are exhibiting in a competition! i.e. minor varieties are Aa, Ab, Bc etc.

Errors : Listed using an upper case letter in position 3. e.g. imperf between etc.

Perforation 11½ (11.5 precisely)

Variety A : 1934 : Perforation 11.5 – Large Holes : The original printing with clean cut perforations. Mint stamps are usually hinged coming from collections of the period. Printed on Wood’s paper 1 which is quite thin and allows the outline of the stamp to be distinguished from the back. (SG 329A)

Note : Wood included sub-varieties with his paper 2 and 2A, which are virtually identical to paper 1 but with some diagonal lines visible. This was based on a single example and, although quite likely, has not yet been independently confirmed so existence is still to be justified. (Aa is retained!)

Variety Ab : 1943 : Perforation 11.5 – Large Holes. The perforator is wearing so holes show some wear. Main difference is the paper Woods Type 3. Thick opaque paper makes it impossible to see the design from the back of stamp. Scarce mint as collectors already had supplies of this perforation and a wartime issue.

Variety B : 1945 : Perforation 11.5 – Worn large holes and **printed in Orange**. Perforator has worn so many perforation holes are not cut out. Paper Wood type 4, and is thick, opaque and under magnification coloured fibres are visible. (This is the Gibbons variety listed as SG 329Aa with catalogue value x4 normal.).

Perforation 11 (Precisely 10.9)

Variety C : 1937 : Perforation 10.9 – Large perforation holes. Clean cut perforations and printed on Wood’s paper 2. Very similar to paper type 1 and design just visible from the back. (SG 329B).



Variety Ca : 1943 : Perforation 10.9 – Large perforation holes. Usually clean cut perforations and printed on Wood’s paper 3. i.e. as variety Ab above – on thick opaque ‘wartime’ paper. This variety was not listed by Wood.

Perforation 11 (Precisely 11.1)

Variety D : 1950 : Perforation 11.1 – Small worn perforation holes. This is a different perforator to above and was never very effective. Stamps printed on a ‘ribbed’ paper most easily seen on used stamps in inclined light using a magnifying glass. Ribs either vertical or horizontal. Wood’s paper type 6. (SG 329Ba)

Variety Da : 1952 : perforation 11.1- small worn perforation holes. This time on grayish opaque paper, without any ‘ribbing’. Wood’s paper type 7.

Variety Db : 1955 : Perforation 11.1 – “pin”* perforations i.e. no paper removed. Wood’s paper 8. Difficult to identify – except it is ‘**not**’ paper type 9! Look for ribbing at 45 degrees rather than vertical or horizontal.

Variety Dc : 1957 : Perforation 11.1 – “pin” perforations i.e. no paper removed. Wood’s paper 9. Again finely ribbed paper visible under a magnifying glass in inclined light. Fairly easy to distinguish on used stamps.

Errors

Variety A-A : Imperf Vertical Margin

The stamp shown has missing vertical edge perforation and an extra horizontal row in the upper margin. This is from the first printing and the scanned example is ex Thoden collection. Bottom row has an extra row of blind perfs through the ‘tughra’ i.e. 8mm from top of stamp.



Variety DbA : Imperf Between Horiz.

Listed by Gibbons for the first time in 2006 as SG328Bab. The example shown is ex Thoden and is a full strip of 5 and is now in the collection of another APAI member. A similar left marginal strip of from another sheet was in the 1987 Kaczmarcyck sale. (lot 30831)

Note the vertical perforations are just ‘indentations’ but horizontal perforations are totally absent. The scan has been darkened in an attempt to show these vertical indents.



One-Eighth Qirsh Checklist

Major Var.	Perf	Minor Var.	Approx Year	Paper	Detail	SG	TW	MM	
<input type="checkbox"/>	A	11.5		1934	1 - Design visible		X	X	X
	"	<input type="checkbox"/>	A-A	"	"	Imperf Margin			
	"		Aa?	1936?	2?		X		
	"	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ab	1943	3 - Opaque		X	X	
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	"		1945	4 - Opaque with fibres	Orange	X	X	X
<input type="checkbox"/>	C	10.9		1937	2 - Design visible		X	X	
	"	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ca	1943	3 - Opaque				
<input type="checkbox"/>	D	11.1		1950	6 - Ribbed		X	X	X
	"	<input type="checkbox"/>	Da	1952	7 - Opaque Grey			X	X
	"	<input type="checkbox"/>	Db	1955	8 - Plain	Pin Perf		X	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	DbA	"	"	Imperf Between	X		
	"	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dc	1957	9 - Ribbed	Pin Perf		X	X

Covers and usage : The one eighth qirsh approximately equals about ¼ US cent i.e. the sheet of 25 stamps = 6 cents. However Dr Amr's review of the Umm Al Qura newspaper dated 28 Ramadan 1353 (January 4th 1935) in RN54 explains. It published details of mail rates including this item -

(15) The fee for newspapers and all types of printed matter and forms is 5 paras for each 50gms inland and 30 paras for out-of-country.

The ¼q stamp was required for the internal printed matter rate. (1 qirsh = 40 paras).

Printed Matter Rate Covers 1934-1960 : Printed matter rate covers just do not appear on the market and I must admit I do not recall ever seeing one. So anyone with a newspaper, newspaper wrapper or printed matter cover from the 1934-1960 period with an eighth qirsh stamp are invited to send a scan to the editor.

Mixed Currency and Mixed Issue Covers However covers where the one eighth is used with a 2⅞ qirsh do appear, particularly in 1960-1961. From 9th January 1960 the basic rate to the USA was dramatically increased from 5½ qirsh to 23 piastres at the same time as the Dam, GOSP and Air issues were due to be issued. However because some DGA's were late – and possibly to use up the qirsh denominated issues the qirsh denominated stamps could be used at rate of 1 qirsh = 2 piastres. (*see Woods Tughras page 12*) A complex new rate chart was issued but basically airmail to USA was 23 piastres and to UK was 16 piastres. The next page shows a selection – and we need more! Basically any 1960-61 cover with mixed or unusual selections are requested – e.g. one eighth qirsh, mixed qirsh and piastres issues such as shown overleaf.



One Eighth Tughra Covers : Please let us know of any improvement you would like to see in listing and, of course, any new varieties and covers.



Feb 1961 : This cover shows the correct rate.

23 pi!

4q + 4q + 2 7/8q + 1/8q i.e.
11q = 22 pi
+ 1pi GOSP
+ 1/4q Tax



Jan 1961 : Lufthansa Cover

Ex Martin Lovegrove Colln.

2 7/8q + 1/8q = 6pi

10pi APU Congress + 1pi GOSP

**16 pi rate to UK/Germany
however addressed to USA!**



November 1935 : KLM to Dutch East Indies. 10q x 2 + 1q + 2 x 1/8q = 21 1/4q

A cover showing the first 1/2qirsh charity stamp and two one eighth qirsh – probably philatelic and believed to show the correct rate. Jeddah (10-11-1935), to Alexandria by sea (25-11-35) by KLM to Batavia and received 2-12-1935



Tughra Issue - One Quarter Qirsh

‘Key’ Varieties : Using the procedure established earlier the three perforation varieties which are practical to identify as the three ‘key’ varieties.

‘Minor’ Varieties : These can reasonably identified if you have the stamp(s) physically available to examine. Note when it is noted ‘design visible’ from back of stamp – it is ‘just visible’ not translucent! Grey paper is apparent – IF you have the alternative for comparison.

One Quarter Qirsh Checklist

Major Var.	Perf	Minor Var.	Approx Year	Paper	Detail	SG	TW	MM
<input type="checkbox"/>	A	11.5	1934	1/1a - Design visible		X	X	X
	"	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ab	1946	4/5 - Opaque Grey	Imperf Margin	X	?
<input type="checkbox"/>	C	10.9	1939	2 - Design Visible		X	X	X
	"	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ca	1944	3 - Opaque		X	X
		11.1	<input type="checkbox"/>	Da	1952			X
<input type="checkbox"/>	D	"	1956	8 - Plain	Pin Perf	X	X	X
	"	<input type="checkbox"/>	Db	1957	9 - Ribbed	Pin Perf		X

Colour : Segregation by perforation also tends to help organise the shades of green.

Perforation 13.5 : Green

Perforation 10.9 : The green appears much brighter to the eye - but that is not reflected in the scan, and it doesn't fade on washing used copies.

Perforation 11.1: There are a range of shades including the original green. It however appears that the majority which are available are the ‘pin perf’ variety and are ‘Yellow-Green’, which has been selected as the Major or Key variety.



A
Perf 11.5

C
Perf 10.9

D
Perf 11.1



Comparison with Other Catalogues

Wood details a total of 11 'varieties' of $\frac{1}{4}q$.

Four perforation $11\frac{1}{2}$ which I have reduced to 2 as the paper differences are very minor. Seven different perforation '11' in green or yellowish green printings but 2 have been eliminated as $10\frac{3}{4}$ and 10.9 are considered to be the same.

Mayo also lists four perf $11\frac{1}{2}$, emerald and yellow green and each with sub-varieties on grey paper. These I find difficult to substantiate. For perf 11 only two are listed emerald and yellow green – the former is the 10.9 and the latter the pin perf. (Perhaps the two grey papers were transposed into the wrong perf listing?)

Gibbons List 3. The first perforation $11\frac{1}{2}$ is straightforward, then green and yellow-green as perf 11 but the yellow green is unpriced – which is rather misleading as it is the most common of the 3 varieties. For valuation I would place the perforation 10.9 highest, then perforation $11\frac{1}{2}$ and lowest the yellow green Perforation 11.1.

Scotts : A single yellow green stamp.

Covers and Usage $\frac{1}{4}q$:

1. **Single Usage** : The only 'single' usage would be on double rate printed matter mail i.e. 50-100gms but I have seen no examples – yet!
2. **Replacing Hospital Tax Stamp** : Alternate usage which I have seen and is reported by Wood (page 8), is replacing the $\frac{1}{4}q$ hospital tax stamp, i.e. correct regular postage + $\frac{1}{4}q$ Tughra rather than a $\frac{1}{4}q$ hospital tax stamp.
3. **CASOC** : Used on the wartime $33\frac{1}{4}q$ rate CASOC covers – both perforation $11\frac{1}{2}$ and 10.9 are available.
4. **Philatelic** : Usually the correct rate, but not always! and a mixture of values that only a stamp collector would love - or likely to create!! Was this below to impress another collector?



Cover Back dated 21–8-1943: Back only with $\frac{1}{8}q$ x4 + $\frac{1}{4}q$ x2 + $\frac{1}{2}q$ x2 + 1q = 3q + $\frac{1}{8}q$ tax : Foreign surface rate or heavy local cover. All are **perforation 10.9** incl. tax.



Tughra Issue - Seven-Eighths (7/8) Qirsh

'Pin' perfs >



Major Var.	Perf	Minor Var.	Approx Year	Paper	Detail	SG	TW	MM
□	D	11.1	1956	8 - Plain	Pin Perf	X	X	X
	"	□	Da	1956	9 - Ribbed		X	
		??	Db?	?	Imperforate			X

Requirement : The $\frac{7}{8}$ qirsh, and the $\frac{2}{8}$, are unusual values and T P. Wood surmises (page 8) that they were effectively the **surcharges** required to pay for internal air mail. i.e. Normal internal surface mail was $\frac{1}{2}$ qirsh but rate for internal airmail was $1\frac{3}{8}$ qirsh and then in 1957 was raised to $3\frac{3}{8}$ qirsh. The supply of a stamp for a surcharge rather than the full value of the service seems rather illogical – but comments please. Perhaps someone in Arabia could peruse Umm Al Qura for late 1956 and 1957 to see if this will shed light on this.

Colour : This is listed as pale blue by Gibbons, light blue by Scotts and Mayo, as pale cobalt by Wood. You see why I do not wish to get involved in naming colours!

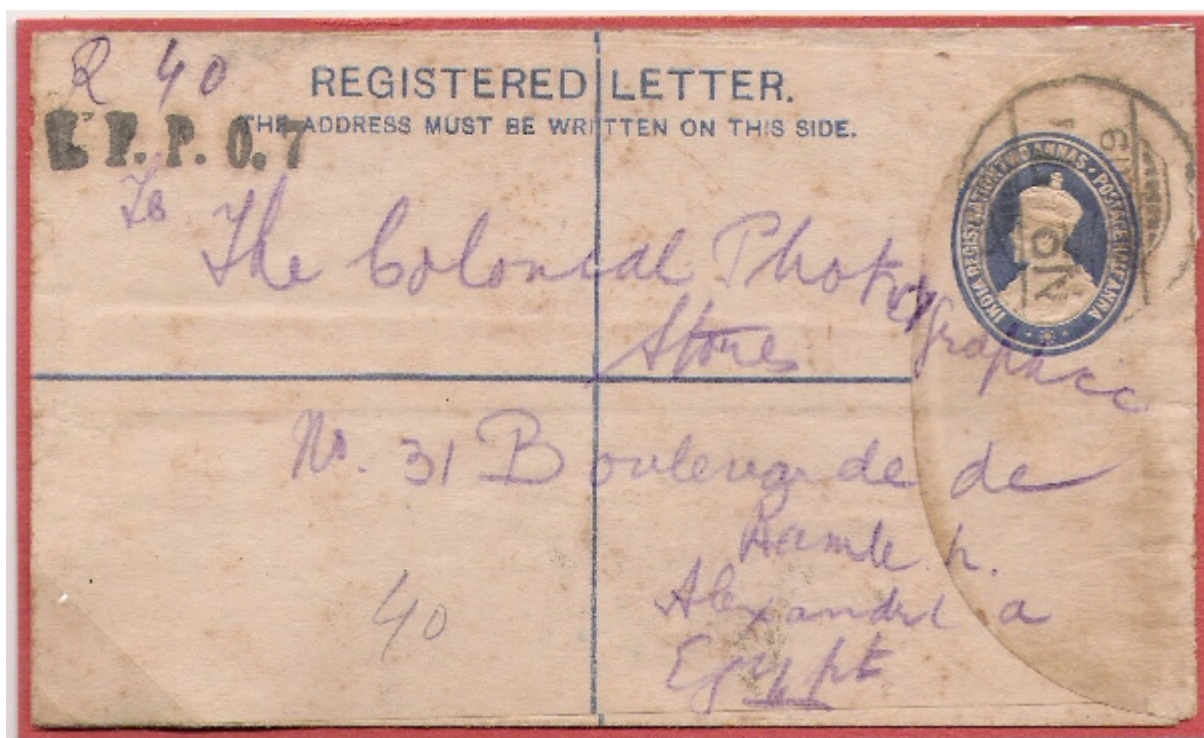
Perforations & Imperforate : Only known with 'pin' perfs on Woods paper 8 and 9. Can anybody show a nicely perforated copy? Only report of this value imperforate is by Mayo and confirmation is also required – in multiples of course. Cannot remember ever seeing any of this value – if you want this listed you must submit justification.

Hope you find this 'Tughra' issue listing of interest. Please submit comments, corrections and also stamps and covers of interest for inclusion in the next part. Note these are 3 of the lower values but the $\frac{1}{2}$ qirsh is complex and will follow later.

Pioneer Flights : Syria - Egypt 1919 - UNRECORDED R.A.F. FLIGHT ALEPPO TO QANTARA

By: Lucien Toutounji

Registered Indian stationery cover, mailed 1st August 1919 from Indian Field Post Office #7 located at Ain Tab in Turkey, about 100 kilometers north of Aleppo in Syria, addressed to Alexandria. Continuing in the military postal system and receiving a transit postmark two days later on 3rd August 1919 of Indian Field Post Office # 17 at Aleppo, located 350 kilometers north of Damascus. From Aleppo, by R.A.F. unrecorded flight to R.A.F. base at Qantara, on the Suez Canal, in Egypt. There, entered the Egyptian postal system as regular not registered mail on 6th August 1919, backstamp shown below. Arrived at Alexandria by rail 7th August 1919.



The surface route would have been : From Aleppo to Damascus with a connection at Rayak (Lebanon) by the "DHP" Damas, Hama et Prolongements Railway. By Hejaz Railway, from Damascus south to Deraa. From there to Haifa, by the Jezreel Valley Railway. From Haifa, also by rail, to Qantara. Not possible in three days in 1919, unless by air. At that time, registered mail by surface from Aleppo to Alexandria, would have taken about ten days in transit, travelling through the postal systems in Syria, Palestine and Egypt.

BELIEVED TO BE UNIQUE

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RN

Makkah Arms 3 Qirsh Brown with Large 3-Line Jeddah Overprint Sideways Reading Up

By: Martin Lovegrove

The image of this stamp on eBay looked as though it could have been a genuine stamp with part of a blue forgery type 2 (Forgery Manual page J-2) overprint. If genuine, the stamp would be Scott L87c, SG 110e. The amount of overprint visible was limited to the bottom line and a comparison of this with all 12 positions of the forgery plate showed that my initial supposition had been incorrect. Comparisons with other forgery types failed to produce a match, and as a last resort I examined the genuine overprint.



3 qirsh brown with bottom line of large 3-line Jeddah overprint sideways reading up.

This activity did show a useful difference between the genuine and forgery type 2. The vertical part of 'laam' leans to the left much more in the forgery than in the genuine. This is illustrated below.

١٣٤٢ ربيع الاول ٥

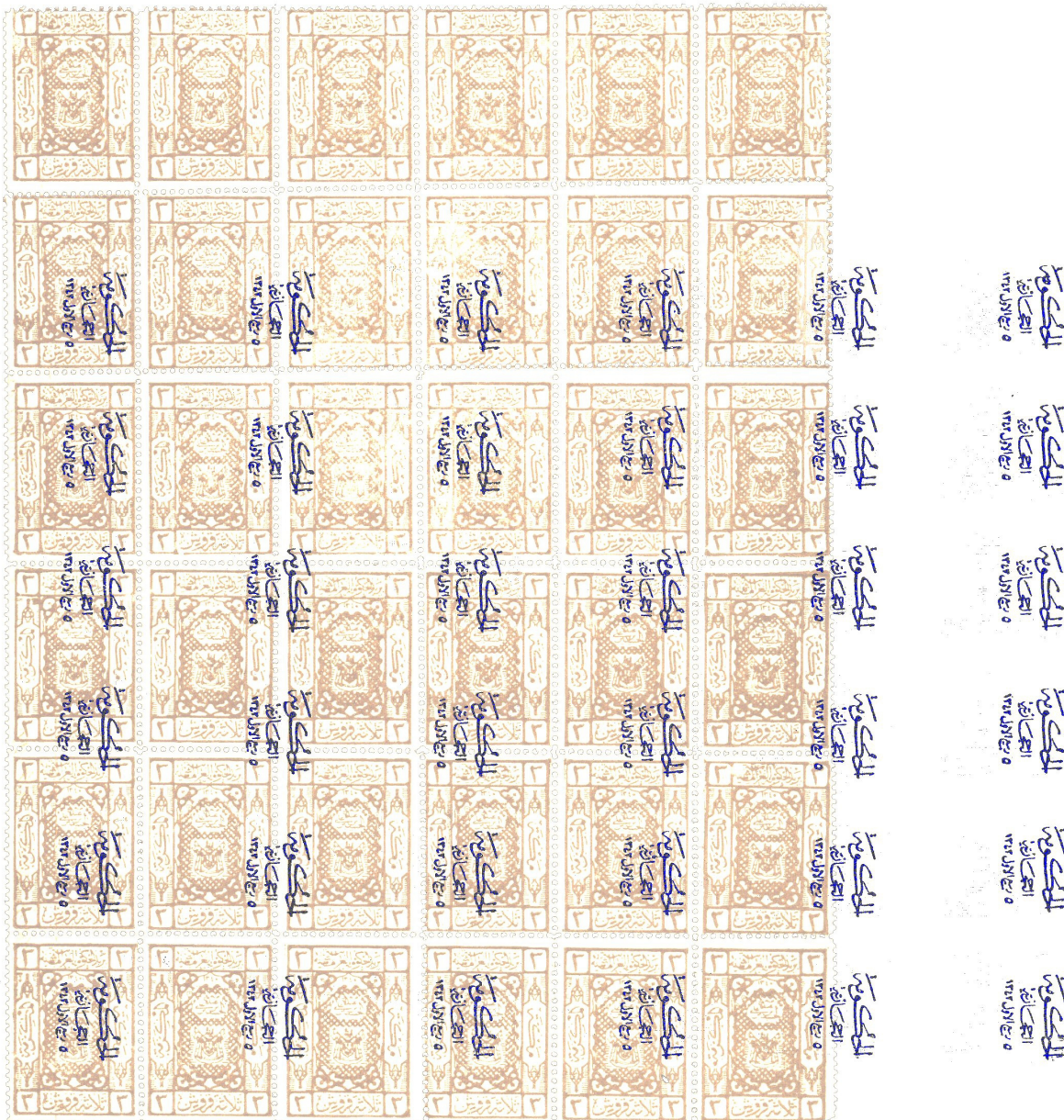
Forgery type 2

١٣٤٢ ربيع الاول ٥

Genuine position 7

The stamp is from position 12, so my first action was to compare with the top row of the overprint sheet. The result here was negative, but a match was found on the second row at sheet position 7. It occurred to me that it might be worthwhile to superimpose a sheet of the genuine overprint on a sheet of the 3 qirsh with the overprint orientated to match the subject stamp. The result is on the next page. This shows that the printing was done with the bottom right overprint aligned with the bottom left stamp.





I am sure that the alignment shown above is not perfect having such a small part of the overprint to work from, but it should give an idea of how the complete sheet looked. A vertical pair, stamp positions 22 and 28, matching the image above, appeared in Nutmeg sale 81 held on 4th May 2004 as lot 2268.

There should also be five pairs having one stamp with a sideways overprint and one stamp without an overprint at all. I wonder whether any still exist?

Has anyone got a copy of this stamp that differs significantly from the image above? That would prove that more than one sheet of this variety was printed.

The Dammam Port Mystery Perforations

*By W. A. King FRPSL
(Following observations by Joanne Berkowitz)*



There was a little note in the glassine that said "Excerpt from letter of 8-9-90 from John Wilson, Saudi Specialist-"I have never seen the 3 pi Dammam Port with coarse perf's and I think it is very rare". It piqued my interest so I bought it. Joanne.

The above email from Joanne accompanied by a scan of the stamp triggered a memory. I came across a selection of these in a collection, which I had bought about 20 years ago. I mentioned them to Rudy Thoden and he passed them off immediately as fakes produced from the souvenir sheets though, if I remember correctly he never actually examined them as it was discussed during one of our evening walks around the perimeter of the golf course in Dhahran. Anyway I confirmed watermark was sideways (right) although one appeared to be upright. Anyway I left the rather ugly stamps in my stockbook and left them there – until Joanne's query arrived.

My initial answer was pretty offhand – “fakes ex souvenir sheets mentioned in old RN's which I cannot locate at moment but you should find sideways watermark”! However Martin located 2 references (see end of article for transcript) RN-3, the first reference mentioned perforation 10½, but the item in RN-16 referred to perf 6½ and back to RN5 – but I could find no mention in my copies of RN5 (none original).

My selection of this variety are :

3 qirsh : four copies all with very coarse perforation ‘approximately’ 6½. In all 4 stamps the watermark pointed right – European convention looking at front of stamp (Also adopted by APA and by Max Mayo but opposite to Scotts who record looking at the back of the stamp)

6 qirsh : One copy Inverted watermark perf 10½.

8 qirsh : Two copies perf 6½ one watermark left and one **normal watermark up**.

Joanne sent a scan of the back of her copy and confirmed that the watermark on her copy points left ie opposite to mine.

I was now intrigued at the very poor quality of the paper, which is soft and ‘porous’ compared with the hard white paper of the regular issue. The paper was undoubtedly watermarked with the type I watermark, which had been introduced for the very first time for this commemorative issue.



Dammam Port Issue : Stamps

Issued 16th August 1961 to commemorate the expanded port facilities at Dammam to help support the oil industry in the eastern province.



Printers : Dar Al-Asfahani in Jeddah.

Perforation : The basic set of three values are comb perforated 13

Size of Design : 23mm x 29½ mm

Size of Stamps: 28 x 37 mm

Paper : Printed on hard white paper.

Watermark : Type I watermark upright or inverted. In my experience the inverted watermark variety is relatively common.

Sheet Size Unknown. Multiples appear scarce and I am not aware of the sheet size or any marginal marking. Would anyone with complete sheets please send a scan for APAI records.

Souvenir Sheets :

The souvenir sheets are small imperforate sheetlets of 4 stamps. These sheetlets were intended for presentation purposes only and since they were not readily available to collectors appear as footnotes in Gibbons and Scotts catalogues – but with prices quoted (£400 / \$425) since these are keenly traded in the philatelic market. Mayo reported only 900 sets issued and that additional sheets were destroyed because of poor printing quality.

The stamps are normal size and the sheetlets are 90mm wide by 107mm in height and printed on the same hard white paper. As can be seen there are no marginal markings.

Watermark : Unlike the stamps the watermark is sideways with the palm tree pointing left or right. The bottom of the scan has had the brightness reduced and contrast enhanced to illustrate watermark size and layout.

In my experience, the 3q. sheetlet with watermark pointing left appears to be the most difficult to locate.



Imperforate Stamps : It is understood 4 or 5 sheets of each value of imperforate stamps were released and are much sought after by collectors. I have 6 and 8 qirsh values with both upright and inverted watermarks but only upright for 3 qirsh. Mayo and APA list both directions but please send scans of imperforate 3 qirsh inverts for record purposes.

‘Bogus’ Imperforate Stamps : To meet the demand for imperforate stamps some ill informed speculator did cut up some valuable souvenir sheets! These imperforates are however of little value and easily identified since the watermarks are sideways. Mayo did list them in his catalogue however – but at just 10% of the value of imperfs with normal or inverted watermarks – so be warned. I have three ‘sets’ The 3q all wmk R, 6q all wmk L, and 8q 2 wmk R and one L. Mayo lists all directions. Were any of the scarce 3q wmk L souvenir sheets vandalized?

Rough Perfs on ‘Soft’ Paper



Arrows show direction of watermark

Perf 10½ : 3q mentioned in RN 16 and by Mayo with inverted watermarks. 6q shown here from my collection also has the watermark inverted. Note it is also a scruffy perforation.

Perforation 6½ : The 3q value has watermark both left and right but note watermark on Joanne’s copy is 5° from the horizontal but it is the only copy reported to the APAI with watermark right. Martin confirms the paper is 0.0035” in thickness for both regular and rough perfs issues and confirms printed from original plates.

6q : Has not yet been recorded with this perforation.

8q : One copy watermark left and that illustrated is watermark up.



Perforation 6½ on the Tughra Issue

This curious perforation was first reported in RN 13 K .H. Jung on similar paper on a 5q Tughra, which was followed by a discussion by T. P. Wood in his monograph on the Tughra issue noting that 13 copies had been located of the 5q Tughra (Wood page 7 of 7) by the beginning of 1982. In the First air section he also noted that three of the 4q airmail had been located including one on cover (see Wood page 4 of 4.



Pair of 4q Tughra Perf 6½ showing pin perfs and ink spatter

The paper is clearly Wood paper Type 9 ie ribs in this case vertical – clearly seen on the computer screen but may not reproduce. However it wasn't until examining the back closely that I noticed the ink spatter on the back of the pair and also a single.



Pair of 4q First Airs – Perf 6½ - Woods Paper Type 9 with horizontal ribs

The scan of back has been adjusted to show the perforations more clearly and this also comes up with a single ink spot – just above the second perforation from the left.



Provisional Conclusion.

Until Joanne's query I must admit I had largely ignored these pretty awful looking stamps. However bringing everything together there are some basic observations that can be made:

1. They are **always used** – and all readable cancels reported are from the Hejaz area – Jeddah or Makkah. Circa 1958-59 for the Tughras and First Airs and 1961 for the Dammam Port.
2. The paper is the correct paper for the period ie type 9 for the Tughras and watermarked for the Dammam Port. However the paper does appear 'softer' than normal especially the Dammam port.
3. The printing is undoubtedly from the genuine plates.
4. Ink spatter on the back of the 4q tughras is unusual – now checked dozens of normal late issue tughras and all seem clean.
5. Although some other 'odd' perforation exist this rough perf 6½ is indicative of something 'unusual'.

Are these stamps printed on 'cleaning' paper. Sheets were then not destroyed but 'escaped' from the press either clandestinely or waste paper not being properly destroyed. Those responsible did not then have access to the proper perforating machines which would be tightly controlled.

The stamps were used on mail in Hejaz only and were used to defraud the mail ie as opposed to selling varieties to collectors ie no mint exist. The very poor perforations of the normal issues in early 1958-1960 would be an excellent disguise and – as reported by Wood – they are not very noticeable on a cover anyway.

On page 4 Thomas Wood states clearly that the perforation 6½ is by far the scarcest – we know that is the case for the Dammam Port set. So start looking on covers and please report any new finds – these ugly looking perforations are likely to be in the rubbish – so go and find yourself a rarity.

Prior References

1. **1972 : RN3p3 circa 1972 :** *The 3q has turned up perf 10½ instead of perf 13. We doubt if this was regularly issued. (JMW)*
2. **1973 Mayo P110 :** *The 3q with Inverted watermark is reported with perforation 10½.*
3. **1978 RN13p5 (22) :** *Bob Jung sent me copies of the 5g Tugra issue perforated 6. Frank Patterson notes that the paper 'a rather coarse soft paper' is not 'standard'. (JMW)*
4. **1981 RN16p4:** *In RN No 5* we mentioned the 3pi Dammam Port with sideways Wmk and perf 6½. James DeVito reports the 8pi value with the same characteristics. Does anyone have the 6pi? (JMW)*

*in the file and reprinted copies of RN 5

H. StJ. B. Philby and the WWII Censor

By: W. A. King FRPSL

The fascinating story of the arabist and explorer H. StJ. B. Philby has been well documented both by himself and by others – and of course of his son Kim Philby who was eventually discovered to be a Russian spy. However the correspondence of this family has a major fascination not only because of their own story but also the prominent people they knew. Many of the covers from this correspondence were passed to the APA and found their way into member's collections. Several of these covers are particularly interesting as they are related to the postal history of Saudi Arabia both inward and outward.

However the 'Philby' covers are also often unusual for postal history of other countries. Recently I acquired the very unusual British cover shown below which is quite scarce in its own right as a 'free' internee cover ie no stamp was required. It was addressed to Philby while he was held in an internment camp after being arrested under the Defence of the Realm Act Section 18B. Philby was arrested on arrival in Karachi en route to the USA from Saudi Arabia in early August 1940. He arrived back in Liverpool in October, but it was December 15th before his wife Dora was able to visit him in prison in Liverpool.



Cover : To Philby from his mother dated 1st February 1941.

Probably this letter was last minute support from his mother since Philby would have received this before he appeared in court in Ascot on February 4th 1941 in front of the judge Sir Norman Birkett and two other knights of the realm Sir George Clerk of the Foreign Office and Sir Arthur Hazelrigg an aristocratic member of an ancient British family. They decreed he was a harmless eccentric and recommended release. He was transferred back to Liverpool and finally released on March 18th after seven months in custody. The family then retired to their cottage in Wales for the remainder of WWII.



Recently I visited the National Archives in Kew London to try and find more information on why Philby had been charged. I discovered a treasure trove of information including three 'Philby' covers together with the letters he had written in Riyadh which were used in the case against him.



The three 'Philby' covers are shown above. They are addressed to his mother, wife and daughter Helena, the latter showing front and back. The letters were written in Riyadh on 26-27th May 1940 (Monday/Tuesday) but not cancelled in Jeddah until 5th June 1940 (28-4-1389) Wednesday of the following week. When you read the letters you will find that Philby was quite clear these were going via 'The' mail on Tuesday – appears a long time to get to Jeddah and why cancelled there? (Comments please). All have stamps to meet the 10 qirsh air mail rate to UK. Note the purple cord, which ties them into the file!

These are normal covers – EXCEPT – they do not have the “Passed by Censor” cancels or labels! That was because they were detained by the censor in Cairo as ‘evidence’ and forwarded to London in an official envelope. Philby’s letters, the censor’s typewritten comments and all of the envelopes are in that file. The letters never ever reached the addressees and were examined in London by MI5 and the ‘Top Secret’ comments by Col. Vivian to Guy Liddell are also present and of special interest to the historian and those interested in the Philby saga.

Censors Comments : It is very unusual to have access to these comments and the censor reported passages in an unusual sequence. Instead of showing the censors letter I have transcribed Philby’s letters in full in the original sequence written by Philby and highlighted the twelve passages that were cited. Mother (4 items), Wife (5) and daughter (3).



Covering Letter from Censor and Initial Part of Typewritten Report

M.C.5.	
TERMINAL MAILS.	
(PRIVATE BRANCH)	
No. TER/P _____	
<i>From</i> <u>H. ST J. Philby.</u> Riyadi (Saudi Arabia)	<i>To</i> <u>Mrs St John Philby</u> 18, Accl Rd London N.W.6
<small>(or postmark when the writer gives no address)</small>	<u>Mrs M.B. Philby</u> The Crossways Middle Gordon Rd Camberley Surrey
<i>Date of letter</i> 27.5.40. <i>submitted</i> 26.5.40. 27.5.40.	<u>Miss Helena Philby</u> Dalegarth P.N.E.U. School Burgess Hill (Sussex)
<small>(or date on post- mark if the letter is undated)</small>	
<i>Previous References</i>	<i>Submitted to</i>
No. _____	F.O. _____

Please return the form with or without the accompanying letter,
marking one or more of the sentences overleaf with an X.

COMMENT.

Three family letters, dates and addresses as above, submitted under cover from Egyptian Postal Administration, to Chief Postal Censor, London, England.

SECRET

H. ST. John Philby (Author - Explorer.)

Muslim Convert and personal adviser to the King of Saudi Arabia.

Among his friends and collaborators while in England, were **William Joyce** (Haw-Haw) with whom he founded the National Socialist League.

John Beckett (now in prison) Ex B.U.F. Editor of Fascist Organs "'Black Shirt'" and "'Action'" and

Lord Tavistock.

Mr. Philby was a signatory of the British Council of Christian Settlements Peace Plan.
He has political aspirations, with pacifist intentions.
In three letters from Saudi Arabia to his family in England written 26 & 27.5.40 he expresses:
Criticism and contempt for past and present British Government Policy.
Pacifist convictions.
Defeatism.
Disloyalty.

Comments : These apparently were the only letters detained as there no previous references. The long delay between posting and cancelling appear strange and the start of the censor's letter 'appear' to indicate diplomatic intrigue.

Transcript of letter – H. St.J. Philby to his Mother (Mrs May B. Philby)

Philby corresponded with his mother on a very regular basis – even more often than his wife. This was the first of the 3 letters written.

Riyadh
26 May 1940

I only got one letter this mail and it was from you with your news up to May 6th – incidentally I have not yet received your letter of April 16th. In which you said a in a letter you had told me about Tom's hope of getting a job and of Diana's excitement. However I dare say it will turn up some day & it may have gone for a joyride round the Cape. However in this last letter you tell me Tom has got the appointment of Deputy Controller of Shipping and must now be in Simla. I am glad as it was too bad a man as fit as he being put on the shelf – and a war on too, when they say they want the services of everybody! Anyway he must be pleased to be at work again and it is nice for him having Averil there too – is Digby there and what does he do?

*Your picture of yourself in the garden sitting in the sun among the *creatures in your blossoming trees made me long to be there but it cannot be yet. Especially now with our new dictatorship and Gestapo activities it would not suit me at all – it all seems so hysterical and silly and cannot do the slightest good. If only they had taken the advocates of peaces seriously a year ago things might not be at this perilous pass now, so they have only themselves in general and the silly Chamberlain Govt in particular to blame for it. Anyway I can't do anything now but sit here and watch from afar. Little did I imagine when I landed at Boulogne on November 14 on my way out here that in a little more than 6 months the Germans would have it & be besieging Calais and looking out on the cliffs of Dover. Our Govt people are just years out of date and now we have just got to make the best of the bad job they have palmed of on us. I wonder if the people in Hythe and Folkestone now remember some of the things I told them last July! Yet they voted for that ass Brabant and if he had his way the Chamberlain Govt would still be in the saddle. Anyway I told them so and they can't blame me. I should like to see their faces now. Things seem to be so serious that the BBC tells us we are not have any more news of the war until the Govt thinks fit, so we have to switch to Germany & Italy to know what is happening and that is not very nice news.*

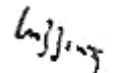
*Incidentally Berlin announced that all of the press representatives with the BEF have been sent back to England and this may be true as Stab** the BBC man gave a talk recently from London. So I am hoping Kim too is back and that will be a great relief to you and Dora though England will not be too comfortable I dare say in the near future. He must have been through some pretty stirring times even though they did not last long. But perhaps of course he may still be out there and, I wish, if he is at home, Dora had wired as naturally I am very anxious to know about him. However no news is always good news and in my optimistic moments I think he must now be at home. If so tell him I wrote him 2 letters in last two months addressed BEF. I imagined you listening in to the King's surprise broadcast which I heard very clearly, quite good but rather gloomy! And today I suppose you will all be listing in or attending the intercession prayers. "Oh God, plead my cause against an ungodly nation. Oh deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man!" I must say if I were the Almighty I would tell them all to go to H---as I can't waste my time saving fools from their folly! However I am sorry, deeply sorry, for those that have to * that is the real tragedy, the primeval wickedness of the human race magnified by the progress of knowledge. How long, oh Lord, how long!*

The censor's comments as noted below

26th May
1940 was a
Sunday

Another
missing
letter?

* is unclear


(buzzing? - ed)

Censor note 2 as
Criticism of Govt

Censor note 7 as
Pacifism

Censor note 4
re BBC

Kim Philby
identified by Col.
Vivian (MI5) in
his letter as work-
ing for MI5

see later

*I am sorry to hear from you that Dora had had another go of that malaria, which may account for her not writing. England certainly doesn't suit her and I am glad to think that she and Diana were thinking of getting away for a change to Wales. I only hope the new war developments didn't happen in time to stop them. If they did get away I dare say they may still up there as your letter of May 6th, incidentally, only took 17 days to get to Riyadh, so it seems that mails are fairly normal still. But for the time being I shall go on sending letters by air as speed is nowadays more important than economy! Incidentally I have written to the bank to send you £10 instead of £5 as you may need now that things are becoming more expensive but if it affects your income tax position let me know and I will cancel the arrangement and help you in kind. Anyway the extra £5 is only a temporary thing and you should not consider it as part of your income!! Just been listening in to the news – mostly rubbishy stuff but of course nothing of interest about the only things one wants to know about. I must say the BBC takes first prize for inanity if that sort of thing is really accepted as good enough by the listeners of the empire – then God help Britain. Anyway I am glad I am in a civilised country whose only serious disadvantage that you and the very few other people I love are out of reach! Anyway I expect you are all taking it very calmly though you may by this time have refugees billeted on you – a bit of a nuisance but something has to be done with them if we must have a war. **I wonder if this will be the last Great war! They seem to be arresting everybody who stands for peace including one of my friends but they would have done better to listen to us last summer. In any case Ramsay MacDonald was jailed for pacifist views in the last war and it didn't do him any harm!***

*You seem to have had quite a good spell of nice summer weather though it seems to have broken a bit now but I always think of you in your lovely garden and I hope the Huns will not take into their heads to drop a bomb on it! I don't know the name of those flowers I sent but I don't think there was anything like a lupin among them. I have collected specimens of ** the flowers which will go to the museum some day for identification.. I wonder what luck you will have this year with the Riyadh and Mecca seeds. I would just love to have a glimpse of your garden now. You know my thoughts are always with you and especially in these trying times and I hope you have a good stock of food laid in to stand a siege if necessary! I expect Diana is getting lonely now things are warming up and I wonder what her young man is doing. He may have been at the inauguration of the training scheme in SR by Brooke Popham the other day. Have you seen BIZ? people yet? Joan seems to be doing well for herself often at (**** off). I suppose Harry is now doing LDF work or is that infra dig for a Maj-Gen?! The French seem to have made a complete sweep of their generals who don't seem to have been very bright. Well my darling mother I think I will stop now and I shall also write to Dora and one of the children this mail which goes tomorrow. I shall look forward to next mail as by then you will be telling me about your reaction to the new developments. What is **Bernard Montgomery** doing? Glad to here Frank is still there*

Much love etc Jack

*H.StJ.B Philby
Arabia*

Postal : 17 day
transit – normal

Censor Note 6
Pacifism

Unclear

**Bernard
Montgomery**
(of Alamein)
was Best man at
Philby's
wedding 1910

Note my
comments are
in black.

Transcript of letter – H. St.J. Philby to his Wife Mrs Dora Philby

The censor selected 5 passages to be reported to Head Office in London.

Riyadh 27 May 1940.

My Darling Dora,

No letter from you this mail in fact nothing from the family except one letter from mother dated May 6th in which she tells me you had reported sick again with a go of malaria or whatever it is you get and the doctors can't come. But you had lunch engagements for the next three days. (Hafidh, C.A.S. and Eileen J.S) So I dare say you were not so bad. By the way I have written to mother and closed the letter so please don't forget (and I suppose you will send this on to her) to thank her from me in advance for the pipes and notepaper which she says she has sent me for my birthday. They have not actually arrived yet but will not do so as I must say the Post Office is a pretty efficient institution and I am astonished how regularly things get through to these remote parts in spite of the efforts of the Censor's department to muck things up. And I must say, through we hear many queer tales of the goings on in that department I have certainly not come across anything to its discredit.

Well by the time you get this, I dare say you will be thinking of other things than Censors etc! *What an appalling mess we have got into!* Well, my dear, *as you know, I did my best to stop it but they would not listen.* I suppose it isn't so much what I say but the unpleasant way I say it that puts peoples backs up. They just can't stand the naked truth – they must have their little frills and fig leaves. But it is no good their getting their backs up only to get it in the neck. For 30 years I have been a voice crying in the wilderness, proclaiming the wrath to come. And lo! It cometh even now. Gee what a prophet I am! Though I wish I wasn't – hawhaw. *Yet even I had no conception of the wide-spread inefficiency that has just eaten away the gate of our administrative system. We can rush to our churches and our factories now but it is too late and of course the new spy mania and Gestapo methods are merely signs of our cracking – merely another proof that we can bear to hear the truth proclaimed by the small minority that sees it all crystal clear.* Anyway I expect you are keeping as cheerful as possible in the circumstances in the strength of your well-known optimism – ahem! And I am not going to give you any advise though I would be happier to think of you up in the cottage. Incidentally Mother says you and Diana (pity you didn't ????) were thinking of going there shortly and I half hope (or wholly hope) that you were there when the storm broke and are still there though I very much doubt it especially as I heard on the Berlin radio – of course the BBC never takes on such unwelcome news! That all war correspondents had been sent back to England and I assuming or hoping that **Kim** is home. I wish you had wired to say so as I am at times assailed with doubt. However I always look on the bright side of things and if he is home he will be able to look after you all. Mother in her letter says that Lily had heard from him and he was bored and I see in the Times of May 7th his message (of 6th) reading “Although there are still no signs of a general engagement the armies are watching and waiting”. That was three weeks ago – and now what?

Notes

Tuesday

Praise for PO

Extracts
linked by
Censor as
item 11 under
heading
Defeatism

Kim
noted by
Col. Vivian but
not the censor.
Also see Vivians
comments on his
wife Dora.



Well its no good talking about that as by the time you get this it will all be stale news but I feel of myself that I am rather like the Sphinx as described by Mr Richard Dimbleby, the prize ass of the BBC, ie "alone in the world unmoved and serene. I am sorry about poor Becket- I asked him once what he would do if war did come – he said I will do my best to stay out of the army and out of prison. The real trouble with the British (this a consequence of their insularity) is that they can't bear to hear people say what they think. Now we all seem to be under the potential heel of a dictatorship and every body seems to love it – but they will soon get bored with with it and then they will have to bear it and like it. Personally I think it is all more talk than action except for the working classes who will be kept hard at it. But I don't suppose they will have much room for decent people like you and me. What can we do? Just nothing, and they know it as well as we do. What's more they don't want us to do anything. They are just running about doing a lot of shouting and waving their arms about but doing nothing – they expect Hitler to do al the doing. Anyway MEW seems to be dead and poor old Ryan is probably out of a job but the Min of Inf is what they ought to get rid of. It is worse than ever now with all news suppressed and its place filled withal that D.C. sobstuff which sound just as if he was on the point of bursting into tears. As for Betty Stockfield (do you ever hear her talking to the French soldiers!) why she's enough to make a soldier cry!

Well where do I get off? I imagine they are too busy to remember my existence and I am not going to remind them as I am still and have long been entirely out of sympathy with them and their ways. So I shall just stay on where I am though relations are still a bit strained here. I haven't seen the King for ten days now and I expect he is feeling pretty blue now at the way things are going ** most of the people here are rather pleased if a little frightened. I don't intend to see him until he apologises (in any way he likes) for calling me a liar when I told him Germans had broken through on the Meuse. I see his brother Abdullah every day but perhaps I will take advantage of the situation to go off to Jidda some day but there is no immediate prospect of that. I wonder what all of our friends there think of things now – they didn't me very much (especially Balcrem) when I told them in January that things weren't going to go very well.

Well, as you see, I am full of punk or perhaps I should use the BBC phrase "In spite of recent events my words and fighting spirit remains unimpaired!" Quel enfant terrible! And all the time I am really very sorry for you people let in for all this by sheer wicked disregard of facts and principles. I think you ought to collect all our chickens and retire to Wales for the duration. Even H. won't covet the cottage though he could build himself a glorious *** in the bowels of Moelwein. I imagined you yesterday flocking church or perhaps you stayed at home with a glass of medicine instead. Pity you didn't come out with me when you could of. Little did I think when I was in Bolougne that day that it would have changed hands within within about six months, and Calais too. I laugh when I think of the blimps at Folkestone who didn't like us! What ages ago that seems though only 10 months. By the way if a General election is decided on I think I will try my my hand at it, if you can get busy with Amber to find me a seat with reasonable prospects, but I understand for war anywhere for any party. Well my darling my blessing on you and take care of yourself and I pray that all may be with you but write and tell me something.. M etc Jack

PS I have told Kaji to send £200 in June * Barclays to send £200. Enough to go on with?

HStJ Philby
Arabia

Notes

Censor Note 8
On Pacifism.

Censor Note 1
Criticism of
Government

Censor Note 12
On Disloyalty

Censor Note 10
On Pacifism

Word here not
read

Transcript of letter – H. St.J. Philby to his Daughter

Riyadh
27 May 1940

Tuesday

My own Darling Helena,

I have a few minutes to spare before the mail goes out and I feel I must write to you to show I am thinking of you now so close to the battle-line. I can't help wondering whether any of the Folkestone & Hythe people are now remembering what we told them only 10 months ago. If only they had been more sensible than to elect that ass things might have been so different now, and now they have to send away their children and wait for the storm to break. I must say that when I was at Bolougne that day in November I little thought that in little more than six months it would be in German hands and I suppose pretty well wrecked into the bargain. I suppose you at Burgess Hill are not going to be moved at any rate not just yet but if the school has to break up prematurely I think you ought to insist on mother going off with you to the cottage and staying there until things improve. I was much interested in your views on the BBC and I must say I think them sound enough. Latterly their news bulletins have actually got worse – I didn't think that possible – and I have just to tune in to Berlin, Rome and other places to get a reasonable idea of what is really happening. For instance the BBC has not as much as mentioned the fall of Calais which apparently happened the day before yesterday but it doesn't matter what the BBC does as there are plenty of other sources of reliable information. As for Duff Cooper, his sob-stuff voice and appeals for courage and resolution - death rather than slavery etc – makes me wonder when he is going to burst into tears. But what a difference now from all of the bravado and braggadoccia of months past! And what a situation! Well there is nothing for it but to fight it out I suppose and I can only hope that it won't be very unpleasant for your children who are not to blame for the chaos and disturbance which disgrace the world today thanks to the National Government (1931-40), now happily defunct, the worst incompetent set of selfish politicians that has ever been entrusted with the destinies of this country and the world. From the start too they have conducted this war on wrong lines trusting to blockade, the block heads, and propaganda to do the work of trained, well-equipped armies. Well, it can't be helped. Every people gets the Government it deserves and the British people have certainly shown their partiality to the MacDonald – Baldwin – Chamberlain show which has let them down so badly. The present government is better perhaps but is not likely to have the capacity to pull the fat out of the fire. There has been and still is far too much talk and too little action.

Censor Note 9
Pacifism.

Censor Note 5
B.B.C.

Censor Note 3
Criticism of
Government

Not reported

Censor Note 3
Continued

*Well my darling I expect you have your own ideas on these matters and perhaps after all *** may after this nasty shock find a better world for you people, now young, to develop on the lines that some of you had in mind during and after the great war. But our chapter has closed in tragedy – you may have a clean page to write on if you remember our errors. I suppose you were all trooped of yesterday to church to beg for victory – but as such it is a bit late to think of God when one is in extremis. It is written in the Quran verily God doth not change that which is in men until they change what is in themselves.*

Well darling I must stop now. By the way I nearly forgot in my excitement about politics to mention Diana's engagement. She certainly seems very happy about it and that is the important thing. I do hope that all will go well. Meanwhile I suppose she is full of spunk preparing for the invasion! Give my love to Judy and take her up to Wales with you! Much love to you too, my beloved. Mind you write often and give me all your news.

Ever loving Daddy

H.StJ.B Philby
Arabia



Letter from Col. Vivian to Guy Liddell re Philby

Page 1

Secret.

In reply, state NUMBER and DATE.

(Strictly Personal)

GX/V.

Dated 24.9.40.

My dear Guy,

Your PF.40408/B, dated 19.9.40., about H. St.J. PHILBY is one of the hardest letters to answer, which you have ever sent me.

I suppose that I have known St. John PHILBY on and off about 30 years. As a bullet-headed young Assistant Commissioner in Shahpur in the Punjab, he was singularly devoid of manners and always up against his superiors. He was strongly self-opinionated and expressed himself, often extremely capably and accurately, with such arrogance that no-one had a good word for him. But neither then nor since has he ever been anything of a fool.

Later he gained expert knowledge of Arabic and the Arabs, while High Commissioner in Trans-Jordania. He fell out violently with the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office regarding policy in the Arabian Peninsula and expressed himself with as much force and arrogance as he had done when he was a young Assistant Commissioner in India. He advocated the dropping of the Husseinis and the backing of Ibn Saud, the deadly enemy of the Husseinis. He was, of course, dead right in his views, but he expressed them with such lack of restraint and such want of discipline that, where his knowledge and flair should have been invaluable to the Government, it was repudiated.

Later, again, he came to eminence as an Arab-explorer, became a Mohamedan and settled down in Saudi-Arabia more or less as a Finance Advisor to Ibn Saud. During this period he was for the most part out for his own interests, but he was a sore embarrassment to our Government in their Arabian policy. I imagine that his politics are, and have always been, Left Wing, and, if my memory is right, he was intriguing with Dr. Dalton over Egypt and Arabia in the time of the short-lived Labour Government.

You will see that, if he and his views have been unpalatable, that does not prove that he was not both accurate and far seeing. I myself, although I have only seen him a few times both in England India and Arabia of late years, have found it possible to get on with him and I do not believe that he is disloyal, merely insufferably arrogant.

Now, the curious thing is that his son (the person to whom I believe he refers as "Kim" in one of the letters returned herewith is one of our D. Officers. In that capacity I have met him once /or

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Comment : This character reference was solicited as part of the case against H.St.J. B. Philby from Col. Valentine Vivian who was then head of the Secret Service (M.I.6) to Guy Liddell head of M.I.5. and was only released in 2002 into the public domain. This is a remarkable assessment with several key insights into Philby's character – weaknesses and strengths. The last paragraph introduces Kim.

Letter from Col. Vivian to Guy Liddell re Philby

Page 2

or twice and found him both able and charming. He himself told me that his father had cooled down in the strength of his views in the last few years, but that would not appear to be so from the letters. Young Philby was, of course, in D's section long before there was any question of D's section being taken over by Dalton, but, as that has happened fortuitously, the son will be more or less under the direction of a man known to his father, with whom I believe the latter has had quite a number of semi-covert dealings. I mention young Philby simply because I think it will make it more difficult to take any repressive measures against the father.

I am afraid this is a terrible rigmarole, but it is my only way of explaining the difficulty which St. John Philby represents. I do not think he is disloyal and I think it is most urgently necessary not to give him a further grievance. [On the other hand, I feel it is a case in which the Foreign Office and the Government would gladly see you using strong-arm tactics. With this uncomfortable problem I must leave you to deal.]

Yours sincerely,

Captain G.M. Liddell,
M.I.5.

P.S. Philby's wife, Dora née Johnson, the daughter of an Indian railway official, was a childhood friend of my wife's. She is a perfectly regulation young Anglo-Indian woman, good bridge and tennis player and fine rider. She has no politics and, though she has been out to Arabia once or twice to see her husband, she had rather dropped out of his family life, when I last saw her by accident in my Bank. From the letters it would seem that the family is coming together again.

Comment : This viewpoint about H. StJ. B. Philby was totally contrary to the then British Ambassador in Saudi Arabia Stonehewer-Bird who disliked Philby with a passion – as of course had all top level British officialdom from the time he was a junior officer in India.

Anyway it is clear that Kim was already well placed within this secret community enough for Col. Vivian to point out repressive measures against the father could well be counter productive. However the post script to this letter refers to Dora Philby in glowing terms.

No-one had noted the reference to the Bernard Montgomery who, as a young lieutenant, was Philby's Best Man at their wedding back in 1910 - when Philby first ran up against authority by getting married without the authority of his superiors! Montgomery at the time of Philby's question was a little known Lt General and may not have been known to the censor or Col. Vivian.

Additional Background : In 1939 Philby left Saudi Arabia and visited Britain. He was accepted as a Labour Party candidate in April 1939, however he had strong pacifist views and very quickly transferred his allegiance to Lord Tavistock's British People's Party whose chief doctrine was non-involvement in wars which did not affect British security. In July he stood as a candidate for the British Parliament at the Hythe & Folkestone by-election and polled 576 of the 22,169 votes cast. However immediately war was declared in September 1939 he volunteered his services to the British War office as a Middle East representative. Not surprisingly following his political involvement this was not taken up. However Abdulaziz Ibn Saud had sent him a telegram asking him to return so in November 1939 he returned to Saudi Arabia.

Philby had always been a thorn in the flesh of the British diplomats in Arabia for over 15 years partly because his often contrary views to that of the British establishment and also due to jealousy because of his very easy access to King Abdulaziz Ibn Saud. In 1940 the British Ambassador was Stonehewer-Bird and he took a particular dislike to Philby. He communicated a whole series of accusations to London concerning Philby's conduct and statements. A further flurry of despatches began when Philby was invited to speak for the anti-war lobby in the United States. Philby applied for visas to travel via Bahrain and India, which were granted. Further despatches discussed whether it was possible to arrest him in Bahrain but he was felt to have too many friends there. He arrived in Bahrain on July 31st 1940, both he and his luggage were thoroughly searched but nothing to incriminate him was discovered. He left Bahrain on August 3rd by ship for Bombay where he was arrested on arrival and immediately placed on a ship bound for Liverpool.

The most serious accusation listed by Stonehewer-Bird related the deaths of a British pilot and his navigator from a downed aircraft at the hands of villagers in Arabia. He had visited King Abdulaziz Ibn Saud to request an apology when Philby, who was present, interjected that they deserved it as they were bombing the village. This particular accusation topped the diplomatic despatches of complaint. However, when investigated for his trial, the commandant of the unnamed RAF station confirmed that the event had occurred in Yemen and the aircraft was engaged in a 'punitive expedition'.

This article does not contain much philatelic information but it is more of a social comment and intrigue that we still appeared to be involved in international politics. Nevertheless it is intriguing to wonder how everything would have turned out differently if Harry StJohn Bridger Philby had not been so 'insufferably arrogant' that made his very frequently correct observations unacceptable.

Anyway I would be interested in seeing related 1940 Philby covers to complete the picture of this period in the Philby correspondence.

Particular thanks go the National Archives for permission to access and photograph the documents held there – I have well over 500 to review!

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(continued from [page 4](#))

5. Not listed in Thoden 2008 is the 3 para chrome-yellow tobacco tax stamp with all four sides roulette 7. This will be listed in the next edition as RT23R.



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