CONTENTS

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 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 and updated as Thoden 2008.
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
European representative: Willie King
USA representative: David Jessich
USA Distribution Manager: Marwan Nusair
Treasurer: David Jessich
Editor, Random Notes: Martin Lovegrove

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 (2011) and Stanley Gibbons (2009) 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'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), Thoden 2008
VON UEXKULL, J.- *The Early Postal History of Saudi Arabia* (2001).

Random Notes #85

Assembled by the Editor

It has been a struggle to get this issue together; I have been busy with work for another society and very little has been sent to me for publication.

Please send in what you can to ensure regular publication of Random Notes.

Now for the notes.

1.   In Random Notes 64, Willie King requested a scan of the King Ali 2 qirsh printed in rose and perforated. Below are images of both the perforated and imperforate versions. Note that Mayo only lists the imperforate version (285G).


2.   Member Burl Henry requested a scan of the 'chandelier' flaw on the 3 qirsh Prophet's Mosque Expansion stamp. This flaw is sometimes referred to as a 'bunch of grapes'. What got my attention when I scanned this pair, was the number of litho 'halo' flaws
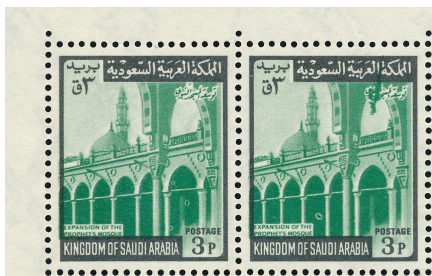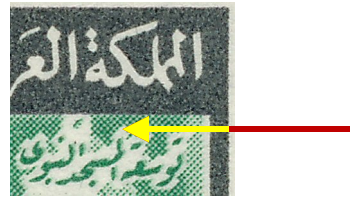

'Chandelier'

present on the two stamps, and in particular a white square on position 1. These flaws are transient, but has anyone else seen this unusual square flaw?
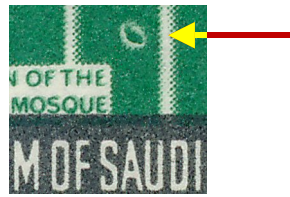
Typical halo flaw   **Unusual square flaw**

3.   More forgeries have appeared on eBay and some have sold for a lot of money. To be fair to the seller, they were not stated to be genuine, but 'to be identified'. The first two shown below have type 2 forgeries of the second Nejd handstamp. The one on the left fetched USD 52.50 and the other USD 67. Even more expensive were two 'matbua' stamps. These went for USD 173.50 each. Both have what appear to be type 2 forgeries of the first Nejd Handstamp and type 3 matbua forgeries as described by Rudy Thoden in Random Notes 44.


4.   Some postal rate information I saw recently: As at 31 December 2012 registration rates are SR3 within KSA, SR4 to Arab countries and Gulf states, and SR5 to the rest of the world.

5.   Another batch of bogus items on eBay, similar to those shown in Random Notes 81, comprised genuine stamps attached to fragments of airmail envelopes and cancelled with a fake DJEDDA 5 dated 10 November 1917, quite a few years before the stamps were printed and well before air mail was introduced.

Bogus airmail (reduced)

6.   'Found open' labels such as the one below are used to indicate that the item was found open in the post and they are usually sealed with tape. The label on the right serves both to inform and seal and must be the largest of its kind; it measures 82mm x 186mm.
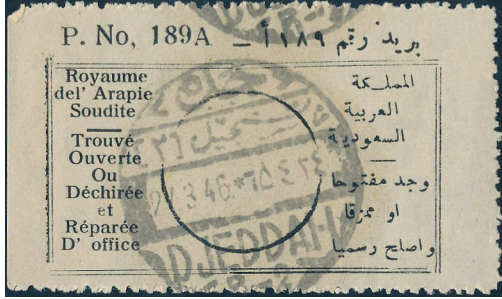
7.   In 2007 a stamp and a miniature sheet were issued to celebrate Saudi Arabia being the 'Kingdom of Humanity'. In the previous year the title appeared in various forms on postal cancellations. A machine cancel from Jeddah, dated 15 July 2006, is shown below together with the stamp that was issued. I have only seen this postmark used on outbound transit mail and only from Jeddah.

عزيزنا العميل :

بعثيتك المرفقة تعرضت لبعض التلف أثناء المعالجة البريدية ومع حرصنا الشديد على سلامة البعائث البريدية لتقديرنا الكامل لأهميتها ، إلا أن بعض البعائث قد تتعرض لشيء من التلف أو التمزق أثناء المعالجة إما بسبب إستخدام الآلات البريدية ، أو لعدم مناسبة الغلاف لطبيعة محتويات البعثية أو لوزنها ، وهذه أمور يتوقع حدوثها عند معالجة مُلايين البعائث يومياً.

ومع أسفنا لما حدث ، قمنا بإصلاح الغلاف مقدرين لك تعاونك ومساعدتنا في المرات القادمة بتهيئة بعثيتك بطريقة تلائم محتوياتها وظروف النقل والتداول المتوقعة.

مع أطيب تحيات المديرية العامة للبريد بالمملكة العربية السعودية

Dear Customer,
Your enclosed item is partialy damaged during the handling in our service.
With our awareness of the importance of keeping your mail safe, yet some of this mail is subject to damage during the handling process either due to misuse of postal devices, or because the packing does not suit the nature of contents of the item or its weight. Such mishaps are frequently expected to happen especially that we are handling millions of items daily.
With full regret to what has happened to your mail, we repaired the damage, hoping that in future such discrepencies will be minimised if not totally eliminated.
Your cooperation & assistance are highly appreciated.

With the best regards
of the Directorate General
of Posts. K. S. A.

Kingdom of Humanity

The Kindom of Humanity has also appeared on a meter postmark slogan and an example is shown below from the town of Al Khormah. This one is dated 27-2-1427 (27 or 28 March 2006).

8.   King Ali stamps are sometimes found with a line, sometimes slanted, printed across the design from top to bottom. This happens when two panes of stamps are printed on a large sheet and the panes overlap slightly. The stamps, both postage and postage due, have a thin frame line surrounding the pane of stamps; an example of postage due is shown below.

Normal postage due with frame line.

Examples of extra frame line at right showing from adjacent sheet.

These extra frame lines have not only been seen on imperforate stamps but also on perforated and overprinted examples. The editor would welcome any reports of them being found on stamps with Jeddah controls.


**Extra frame line on perforated stamp with
horizontal Cairo controls in blue**

**At right: King Ali double print on lower 5 stamps
(reduced 90%)**

9.   In RN81 a double print of a Jeddah I overprint on a 5 qirsh King Ali was illustrated. I have since seen a complete vertical strip of 10 stamps, clearly showing that the lower five rows received the double strike.

10.   This edition will probably reach you after the Corinphila auction on 26 February 2013 containing items from Willie King's gold medal exhibit of the first issues of the Hejaz. I hope to include news of the auction in Random Notes 86.

11.   Kenneth Knight, in his articles in Random Notes 44 to 52 describing Saudi postmarks, grouped the types of Arabic script used for the machine cancels type SM10 into three; the first having a smooth, fluid flow, avoiding angular characters. In the example below from Medina, it can be seen that there are two variations of this script, one much longer than the other, and from my covers it would appear that the longer script was the first to be used. If anyone is considering updating the articles, I think that this needs to be taken into consideration. It may apply to offices other than Medina.
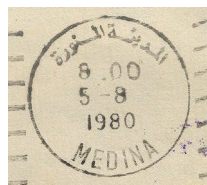
Short Arabic text   **Long Arabic text**

CASOC or BAPCO Cover

By: J. I. Kearney

In November 2012 a very interesting and relatively rare cover was offered for sale on eBay. It was unusual in two ways:

One, it is difficult to determine if this is a "CASOC" cover or a "BAPCO" cover. The sender used an imprinted CASOC envelope, yet the sender put "Bapco Bahrain Island" as the return address. The author could not locate the sender in any list of CASOC employees.

Secondly, this is a "Chungking" route cover that was described in RN #83, page 15. Except this cover was a double rate cover. The rate for a double rate cover would be 3½ annas for the basic fee and 2 x 55 annas airmail fee for a total of 113½ annas.

The cover has four 1 rupee stamps plus four 12 annas stamps plus two 9 pies stamps for a total of 64 annas + 48 annas + 1½ annas (12 pies to an anna) = 113½ annas. On the cover front a manuscript 7-1-6 is indicated. This means 7 rupees (112 annas) plus 1 anna plus 6 pies (½ anna) although it was franked as described above.

The author has only seen two "Chungking" route covers, this being the second.

BAPCO and CASOC had a close working relationship in the early 1930s. BAPCO (Bahrain Petroleum Company) was established in Canada in 1929 as a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Standard Oil Company of California to conduct oil exploration activities in Bahrain. CASOC was also a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Standard Oil Company of California. In 1930 BAPCO obtained an oil concession in Bahrain. In 1936 the Standard Oil Company of California sold a 50% interest in BAPCO to Texaco.

(Reverse of cover is shown on next page)

FREE ADLETS

Your editor would like to restart the Free Adlets section in a similar form to the original that appeared in the series of Random Notes produced in Dhahran.

Random Notes will publish as many free adlets in each issue as will fit on one page. Adlets will run for one issue only but can be renewed by sending a request by email to the editor. There is a maximum of five lines per adlet. The adlet must be relevant to Saudi Arabian philately and the editor's decision is final as to whether an adlet is suitable.

If the adlets can fill a full page, they will appear as the last page in the journal, but partial pages may be used as fillers as required.

Bound copies of Kenneth Knight's series 'The Postal Markings of Hejaz, Nejd, Hejaz and Nejd, and Saudi Arabia' are available for USD 20 (includes postage) from the editor (eMail weatherings@aol.com).

Registration Marks from 1960

By: Martin Lovegrove

There are many types of registration marks appearing on postal items from Saudi Arabia, both official and private, and certainly enough to present a challenge for any investigation.

This article presents little more than an overview, although some areas are presented in some detail. My starting point is 1960, the beginning of a decade that saw the beginnings of an enormous expansion in the postal services of the country.

The marks are all designed to show that the letter is to be sent, or is being sent, by registered mail. The marks intended to show that registered mail is required are private marks applied by the writer or his/her company. They may be manuscript, typed or handstamped, will be discussed briefly.

The marks applied to indicate the actual registration are of the following types:

> Plain text label (pre 1960 - 1989)
>
> Handstamp cachet (pre 1960 - 2004)
>
> Manuscript in one or more languages (pre 1960 - 2006)
>
> Numeric handstamp, either manual or automatic (1982 - 2006)
>
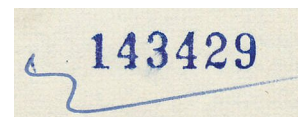> Barcode label (2005 - current)

Examples of each type are shown below and each type will be dealt with in varying amounts of detail on the following pages.
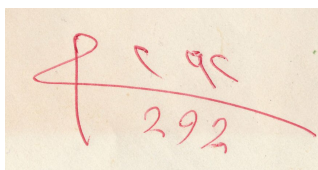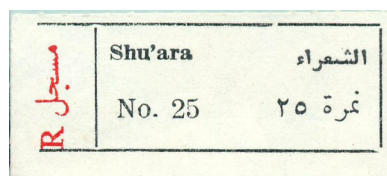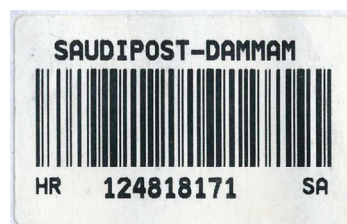

Manuscript

Handstamp cachet

Numeric handstamp

Plain text label


Barcode label

Plain Text Label

There are two main basic types of registration label and many variations introduced during various printings. These are issued in sheets and are rouletted. There is another, more recent perforated type, and has been seen only at Makkah.
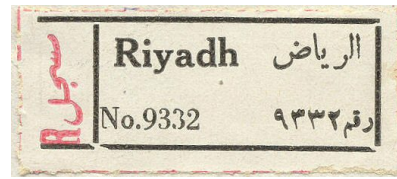
Type I has the red Arabic مسجل (*mussajil)* parallel to the vertical bars in the label.
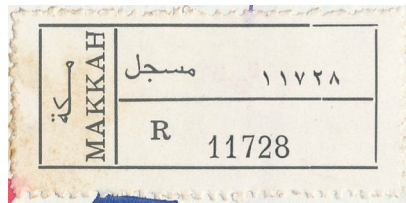
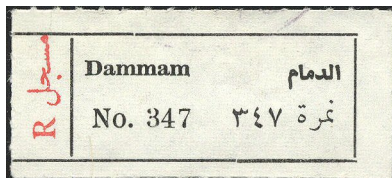In Type 2, the word is sloping

Type 3, seen only at Makkah
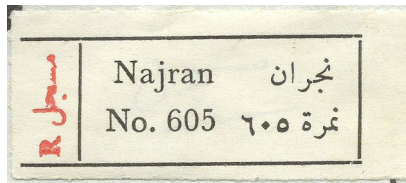
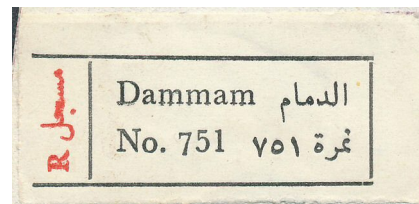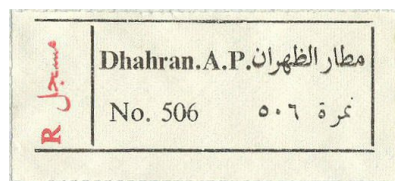
Type 1

Type 2

Type 3

The variations noted in these types are font size, town in normal and bold, town in mixed and upper case, town on one or two lines.
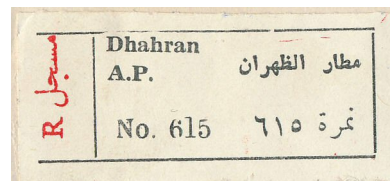

Dammam in small, bold font

Dammam in larger, normal font

Dhahran A.P. on one line
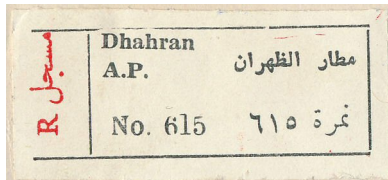

Dhahran A.P. on two lines

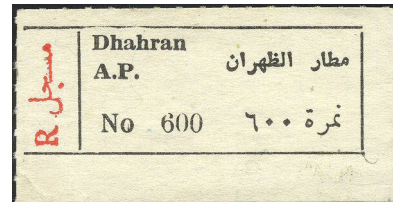The following error have been noted in these labels:

Missing dots

Misspelling of town

Western version of registration number not matching Arabic

Full stop after No
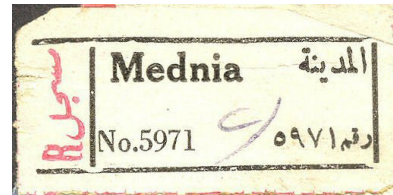

No full stop after No

Correct spelling of Medina

Medina shown as Mednia

Western number printed as 504 instead of 204 and corrected in manuscript

Western number printed as 7780 instead of 8780, uncorrected

It is not known why a label for DHEBA was attached to this cover from Al Wajh. Surely if there was a shortage of labels then the registration number could have been written in manuscript as we have seen earlier in this article. If incorrect labels had been sent to Al Wajh, then they could have been returned. At least it has given us another variety! Note that the registration number 401 has been repeated in Arabic manuscript.

Reduced to 70%

A rare Amluj label is on this cover below to ARAMCO at Dhahran and illustrates why care should be taken with incoming ARAMCO mail - the manuscript R-3404 is not a registration mark but a room number.

Reduced to 85%

Below is a list of labels seen by the author.

Type 1 label

Town	Text
Abqaiq	ABQAIQ
Afif	Afif
Al Aflaj	Aflaj
Anaizah	Aunaizah
Arar	Ar-Ar
Badr	Badur
Al Baha	Baha
Al Bakariya	Bikariya
Bisha	Bisha, Beesha
Buraidah	Buraida, BURAIDAH
Al Confudah	Konfudah
Al Dammam	**Dammam**, Dammam, DAMMAM
Al Dawadmi	Dawadmi
Dhahran Airport	Dhahran A.P. (one line), Dhahran A.P. (two lines), Dhahran Air Port (two lines), A.P. Dhahran (two lines)
Dheba	DHEBA
Durma	Durma
Al Hassa	Al-Hassa, AL-HASSA, Hasa
Hurma	Hurma
Jeddah	**Jeddah**, Jeddah, JEDDAH
Al Jubail	Jubail
Al Khafji	AL-KHAFJI
Khamis Mushait	Khamis Moshait (two lines), Khames Mushait (two lines)
Al Kharj	Al-Kharj, Kharj
Al Khobar	Al-Khobar, AL-KHOBAR
Al Lith	Lyth
Al Majmaa	Al-Majmaa
Makkah	Mecca
Al Mandak	Mandak
Marat	Marat
Al Medina	Medina, Medinah, MEDINA
Najran	Najran
Al Qatif	Qatif

Type 1 label (continued)

Town	Text
Al Qurrayat	Korayat
Rabegh	Rabegh
Rahaema	Ruhaima
Ras Tanura	Ras Tanura (two lines)
Al Rass	Al-Rass, Rass
Al Riyadh	Riyad, Riyadh, RIYADH
Shaqra	Shaqra
Al Shu'ara	Shu'ara
Al Taif	**Taif**, Taif, TAIF
Taima	Taima
Taraba	Taraba
Turaif	Turaif
Umluj	Amluj
Al Wedjh	WEDJH
Yanbo	Yanbo'e, Yanbu'a, YANBO
Al Zilfi	Zilfi

Type 2 label

Town	Text
Al Dammam	Dammam
Al Khobar	Al Khobar
Dhahran Airport	Zahran Aeroport (two lines)
Jeddah	Jeddah
Makkah	Mecca
Al Medina	Medina, Mednia (error)
Al Riyadh	Riyadh
Al Taif	Taif

Type 3 label

Town	Text
Makkah	MAKKAH

Manuscript Marks

Manuscript marks appear in pencil, crayon or ink, in western script, Arabic or both. Colours seen are red, green, blue, and lead pencil.

Covers to non-Arabic countries have their registration markings in Western script and in addition, may have the Arabic version as well.


Registration number in Arabic and Western. In this case they were added by different members of staff; the Western number was probably added in a back office.

Note the use of a normal definitive stamp used during a period when official stamps were in short supply.

1962 cover from Hayel to the BBC in London. Unusually for a non-Arabic destination, the registration number 1117 appears only in Arabic
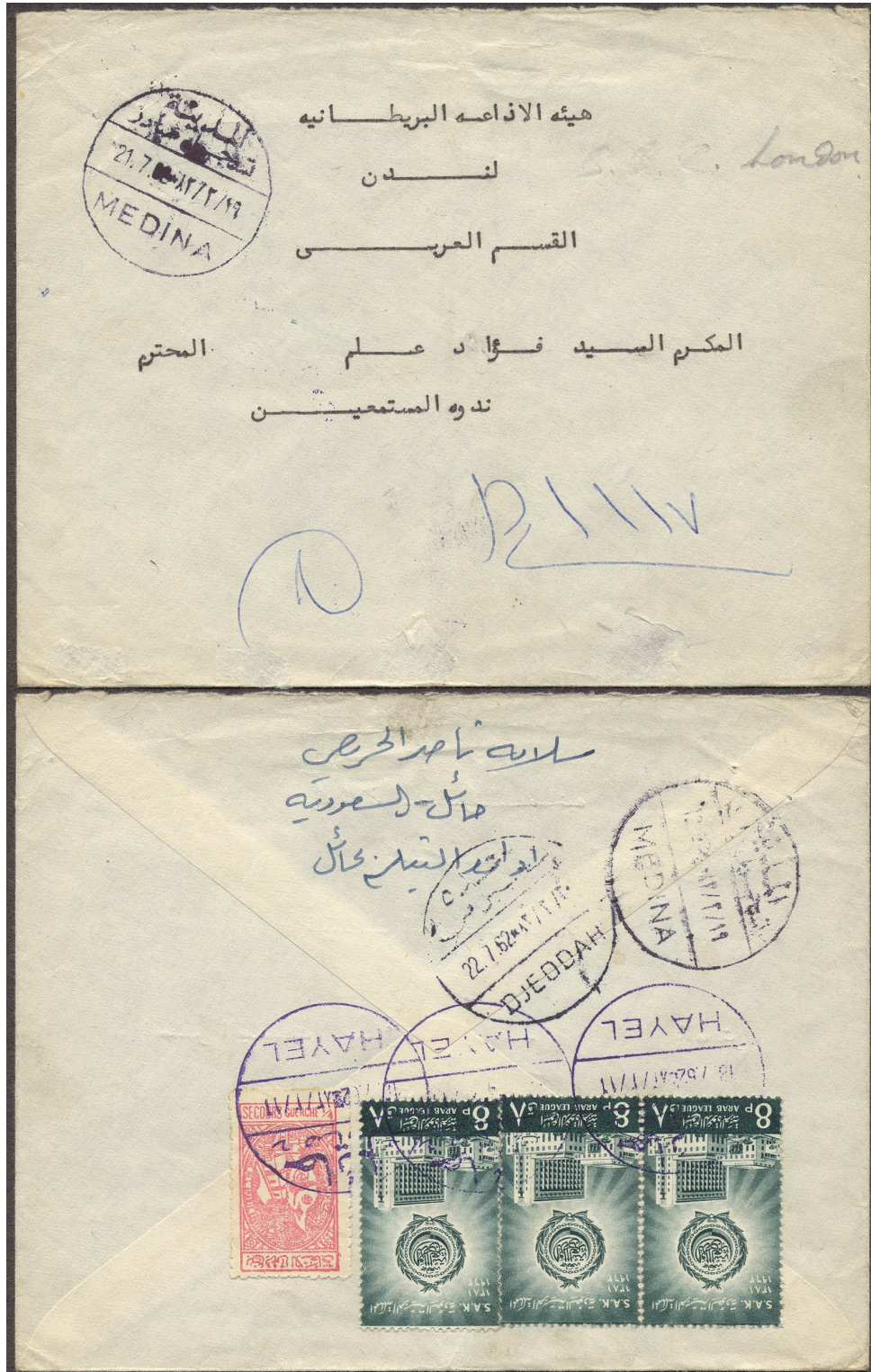
Hayel to BBC, London (reduced to 80%)

The cover below from Abu Arish to the BBC in London is a bit of a mess. The 'R' was written using a red pencil as was the crossed-out script; the registration number 277 was written using a red ball-point pen and may have been done in Jeddah. The Jeddah transit was sometime in September 1960.

Cover from Ranya, 21 November 1963, to the BBC in London, with registration in Western and Arabic script.

Ranya to BBC, London (reduced to 80%)

Registration Cachets

These normally include the town name and the registration number entered in manuscript, although exceptions do exist.

Violet registration cachet of Malham on a November 1960 cover to Khan Younis, Gaza. The registration number in the cachet is 41, but a manuscript number 375 appears at the top of the front of the cover. It is not known where this mark was added.

So, what types of cachet exist? I will be describing them under five categories:

1. Official, with office name.
2. Official, without office name.
3. Unofficial, but information added by the post office.
4. Unofficial, informing only of the requirement for registration.
5. Those that could be either (2) or (3).

That list is in an approximate order of importance to me, but I will be dealing with them in a different order.

Unofficial, informing only of the requirement for registration.

These are usually the word REGISTERED in English, Arabic or both, but other types do exist. To me, these are not of any philatelic importance, but it may be useful to know exactly what they are. Below are a few examples.
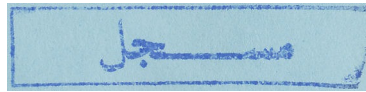
| **Seen on cover from Riyadh** | **Seen on cover from Riyadh** | **Seen on cover from Jeddah** |

(Reduced)

**Unofficial, but information may be added by the post office.**

Normally without town of origin, these are probably added by companies, official departments and banks. The Saudi British Bank in Jeddah actually used envelopes with the registration mark pre-printed. These marks do not always originate from companies in the large cities and there may be several versions of company marks. A few examples are shown below.
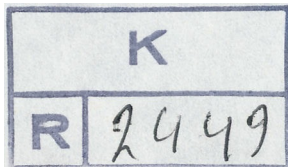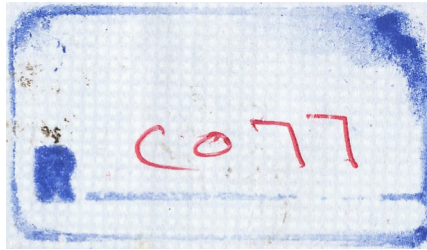

Pre-printed, Saudi British Bank, Jeddah

Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency, Jeddah
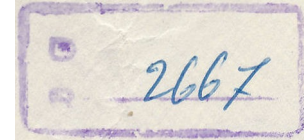
Banque de l'Indochine, Jeddah

Banque du Liban et d'outremer, Jeddah

From Al Majardah

**From National Commercial Bank, Jeddah**

Cover from National Commercial Bank, Jeddah. (Reduced)

Official, without office name.

This group, relating directly to the Saudi postal service, is worthy of further research. We can make a guess that these are official when they are seen used from various towns and cities and are on covers from varying companies and individuals.
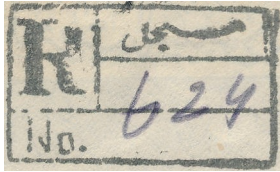
Seen used at Buraidah (violet), Dammam (violet), Jeddah (violet), Karya (violet), Makkah (black), Riyadh (violet).

Seen used at Riyadh (black), Makkah (black), Jouf (violet).

Used at various post offices in Makkah.

**Cover from Ministry of Health, posted in Dammam.**

Official, with office name.

As with the previous, this group, relating directly to the Saudi postal service, is worthy of further research and probably a lot easier.   Some appear to be of a design unique to that post office while others conform, to varying degrees, to a standard.
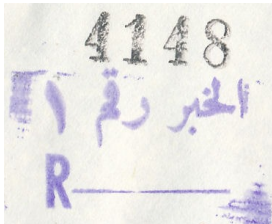
Unique designs. Further research may show that some of these are not unique, but we have to start somewhere. There are many more, but my examples are unsuitable for reproduction.

Tarout
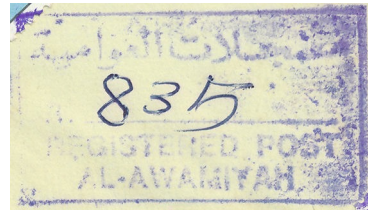
Al Awamiyah

Al Khobar number 1, but is it official?

Dammam

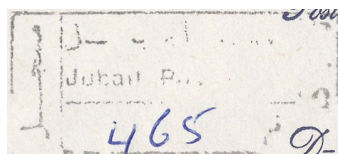

Khobar Central Post Office

Barid Al Wasel, Jizan

Dhahran Air Port. The design mimics a registration label
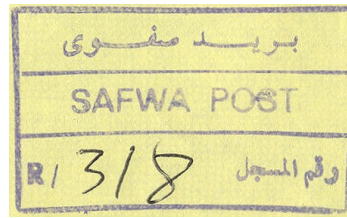

Jubail Post Office

Madinat Al Jubail Al Sinaiya

Standard design for small geological area.

This group is from the Dammam area.

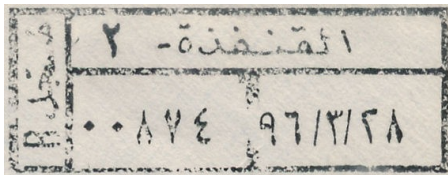|		
Thuqbah	**Safwa**	**Jubail**

Standard design for larger geological area.

These are far easier to find than the previous group.
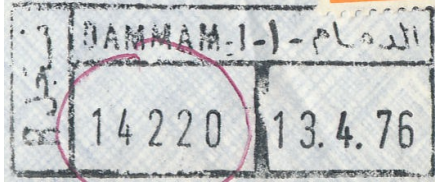

This type displays the post office name and counter number, the registration number and date and is all-Arabic.

Seen at: Al Confudah-1
              Al Confudah-2
              Jizan-3
              Al Majmaa-2
              Najran-1

Registered cover from Al Confudah to Dhahran with Al Confudah-1 registration cachet dated 26-3-1396 and KUNFODAH postmark type SD170 dated 27-3-1396.

Similar to the previous type but bi-lingual.

Seen at: DAMMAM-1
                DAMMAM-4
                DAMMAM-5
                HAFR-2
                KHAFJI-1
                KHAFJI-1
                KHOBAR-2

Similar to above but English name at bottom and probably limited to locations with long names.

Seen at: HALIT AMMAH-1

This type displays the information in three lines:

Post Office or Travelling Post Office name
Registration number in manuscript

Travelling post - Thirmada

The shape of the R at left varies slightly.

Seen at: TPO Thirmada
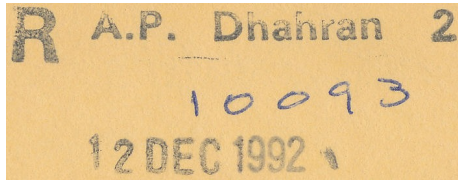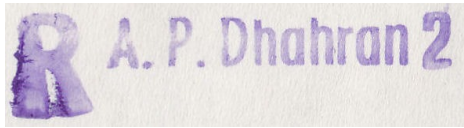   Al Khadraa
                Al Muthneb
                Hijar Bilfurn
                Khaf

Al Muthneb

Dammam Area

This group belongs to either the small geographical area or unique design categories, but are grouped together for convenience.

Dhahran Airport

These appear with different fonts and numbers. The author has seen only numbers 2 and 3 but others must exist.

Dammam

Similar in style to Dhahran Airport above, this has been seen with numbers 1,4,6,8.
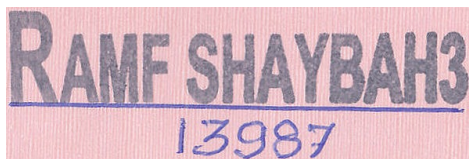

Dammam/1
Dammam/3

AMF Dammam has been seen with many fonts, upper and mixed case, numbers (with or without preceding hyphen), boxed and unboxed.
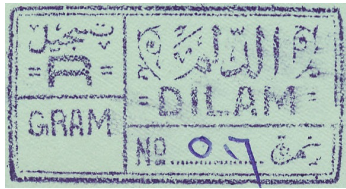

This appears to be a very scarce mark, or is the author just unlucky?

Shaybah

An ARAMCO oil field in the Rub' Al Khali; all mail that the author has seen with this mark has a Dammam postmark.

National types

Above - Bi-lingual design in four sections with slight variations in ornaments and other details.

Seen at: DAFIR
           DILAM
           DJEDDAH
           KORAYAT
           OMLUJ
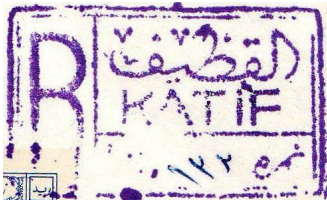
Left - Bi-lingual design in three sections.

Seen at: KATIF
           RYAD
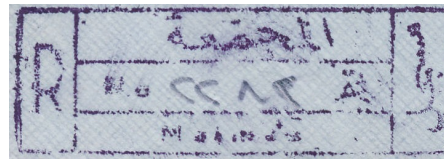
Above - Bi-lingual design in five sections with slight variations in font face and size.

Seen at: Dheba
           Kooyieh
           Majma'a
           Qibah
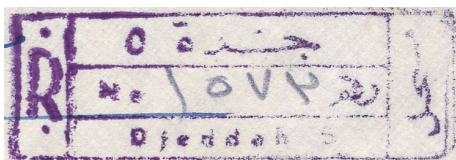
Above - Bi-lingual design in five sections similar to above but with counter number after office name. There are minor differences in ornaments.

Seen at: Djeddah 5
           Ryadh 8
           Ryadh 9

Use as cancelling device

Registration marks are known to have been used to record registration details and to cancel the stamps.

They have also been seen to have been used to cancel stamps on unregistered letters..

Registration cachet 'Barid Al Wasel', Jubail, used to cancel stamp on registered letter.

Registration cachet 'OMLUJ' used to cancel stamps on unregistered letter.

Barcode Labels

The earliest barcode label I have is from 2005 and since then, several designs have appeared and more than one barcode standard has been used. The codes allocated to the barcode types are those I am currently using in my collection and have no other significance; they certainly do not imply the order of issue.
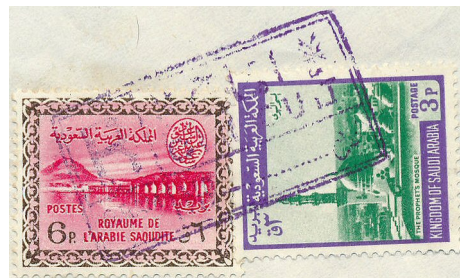
The earliest and latest years quoted are from covers in my collection and probably vary considerably from reality.

Type BC1

2005 - 2012. Seen used only from Riyadh.

Type BC2

2007 - 2011. No town name. Registration number wider than barcode and delimited by '*'. The barcode standard is code 39.

Type BC3

2011. No town name. Registration number narrower than barcode and delimited by '*'. The barcode standard is code 39.

Type BC4

2005 - 2008. No town name. There are several variations of this type. The barcode standard is code 39.

Barcode 3mm high.

Registration number:
R + 10 digits + SA

Barcode 4.5mm high.

Registration number:
R + 10 digits + SA

Barcode 3mm high.

Registration number:
RJ or RR + 10 digits + SA

Type BC5

2005 - 2011. Seen only with Dammam as town but has a two-letter code underneath the start of the barcode indicating the town of use. The list below gives the codes seen and the location based on the return address written on the cover, so may not be accurate. The barcode standard appears to be code 128.
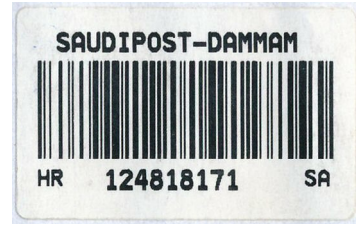
Code	Town of origin
AR	Arar
EC	Al Jubail
ha	Al Hassa
HR	Hafr Al Batin
QF	Al Qatif
RR	Dammam
SR	Al Sa'eera

Note the use of a lower-case code for Al Hassa.

Type BC6

2009 - current. Contains all of the information you would want to know about your package, including the identity of the post office official who dealt with the transaction!

Type BC7

2005. Similar to BC4 but with date added. The barcode standard is code 39.

Type BC8

2005 - 2007. Speed Post. Seen at Riyadh and Dammam but a cover exists with a Riyadh label and Al-Kharj meter mark so use may not be confined to the city printed on the label. The barcode standard appears to be code 128.

The information given in this article comes as a result of a preliminary study of a few thousand covers. There is probably more information to be gleaned from those covers and hopefully more from covers in members' collections.

Some of the sections in this article are worth further study, especially official marks and with technology advancing at the rate it does, we expect to see developments in the barcode labels and their successors.

The author would appreciate further information about registration markings and, if possible, scans of the covers at 300 d.p.i. or higher resolution.

Can anyone identify or confirm the barcode standards on the labels shown?

Can anyone supply a complete image of the barcode from Al Khafji shown below?

KA 100 081 186 SA

Further updates will be made if sufficient material becomes available.

Barcode label, type BC1, on cover to Pakistan.

Revenue News

By: Martin Lovegrove

We should all be very wary about revenue stamps on documents but not 'tied' to the document. I recently came across what looked like a previously used residential permit stamp applied to a passport page, but a very close look showed that the stamp, Thoden RP39, was just tied to the page at the bottom of the stamp by the violet residential permit handstamp applied at Jeddah.

So what was the mystery circular cancel on the stamp? The only clue was the Arabic صر

In my collection I found a passport page with three residential permit renewal stamps cancelled at Anaizah by a circular device that looked as though it could be a match, and another page with an exit and return visa, similarly cancelled, and issued at the same town. The Arabic word at the bottom proved to be صرف (sarf meaning expenditure, although it may have another meaning in this context).

Another passport page in my possession was a residential permit renewal issued at Jeddah and showed the two stamps, Thoden RP46, had a similar pre-cancel.

So far then, I have found residential permit and renewal stamps issued at Jeddah with a circular pre-cancel, and return visa and residential permit renewal stamps issued at Anaizah and cancelled with a similar device.

I would like to know if anywhere other than Jeddah pre-cancelled their stamps and if any other passport office used similar cancels.

Device used at Anaizah

The full translation of the text on the device is:

Directorate
of civil status
in Anaizah
Expenditure

Another revenue forgery has surfaced. This time it is a crude attempt to produce an entry visa label, maybe to replace one that had expired. In order to show a genuine hologram, an existing label had been removed, apart from the hologram, and the forgery with an appropriate hole placed in exactly the same position. The result is almost realistic but would not deceive anyone with experience of real visa labels; the quality and colour reproduction are poor. The stamp, cancel and signature at the bottom of the page are all genuine.

Forgery   **Genuine**

Both images reduced to 75%

Detail at 200%

The original hologram was left attached to the page and the forged label, with a hole carefully cut to fit, was placed on the page.

12.   Sometimes there is a story behind a cover; it may be obvious or it may not. The cover below is one whose story is almost a secret. It has a clear type S150 strike for HALAT ALJOLLAH dated 16-6-1410 (13 January 1990). Halat Al Jollah is a small village between Al Muzahimiyah and Al Quwayiyah on Highway 40 south-west of Riyadh. On my map it is marked as Al Gjullah and on Google Earth as Jilah. The cover is addressed to David R Matthews who may have been an APA member. David prepared many covers and had them posted at locations all over the Kingdom; that had been done before, but in this case notes were taken relating to the actual posting, and these show us what the postal system was like in rural places. In the case of the cover below, it was given to a local person to post, probably because the post office was closed at the time. It was handed over on January 12 and arrived at King Saud University on January 17.

(reduced 70%)

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