

ARABIAN GULF STATES

POSTAL HISTORY

QUARTERLY



PERSIAN GULF DISTRICT

18 April 1929: A surface cover sent from Dubai to India and franked with 1½as.

The cover has been franked with the registered “Persian Gulf District” datestamp and has a Bombay GPO backstamp dated 19 April 1929.

Edition 37– Winter 2010

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Welcome to Edition 37 of the Quarterly

Edition 37 is the final of the four 2010 editions and though delayed I hope you will enjoy it.

A few of you have already paid the subscription fee for 2011 before 2010 was completed, which is much appreciated. Eight months remain in 2011 and I am confident that all four issues will be released in 2011 as I am due to relocate to Singapore by July 2011 which will reunite me with my sources, collection and various IT equipment which along with peaceful evenings. Subscription fees for 2011 are found at the back of this issue.

As for Edition 37 my thanks to those of you, who have been helpful in supplying me with images and information. I do believe that a few new topics have been covered and as far as I know the study of Kuwait postal rates is also new.

To help me with Edition 38 I am interested in information concerning the following topics:

- Kuwait surface covers 1921 to 1941 (Does anyone have a 4as cover from 1940 or 1941?)
- Kuwait registered covers 1921 to 1941 (Has anyone noticed 4as registration charge in 1940 or 1941?)
- Kuwait airmail covers 1921 – 1932
- Kuwait airmail covers 1932 - 1941
- India used in Kuwait 1915 – 1923

Images of any interesting covers would of course be nice but you are welcome just to forward a list with date, destination, reg/not reg, surface/air and franking. All other items of interest are equally welcome.

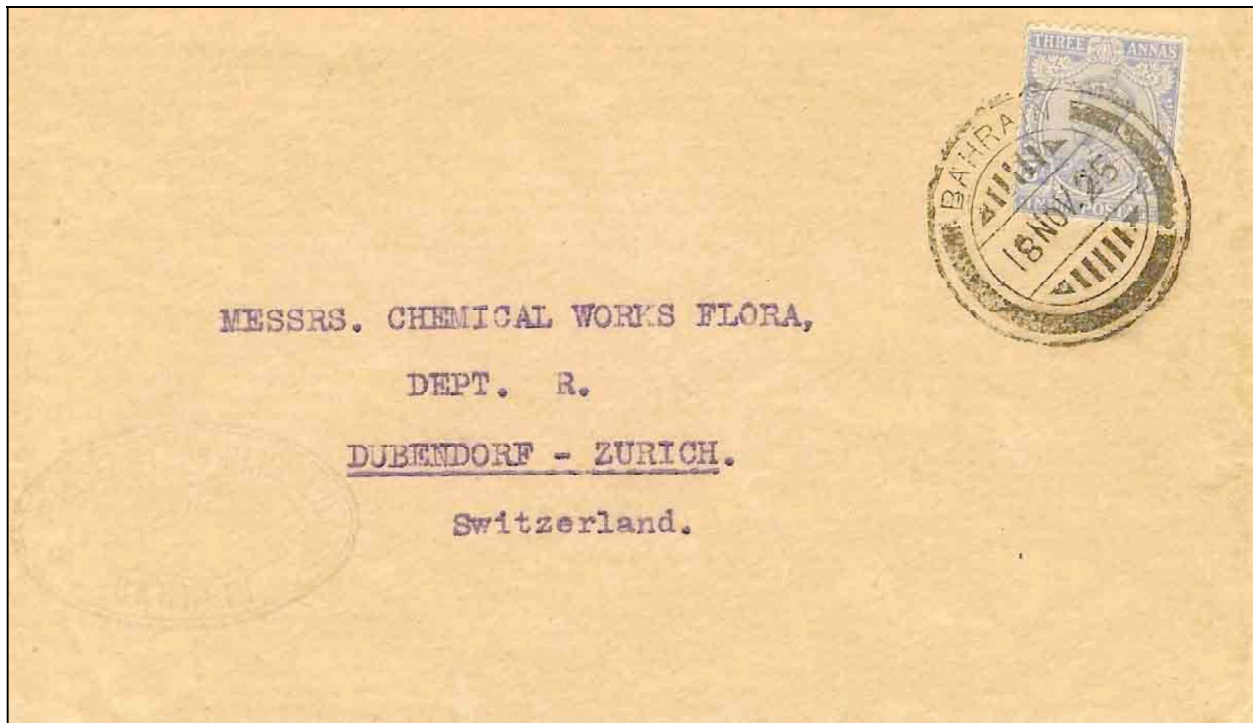
Enjoy spring
Thomas Johansen

Bahrain



A cover dated 24 May 1901 cancelled with Donaldson Type 2 and sent to the unusual destination of North Wales. The cover has been franked with 2½as being the going rate surface rate for 1 tola to foreign destinations.

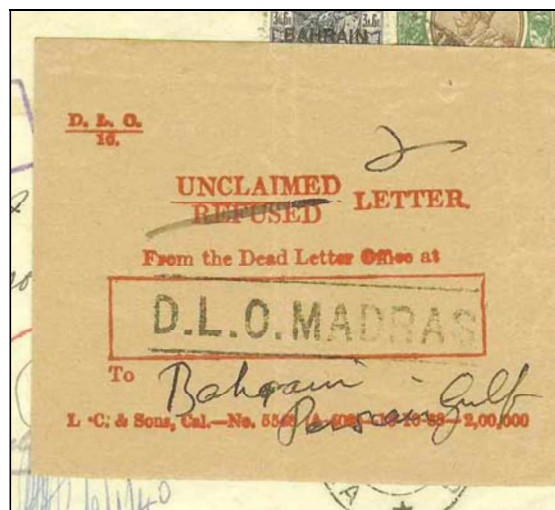
The cover below, dated 18 November 1925 and cancelled with Donaldson Type 6, shows the 3as surface rate, which was introduced in the early 1920s and remained in use until December 1931.



An airmail letter sent from Bahrain on 30 November 1939 to a passenger on the S.S. President Cedama, Penang to Siam. The letter is franked with the 1933 1 Rupee and 3as6pies and has one stamp missing which would have been a 2as value in order to make up the required rate of 21½as.

The letter has a 6 January 1940 Penang, Malaya arrival stamp applied to the front of the cover

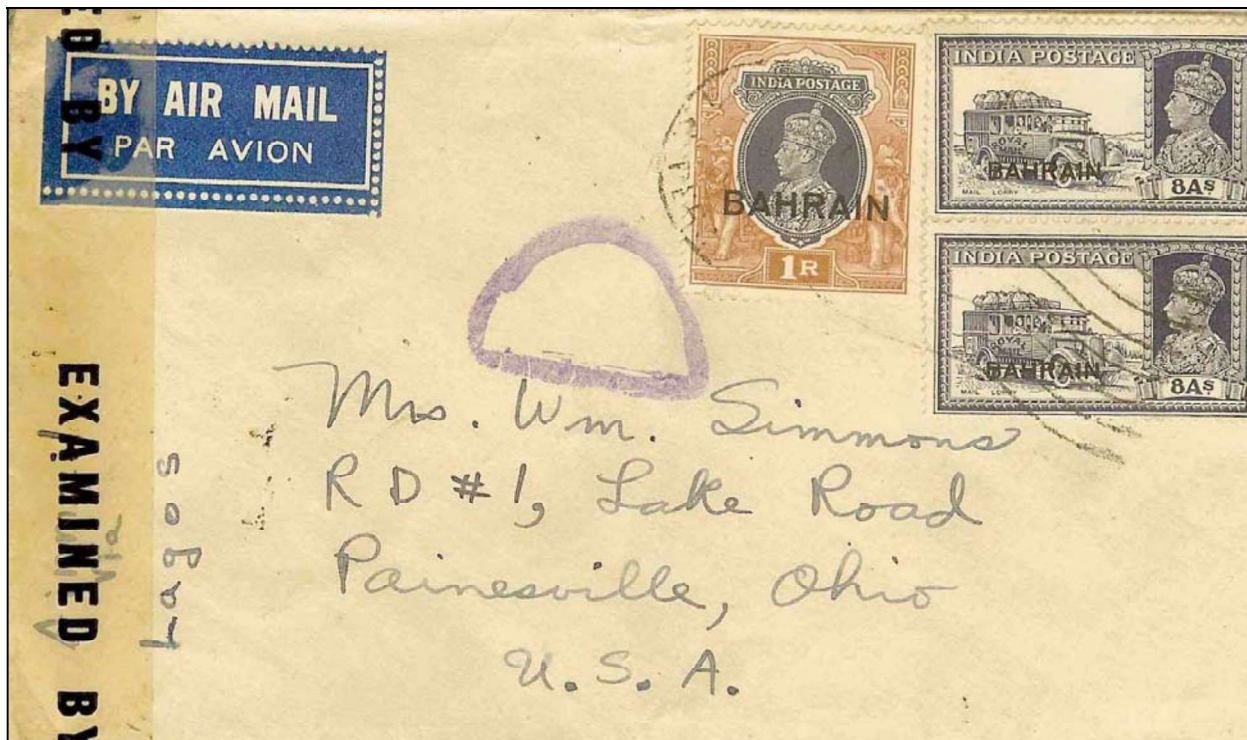




The cover has had “steamer sailed – return to sender” endorsed on the front and a Penang/Dead Letter Office datestamp (10 January 1940) applied to the back, where after it has been forwarded to the Dead Letter Office at Madras where it arrived on 19 January 1940 – it has a Madras F transit stamp dated 17 January. The cover was then released by the Dead Letter Office in Madras on 20 January 1940 and returned to Bahrain where it arrived on 31 January.

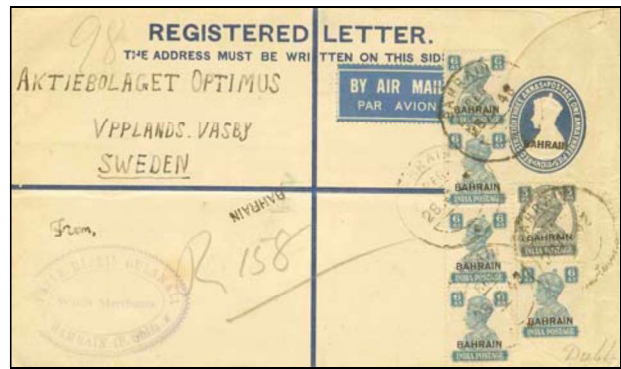


The cover below was sent from Bahrain via Lagos to the USA. The "horse shoe", applied in purple, indicates that the cover was passed by Lagos Censor without being opened there. The cover was subsequently opened on arrival in the USA where it received the EXAMINED BY label.



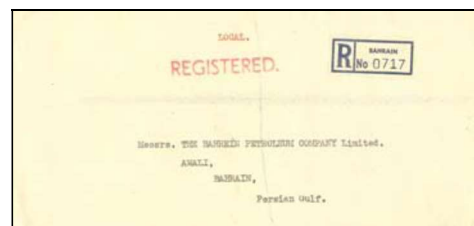


The use of overprinted KGV and KGVII registered letters during the 1930s and 1940s is nothing new and has previously been illustrated by Terry Jones in Edition 17. But while the KGV letters are known with a “1934” applied to them with handstamp – presumably the year that they were introduced – the KGVII letters have not been recorded with a similar handstamp so when were they introduced?



The latest record use that I have of the KGV stationary is 19 May 1940 being a surface letter sent to the USA (above left), whereas the earliest I have recorded use of the KGVII stationary is 26 April 1943 (below). Could you please have a look in your collections send me the dates of any usage you may have?



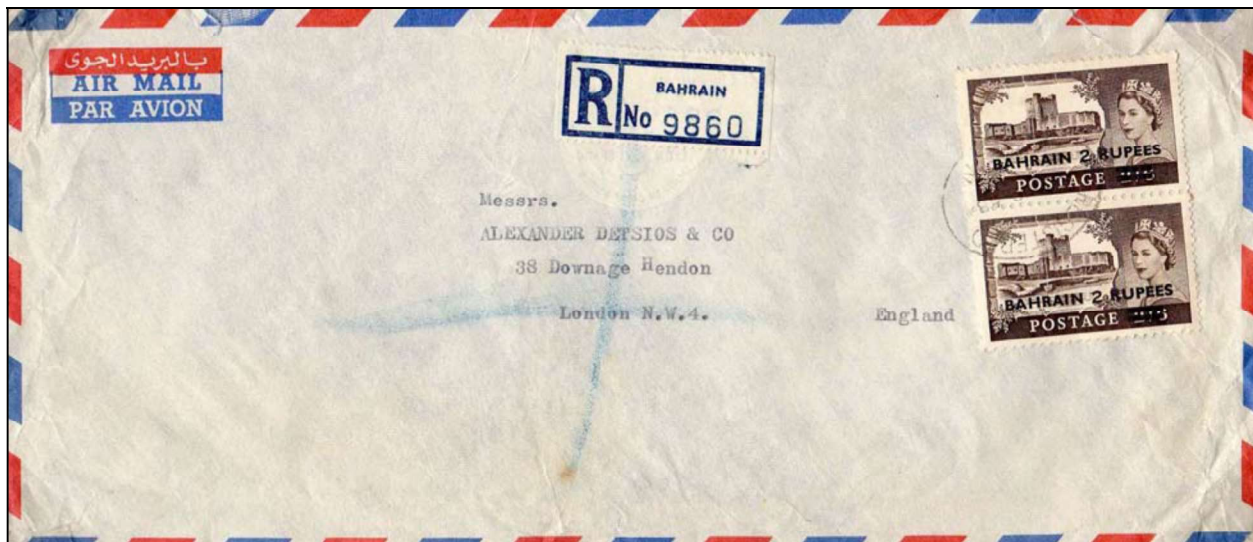
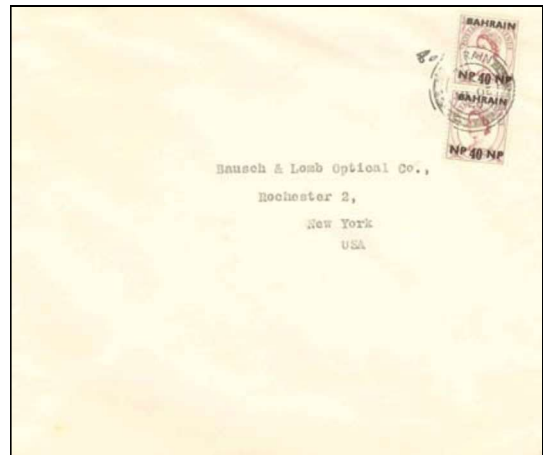


Two registered local covers both dated 1955 with the top cover being the second example of a local cover franked with 8as (the first one was illustrated in Edition 17) decreasing the chance of the rate being a fluke. With the 6as registration fee and $1\frac{1}{2}$ as internal letter rate, what does the additional $\frac{1}{2}$ a represent? An additional weight class, probably not since the $\frac{1}{2}$ a local value would have been issued as well. In his book Donaldson does specifically mention that revenue from the sale local stamps went to the Bahrain State Postal Service whereas the revenue from sale of GB overprinted stamps went to the British Postal Agency so was there some BPA involvement in the delivery of the two covers that was charged by $\frac{1}{2}$ a? Any ideas?



The cover shown here is a double rate 2nd class airmail cover the USD.

Franked with 80np, which has also been endorsed in black ink, it is a big cover, which would have weighed up to 1 ounce. The cover is dated 18 December 1959 and could look as if it contained an Xmas card of some sort.



The above registered cover was sent to the UK on 22 February 1958 and has been franked with a total of 4 Rupees. The high franking paid on the cover makes it a good example when illustrating that the 1957 currency reform actually resulted in a “stealth” postage hike for Group 2 countries:

Pre-reform:	Air Fee per ½ ounce = 6as	Registration Fee = 6as
Post-Reform:	Air Fee per ½ ounce = 40np	Registration Fee = 40np

If the cover was paid by 2Rs pre-reform the 64as would cover nine weight classes, so 4½ ounces at the price of 54as plus the 6as registration fee totaling 60as – i.e. the cover would have been overpaid by 4as. Post-reform the 400nps would cover the same nine weight classes but the 4½ ounces would cost 360np, which with the 40np registration fee would mean that the cover was correctly paid at 2Rs.

The cover illustrates how mail to Group 2 countries (Europe, UK and India) was actually increased by almost 7.5% (6as to 40np) as a result of the 1957 currency reform. Mail to Group 3 countries (Australasia/Africa) converted from 12as to 75np (respectively ¾ of 16as and 1 Rupee) while mail to North and South America was unchanged at the rate of 1 Rupee.

Along comes an odd one – a locally addressed cover paid with the excessive rate of 1R 20np, excluding the “local postage” on the back. Having examined the cover together with Salam Al Shakar it does not appear to be a forgery, so what are the local labels – has anyone seen them before? Notice that the Reddish/Pink label has two values – 5np and 10np.



Kuwait



India used in Kuwait:

Two more values to add to the India used in Kuwait series:

Cancelled with Type 1 the 1½a value cancelled 21 June 1920.

Cancelled with Type 2 the 2as value cancelled 1 August 1920.

Kuwait 1923 ½a Double Overprint

In Edition 34 were illustrated two copies of the ½a double overprint in which a discussion of forgery or not was aired. Since then, a number of other varieties of the double overprint have surfaced all of which are shown here. Which of these double overprints are forgeries, if any, and which are not, is not the focus of the illustration but merely to show the variety in circulation. In conjunction with the discussion in Edition 34 some clumsy remarks were made for which I regret and apologize to Chris Ceremuga for. Seven of the eight below varieties either show the double overprint as very close or placed above right rather than above left. Only one copy shows the above left variety.



Kuwait Post Office 1918-21.

By P.H.G. Clarke (© 2008)

Certain problems in postal history never seem to get solved, no matter how much time and effort is devoted to them. One example is the status of the Kuwait post office between 1918 and 1921. I have decided to write an article, in the hope that someone may be able to shed more light on the problem.

Initially I believed that the P.O. was handed over by the Posts and Telegraphs of India to the Iraqi Civil Posts and Telegraphs when the latter department was formed in 1919, but I soon realized that this might not be correct. It seemed likely that the handover would be accompanied by a change in the postage rates between Kuwait and India, so Khaled Abdul-Mughni and I checked all the covers we could find between Kuwait and India in 1918, 1919, 1920, and 1921. Unfortunately there were only three examples, with conflicting results. I then ploughed my way through the Indian Postal Guides for the period from 1915 to 1942, and the results are shown in the appendices.

In June, July, and August 1918 Lt. Col. H.A. Sams (Director of Postal Services, Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force, later Director-General of the Posts and Telegraphs of India) proposed to Mr. G.R. Clarke (Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs of India) that Kuwait (and Mohammerah) were more easily supervised as part of the Civil Posts of Iraq than as part of the Indian Posts and Telegraphs. Mr. Clarke supported the idea, and the Government of India gave its approval in November 1918, with the stipulation that Indian stamps should be used (rather than stamps overprinted Iraq in British Occupation). However the absorption of the Kuwait P.O. into the Iraqi system does not appear to have been completed until August 1921. We are left with the question of what happened for nearly three years.

I have laid out below all the information that seems relevant, in chronological order, with the sources used. The letters IOLR refer to the India Office Library and Records, now part of the British Library in London; these letters are followed by the shelf mark.

1. Kuwait P.O. opened 21st January 1915 as an Indian P.O. (IOLR: L/P&S/10/47).
2. Proclamation by Officiating C-in-C, Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force dated 8th August 1918 that postage stamps with Turkish designs overprinted Iraq in British Occupation shall be brought into use in the Civil Posts of Iraq on 1st September 1918, and from that date no other stamps shall be valid (Baghdad Times newspaper August 20th 1918).
3. Proposals from H.A. Sams to G.R. Clarke in 1918, as described in the third paragraph above (IOLR: L/P&S/10/244).
4. Proclamation by Officiating C-in-C, Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force dated 14th August 1918 re revised postage rates in Iraq from 1st September 1918, and Postal Notice dated 28th August 1918 by E. Clerici, Deputy Director, Postal Services (Civil), Iraq. The Postal Notice shows that the postage rates to Koweit are the same as those to India, and

the rates between Koweit and India are Indian inland rates (The Postal History of Iraq by Patrick C. Pearson and Edward B. Proud – presumably the Proclamation and Postal Notice were published in the local newspapers at the time).

5. Postal Notice by Lt. Col. G.E.O. Le Smidt, Director of Posts and Telegraphs, Baghdad dated 22nd July 1921 re changed postage rates from 1st August 1921. India, French India, Aden, Bahrein, Dubai, and Muscat are mentioned together under “Foreign Rates”, but Kuwait is excluded. Value payable parcels to and from India will be discontinued from 1st August 1921 (Times of Mesopotamia newspaper July 29th 1921, found at Colindale by Khaled Abdul-Mughni).
6. Telegram No. 135-C dated 26th August 1921 from Political Agent at Kuwait to High Commissioner, Baghdad. “On return from Karachi I learnt from the Sub-Postmaster that Kuwait Post Office had been transferred to Iraq Postal Department and Iraq postal rates and regulations brought into force from 1st August. I am writing to you on subject as enormous increase in postage renders my allotment totally inadequate, and loss of facilities enjoyed as Indian post office is much felt. Loss of V.P.P. hits British and Americans very hard and abolition of Telegraphic money orders is a real hardship to merchants here where there is no bank. Meanwhile I hear that sub postmaster has intended for Iraq stamps. I trust that this at any rate may be stopped as their substitution for stamps bearing the King’s head certainly seems undesirable here, and would even lend colour to the fear already expressed by some that absorption of Post Office into that of Iraq is beginning of absorption of Kuwait itself into Iraq state.” (IOLR: R/15/5/95).
7. Telegram no. 978-8 dated 1st September 1921 from Highcomm, Baghdad to Political Agent, Kuwait “Your telegram No. 135-C, dated 26th August. Kuwait has been on the Mesopotamian system as regards telegraphic money orders and V.P.P. ever since occupation. I am enquiring further and considering practicability of making an exception in favour of Kuwait. Regarding your last paragraph, there is no intention of discontinuing the use of Indian stamps at Kuwait.”
8. Extract from Persian Gulf Administration Report for 1921. “With effect from the 1st August the Kuwait Post Office was transferred to the Iraq Postal Department, and Iraq postal rates and regulations were brought into force. The change is most unpopular in Kuwait, owing to the enormous increase of the rates of postage, and also to the loss temporary, however, it is hoped-of facilities, such as the Value Payable Postage system and Telegraphic Money Orders, which it had enjoyed as an Indian Post Office.” (IOLR: V26269 and IOLR: R/15/6/521).
9. Extract from the “Philatelic Journal of India”. “Thanks to the kindness of Major J.C. More, the Political Agent, we have seen a set of British Indian stamps overprinted ‘KUWAIT’ for use at the place.” “The history of this issue is interesting. Originally Indian stamps were in use as at the other Gulf posts, and Indian inland rates were charged. On August 1st, 1921, however, the post and telegraph offices were transferred, lock, stock, and barrel, to the Iraq administration, the reason being that for geographical reasons the telegraph could only be run by Iraq, and it was considered desirable that both

should be run by the same people. It was then proposed to use Iraq stamps, but as Kuwait is politically quite independent of Iraq, this was held to be politically inexpedient. Indian stamps therefore continued to be used until April 1st, 1923, when the overprinted stamps were issued. We understand, however, that foreign rates of postage are now in force between India and Kuwait, as in the case of Iraq.” (Stamp Collecting, July 21st, 1925).

The sources above, plus the appendices, all suggest that the takeover of the Kuwait P.O. by the Iraqis was not finally completed until 1st August 1921, despite the fact that Sams, Clarke, and the Government of India all approved the takeover in 1918. I hope to work my way through the Iraq Administration Reports and the Proceedings of the Post Office of India in the next decade or so, but meanwhile any comments or guidance would be much appreciated.

Appendix 1. Indian Postal Guides re Kuwait.

- 1) First listed as Koweit, sub-office under Bushire, in April 1915 issue.
- 2) Head Office changed from Bushire to Busra in July 1915 issue.
- 3) Name changed to Kuwait in July 1921 issue.
- 4) The October 1921 issue is missing from the IOLR.
- 5) Kuwait absent from January 1922 issue to September 1941 issue inclusive.
- 6) Kuwait re-listed as sub-office under Karachi in July 1942 issue.

Appendix 2. Basic Letter Postage Rate between Kuwait and India.

I know of no published official information on the postage rates from Kuwait to India. However one would expect any change in those rates to be matched by a similar change in the rates to Kuwait from India. I therefore checked the Foreign Post_Directory section in the Indian Postal Guides up to 1922.

- 1) The letter postage to Mesopotamia is given as 1½as for the first ounce in the July 1919 issue, but Koweit/Kuwait is not included in a list of Civil Post Offices in Mesopotamia.
- 2) There are three changes in the January 1922 issue from the previous issues, when i) Mesopotamia is re-named Iraq, ii) the letter rate to Iraq is increased to 2as for the first ounce, and iii) the “List of Post Offices in Iraq and Arabistan” includes Koweit.

Kuwait Surface and Air Fees during the Iraqi Postal Administration

Having so far been unable to find something comprehensive about the postal rates during the Iraqi administration of the Kuwait Post Office my recent purchase of Douglas B. Armitage's & Robert I. Johnson's 2009 book, the very excellent "Iraq - Postal History 1920s to 1940s" seemed like a very good opportunity to compare Iraqi rates at the time to those of mail from Kuwait. I was positively surprised by the extent to which the postal rates match, at least until 31 March 1932, since after the currency reform (Anna/Rupees to Fils/Dinars) it gets slightly trickier, maybe due to fluctuations in the Dinar/Rupee rate.

The Anna/Rupee system, which was in use in Iraq until 31 March 1932, was replaced by the Fils/Dinar system on 1 April 1932. Defined by the April 1931 law, which was the legal foundation for the change of currency, the Iraqi dinar was to have had a gold value equal to the pound sterling – i.e. 1 pound = 1 dinar. However, the pound was floated against gold on 21 September 1931, so a December 1931 law removed the planned gold parity. Upon introduction the Indian rupees were exchanged at 1 Indian rupee = 0075 Iraqi dinars from 1-28 April 1932 in line with 1 pound = 13.33 Rupees. However, the rate fluctuated and 1 Indian rupee = 0.074 Iraqi dinars from 29 April-5 May 1932, and 1 Indian rupee = 0.0745 Iraqi dinars from 6 May-30 June 1932.

Another difference from what we are used to when it comes to Indian rates is that Iraqi weight classes were in grams rather than ounces. Though the metric system was adopted by law in 1931 and subsequently used by government offices, including the post office, weight classes as presented by the book in question were in grams well before that.

To start off the analysis of the various Iraqi postal rates and how they match mail sent from the Kuwait Post Office I have chosen four areas:

- Registration Fees (1922-41)
- Surface Mail (1922-41)
- Overland Mail (1922-41)
- Airmail (1922-1932)

The various rates will be presented with a number of covers, some of which have been illustrated in previous Quarterlies but have now found new relevance.

A final note, and as you have read in Hugill's article, Iraqi postal rates were introduced in Kuwait on 1 August 1921. The earliest date for postal rates in Johnson/Armitage's book is September 1922.

Registration Fees – 1922 to 1941

Registration fees are a simple way to start off the study but also a good way, as they are easy to confirm. They also give us a chance to look at the conversion from Annas to Fils with some simple math.

	September 1922	Post Office Guide 1930	1 April 1932	24 July 1940
Rate as Published	3as	3as	15 Fils	20 Fils
Anna Conversion			3as	4as

First of all the registration fee was constant at 3as from September 1922 to the currency conversion in 1932, when it became 15 Fils. The only change took place in 1940 when the registration fee was hiked from 15 to 20 Fils and based on the math below it is presumed that the registration rate in Kuwait was raised from 3as to 4as but I have not yet seen a 4as cover.

Doing the math with the conversion rate of 1 Rupee equaling 75 Fils it tells us that 3as, in fact, was 14.0625 Fils or rather that 1a was 4.6875 Fils. Presumably the value of 1a was rounded up to 5 Fils resulting in the registration fee being set at 15 Fils (rather than 14 Fils) and subsequently 20 Fils.

Surface Fees – 1922 to 1941

The second rate studied is the surface rates used in Iraq, which can be divided into two areas: Inland and Foreign. Once these have been tabled a number of covers will be illustrated to show their application to postal rates used at the Kuwait Post Office.

The following rates are listed in Johnson/Armitage's book:

INDLAND:

	First 20 Grams	Each Extra 20 Grams	Currency Conversion
September 1922	2as	1a	
21 December 1926	1a	1a	
Post Office Guide 1930	2as	1a	
1 April 1932	10 Fils	5 Fils	2as/1a
21 April 1932	8 Fils	4 Fils	1.5as/0.75a
24 July 1940	10 Fils	5 Fils	2as/1a

The rates before 1 April 1932 make no mention of Kuwait but the book specifically mentions "Including mail to Kuwait" in the table illustrated Internal Postage Rates in Fils. The 1.5as/0.75a conversion is derived from how the 3as/1½as external surface rate illustrated on next page was converted to 15 Fils/8 Fils.

For postcards the rates were as follows:

	Single Postcard	Reply Postcard	Currency Conversion
September 1922	1a		
21 December 1926	½a	1a	
Post Office Guide 1930	1a	2as	
1 April 1932	5 Fils	10 Fils	1a/2as

For foreign external surface rates the following rates are listed:

	First 20 Grams	Each Extra 20 Grams	Currency Conversion
September 1922	3as	1½as	
Post Office Guide 1930	3as	1½as	
1 April 1932	15 Fils	8 Fils	3as/1½as
24 July 1940	20 Fils	10 Fils	4as/2as

For postcards the rates were as follows:

	Single Postcard	Reply Postcard	Currency Conversion
September 1922	1½as		
Post Office Guide 1930	1½as	3as	
1 April 1932	8 Fils	16 Fils	1½as/3as
24 July 1940	10 Fils	20 Fils	2as/4as

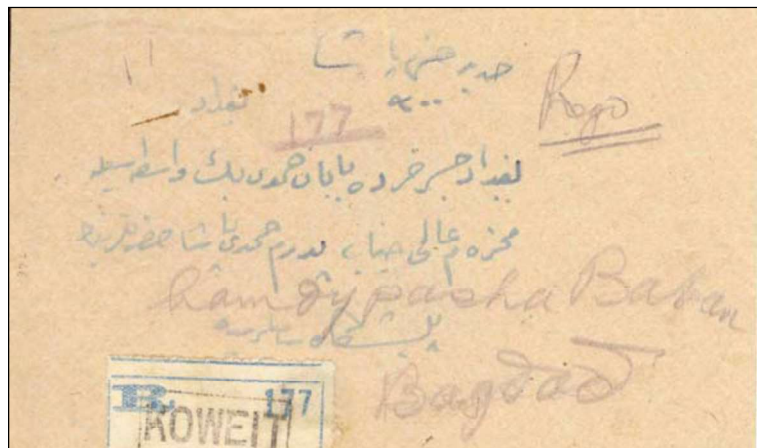
It is being presumed that in the case of the Reply Postcard the 16 Fils became 3as in Kuwait.

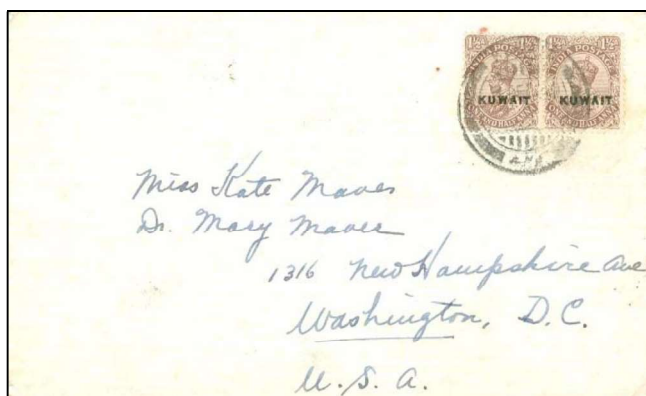
With the surface and registration fees now defined it is time to have a look at some cover and see how it translates to postal rates used at the Kuwait Post Office.



The first cover, which was previously illustrated in the Quarterly, is oddly enough one that can have two possible rate solutions. The cover is dated 2 April 1923 and is franked with 6as covering the 3as registration fee, however, the composition of the remaining 3as is not clear.

If Kuwait was included in the inland mail scheme then it would have had to be a cover paid up to 40 grams, i.e. 2as for the first 20 grams and an additional 1a for the next 20 grams. However, if Kuwait was not in the scheme then the cover would be paid 3as for the first 20 grams.





Two surface covers the above left one, sent in February 1938, complying with the 3as (15 Fils) surface rate in use at the time, while the above right cover, sent in February 1941, does not comply with the increase in surface fees on 24 July 1940 from 15 Fils to 20 Fils. The cover has been paid with 3as representing 15 Fils raising the question as to whether or not the increase applied to the Kuwait Post Office – does anyone have any surface covers sent from Kuwait between 24 July 1940 and May 1941 franked with 4as?

Overland (Baghdad – Haifa) Rates – 1922 to 1941

In Edition 27 the topic of Overland Mail was discussed with mail from Kuwait illustrated, some of this mail is illustrated again here. The Armitage/Johnson book gives us further clarity as to how Overland Mail from Kuwait was treated during the Iraq Postal Administration.

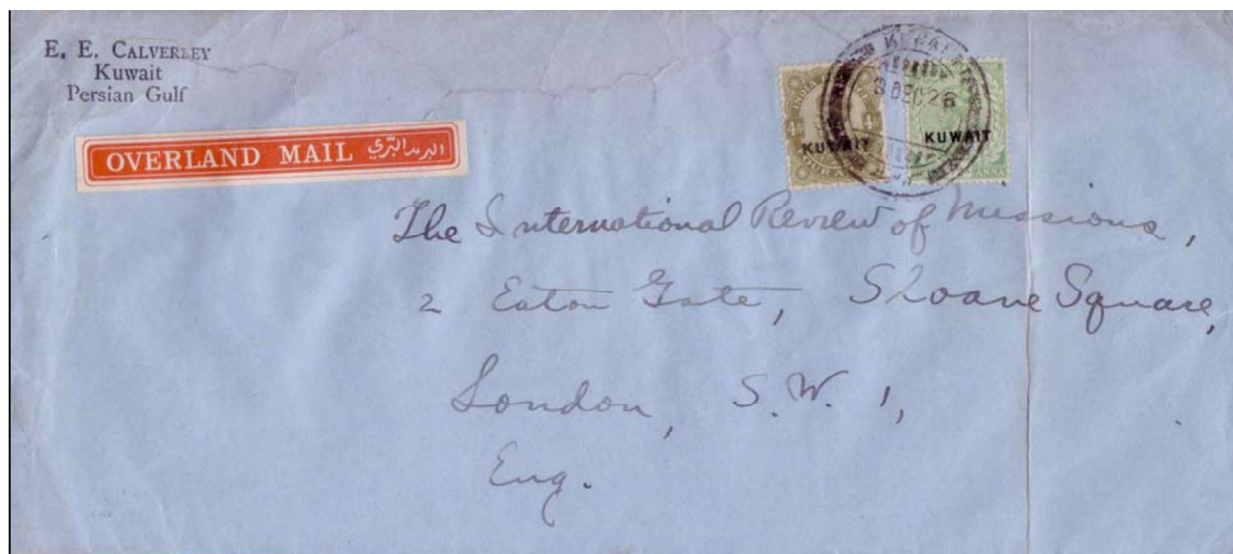
According to the book the Overland Mail service was introduced on 30 August 1923 with mail leaving Port Said for Europe and the USA on 3 September arriving in London on 10 September. In addition to this it is noted that trips up to October 18 appear to be test runs and that the actual mail contract came into effect on 18 October.

The Overland Mail Surcharge was charged in addition to the normal surface fee and in the case of registration, the registration fee.

	30 August 1923	1 May 1927
Overland Surcharge – First 20 grams	3as	
Overland Surcharge – Each additional 20 grams	3as	
Overland Surcharge – Every 10 grams		1½as
Surface Fee	3as	3as
Surface Fee – Each additional 20 grams	1½as	1½ as

Incidentally, Commercial and Printed Papers, Books, Pattern and Sample Packets were charged at 1a for every 50 grams while Postcards were charged at ½a.

Before illustrating some rates and covers one final piece of significant information being that the Iraqi Postal Administration abolished the Overland Surcharge on 1 March 1929 where after Overland mail was charged as normal Surface mail.



The Overland letter illustrated above is dated 8 December 1928 has been franked with 4½as which according the to 1 May 1927 postal rates is made up by the Surface Fee of 3as plus 1½as for one weight class of 10 grams.



The cover shown here, which has had “Overland Mail” applied in manuscript, is dated 29 March 1930 and has been franked with 6as. If the abolishment of the Overland surcharge was applicable at the Kuwait Post Office as well then the letter should only have been paid with 3as, unless it weighted 60 grams in which case the rate is right – 3as + 2x1½as.

The cover illustrated here and sent to Malta is dated 5 October 1933. It has had “Overland” applied in manuscript and been correctly franked with 3as

The Armitage/Johnson’s book mentions the need to endorse letters using the service “Overland Mail” something that remained a requirement after the surcharge was abolished.





A cover sent to the USA on 22 June 1937 again franked with 3as.

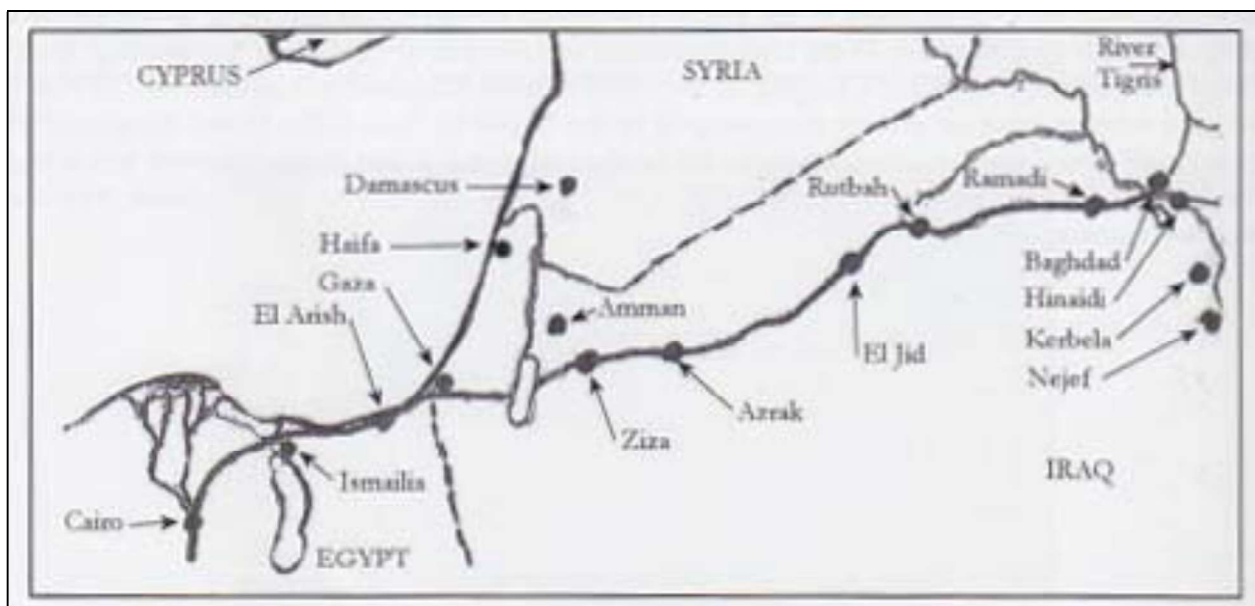
The cover has had “Overland” applied in manuscript and is additional confirmation that the surcharge was abolished at the Kuwait Post Office; something that did not happen at the Bahrain Post Office where a 2½as surcharge remained a requirement

Airmail Rates – 1922 to 1932

The final group of postal rates to be discussed in this edition are the airmail rates applicable from 1922 to 31 March 1932.

Baghdad – Cairo: The RAF Desert Airmail Service

The first airmail service to be introduced was the Desert Airmail Service also previously discussed in the Quarterly. The Armitage/Johnson book offers us very interesting information about this route on pages 30-34 along with the below map illustrating the route (page 30).



The service was opened to the public (commercial mail) on 13 October 1921 as a bi-weekly service and in 1922 foreign countries who were members of the UPU were allowed to use the service.

BAGHDAD – CAIRO	19 December 1921	12 December 1923
Air Fee per ounce	6as	
Air Fee per 20 grams		3as

The surface and registration fees applied to mail on this service were the same as all other mail.

Two covers illustrated in the Iraq book on pages 32, one dated 1 March 1922 and the other 29 March 1923, confirm both the surface rate as being 3as and the air fee as being 6as. The fact that the 6as rate is quoted per ounce whereas the 3as rate is quoted per grams also gives us an idea of when grams was introduced as the weight class of the Iraqi Postal Administration.

The only cover out of Kuwait that I have recorded traveling on the early fee of 6as an ounce is illustrated here courtesy of Khaled Abdul-Mughni. The cover is dated 30 June 1922 and has been franked with a total of 9as making up the 3as surface fee and the 6as air fee for the first ounce. It has been cancelled with Donaldson Type 1 KOWEIT. The cover was previously illustrated in Edition 30.



On 23 December 1926 the last commercial mail flight on the Baghdad – Cairo service was flown by the RAF though one more trip was made on 30 December without commercial mail.

Cairo – Baghdad – Basra – Cairo: Imperial Airways

Imperial Airways took over the air service on 1 January 1927, a route, which was extended from the old RAF service to include Basra. On 30 March 1929 the route was extended to include London and Karachi and the Armitage/Johnson book gives us the following information about the route on page 36:

“The route was from London to Paris, to Basle by air, from Basle to Genoa by train; then by air to Alexandria by Short Calcutta flying boat, with stops at Rome, Naples, Corfu, Athens and Tobruk. By air from Alexandria to Karachi by DH66 Hercules with stops at Gaza, Rutbah Wells, Baghdad, Basra, Bushire, Linga, Jask and Gwadar. In November 1929 the first section of the route was altered to an all air route from London to Paris, Cologne, Nuremburg, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Skopje, Salonika, Athens, Crete and Alexandria. Only two services were flown.”

	Letters Per 10 grams	Postcards
1 May 1927	1½as	½a
1930 Post Office Guide		
- India, Persian Gulf, Africa, Australia, Far East, Syria, Palestine, Egypta and The Soudan	1½as	½a
- Europe and America via All Air Route Baghdad to London	3as	1a
- Europe and American via Basrah – Cairo followed by the surface route	1½as	½a
17 January 1932		
- To Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Persia, Persian Gulf and Karachi	2as	1a
- To Europe and America air only	4as	2as



The cover illustrated here and dated 2 August 1928 and was sent to Dumfries in Scotland via the Basrah - Cairo airmail route. It has been franked with a total of 4½as covering the surface fee of 3as up to 20 grams and the air fee of 1½as up to 10 grams.

If you would be so kind as to go through your Kuwait covers and send me scans

or date/franking/destination details of any covers that you may have dated between 1922 and 1932

Other Airmail Routes and Services

The RAF and Imperial Airways routes were not the only airlines to offer a commercial mail service. Again the below list of alternatives is from the Armitage/Johnson book, pages 45-65, though I have omitted going in to detail about the routes (except one) since I don't have any covers to illustrate the routes with.

1. KLM: Scheduled flights connecting Amsterdam with the Dutch East Indies began in September 1928 and the stopover was at Baghdad. The first official flight service was inaugurated on 25 September 1930.
2. Deutsche Lufthansa: The route seems to have been opened around 1937 and Baghdad was a stop on the way to Kabul.
3. Air France: The book mentions that by 1932 the routes to Indo-China were well established and that by 1933 Air France had taken over most of the Middle East and Far East commercial routes with those to Indo-China always making a stop at Baghdad or Basra.
4. MISR: Opened an airmail service to Baghdad on 16 September 1936.
5. Iranian State Air Service: Opened for mail service on 15 April 1929 - mail arriving from Tehran in Baghdad would normally be transferred to Imperial Airways.

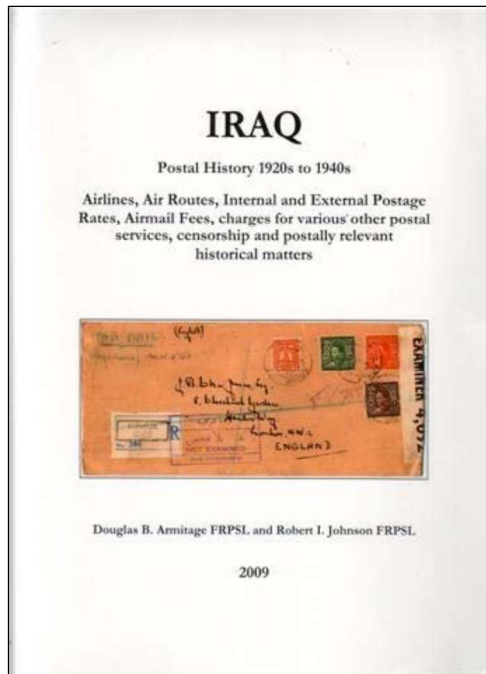
Another airline, which flew to the Middle East, was Air Union Lignes d'Orient, which extended its flying boat service between Naples and Beirut to Dasmascus and Baghdad on 1 April 1930. Air Orient incorporated the route into their new regular service linking Marseille with Saigon on 17 January 1931. The route went via Baghdad.

The fees on the route were as follows: Letters were charged at an air fee of 1½as per 10 grams. Postcards cost ½a while printed papers and packets etc were charged at 2as for every 50 grams. The charge remained the same after Air Orient took over. Surface and registration rates were as previously discussed.

The airmail cover illustrated here was sent to Austria on 11 November 1930 and went via Damascus, Beirut and Naples route confirmed by the Damas and Istanbul transit marks.

It has been franked with 7½as made up by the 3as registration fee and 3as surface fee plus 1½as for the first 10 grams.





IRAQ POSTAL HISTORY 1920s to 1940s

Airlines, Air Routes, Internal and External Postage Rates, Airmail Fees, charges for various other postal services, censorship and postally relevant historical matters by **DOUGLAS ARMITAGE** and **ROBERT JOHNSON**

The main purpose of this book is to make sense of the airmail fees charged on airmail sent from Iraq to all other countries of the world in the period 1933 to 1946. Extensive tables are set out on 178 pages of this 328-page book.

The problem that the authors identified was a total lack of information about many of the air fees and changes to them especially in the period of the Second World War.

The availability of original postal information in the English version of the many successive issues of the Iraqi Government Gazette was the clue.

Iraq was a country like Italy which continued to charge air fees in addition to surface postage long after countries such as the United Kingdom converted to combined air and surface rates. It became apparent at an early stage of writing the tables that all the other postal rates and fees, internal and external would have to be included in order that calculations of postage rates seen on covers could be accomplished.

It was also evident that to put these air fees and postal rates and fees into context a reader would need narratives which described the involvement of various airlines in providing air services to and from Iraq as air routes to the Far East, Africa, the Americas and Australia and New Zealand were developed. Inevitably references to the position in the 1920's became essential and much detail of the 1920's is in fact included both in the narrative and in the supporting tables.

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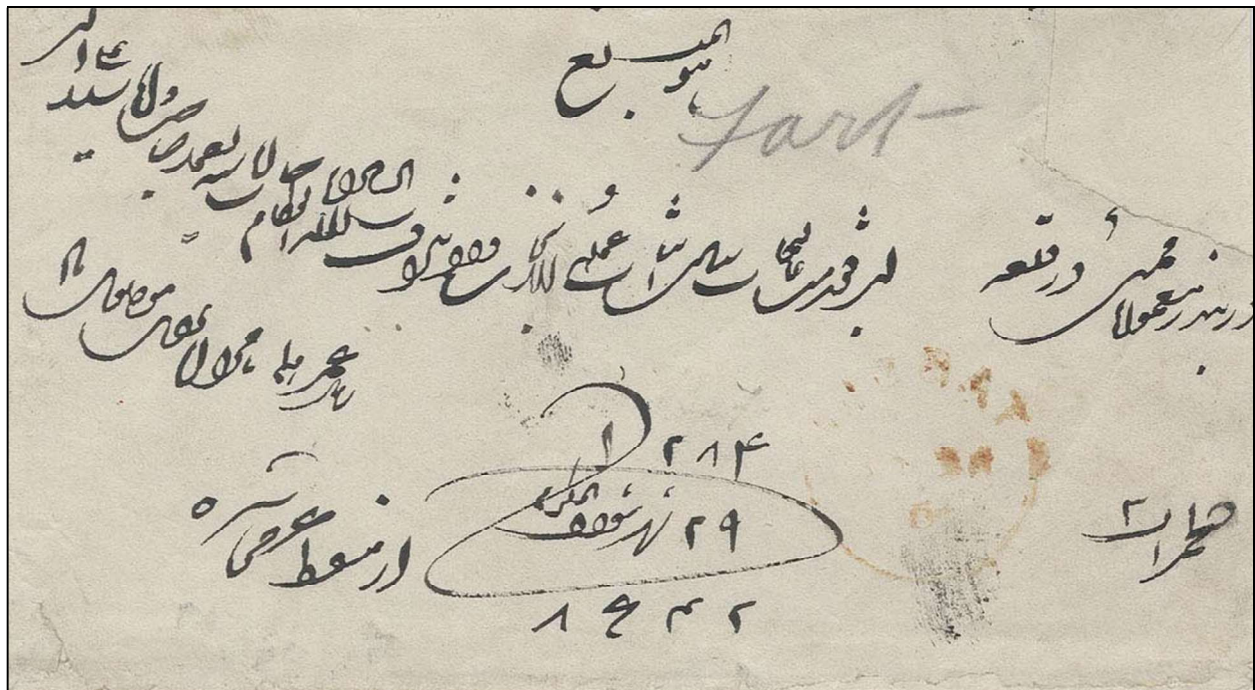
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Muscat & Oman



This one remains a bit of a mystery for a couple of reasons. The cover has had a weak Donaldson Type X applied in red being the color of ink used on unpaid mail. It was sent to Bombay and has got three receiver marks, all applied in red and all dated 21 March 1968.

As you can see the Muscat strike is quite weak and only part of the date can be read – MA can be seen

as the month while the 6 in the year is clear. The strange aspect of the cover is that the second digit in the year looks like a “7” which doesn’t match the arrival date – i.e. its probably an “8”. During the time it was common to endorse the cover with the Hijr year, which has also been done here and what creates the conflict is that the Hirj endorsed on to the cover is 1283. If you input 1 Muharram 1283 in to a Hijr/Gregorian calendar converter it gives you 16 May 1866 with error limited to 1 day as the result – presumably the wrong Hijr year was applied.

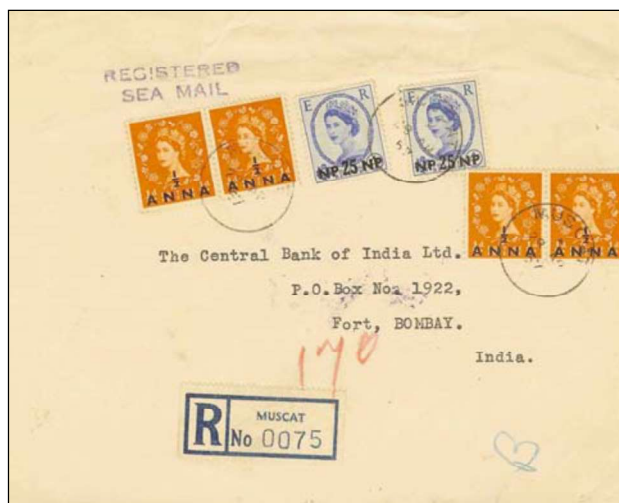
In addition to the basic Muscat info I contacted Max Smith for further clarification as to the significance of the three arrival backstamps.

“The two with R at the top (one is off the edge of the cover) are 2nd and 5th delivery of the day from the GPO; the other is ‘B. P. O. No. 5 / Dely 2’ (2nd delivery from Branch PO No. 5. There

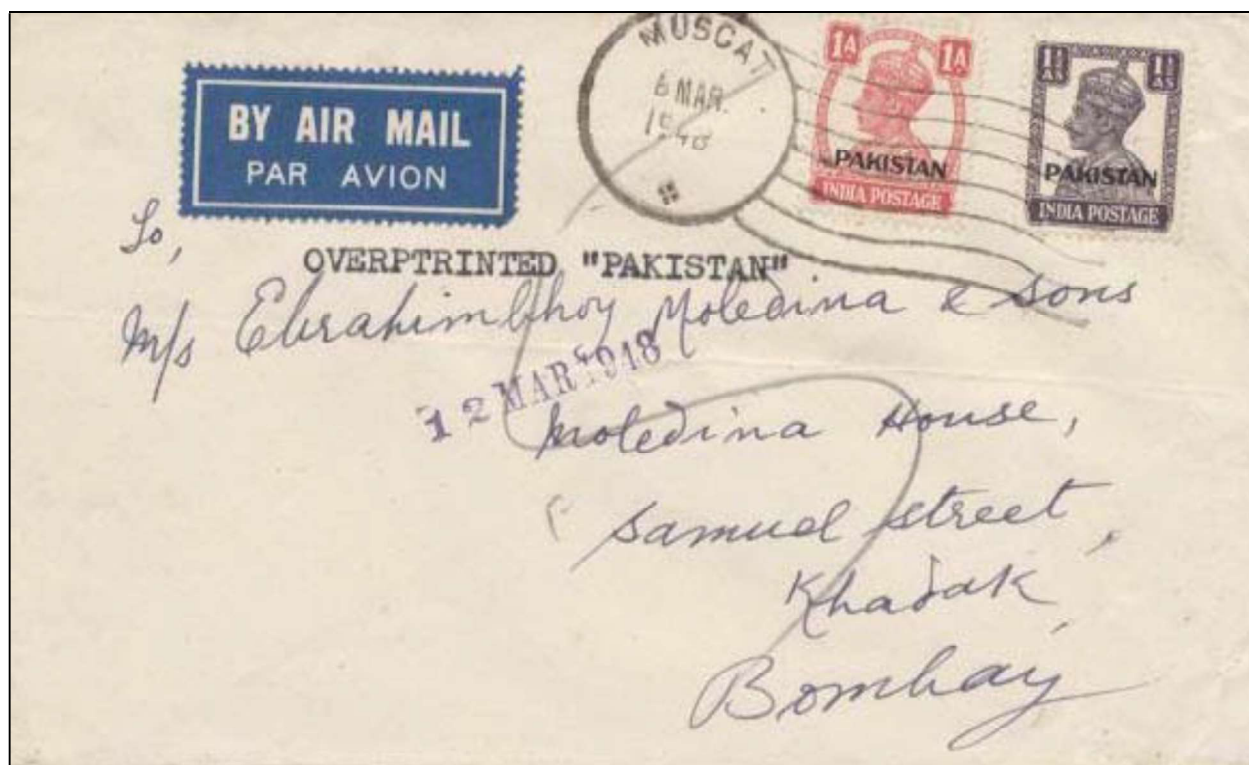
were 10 BPOs and all are scarce and the numbers are illegible in all but a few strikes and BPOs were introduced under an "urban delivery" system in 1867. Branch Post Offices had been established as 'non-delivery' offices since the 1830s, but at some time in 1866 an experiment was tried in Bombay for delivery of mail to the suburbs by dividing the town into 'Divisions'. Delivery stamps in this period are small red ovals just showing Dn. (Number) / date / Dy. (Number). At some point in 1867 – I have not found a precise date – they changed to the circular B.P.O. No. X type. I'm sure I have never seen one of these dated before 1867. As for the GPO Bombay Del 2 and 5 strikes the numbers relate to the delivery. Letters coming in from elsewhere will always be received first by the GPO and included in the general delivery. Where the address is appropriate to a Branch office, it is passed to that BPO at the same delivery. If it can't be delivered it is returned to the GPO. So I presume that here it was received at GPO in time for 2nd, passed out to BPO but could not be delivered and was passed back to the GPO for delivery at 5th. The Branch office delivery system was successful and continued at Bombay, but at Calcutta it was considered a failure and was not reintroduced for some time."

A cover dated 4 December 1934 showing the use of the 3as 1929 Airmail issue in Muscat. The cover was sent to Switzerland and has been franked with 15½as making up the air fee for 1 ounce being 3½as for the surface fee and twice the 6as air fee for ½ ounce.

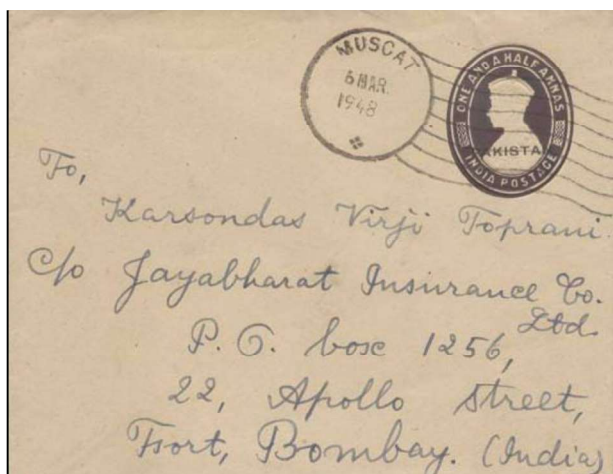




A cover dated 29 April 1957, four weeks after the currency reform, sent registered from Muscat to Bombay and mix-franked with Anna and NP values. Back in Edition 31 we went through the various British Postal rates including surface rates to India where a cover, franked with 60np was illustrated on page 19. With this cover in mind it would appear that the person that franked this cover was intentionally using up his hold Anna valued stamps. After the currency reform the $\frac{1}{2}$ a value became 3np, which would mean that this cover was franked with 62np – a 2np over franking. Prior to the currency reform the 25np value would have been 4as meaning that the cover would have been franked with 10as as opposed to the required $8\frac{1}{2}$ as



Pakistan used in Muscat on 6 March 1948 on an airmail cover sent to Bombay franked with $2\frac{1}{2}$ as made up by a $1\frac{1}{2}$ as surface fee and 1a for the first $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce air fee to India.



An Indian 1½as stationary overprinted Pakistan and used on 6 March 1948 sent by surface mail to Bombay with a 17 March 1948 arrival backstamp.

The 1985 Frankincense Tree issue

Issued on 15 December 1985 the issue consisted of two values: 100 Fils and 3 Dinars; the 3 Dinars being the highest value issued in Oman to date. According to the Oman Postal History book issued by the Government of Oman a total of 1.8 million copies of the 100 Baizas value were issued where as 200,000 copies of the 3 Rial issue were issued. An official FDC was created and issue pamphlets advertizing the issue were sent out.



The 3 Rial value was intended for parcel post and had a small 1985 in the bottom left corner indicating the year of issue. Whether or not additional printings of the 1985 stamp were made is unknown but it would seem that this did not take place given the accurate number stated in the official publication. Sometime towards 1992 it would seem that stock was running out and a new printing was ordered. Though other minor difference exist between the 1985 and 1992 3-Rial stamps the most obvious one is that the year 1985 was replaced with a 1992. No notification was issued nor was any FDC created and the exact date of release is unknown. The stamp is still on sale at Oman Post Offices today.

UAE – Abu Dhabi

You may all remember the famous Harmers sale that took place back on the 6th of May 2004 where some spectacular prices were realized on Gulf material, specifically on a couple of Qatar cover lots. The auction also included a very impressive Abu Dhabi collection; arguably the best collection of Abu Dhabi material sold at a single auction to date, including items such as 1966 and 1972 overprints in complete sheets, the Arabic 20 Fils instead of 30 Fils 1966 overprint, a number of 20 Fils inverted, 5 Fils double overprint etc. It also contained a number of very nice covers including covers with the 1971 5 Fils albino.

One lot that went fairly unnoticed was a lot of some 100 covers of correspondence, which turned out to be mail between the vendor and H.P. Wynn (or Hal Wynn), the Abu Dhabi Post Master. All the covers were addressed to a Norman Reynolds, who, when I made contact with him, confirmed that he was the vendor of the material. After some written correspondence I decided to give Norman a call, hoping to satisfy my curiosity as to how he managed to build such a collection of Abu Dhabi material – luckily I wasn't disappointed.

It turns out that Norman had developed a close pen-pal relationship with the Wynn Family in Abu Dhabi, which was instrumental in creating his Abu Dhabi collection. Naturally the next question was whether or not he still had the letters – luckily the answer was yes. A few months back, 5 to 6 years since I first discussed the letters with Norman, he called to tell me that he had found the letters, which he has now been kind enough to pass on to us.

Having skimmed through them lightly I am happy to say that they contain a variety of philatelic information. Furthermore the correspondence clearly shows that Mrs. (Dorothy) Wynn, who collected GB stamps, managed the Philatelic Bureau on behalf of her husband. Before I share the first letter with you let me just thank Norman, not only for having saved all the letters but also for being willing to pass them on to us.

Mrs. Wynn sent the following letter on the 25th of June 1972 and it discusses the 1969 Progress issue. Three stamps in all, where two values, 10 Fils and 35 Fils, were issued on the 1st of January 1969 and the 5 Fils was issued on the 17th of December 1968.



In the letter illustrated on the next page you will see that Mrs. Wynn refers to the issue date of the 5 Fils value having been moved forward due to a shortage for the 5 Fils local postage stamps – presumably referring to the 1968 Accession and the 1966 and 1967 Definitive issues. She then goes on to draw a parallel to the 1971 5 Fils on 50 Fils overprint.

Representatives of the Federal Posts are now in London to negotiate with either printers or Crown Agents for the production of a Federal definitive series. This will take several months therefore we will carry on with our own stamps for a while.

The first definitives of Abu Dhabi, April and August 1967 are no longer available, in fact very few earlier stamps are left. The enclosed photocopy of a list I keep may be useful, it shows all issues to date. Perhaps I should not have scribbled all over it, if you should like to have a further clear photocopy, please let me know. There will ~~definitively~~ definitely be no more additions to the list now. The Federal Posts will probably run a Philatelic Bureau of their own. Well, it will take a load of work off my hands, as I run the Bureau on my own, of necessity mostly in my spare time, in the evenings after office hours.

The Donaldson article 'Bars of Abu Dhabi,' was of particular interest to us both, because my husband personally had to make arrangements for this. Normally the British Post Office would not have allowed anybody to do this but there was a degree of urgency, a 'Royal Command' in fact. The work involved many hours in guiding the Bahrain printers, who had never tackled such a job before. The compositor worked through several nights, setting and re-setting the blocks until Hal was satisfied.

You may like to have the enclosed F.D.C's. I do not think there are many around. Although the 'Progress' issue is listed as 1/1/69, a shortage of 5 Fils local postage stamps made it necessary to put the Progress 5 on sale on 17/12/68. A similar situation resulted in the 5/50 OP issued 8/12/71. Also enclosed the block of four of the 60 Fils with the printers name in blue. Odd that you could not get a sheet from a dealer. The Crown Agents monthly account shows a sheet of the first 60 Fils imprint sold during May, the only sale this year.

In your P.S. you asked about complete sheets of the 5, 10, 15, 20 Fils surcharged issue. I wish I could send you them, but what I have left are only in bits and pieces. I can only think of Mr. Donaldson who may be able to help.

Use of Value Only stamps in Abu Dhabi



In the previous issue the use of Value Only stamps in Abu Dhabi was launched and here are a couple more examples.

The block of four is the 1955-1960 5r on 5/- rose-red type II overprint cancelled with Das Island (2) on 13 October 1963. The single stamp is the same stamp but cancelled with the Abu Dhabi parcel post strike in November 1963.

1971 UK Postal Strike Mail to Abu Dhabi

The following article has got images of two covers that recently turned up at auction and it is the first time that I have come across UK strike mail addressed to the Gulf. A quick Google search of the postal strike brought me to the GBPS website and an introduction to a display done by Maurice Buxton, who has been kind enough not only to let me use his introduction but also to assist with further information about the covers and the strike itself.

The main work on the topic is Clive Smith's magnum opus published in 13 parts (the first five back in the 1980s, the others more recently) which lists all the strike posts in alphabetical order and documents as much as possible about them – they should be available from Vera Trinder. In addition to this the Cinderella Stamp Club is working on an updated listing on CD.

The first full national strike in the history of the British Post Office took place from Wednesday 20th January to Sunday 7th March 1971. It took place against a background of increasing inflation and worsening industrial relations over the preceding decade, both in the Post Office and in the country in general. On 15th January the executive of the Union of Post Office Workers rejected a pay offer from the Post Office Board. An "all-out" strike was called to start at midnight on 19th/20th January.

Although local mail deliveries were possible in some areas, either where the postmen did not go on strike or as some gradually returned to work, the bulk of the country's postal services came to a complete halt.

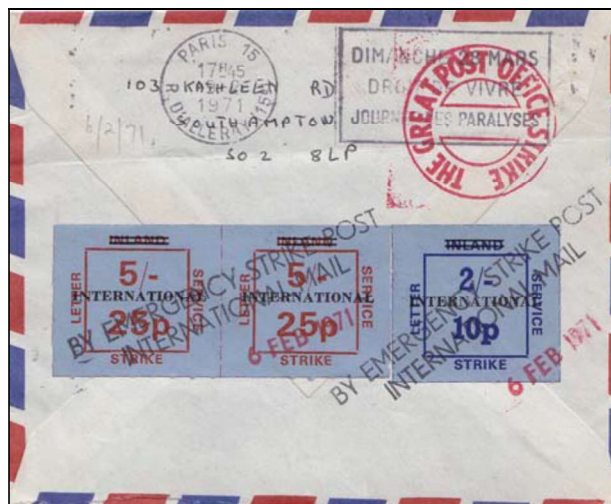
The Government announced that the Post Office's monopoly on carrying letters would be suspended for the duration of the strike. Several hundred private posts were set up throughout the country; some of these were of course "philatelic", but many operated with efficiency and transported significant quantities of mail, although normally at a much higher price than the normal first class rate. A number of these posts linked up in an "Association of Mail Services" which provided for transmission of letters from post to post across the country, and also to overseas destinations. Considerable use was also made of the existing alternatives, and of course the Armed Forces had their own postal arrangements.

The strike dragged on for seven weeks, as the Union and the Post Office were unable to agree. Eventually, faced with rapidly worsening finances, the Union Executive proposed a public enquiry as a peace plan to Employment Secretary Robert Carr. A ballot resulted in a majority for ending the strike, and postmen were told to return to work at 9am, Monday 8th March.

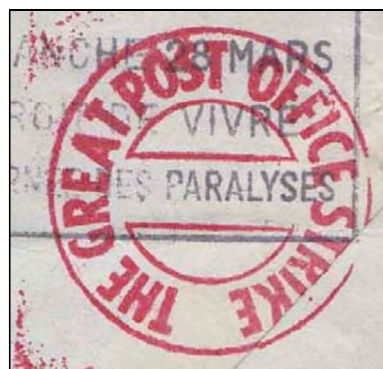
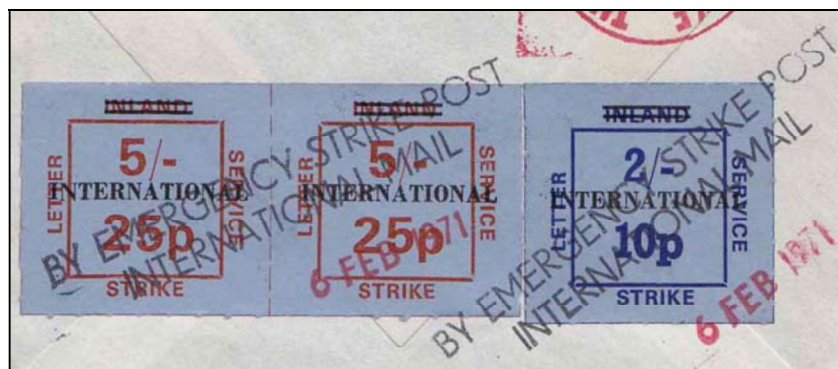
The disruption of services caused by the strike produced a wide range of interesting material. Much is rarer than a "Post Office Mauritius" -- and while it may not have the same 'philatelic pedigree', arguably it has much greater *postal* significance, as these items represent the only services available for a major country for a seven week period, longer than the Uniform 4d Post!

The two covers illustrated here were sent via a strike post imaginatively called the Emergency Strike Post, set-up by Allan Grant, a stamp dealer (Rushstamps) based in Southampton, which was a public service authorized by the Post Office.

They were quite closely linked with the "Export Letter Service", another genuine-but-too-many-stamps strike post, as Allan Grant was part of the group of stamp dealers who organized it. Nationally, they appear to have some kind of link up with the Association of Mail Services, although they weren't directly members. They also accepted mail for overseas, which was taken to either France (Calais via Ramsgate hovercraft) or Switzerland (by air) and posted in the foreign postal service, as with other strike posts. All in all they did actually provide an efficient mail service.



The first cover was sent by “Emergency Strike Post International Mail” on 6 February 1971 and has been franked with 60np. Smith’s book illustrates various adverts, with inland prices ranging from 10p Southampton local to £1 Glasgow and Edinburgh, and overseas prices presumably based on the foreign postal service costs. Airmail to the Middle East was offered at 30p per half ounce meaning that this cover, being paid with 60p, was paid for one ounce of weight.

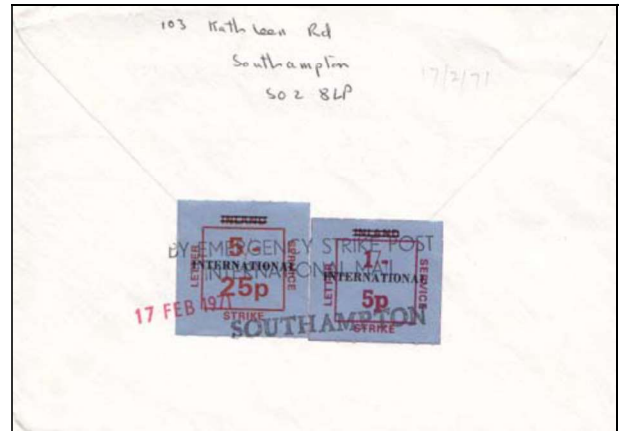


The 60p was paid up by one 10p royal blue print on azure paper and two 25p red on azure values, two of the five values issued by Allan Grant and cancelled by a “BY EMERGENCY STRIKE POST – INTERNATIONAL MAIL”. The other three values are 2½p, 5p and 15p.

The second handstamp is a “THE GREAT POST OFFICE STRIKE” applied in red. The handstamp is listed as nr. X11 in Smith’s book but without any indication of whether it was used throughout the strike or not.



Both covers were transported to France for onward transmission to Abu Dhabi the first one via Paris on 9 February while the second one was sent via Le Havre on 18 February.



The second cover has been cancelled at Southampton on 17 February 1971 and has been franked with 30np covering ½ ounce to the Middle East. It shows the use of the 5p value along with the 25p value.

Again the stamps have been cancelled by the “EMERGENCY STRIKE POST / INTERNATIONAL MAIL” handstamp and has also had “SOUTHAMPTON” handstamp applied to the stamps. The latter handstamp is listed in Smith’s book as nr. VIII without date range but mentioned that it was applied in black.

Both covers have 103, Kathleen Road – Southampton as the senders address and illustrate commercial use of the Emergency Strike Post system managed by Allan Grant, and according to Maurice Burton Abu Dhabi is an unusual destination for commercial strike mail.

Clive Smith's book (*British Private Posts 1680-1980: Volume 5, 1971 Postal Strike Posts: Posts Beginning With Letters "D" to "EM"*) gives a figure of 98,000 items carried, 42, 000 of which were purely philatelic.

UAE – Dubai

Persian Gulf Section / Bombay G.P.O.

By P.H.G. Clarke (© 2008)

The article in “Arabian Gulf States Postal History Quarterly – Edition 24 – Autumn 2007” stimulated me to visit the National Newspaper Library (an outpost of the British Library situated at Colindale in North London), to complete some research that I started a decade or more ago.

The Persian Gulf Section of the Bombay G.P.O. was formed on 15th October 1921 when the Base Postal Depot at Bombay was closed (see Annual Report of the Posts and Telegraphs of India for the Year 1921-22, page 18; I have a private copy of the report for that year, but the whole series is held in the British Library). I do not know when the section was closed, but I would speculate that it ceased operating during the early 1930s when public expenditure was cut during the global economic recession.



Two covers, both from 1924, the left cover franked with 2as, dated 15 August 1924 and with a Bombay GPO receiver datestamp also dated 15 August. The right cover has been franked with 1a and is dated 28 October 1924. The Bombay receiver datestamp is also dated 28 October 1924.

I remember viewing at Sotheby's a decade or more ago a single lot with between fifty and a hundred covers with Persian Gulf Section postmarks, but not a single cover had any definite evidence of origin. However nearly all the covers were annotated in Farsi, Arabic, or Urdu, suggesting an origin in the Gulf or in what is now Pakistan. Thus this postmark is somewhat mysterious.

(NEXT PAGE) The left cover, franked with two ½a KGV, is also dated 24 October 1924 and has a 24 October Bombay GPO receiver datestamp. The right cover has been franked with 1a and is dated 5 October 1925. The Bombay receiver datestamp is also dated 6 April 1928 – one day later.



Mail between the Indian post offices in the Persian Gulf and from them to India was mainly carried by steamers of the B.I.S.N. (British India Steam Navigation Company Limited) under mail contracts with the Secretary of State for India. From 1903 onwards, there were two services up the Gulf, firstly the Fast Mail, which called at Karachi, Muscat, Bushire, Fao, Mohammerah and Basra, and secondly the Slow (or Subsidiary) Mail, which called at the above ports plus many others such as Pasni, Guadur, Bandar Abbas, Dubai, and Bahrain. Between the world wars the Fast Mail was mainly operated by V-class steamers (Vita, Varsova, Varela, Vasna) and the Slow (or Subsidiary) Mail by the B-class steamers (Baroda, Barpetta, Bankura, Bamora, Barala, Barjora, Bandra, plus other steamers as required, such as the Chakla). The return journey from Bombay to Bombay by Fast Mail was about a fortnight, and by the Slow Mail about four weeks. Given that the mails were carried between Indian P.O.s by Indian vessels, my understanding is that such mails do not fall within the definition of Paquebot mail as adopted at the U.P.U. Congresses in 1891 and 1897. Indeed if maritime mails from the Gulf were paquebot mails, one would expect practically all mails from the Gulf to bear paquebot markings.



The above left cover, franked with 1a, is dated 22 June 1928 and with a Bombay GPO receiver datestamp also dated 12 June. The cover on the right, franked with 3as, is dated 15 August 1928, as is the receiver datestamp.

Turning to the postmarks, there are two different varieties of the basic datestamp; the first variety has an inner circle of diameter 20.5 mm and a distance between the horizontal lines of 8.9 mm,

whereas the second has an inner circle of diameter 22 mm and a distance between the horizontal lines of 9.75 mm. I did at one time think that the first variety could be divided into two sub-varieties, but am no longer convinced. There is also a registration datestamp for registered mail with REG. in the segment above the datestamp; this was used on two covers on 18th April 1929, but neither cover shows any evidence of registration. Both covers also had a BOMBAY G.P.O./DELY. datestamp of 8-A.M./19 APR. 29. The cover illustrated on page 58 of the Arabian Gulf States magazine has the same delivery datestamp, and I therefore suspect that the Persian Gulf Section datestamp is dated 18 APR. 29.



The cover on the left has been franked with 1½as and is dated 23 November 1928 (Receiver datestamps appears to be 24 November 1928) and a cover date 15 November and franked with 2as with a Bombay GPO receiver datestamp dated 16 November 1928.



Below is an appendix with the dates of the Persian Gulf Section datestamps, any information about the origin of the covers, and information derived from the shipping arrivals shown in the Times of India (now on microfilm at Colindale: shelfmark MFX16 month by month). In each case I checked the microfilm for the month before, to see whether the steamer concerned was on the Fast Mail or Slow Mail service. Although these checks doubled the amount of research time required, I was able to confirm that in nearly every case the Persian

Gulf Section datestamp corresponded with the arrival of a Slow Mail steamer on that day or the previous day. The sole exception was on 2nd April 1929, when the only steamer that arrived that day or the previous day was the Pundit from Sourabaya (East Java, Netherlands East Indies). I do not know in what country the Pundit was registered, but this cover could well be one to which

the paquebot regulations applied – indeed it is the only cover with a Persian Gulf Section datestamp that bears a paquebot mark.

Appendix. Persian Gulf Section/Bombay G.P.O. Mail from Dubai or Elsewhere.

Date of Section Postmark	Origin	Evidence of Origin	Steamer	Steamer Arrival Same or Previous Day
15 August 1924	Unknown		Bamore	15 August 1924
28 October 1924	Dubai	Merchant Printed Address	Bankura	28 October 1924
22 May 1925	Dubai	Merchant Oval Stamp	Barpeta	22 May 1925
12 February 1926	Unknown		Bankura	12 February 1926
5 March 1926	Dubai	Merchant Oval Stamp	Baroda	5 March 1926
27 May 1926	Unknown		Baroda	26 May 1926
1 December 1927	Unknown		Barpeta	1 December 1927
6 April 1928	Unknown		Bankura	5 April 1928
22 June 1928	Unknown		Chakla	22 June 1928
15 August 1928	Unknown		Barpeta	15 August 1928
19 September 1928	Dubai	Merchant Oval Stamp	Barpeta	19 September 1928
9 November 1928	Dubai	Merchant Oval Stamp	Bandra	9 November 1928
16 November 1928	Dubai	Merchant Oval Stamp	Bankura	16 November 1928
23 November 1928	Unknown		Baroda	23 November 1928
22 February 1929	Dubai	Merchant Oval Stamp	Bandra	22 February 1929
2 April 1929	Unknown			Boxed Paquebot *
18 April 1929 (REG)	Dubai	Merchant Oval Stamp	Barpeta	18 April 1929 (REG)
18 April 1929 (REG)	Unknown		Barpeta	18 April 1929 (REG)
18 April 1929	Dubai	Manuscripts	Barpeta	18 April 1929
15 November 1929	Dubai	Merchant Printed Address	Bankura	15 November 1929

* Pundit 2 Apr from Sourabaya or Bankura 4 Apr from Basra or Chakla 4 Apr from Karachi



Two more covers, the left one cancelled with the REG strike 19 April 1929 while the other cover has been cancelled with a normal strike dated 15 November 1929, the latest recorded use.

Pakistan used in Dubai

Whereas covers franked with Pakistani stamps and sent eastwards to India are fairly common this is not the case when it comes to westbound mail and even though the two covers illustrated here are of a philatelic nature they are still unusual. Both are from 30 March 1948, so second last date of Pakistan Administration, but whereas the top surface mail cover should have been franked with 3½as instead of the 4as 9ps the bottom airmail cover is actually franked with the correct airmail rate at the time for airmail to the USA which is 18as



Registration Labels the British era:

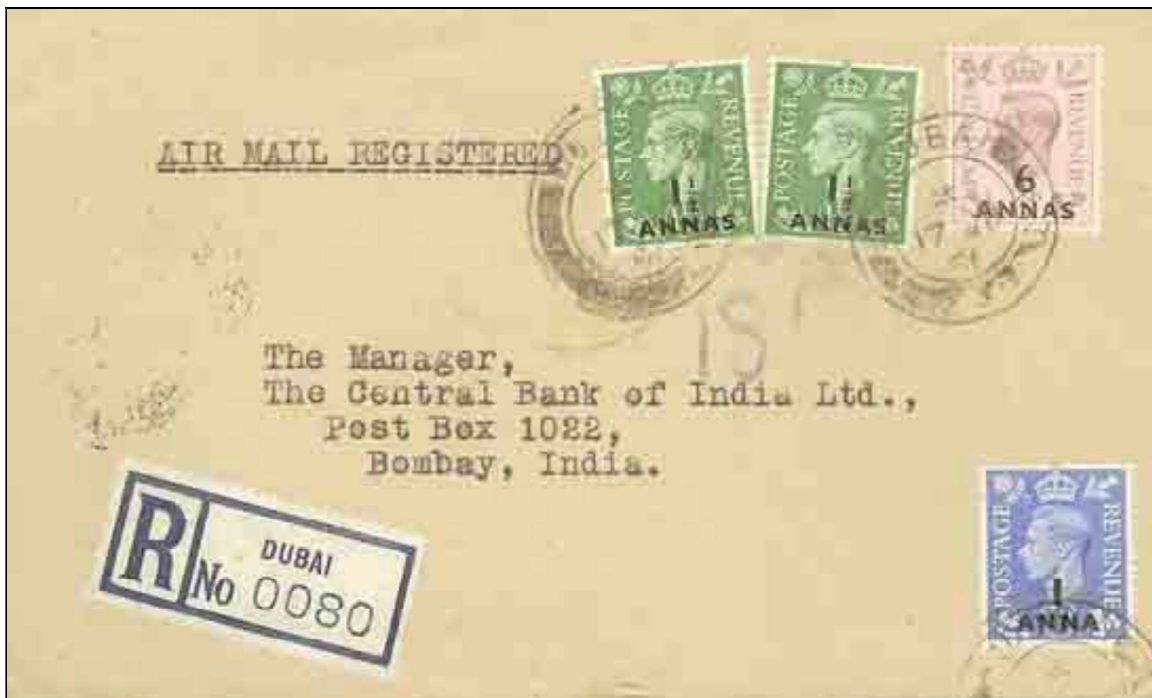
By Khalid Al Omaira

In Edition 28 of the Quarterly Abdulla Khoory presented us with an article titled “Registered Labels used in Dubai during the Indian Postal Administration”, in which he presented all the Indian registration types recorded used since 1 April 1942, when the Dubai Post Office was upgraded to a Sub-Post Office. When the Post Office was transferred to the British Postal Administration only one Indian registration type remained in use being the Dubai/Persian Gulf District handstamp (RM01) ¹.

During the British postal administration only four types of registration labels were recorded, two of which are not numbered (RL5 & RL6) and two of which are numbered (RL7 & RL8). All types, except RL5, which was replaced by RL6 in 1954, continued in use during the Independent postal administration. The two most common types found are RL5 and RL6 with the only difference between them being the size of the word “DUBAI”, which is bigger in type RL5 than RL6.



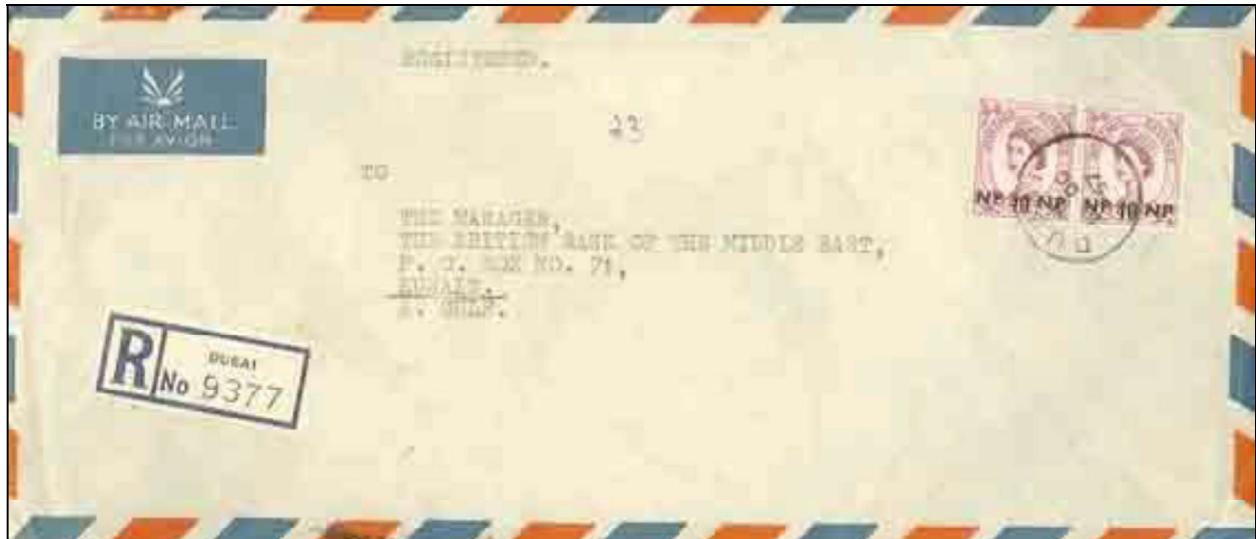
RL 5 was introduced in 1948 as the first British type registration label used at the Dubai Post Office. The introduction happened during the summer of 1948 with the earliest recorded use being 12 July 1948. The latest recorded use is 23 March 1954.



¹ For more information about this type see: Registered Labels used in Dubai during the Indian Postal Administration, By Abdulla Khoory, Arabian Gulf States Postal History & Stamps Quarterly, Edition 28, Autumn 2008, p46.

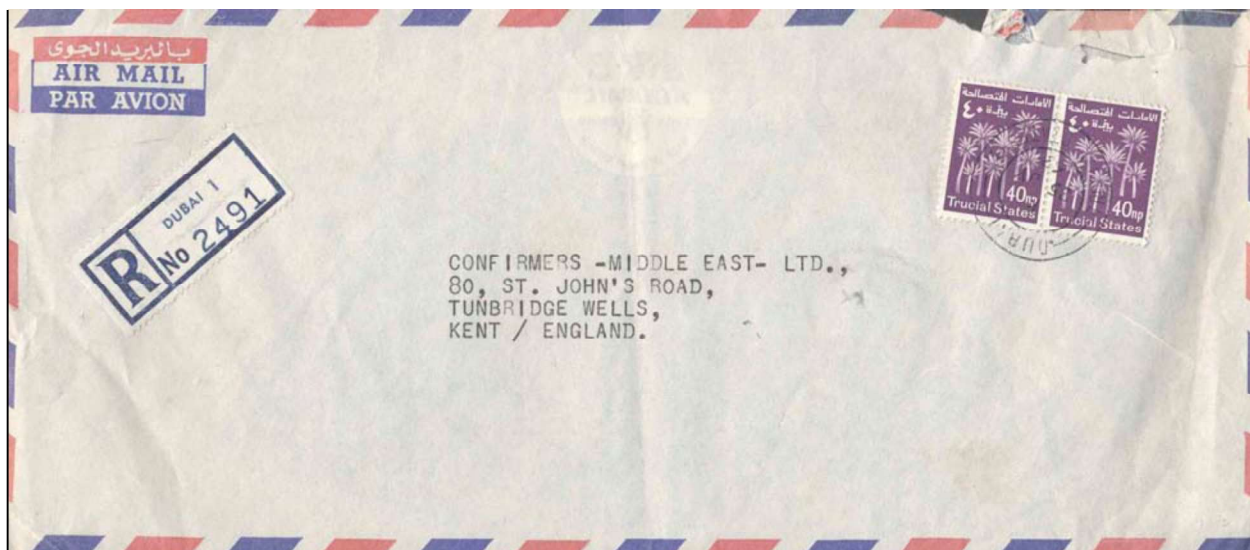


RL 6 was the second type of registration label to be introduced and replaced RL5 in 1954. The earliest known use is 30 (July?²) 1954 while the latest recorded use is in June 1964.



During the period when the Trucial States stamps were in use two numbered British registration labels were introduced at the post office. RL7 and RL7a have been recorded used on mail sent from British Bank of the Middle East during this period. Both RL7 and RL7a were printed as “DUBAI 1” but the “1” was blackened out on the RL7a label. The earliest recorded use of RL7 and RL 7a is on 20 April 1961 while the latest recorded use is on 25 October 1971.

² The month is not clear.



RL8 (DUBAI 2) was the final of the British type registration labels to be introduced during the British Period. I have seen only one label of this type³ used during the British period maybe because it was assigned for parcel mail only. The earliest known use is 13 April 1963 while the latest is 7 November 1964.

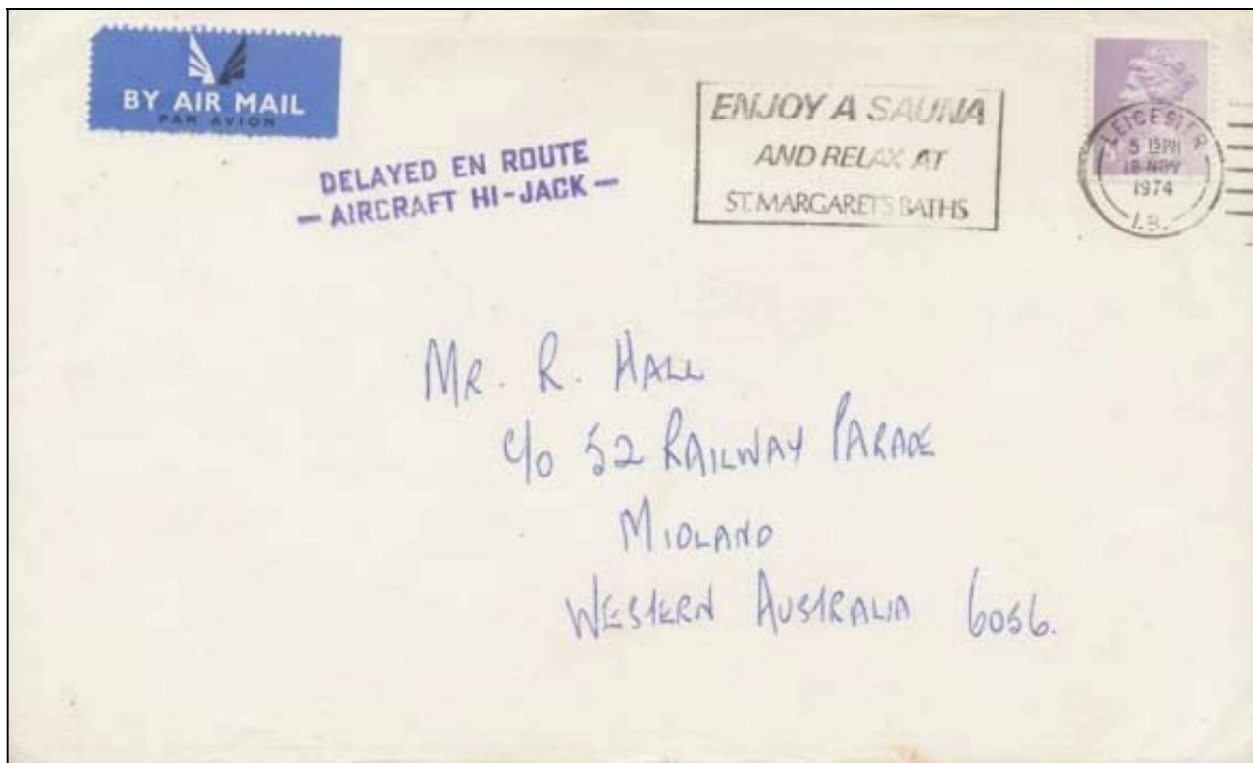


³ Arabian Gulf States Postal History Quarterly, No. 5, Autumn 2001, p19.

Mail from the 1974 Dubai Hijacking

The following article about the 1974 Dubai hijacking has been sourced from Jelle Hierminga's specialized VC10 website: <http://www.vc10.net/History/Hijackings.html> who in return based most of his article on the obituary of Captain Jim Futcher published by the Telegraph (see link <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/2055787/Captain-Jim-Futcher.html>).

On the evening of 21 November 1974 captain Jim Futcher and his crew were at Dubai Airport awaiting the inbound flight from London to continue the BA870 schedule to the Far East. During the refueling stop four men disguised as airport workers left the passenger lounge and ran towards the aircraft firing guns. A stewardess standing near the rear steps was hit but fortunately survived. Once onboard they realized that the captain was not there and they demanded that he should get to the airplane or they would start shooting passengers.



As illustrated here on a cover sent from the UK to Australia mail onboard the hijacked flight had a "DELAYED EN ROUTE – AIRCRAFT HI-JACK – handstamp applied to them. This cover is courtesy of Gary Watson, Prestige Philately

Captain Futcher did not hesitate and made his way to the aircraft despite the airport's security officer urging him to stay out of sight. As he entered the aircraft he was met by a terrorist holding a gun to the head of a young New Zealander who greeted him with "Thanks for coming aboard Skipper". The aircraft took off with 27 passengers, 8 airport workers who had been cleaning the interior and 10 crew members.

As the authorities had closed off the airport at Beirut where the hijackers wanted to go to, the

VC10 refueled at Tripoli before landing at Tunis where it was surrounded by troops. The hijackers decided to stick to their demand for the release of 7 Palestinians held in Cairo and Holland. They set a deadline 24 hours away and promised to execute a passenger for every two hours past that time. When no progress was visible after 24 hours they murdered a German banker and dropped his body to the ground from the aft passenger door.

Negotiations resulted in the Cairo-held hostages being brought to the plane in exchange for 7 hostages. When the other two prisoners from Holland arrived the remaining hostages were also released, leaving captain Fitcher, his co-pilot and flight engineer on board. Meanwhile the hijackers had been informed that their action had been condemned from all sides and their request for asylum in Tunis was also denied. Captain Fitcher did his best to reason with them amidst their statements that they were willing to die for their cause. Time passed and deadlines went but the crew was still held inside with various explosives set around the cockpit. After an ordeal totaling 84 hours a gunman came to the cockpit but instead of the message the crew was dreading he informed them that they had decided to surrender.



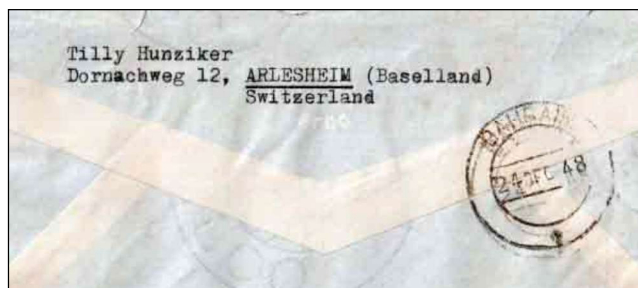
A second cover also sent from the UK to Australia illustrating the use of the handstamp courtesy of Graham Temple.

Captain Fitcher was extensively recognized for his heroism in this case and awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal. He passed away in 2008, aged 86.

UAE & Trucial States

Petroleum Development Trucial Coast (PDTC) began the search for oil in the UAE in Dubai back in May 1937 when it signed its first concession with the then ruler of Dubai, Shaikh Said bin Maktoum. The second Trucial State to sign was Sharjah in September 1937 followed by Abu Dhabi and Shaikh Shakbut in 1939.

The remaining four Trucial States didn't sign until after WWII when Ras al Khaimah and Umm al Qiwain signed in 1945, Ajman in 1951 and Fujairah in 1953.



The letter illustrated here is the first time that correspondence addressed to the Petroleum Concessions (Trucial Coast) in Bahrain has surfaced indication that the company, initially, was based in Bahrain. In addition to this it is also the earliest correspondence to the PDTC that has been recorded.

The letter was sent from Switzerland on 17 December 1948 and addressed to Paul Hunziker, Seismic Party No. 3. It has a Bahrain arrival backstamp dated 24 December 1948.

It lead me to contact Khalid Omaira to see if he had any documentation that may tell us where Seismic Party No. 3 were operating back in 1948-49. Reliable as always Khalid dug out the document illustrated on the next page, which tells us the Seismic Party No. 3 started operations in Umm al Qiwain on 30 November 1948 and that they were expected to continue until May 1949.

Telegram: PETCONCESS, BAHREIN

Code: BENTLEY'S SECOND PHRASE

PETROLEUM DEVELOPMENT (Trucial Coast) LIMITED

BAHREIN.

PERSIAN GULF.

TSD.4/6622

CONFIDENTIAL

29th November, 1948.

H.P.M.'s Political Agent,
Bahrain.

Dear Sir,

SEISMIC SURVEY - TRUCIAL COAST

Seismic Party No.3 will be arriving by Company LCT 'Jesoura' at Umm al Qrwain on Monday 30th November 1948.

Area. The programme calls for the survey of the area south of Jabal Ali, and the exact extent and direction will depend on the results obtained.

Personnel. The Party will consist of 11 British and American staff and the usual complement of local labour.

Period of Survey. The survey will commence immediately all equipment is received and will continue until May 1949.

Base. Sharjah house will be base headquarters.

A camp is in course of completion, approximately six miles S.W. of Jabal Ali. It is quite probable that this site will not be changed this season.

Communications. Two-way radio sets will be used as follows:

1. Sharjah house
2. Main camp
3. Field cars

Explosive Store. A store has been built and is situated 3 miles south of the village of Um Sgaim and 1000 dhara' east of the main Dubai - Abu Dhabi track. It is divided into two magazines with a separate Cap Magazine.

...

Confidential.
BAHRAIN RECEIPT.
No. 12 Date 30.11.48.



The illustrated UAE franking label was put on sale on 15 September 2001. However, it only lasted a few hours and was then closed down, the reason being that the machine malfunctioned.

In all, three machines were set-up and activated on the day in the following post offices: Jumeirah, Karama (or Dubai Central) and Deira.

The malfunction that led to the shut-down of the service was due to the machines returning the wrong amount of change to the users – basically you would put in your 10 Dirhams, get your label and then you would get more than 10 Dirhams in change (an amount of 95 Dirhams has been mentioned).

Word about the malfunction quickly spread, mainly amongst overseas workers, and it was not until an honest individual made a clerk at the post office aware of the problem that the machines were shut down.

We have not been able to get any confirmation as to exactly how many labels were sold before the shutdown but figure mentioned by different sources is 143. It has been reported that a German philatelist bought a number of these labels at the Jumeirah Post Office some of which were applied to philatelic covers sent to his address in Germany and others apparently sent locally to his address in Dubai though I have not been able to obtain a scan of such a local cover. A number of labels were either left unused or cancelled. Though unconfirmed the number of covers rumoured to exist is approximately 70. What we don't know is what happened to the labels that were purchased by the people taking advantage of the malfunction in order to make a bit of cash for themselves. Presuming that it is unlikely that they would let the labels go to waste and subsequently use them on letters sent home we may still, one day, come across genuine commercial use of the labels.

The images of the labels shown here are courtesy of Gaertner Auction while the image of the machine is courtesy of Khalid Omaira.

Links, Contacts and Credits

GOVERNMENT PHILATELIC OFFICES

Emirates Stamp Club
Emirates Post
P.O. Box 99999
Dubai
U.A.E.
+973 4 2031421
Email: philatelic@emiratespost.ae
Website: www.emiratespost.co.ae

Director General of Posts
Philatelic Department
PO Box 3338
P.C 112
Ruwi
Muscat
Sultanate of Oman
Email: pttphil@omantel.net.om
Website: www.comm.gov.om

Qatar Philatelic Bureau
+974 4464309
Email: philatelic@qatarposts.com
Website: www.qpost.com.qa

Bahrain Philatelic Bureau
Postal Directorate
PO Box 1212
Manama
Bahrain
Email: stamp@bahrain.gov.bh

Kuwait Philatelic Section
Post Office Department
PO Box 888
Safat 13309
Kuwait

INDEPENDENT PHILATELIC ASSOCIATIONS

Emirates Philatelic Association
P.O. Box. 33333
Dubai, UAE
Telephone number: 00971 4 353 8383
Website: www.epa.ae

Bahrain Philatelic Society
Email: bahrainps@yahoo.com
Website: www.geocities.com/bahrainps

Yahoo Group: arabiangulfphilately

Group home page: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/arabiangulfphilately>

Arabian Gulf Philately is a yahoo group for people interested in the postal history and stamps of Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, Muscat and the UAE - Dubai, Abu Dhabi and the Trucial States.

The group is meant as a forum for exchanging information, asking and answering questions. It is neither a forum for buying and selling nor marketing and advertising - so a zero advertising policy. Amongst the many tasks planned for the group is setting up libraries and uploading documents about forgeries from Dubai, Abu Dhabi and other areas of the Gulf. This is done in order to safeguard and protect new collectors and requires input from the more seasoned of you. The information sent in to the group and the discussions that take place about material are not subject to pre-approval – as such there is no moderator for the group unless the group rules are broken.

Should you be interested in joining the group you can either do so via the above link or you can send me an email to one of the following addresses and I will send out an invitation.

arabiangulfphilately@gmail.com

kameltom2004@yahoo.com

The current membership stands at 17 with 16 photo albums and 3 PDF files uploaded in the group Library.

WEBSITES RELATED TO GULF POSTAL HISTORY

www.bahrain-stamps.com
www.kuwait-stamps.com

www.oman-stamps.com
www.dubai-stamps.com

www.abu-dhabi-stamps.com
www.qatar-stamps.com

6 interactive website containing more than 10.000 images of stamps, covers, philatelic items, cancellation marks, registration labels, postage due hand stamps, aerogramme and other postal markings. Without a doubt the biggest compilation of philatelic material related to the Gulf on the Internet today. These website are under constant development and all contributions are accepted in all forms: comments, image contributions, theories, photocopies, CD-ROMs of exhibitions and collections etc.

<http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/arabgulfandyemenstampgroup>

A yahoo group created in 1999 with 899 member (As of March 2006) – a forum that focuses on anything that has to do with Gulf postal history but the group also includes Yemen and occasionally other regional post offices.

<http://www.gbos.org.uk/index.php/Home> - Great Britain Overprint Society

The GB Overprints Society (GBOS) helps members and collectors to explore the many ways and reasons why British stamps and other postal material have been overprinted, whether it is for use outside the UK or for special functions within the UK. This opens up a wide variety of avenues, which will interest not only GB collectors who want to find out other uses of their favorite stamps, but also collectors of particular countries or themes.

<http://www.indiastudycircle.org> - India Study Circle

This is the website for anyone interested in Indian Stamps, Postal Stationery, Indian States Stamps, Revenue Stamps and all areas of Indian Philately. Membership of The India Study Circle is a great way to learn more about all aspects of Indian Philately. It is also an excellent way to buy stamps, covers and all sorts of Philatelic material from other members, and to sell your own surplus material.

<http://www.postalcensorship.com> - censored and military postal history

Started in 1996 the postal censorship website was intended to concentrate on the story of Postal Censorship in Ireland during World War II, 1939-1945, known as 'The Emergency'. The site now hosts an array of Civil Censorship and Military Mail information mostly related to World War II but adding material from other periods as collectors provide covers to show and as other information comes to hand.

<http://www.wreckandcrash.org>

The Wreck & Crash Mail Society was formed in the latter part of 1994, and is devoted to the collecting and study of all aspects of delayed and/or damaged mail and interrupted mail services. Currently the Society is composed of four study groups, namely: the Air Crash Study Group, The Railroad Wreck Study Group, the Ship Wreck Study Group, and the Suspended Mail/Conflicts Study Group.

The Society publishes a quarterly journal "La Catastrophe", which contains articles on all aspects of wreck and crash mail, as well as news on new cover discoveries, auction realizations on wreck and crash mail, and questions from members who are seeking information on their crash and wreck covers and the stories behind them.

<http://friends.peoria.lib.il.us/community/howardcourtney/Catalog1.html>

Howard Courtney's fabulous website illustrating his knowledge about Dubai's Independent Postal Administration.

Many more pages will be added to this list once I define the exact web address that should be presented here with the web masters.

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If you send a check to my father-in-law please attach a little note so that he can forward me a list of what payments he gets.

BACK ISSUES

Back issues are available from Edition 20 and can be obtained by contacting Thomas Johansen at arbiangulfphilately@gmail.com

Any other distribution of Editions 20 and onwards of the Quarterly is unauthorized.

Edition 1 to 19 can be purchased on www.lulu.com