

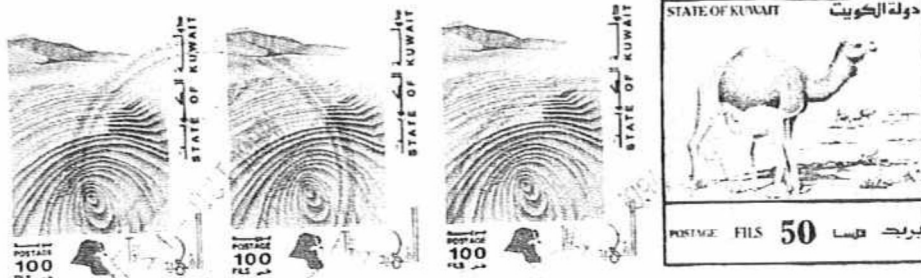
ARABIAN GULF STATES

POSTAL HISTORY

QUARTERLY

(including 8 colour plates)

REGISTERED
MAIL



ROYAL MAIL INTERNATIONAL
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Rd., Accrington, BB5 2AD, Lancashire

Introduction

This is a quarterly magazine for Gulf enthusiasts with the aim of circulating previously unpublished information and illustrating mainly in colour a wide variety of postal history. I shall be relying on you the reader to supply articles, snippets of information and items to photocopy or good quality colour copies along with a description or any relevant information. This publication will cover all periods including post agency. Circulation of information through these pages may encourage a wider interest in modern developments as well as providing an opportunity to see what exists from earlier times.

I acknowledge the work of the India Study Circle, the Great Britain Overprints Society and the erudite work of A.N. Donaldson. It is not my intention to tread their ground again but to enhance the study of the Gulf by producing a bank of coloured reproductions of covers which we may not otherwise see.

This will be a non-profit making venture and a charge of £2 per edition will enable me to pay all expenses incurred. Names and addresses of contributors will not be published neither will they be sold to anyone else. Readers may have their letters published at the discretion of the editor.

Territories covered

Bahrain, Guadur, Kuwait, Muscat & Oman and Qatar. Also the combined territories of the United Arab Emirates. These former Trucial States are :-

Abu Dhabi
Ajman and dependencies
Dubai
Fujeira
Ras al Khaima
Sharjah
Umm al Qiwain

Cover story - this is I think an appropriate cover for the first edition. The dromedary shown on the 50f stamp (SG 1306) is also called the Arabian Camel and is bred for riding and racing. In earlier times their breeding and sale played a major part in sustaining the tribes of the interior of the Arabian peninsula. However the unstoppable exploration for oil and the development of the industry wiped out this centuries old lifestyle in less than one generation and Arabia largely turned its back on the camel. Just out of curiosity I have been through the catalogue to find out just how often camels figure in Gulf stamp issues. These are listed below:-

Ajman 1964 SG12; Bahrain 1989 SG360-71; Dubai 1967 SG268; Fujeira 1964 SG8,18,92,101,055,0165; Kuwait 1992 SG1305-9; Oman 1986 SG322; Qatar 1968 SG232 and 1971 SG354; UAE 1992 SG401-4.

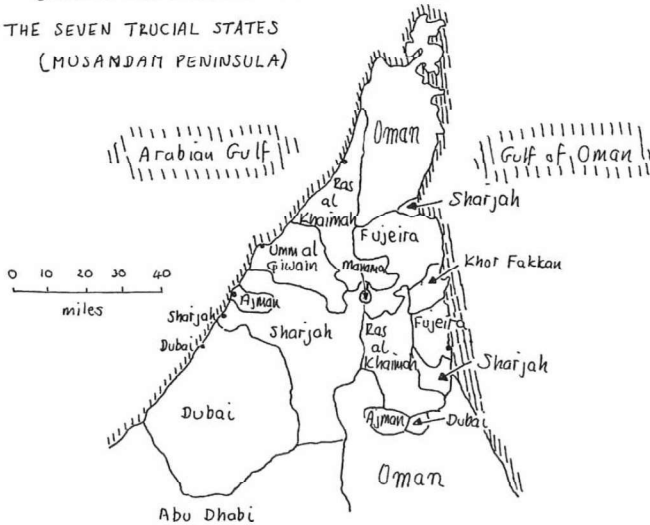
It may be surprising to see reference to the Trucial States given their dismal record in the hands of philatelic agencies, but their part in the development of the postal services. Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah post offices did indeed provide a genuine postal service during the 1960's but there was no real demand in the other states. This didn't stop them taking advantage of their political independence in 1964 to generate some easy money by issuing long series of stamps, limited editions and imperforates. In this they were encouraged by various commercial agencies. All this ceased in the early 1970's when the United Arab Emirates was formed.

These states had small populations and no infrastructure at the time so commercial covers from this period are rarely seen.

3

The map shows the complicated boundaries of the seven Trucial States based upon historic tribal divisions. In 1964 the population lived mainly along the coast and made a living from the sea; fishing and pearl diving and carrying goods to and from the Indian subcontinent

THE SEVEN TRUCIAL STATES
(MUSANDAM PENINSULA)



Opposite page- top

Sharjah to UK franked 75np (SG149e)
cancelled d.r. Sharjah & deps. 1965
a commercial cover

- bottom

Umm al Qiwain to Sweden 5,10,15np
(SG 5,7,27) canc. Umm el Qiwain 19.7.65

4

Trucial States



E.B. Danvers Esq.

I.H.T. Central Branch.

43, Mayfield Road,

WITLIE.

CHELMESFORD.

ENGLAND.

ESSEX.

Sharjah 1965 below : Umm al Qiwain 1965



Mr. B. Schylander,

Roslins väg 6,

السويد. Malmo V. Sweden.

5
Bahrain Agency



above : India P.C. 1905 below :seamail 1949



6

opposite page - top

Bahrain to Hamburg India 1anna post card
cancelled Bahrain type 4 14.7.05
Sea Post Office 22.7.05
Hamburg 6.8.05
A very good example of westward mail.

- bottom

Bahrain to Scotland franked 21/2annas
Silver Wedding canc. type 5C 13.4.49
this Indian PO canceller is presently re-
corded 16.1.35 to 4.6.49.
Sea mail was seldom used in this period
on mail westwards from the Gulf.

Shown below is a good but typical example of a cover
from Bahrain sent just nine months after the independent
postal service started. It is interesting in two respects :-

- 1) the stamps are cancelled with British Postal Agency
type 21 which was probably introduced in 1948.
- 2) It is addressed to Jerusalem, Jordan. A reminder of the
political turbulence of the Middle East.



Mr J. Rose

St George's Hotel

P.O. Box 18

JERUSALEM

JORDAN

opposite page - top

Inter-Gulf mail from Bahrain 23.12.65 to Kuwait and backstamped there 27.12.65. The Bahrain agency post office closed just eight days later on 31.12.65 but the agency cancellers continued in use. The Kuwait postal agency had closed six years earlier. Most incoming mail to Kuwait received a single ring backstamp applied by machine and in some cases with wavy lines or a slogan.
Bahrain canc. type 21

- bottom

Dubai to Kent franked 70np Freedom from Hunger (SG45). Cancelled with a large ring date stamp 1.12.64.

This style of canceller shown below is recorded with a 1,2 and 3.

The first post office opened in Dubai in 1909 and postal independence came in 1963. The map on page 3 shows that the post office situated in Dubai Town was not too distant from the surrounding states and was accessible to them in some cases. For instance mail from Sharjah prior to 1963 often entered the international postal system in Dubai and can be recognised by the return address.



Inter Gulf mail 1965 below : Dubai 1964



9
United Arab Emirates
Riqqa, Dubai 1986



10

opposite

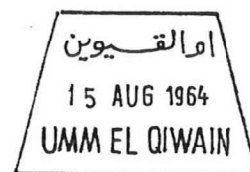
Modern commercial mail is usually contained in C4 size envelopes which are awkward to mount or illustrate. However collectors have to deal with this as best they can. The multi-stamp franking is not unusual on Gulf mail and is made up of :-

7x45f(SG131) , 6x25f, 175f(SG137, 145).

Cancellation is d.r. biligal Riqqa 1 17.5.86.

With the introduction of electronic processes bank mail from the Gulf has reduced to a fraction of its former level and this once plentiful source of stamps and covers is no longer available.

Two Trucial States cancellers



Kuwait Post Offices circa 1980

This list has been compiled from information received from the Kuwaiti Post Office in 1980. Alongside each entry I have put the earliest, latest or only recorded date stamp I have seen. Note also that the vowel sounds in English only approximate to the original Arabic and the spellings of the place names can vary.

A good source of postal markings from which well over a half of the dates below were obtained came from parcel cards. Those from Bahrain and Kuwait are actually made of thin card and are usually in good condition. The UAE 'cards' are only made of paper and usually creased or worse.

	earliest	latest
1. General P.O.	10.4.85	14.9.86
2. Aardhiyah	24.9.83	15.5.84
3. Aaqool	18.5.83	21.6.86
4. Ahmadi (Ahmedi)		
5. Abraq Khaitan	9.11.82	7.5.86
6. Abu Hleifah	23.5.85	
7. Bayan	14.5.84	
8. Dasmah	1.5.82	
9. De'eyah	13.6.83	
10. Dhahiyat Abdulla As-Salem	29.4.85	9.11.85
11. Doha	1.12.83	
12. Edailiyah (Idailiya)	22.12.83	
13. Fahahiheel central	20.12.83	12.8.86
14. Faihaa	17.10.82	29.4.85
15. Faileka (Failaka)	6.6.81	
16. Farwaniyah	30.11.81	
17. Fintaas (Fantas)	22.6.81	
18. Hawalli	5.11.83	-7.85

19. International Airport	28.5.83	8.8.86
20. Jahara	18.5.83	8.5.8
21. Jahara -4		
22. Jeleeab as Shoyoukh	23.5.84	10.5.90
23. Kaifan	11.11.84	29.4.85
24. Khaledeyah	12.4.84	9.5.84
25. Mansouriyah	20.9.84	
26. Mirgaab	26.4.82	
27. Mubarakiyah		
28. Nugrah	4.5.83	
29. Nuwaiseeb		
30. Nuzah	20.11.84	2.7.86
31. (Al-) Omariyah	22.12.84	
32. Qadeseyah	29.3.83	25.5.83
33. Raabiah	3.11.84	
34. Raas	11.6.85	
35. Rawdah	21.3.84	8.5.86
36. Riqqah	18.7.84	
37. Rumaithiyah	11.8.86	
38. Safat	2.3.82	
39a. Salmiyah	17.2.82	
39b. Salmiyah Central	9.1.83	-5.86
40. Shu'aiba	4.8.86	
41. Shamiyah	1.8.85	
42. Shi'eb	13.11.83	
43. Shuwaikh Industrial Area	30.4.85	
44. Shuwaikh B	12.6.83	14.4.84
45. Sulaibikhat	20.11.83	
46. Wafrah		
47. Umm - al - Heeman	15.1.83	
48. Zour	4.8.85	

This list does not imply that any of the dates represent the opening or closing of the offices.

Others listed as closed at the time (1980) were :-

Dasman, Jewan, Khafji (N.Z.), Mabarakya, Mena al Ahmadi, Mina Saud (N.Z.), Odhailiyah, Salmiyah Branch, *Sharq, Sief.
 *I have one recorded strike from Sharq dated 29.3.81
 NZ = Neutral Zone shared territory with Saudi Arabia.

Post offices in operation later :-

(These are recorded from mail and are not opening dates)

(Al-) Ozailiya	recorded	7.7.81
Salihiya	"	18.4.96
Souk Amir (Souk Al-Dhakly)	"	31.8.94
Sura (Surrah)	"	15.2.95

Illustrations of date stamps and other postal markings from modern Kuwait will appear at a later date. With fifty plus post offices now operating this will be quite a task.

Covers illustrated on the opposite page :-

top -

Kuwait post war airmail to USA bearing standard rate for this period and cancelled type 11 28.1.46.

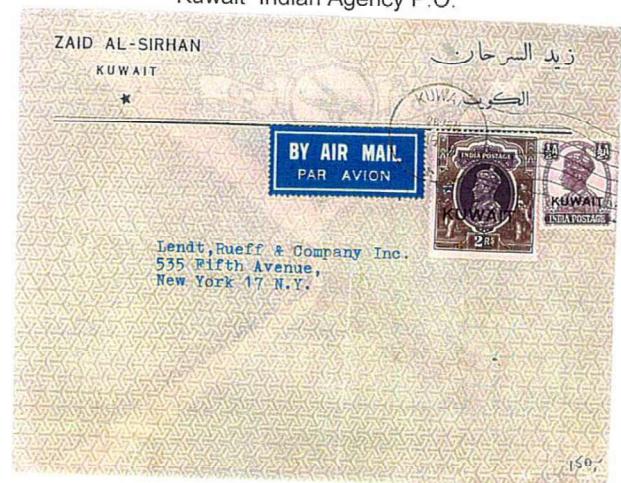
Type 11 recorded 4.10.41 to 29.9.48.

bottom -

Kuwait to India registered 20.7.47 and bearing 5 rupees (GVR, SG No. 27). Cancelled by type 12.

The points of interest here being the very rare postal use of a 5 rupee value and secondly the use of the VP label. There were a number of occasions in the 1940's when registration labels ran out and VP labels substituted. The VP (= Value Payable) is crossed out and an 'R' written across.

Kuwait Indian Agency P.O.



above : 1946 airmail below : 1947 reg.

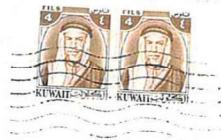


15
Kuwait



1930 reg. via Basrah below : local cover 1965

AMBASSADE DE FRANCE
AU KOWEIT



Monsieur Ernest ABCARIUS

DAR UTTARJAMA

P.O.Box 2996

KUWAIT

16

Facing page top -

Kuwait to London registered surface mail franked 1a, 8as (SG17,23) and cancelled 24.3.30 type 7. Transit Basrah on back 27.3.30 and received in London 10.4.30. A Foreign Office report dated April 1929 reads

'Steamship services - The British India Steam Navigation Co. runs a weekly fast mail between Bombay and Basrah travelling on the Persian side of the Gulf via the ports of Bushire and Mohammerah. The weekly slow mail leaves Bombay on Wednesday for Karachi, Muscat, Bandar Abbas, Henjam, Lingah, Bahrain, Bushire and Basrah taking fourteen days.

bottom -

A typical locally delivery cover bearing 2x4fils (SG 148) and cancelled 17.11.65. Kuwait P.O. invariably backstamped mail during this period; both internal and international.

facing page top -

a very clear example of the type 7 canc. franking a 3 1/2 as (SG 272). This surface mail cover received in Basrah 9.8.47. A delivery time of 7 days.

bottom -

this cover has already been recorded in the journal of the Great Britain Overprints Society as a black and white photostat. I think it warrants a second airing as a particularly scarce example of a high value franking - 2 rupees on 2s6d (SG 24). This does not however represent a proper rate which was 6as registration fee plus multiples of 6as airmail postage. Overfranking of Gulf mail is not an uncommon event and there is no suggestion here that this is anything other than commercial mail. Cancellation is Indian PO type 14a and dated 16.4.49.

Muscat's commercial and social connections were almost exclusively with the Indian subcontinent. The country had no infrastructure at this time and oil had not been discovered. There were few Europeans in residence and the volume of west bound mail was consequently small.

A combined total of only just over 24,500 of this 2 Rupee value was sold by the post offices at Dubai, Muscat and Doha in a three year period. The sales were estimated to be at least 50% philatelic which leaves an average sales figure of 3 per day per office.

Muscat Agency

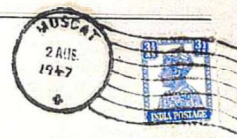
FROM,

NASSIB BIN MAHOMED & SON.
MUSCAT (P. Gulf)

To,

Messrs Anglo Iranian Oil Company Limited,

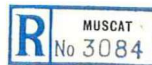
ABADAN.
(IRAQ)



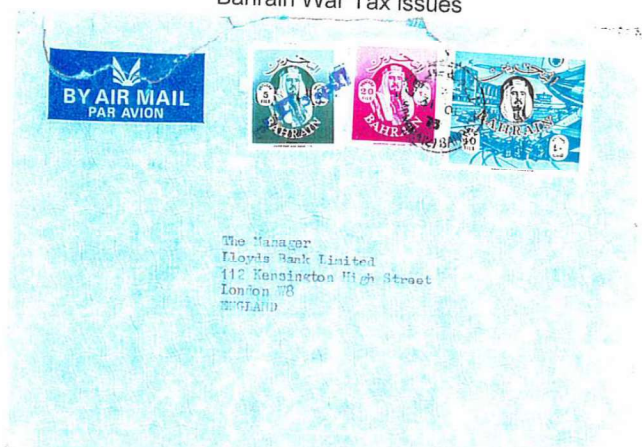
above : 1947 to Iraq below : 1949 reg.



British Legion Bank
41 / Paisley Road West
Glasgow S.W.1
Scotland



Bahrain War Tax issues



interim issue 31.10.73 below : T192 7.11.73



The War Tax issues of Bahrain

A consequence of the 1973 Arab-Israeli war was the taxing of all mail sent through the Bahrain Post Office. The tax levied at a flat rate of 5 fils was collected by the sale of a tax label (stamp) which was affixed to each item of mail. This rate remained unchanged throughout twenty seven years of its use. Each label was inscribed 'Al Majhood Al Harbee' which translates as 'War effort'. But this is rather misleading since the funds didn't go to support the military campaign but to aid the refugees of the conflict(s). A 10 fils charity tax label replaced this issue early in 2000.

In the first years of use the label was often fixed well away from the standard top right hand corner of the envelope and did not receive any form of cancellation. Later covers usually have the label along side the stamps but even when placed elsewhere it was usually cancelled. I have recorded two covers where the labels have been accepted in payment of postal charges one internal and the other on international mail. There are numerous examples of mail not bearing the label.

Interim label - for a period of about four weeks until the first printed label became available the then current 5 fils stamp (SG139) was overprinted in purple by hand stamp as shown here*

المجهود الحربي

Work State الجهد الحربي

The stamp was probably affixed to the cover prior to handstamping. Certainly in the cover I have recorded the overprint overlaps the adjoining stamp. This is shown opposite and dated 31.10.73.

First printed label (SG T192) - I have recorded a cover bearing this label - shown opposite and dated 7.11.73.

Also reported but not seen is a piece with T192 cancelled 27.11.73 AND bearing the overprint.

Second issue - T198

The earliest I have recorded this is 31.3.74.T Many shades of blue exist.

Immediately below is a local cover bearing 15 fils (10f postage+5 fils tax) all paid by T198.Date stamp just discernable as 17.10.82.

The 10 fils charity label is shown on a cover dated 3.2.2000



BAHRAIN TELEPHONES
P.O. BOX 14
Manama

BY AIRMAIL
PAR AVON

المنطقة الدبلوماسية
DIPLOMATIC AREA
R 1577



MEED SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES
PO BOX 14
THE BUSINESS CENTRE
HAROLD HILL
ROMFORD
ESSEX RM3 8EQ
ENGLAND

Kuwait Neutral Zone



180 fils (SG804) cancelled Mina Saud Registered

The part cover shown above is from the Neutral Zone. This is an area shared both politically and economically by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Two Kuwaiti post offices were opened in the Zone at Mina Saud (above dated 15.10.78) and Khafji. The former is shown in the 1978 post office list; the latter is shown in neither the 1978 or 1980 list.

Publications

In print :-

Aerogrammes of the Arabian Gulf
Independence Issues

by

T.E.Jones

(second edition 1998)

price £5 post paid inland or £7 airmail worldwide

This booklet contains the most accurate and up to date
information available.

1997 update of first edition of above

12 pages

price £1.50 inland and £2 overseas airmail.

Projected publication :-

Gulf Postal Stationery

Independence Issues

by T.E.Jones

containing information and listings of registered letters
formula and stamped, stamped envelopes, parcels cards
etc.

(written up but not yet set out for printing. Any information
welcome).

Magazine

Next edition available January 2001