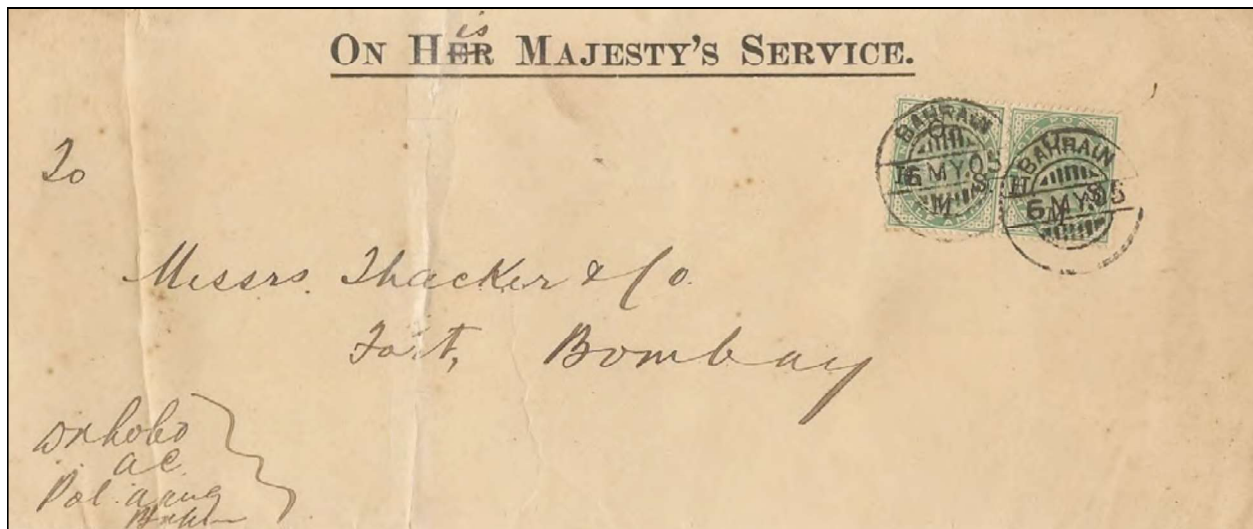


ARABIAN GULF STATES

POSTAL HISTORY & STAMPS

QUARTERLY



6 May 1905: An “On Her Majesty’s Service” cover with a Government of Bombay embossed seal on the back sent from Bahrain to Bombay where it arrived on 13 May. Franked with two copies of the 1901 QV ½a O.H.M.S. value (SG O39) it is the only recorded use of QV O.H.M.S. overprinted stamps on a cover originating from Bahrain.

Edition 43 – Winter 2012

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Welcome to Edition 43 of the Quarterly

Dear Arabian Gulf Philatelists,

Edition 43 is the fourth and last of the 2012 issues being the third Quarterly that you have received over the past 3 months or so. I hope that you have not been over-burdened with reading material and that the content of the 2012 Quarterlies has been of use to you.

Over the past two months I have been following up with almost all of you with regards to your interest in continuing to subscribe and I greatly appreciate how many of you have signed up – in spite of the delay you have been faced with during 2011 and 2012. Some of you have already paid 2013 subscriptions in advance – thank you. For those of you who haven't signed up for 2013 you can do so now with all the subscription details found on the last page.

Edition 43 contains three main topics:

- A presentation of internal Indian airmail rates covering mail from the Gulf to India
- A reproduction of a 1978 article written by Bruce Conde about the first Sharjah definitive issue – this time illustrated with color images
- A lengthy introduction about the preparations that launched Dubai's Independent Period.

Going forward in 2013 with Editions 44 to 47 I kindly ask you to send me as much material as possible or alternatively send me suggestions as to what topics that need to be researched.

Enjoy 2013
Thomas

Airmail Rates from the Gulf to India – 1932 to 1948

The following presentation of airmail rates to India is valid for mail that was sent from Bahrain, Dubai and Muscat between 5 October 1932 and 31 March 1948 and mail that was sent from Kuwait to India between 24 May 1941 and 31 March 1948. The study is based on Jeff Brown's "Indian Airmails".

On 5 October 1932 the first flight carrying airmail took off Bahrain beginning a service that would remain for the duration of the Indian Period and onwards for that matter. With Bahrain being an Indian administered post office mail sent from Bahrain to India was charged as per the internal Indian air and surface rates. As of 5 October 1932 the following rates were in use:

Ordinary Postage:	Up to 2½ tolas	1¼as
	Each additional 2½ tolas	1¼as
Air Fee:	Bahrain – Karachi	2a
(Rates per one tola)	Bahrain – Guadur	2as
	Bahrain – Bombay	4as
	Bahrain – Delhi	4as
	Bahrain – Madras	4as
Post Cards:	Ordinary Postage	¾a
(Plus air fee for letters)		
Printed Matter:	Ordinary Postage	1½as (per 5 tolas)
(Plus air fee for letters)		

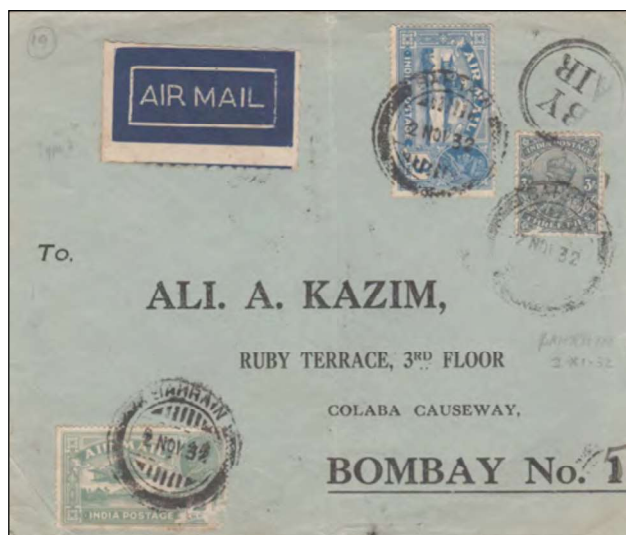


The First Flight Covers

The cover shown here is a somewhat commercial looking first flight cover that has had "By first Bahrain – Karachi Air Service" applied in manuscript to the front of the cover.

It has been franked with 3¼as covering the air fee of 2as to Karachi plus the surface fee of 1¼as.

Several different varieties of illustrated First Flight Covers exist along with a multiple destinations and various sectors of the flight.

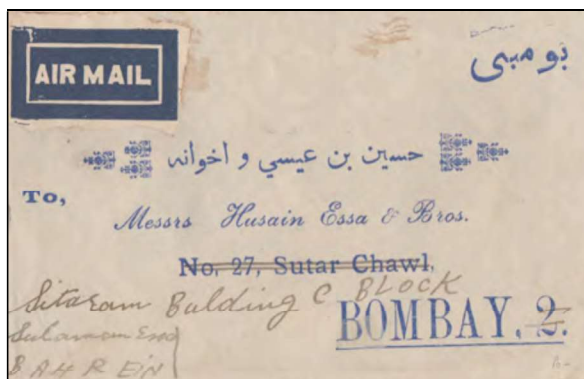


As you will have noticed there was initially a two-tier air fee system applied to mail from Bahrain based on the length of the journey.

The two covers shown here were both sent to Bombay – the first on 2 November 1932 while the second was sent on 30 November 1932.

In both cases they have been paid with 5s3ps making up the surface fee of 1s3ps plus the 4s air fee for one tola to Bombay.

The below cover has a Bombay arrival stamp dated 5 December 1932.



7 July 1933 – Changes to the Air Fees

The first change in rates took place on 7 July 1933 when the 2as and 4as air fees were united to just one air fee of 2as per tola regardless of destination within India. All other rates remained unchanged.





Ordinary Postage:	2 x 1¼as	2½as
Air Fee (5 tolas):	5 x 2as	10as
Registration Fee:		3as
Total Postage:		15½as

The cover shown at the bottom of the previous page (front shown here) was sent registered to Karachi on 26 July 1933

arriving there on 28 July. It has been franked with a total of 15½as covering the airmail rate of up to 5 tolas.

April 1935 – Changes to the Surface and Air Fees

The next change in rates took place in April 1935 when the first tola of the air fee was broken down into ½ tolas allowing for the introduction of a ½ tola air fee priced at 1a. The surface fee structure was also changed with the introduction of a 1as surface for ½ tola matching the ½ tola air fee allowing for a ½ tola letter to be priced at 2as as opposed to 3¼as prior to the changes.

Other changes were also implemented with the new rates listed below:

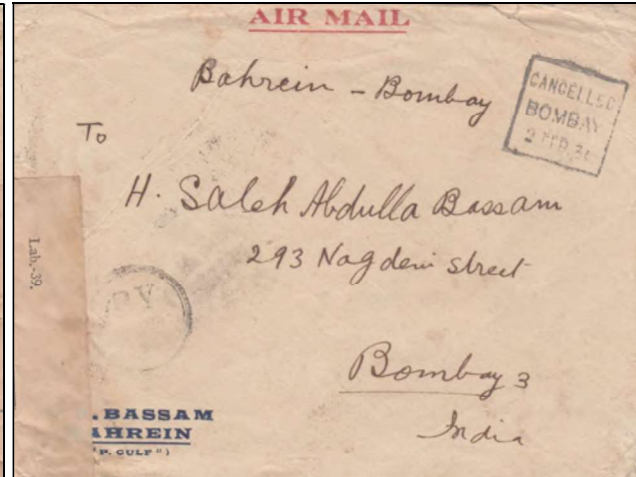
Ordinary Postage:	Up to ½ tola	1a
	Between ½ and 2½ tolas	1¼as
	Each additional 2½ tolas	1¼as
Air Fee:	Up to ½ tola	1a
	Between ½ and 1 tola	2as
	Each additional 1 tola	2as
Post Cards:	Ordinary (¾a) + air fee (1a)	1¾as
Printed Matter:	Ordinary Postage (Plus air fee for letters)	½as (per 5 tolas)



The cover shown here is dated 14 February 1937 and illustrates the use of the new 2as rate.

The cover at the top of the next page is a 3-tola cover dated 31 January 1936 – heavier covers to India are oddly enough difficult to find,

Surface fee:	First 2½ tolas	1¼as
Surface fee:	Additional 2½ tolas	1¼as
Air fee:	3 tolas of 2as	6as
Total postage:		8½as



The 1a stationery has been up-rated by 1a in order to cover the airmail rate for ½ tola.

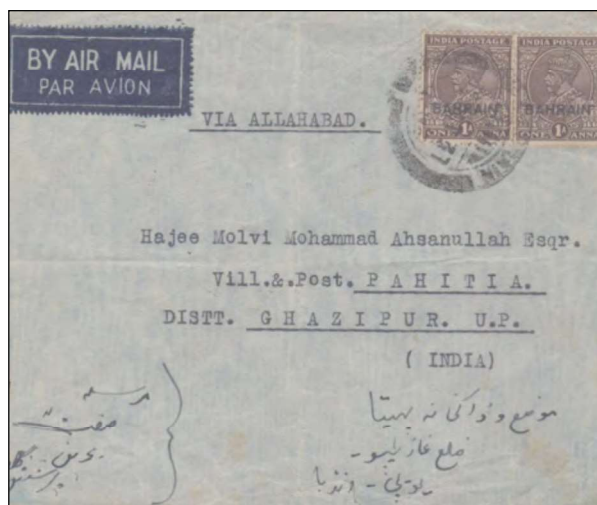
It was sent from Bahrain to Calcutta on 5 April 1937.

September 1937 – Changes to the Surface and Air Fees

The next change in rates was mentioned in the September 1937 Postal Guide and focuses on the structure of the surface fee. The 2½-tola weight structure was substituted by a 1-tola weight structure.

Other changes were also implemented, including changes to the air fee, with the new rates listed below:

Ordinary Postage:	Up to 1 tola	1a
	Each additional tola	½a
Air Fee:	Up to ½ tola	1a
	Between ½ and 1 tola	2as
	Each additional 1 tola	2as
Post Cards:	Ordinary (¾a) + air fee (¾a)	1½as
Printed Matter:	Up to 5 tolas	¾a
	Each additional 5 tolas	½a
	(Plus air fee as per letters)	

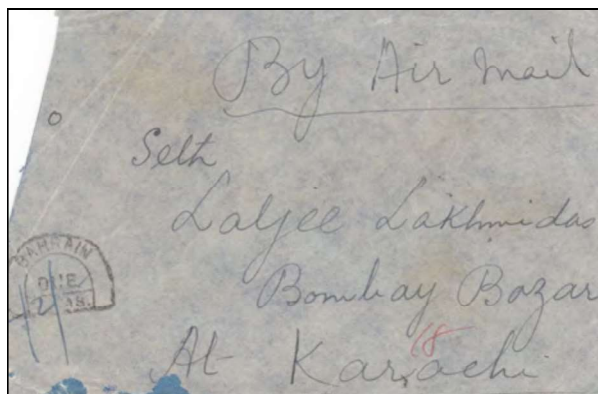


The letter shown on the left illustrates the continued use of the standard 2as ½-tola airmail rate. This is no different than the previous rate structure and the vast majority of Indian Inland mail from the Gulf is franked with 2as.

The cover was sent from Bahrain to India on 18 October 1937 and arrived in Ghazipur five days later.

The below cover was sent from Bahrain on 29 September 1937. The sender has franked the letter with 2as covering the airmail rate for a ½ tola. As the cover has received postage due at

Bahrain it must have weighed between ½ and 1 tola resulting in an underpayment of 1a and a correct postage due charge of 2as as applied in manuscript by the postal clerk.



February 1938 – Changes to the Air Fee

February 1938 saw a simplification of the air fee structure from a tiered tola structure to a constant air fee per tola.

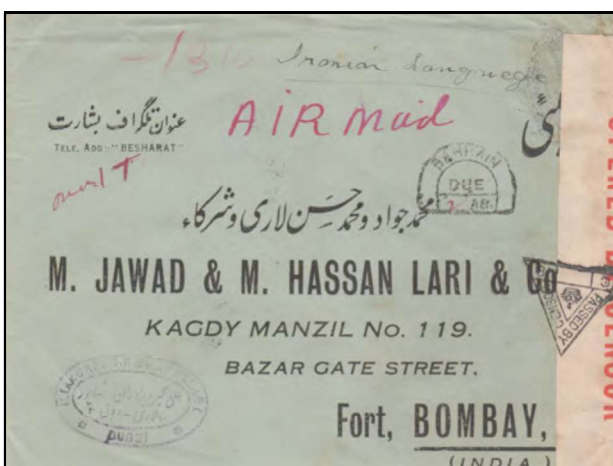
Other changes were also implemented with the new rates listed below:

Ordinary Postage:	Up to 1 tola	1a
	Each additional tola	½a
Air Fee:	Per 1 tola	1a
Post Cards:	Ordinary (¾a) + air fee (½a)	1¼as
Printed Matter:	Up to 2½ tolas	½a
	Each additional 2½ tolas	¼a
	(Plus air fee as per letters)	



The cover on the left, dated 12 September 1938, is a standard 2as cover but with the new air fee structure in place the 2as rate now covers up to 1 tola.

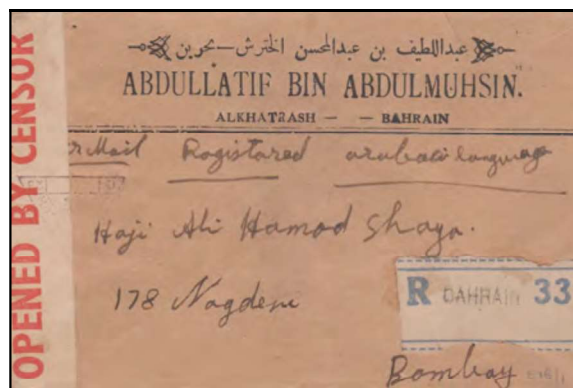
The below cover, with sender's address being Dubai, was sent from Bahrain on 13 October 1940. It has been franked with 2½as being an underpayment of 1as since the cover weighed up to 2 tola. The correct rate off 3½as comprises of surface 1½as + air 2as. The postal clerk at Bahrain correctly applied postage due at 2as.



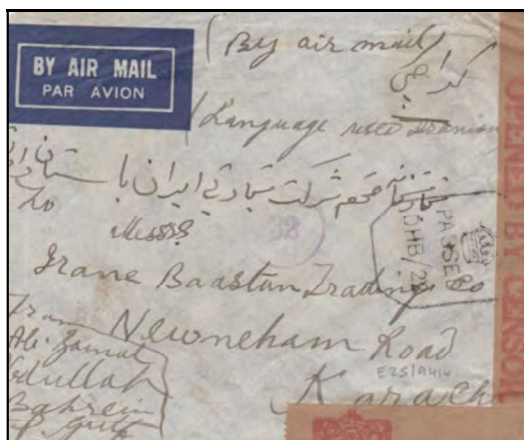
September 1941 – Changes to the Surface Fee

Surface fees were hiked in September 1941 while all other rates remained unchanged.

Ordinary Postage:	Up to 1 tola	1¼as
	Each additional tola	½a
Air Fee:	Per 1 tola	1a
Post Cards:	Ordinary (¾a) + air fee (½a)	1¼as
Printed Matter:	Up to 2½ tolas	½a
	Each additional 2½ tolas	¼a
	(Plus air fee as per letters)	



The two covers shown here are both single weight covers illustrating the $\frac{1}{4}a$ increase in the surface rate. The top cover was sent from Bahrain on 7 September 1941 and paid at $5\frac{1}{4}as$ it includes the $3as$ registration fee. The bottom cover was sent from Bahrain on 23 March 1942 and has been paid at $2\frac{1}{4}as$, which, as will be explained shortly, is late use of the $1\frac{1}{4}as$ surface fee.



September 1943 – Changes to the Surface Fee

The change in the 1 tola surface fee from $1\frac{1}{4}as$ to $1\frac{1}{2}as$ was first mentioned in the September 1943 Postal Guide, however, the change took place a few months earlier than that with a cover paid with $2\frac{1}{4}as$ dated 4 April 1942 having been charged postage due of $\frac{1}{2}a$ – leaving gap from 24 March to 3 April. Other changes were also implemented with the new rates listed below:

Ordinary Postage:	Up to 1 tola	$1\frac{1}{2}as$
	Each additional tola	$1a$
Air Fee:	Per 1 tola	$1a$
Post Cards:	Ordinary ($\frac{3}{4}a$) + air fee ($\frac{1}{2}a$)	$1\frac{1}{4}as$
Printed Matter:	Up to 5 tolas	$\frac{3}{4}a$
	Each additional $2\frac{1}{2}$ tolas	$\frac{1}{4}a$
	(Plus air fee as per letters)	

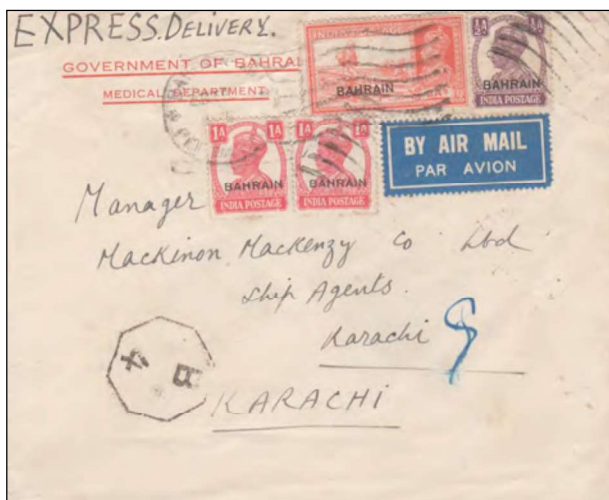


The above cover was sent from Bahrain on 12 April 1942 and has been franked with 2¼as being an underpayment of ¼a as the surface rate had already increased to 1½as. The postal clerk has correctly applied ½a in postage due by adding 0-0-6 in manuscript under the postage due cachet.

September 1946 – Changes to the Postcard Fee

In September 1946 the surface part of the postcard fee was lowered from ¾a to ½a – no other changes were made.

Ordinary Postage:	Up to 1 tola	1½as
	Each additional tola	1a
Air Fee:	Per 1 tola	1a
Post Cards:	Ordinary (½a) + air fee (½a)	1as
Printed Matter:	Up to 5 tolas	¾a
	Each additional 2½ tolas	¼a
	(Plus air fee as per letters)	



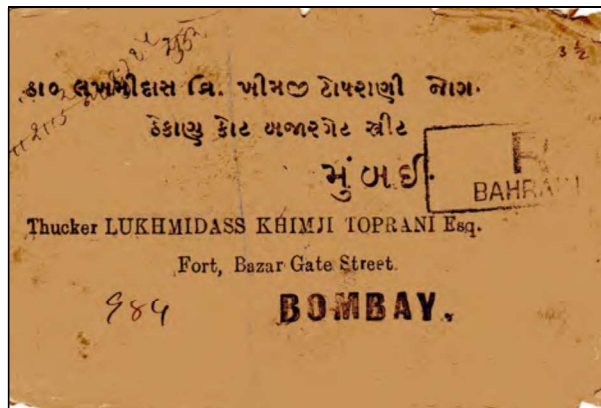
Only the fee for postcards was lowered when the final rates including the Persian Gulf were listed in the September 1946 Postal Guide.

However, without a postcard to illustrate an Express Delivery cover dated 22 February 1945 is illustrated instead.

The cover has been paid with 4½as making up the 2½as airmail rate plus the 2as express deliver fee, which was introduced in 1930 but is rarely found on pre-WWII mail.

Bahrain

Miscellaneous covers from the Indian Period



The above cover was sent from Bahrain on 18 July 1893 and is an example of early registered mail from Bahrain. It was sent to Bombay and has been franked with 2½as making up the 2as registration free plus the ½a surface fee. It arrived in Bombay on 28 July indicating 10 days in transit.

The registered letter on the left was sent from Bahrain on 2 November 1932 following the introduction of air services via Bahrain. It has been franked with 14½as cover the double air fee of 12as for 1 ounce plus the Empire surface fee of 2½as.



The above is an unusual example of Overland mail sent from Bahrain on 16 September 1938. It has been addressed to the Dutch Consul in Port Arthur, being the English name for Dairen in Northern China. Not only is the destination unusual, probably unique, but the cover eventually ended up in the DLO.

The cover has a number of transit stamps on the front and back – Basrah 20 September – Baghdad 21 September – Dairen 14 (entry) and 18 October (exit) – DLO Calcutta 7 December – DLO Bombay 9 December. The cover would have traveled down to Port Said via the Overland

Service and onwards by sea from there. The 6as rate is correct covering the 2½as Overland fee plus the 3½as surface fee to non-Empire destinations.



The various Indian Period air fees to the USA were presented in Edition 28 including the 55as air fee, which was in use from 21 December 1940 to 23 May 1941. What made the 55as air fee special was that it was introduced in conjunction with a 45½as, the latter being a longer more time consuming route. As a result of the price difference mail from Bahrain using the 55as is scarce and only a handful of covers have been recorded.

The above cover, sent from Bahrain on 1 May 1941, is a double rate cover franked at 113½as (2 x 55as + 3½as surface fee); the first such cover on record, and it also distinguishes itself by being the only one of the 55as covers that has had a Burma censorship mark applied. The “14 – not passed by censor” hand-stamp was in use in Burma from April 1941 to March 1942 with numbers 10 to 65 recorded.

The below cover was sent from Bahrain to Basrah on 12 April 1946. It has been franked with a total of 53½as comprising of four copies of the 1946 12as Victory issue – the largest amount of 12as Victory stamps recorded on a cover of Gulf origin.

The rate of 53½as is a bit of a mystery since the cover by all means is commercial. The going rate to Iraq at the time was 14as all-inclusive per ½ ounce meaning 42as or 56as would have been correct depending on weight. Had the inclusion of “Iranian” in the address confused the sender then the price for 1½as ounce would have been based on an air fee of 16as (3 x 16as) plus the surface fee of 3½as so 51½as and still overpaid by 2as.



Miscellaneous covers from the British Period



Bahrain Parcel Cancellation

The piece shown here is dated 29 November 1949 and is the earliest recorded use of the parcel canceller by more than three years – the previous earliest use was 8 December 1952.

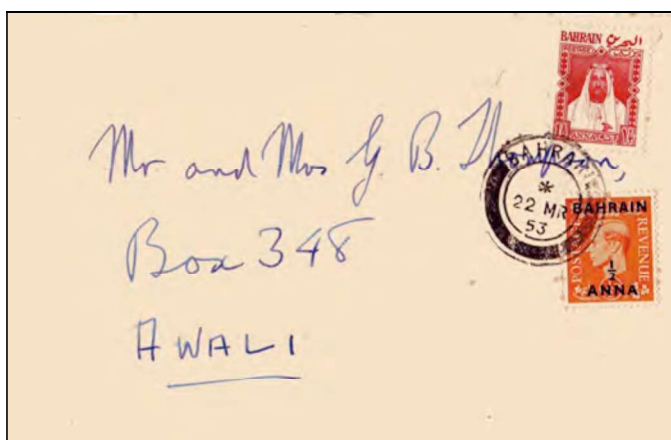
It is interesting to discover that the parcel canceller was introduced in 1949 along with a string of other British cancellers but also because we have previously only seen Donaldson Type 33, The Exchange Office Cancellation, applied on high value stamps this early during the British

Administration. Does that mean that both cancellers were used to cancel stamps on parcels or was Type 33 used for its desired purpose?



Four cross usage covers shown here the first of which is dated 24 March 1949, cancelled with Type 9, and similar in franking to a cover shown in Edition 40. The next cover is another BOAC cover, again similar to the two covers shown in Edition 40, but with a combination of Kuwait and BPAEA overprints. Dated 28 November 1964 the third cover is a late example of British used in Bahrain, while the fourth cover, dated 13 November 1953, shows the use the 1953 BPAEA 4as Coronation Value used cancelled with Type 26.



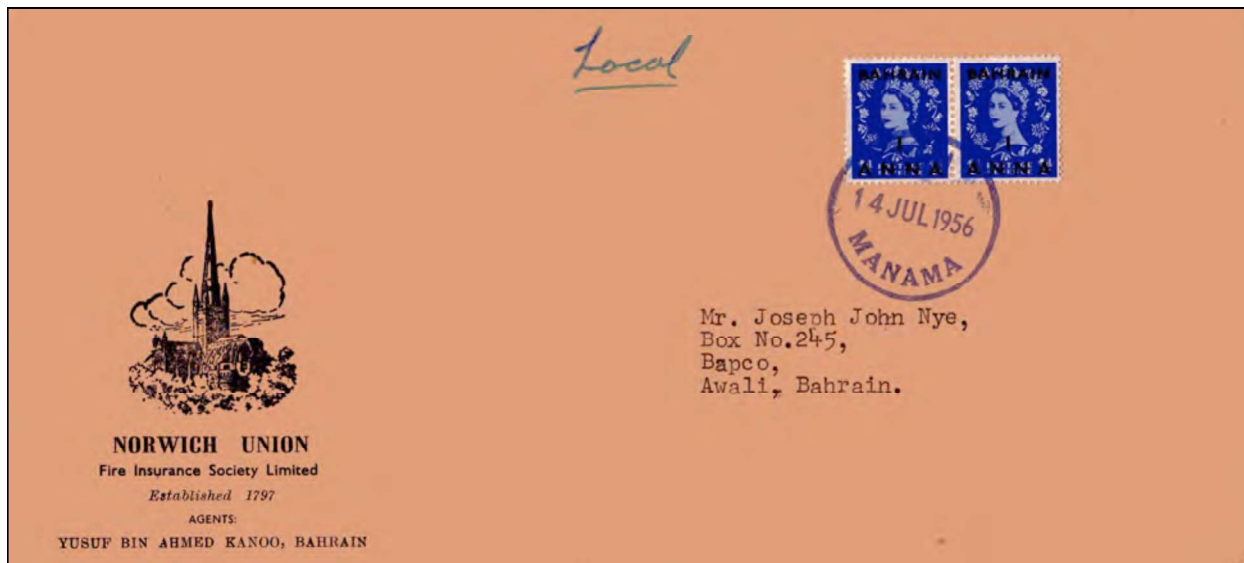


The above left cover shows the unusual use of the “ $\frac{1}{2}$ a – Missing Fraction” variety applied on to a letter sent to Lebanon and cancelled with Type 26. The cover is dated 7 February 1954 and has been correctly paid at $3\frac{1}{2}$ as.

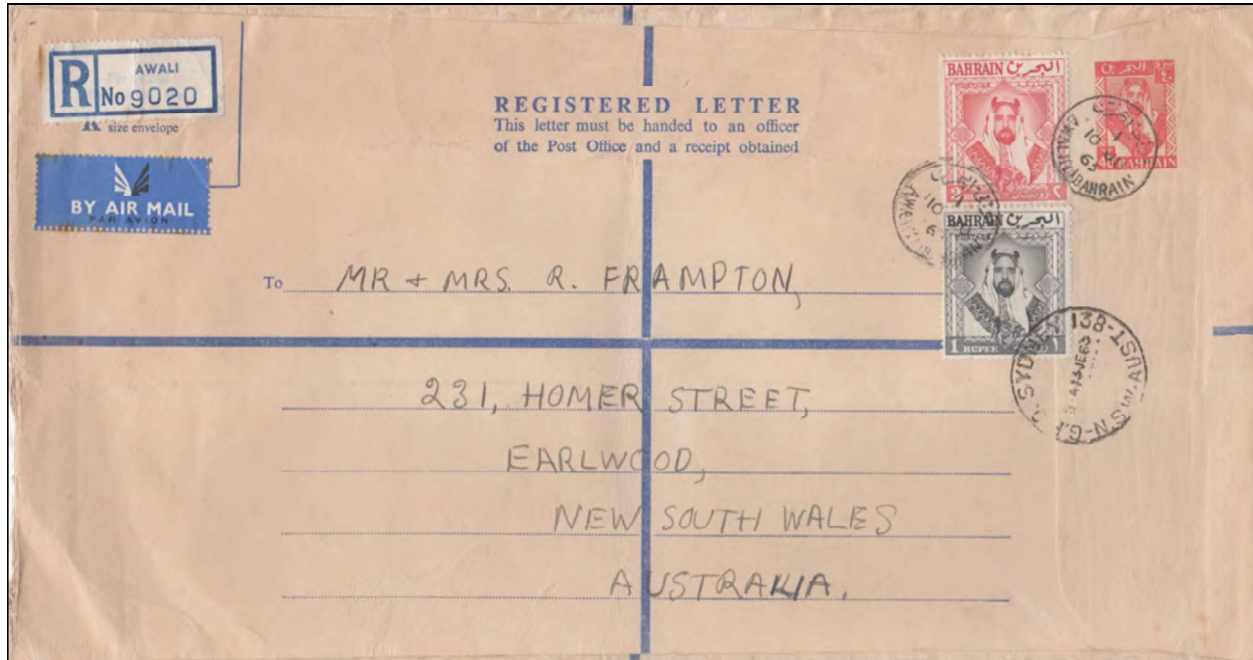
It is already well established that the basic local rate during the British Period was $1\frac{1}{2}$ as, however, a number of 2as covers have now been illustrated in the Quarterly and two more are shown here.

When looking at the various British rates they were all consistent meaning that there was a price per $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce and that price multiplied proportionately as weight increased. With all these 2as local covers is it possible that the local postage was tiered differently and that $1\frac{1}{2}$ as was just for the first $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce (or weight class) and each additional weight class was charged at $\frac{1}{2}$ a? If you have any 2as, or $2\frac{1}{2}$ as, local covers would you please send me scans or dates of the covers?

The below cover has also been franked with 2as – it has been cancelled with the short-lived Type 30 Manama canceller.

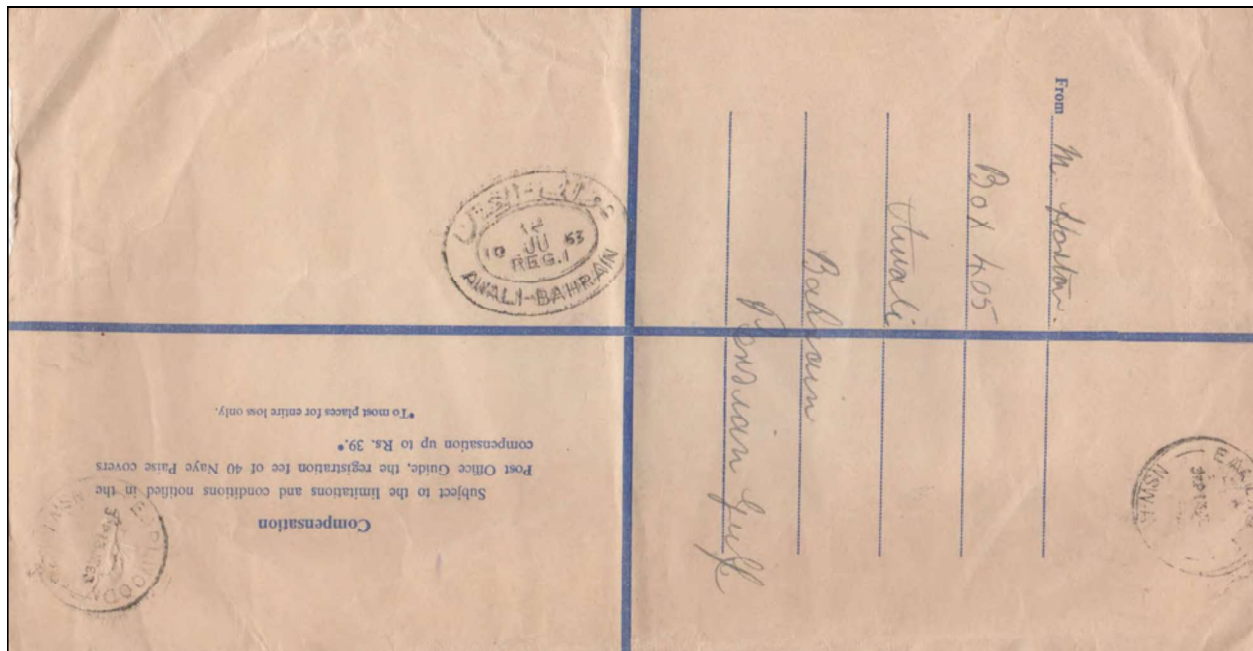


Miscellaneous covers from the Independent Period



Shown here is a rare example of the use of a K-size 1961 Shaikh Salman registered letter. It has been sent to Australia and franked with 3Rs 40np making up the rate for 2 ounces at 75np per ½ ounce plus the 40np registration fee. The cover has been cancelled with two Awali cancellers, Type 35 and Type 38, both number “1” and both dated 10 June 1963.

The Shaikh Salman registered letters were put on sale in Bahrain on 14 April 1961 with the post office ordering a total of 10,000 K-sized registered letters.



Kuwait

Overland Mail sent by Habib Behbehani



It would seem that Kuwait had a philatelist during the 1920s in Habib Behbehani, who enjoyed using the Overland service when communicating with stamp collectors in exotic destinations such as the URSS and Sweden.

The 1927 overland cover sent to the URSS is already familiar to you as it was part of the Kiddle-sale and was also illustrated on the front page of

Edition 39.

The two other Overland covers, both sent to Sweden, were sold at the same auction in 2012. The first cover is dated 5 September 1924 and has a Baghdad (10 September) and Port Said (14 September) transit stamp on the back. The second cover is dated 4 February 1926 and has a Basrah (8 February), Baghdad (11 February) and Port Said (15 February) transit stamp on the back. Both covers are franked with the same line up of stamps and both are sent registered at 9as covering the 3as surface fee, the 3as registration fee and the 3as Overland fee.

Does anyone hold any other Habib Behbehani covers and can anyone in Kuwait tell us more about who the man was?



Donaldson Type 9, the Supdt. Of Post Offices – Persian Gulf hand-stamp has already been the focus of the Quarterly, where a number of covers, pieces and stamps were illustrated.

The 2Rs value shown here was sold in an Internet auction last year and is the highest value yet to be recorded with Type 9. Is anyone in possession of the stamp and if yes, would you mind sending me a high-resolution scan?

Miscellaneous covers from the Indian Period

Use of the 1946 Victory Stamps in Kuwait

The cover shown here was sent from Kuwait on 8 April 1946 to Bombay where it arrived on 23 April.

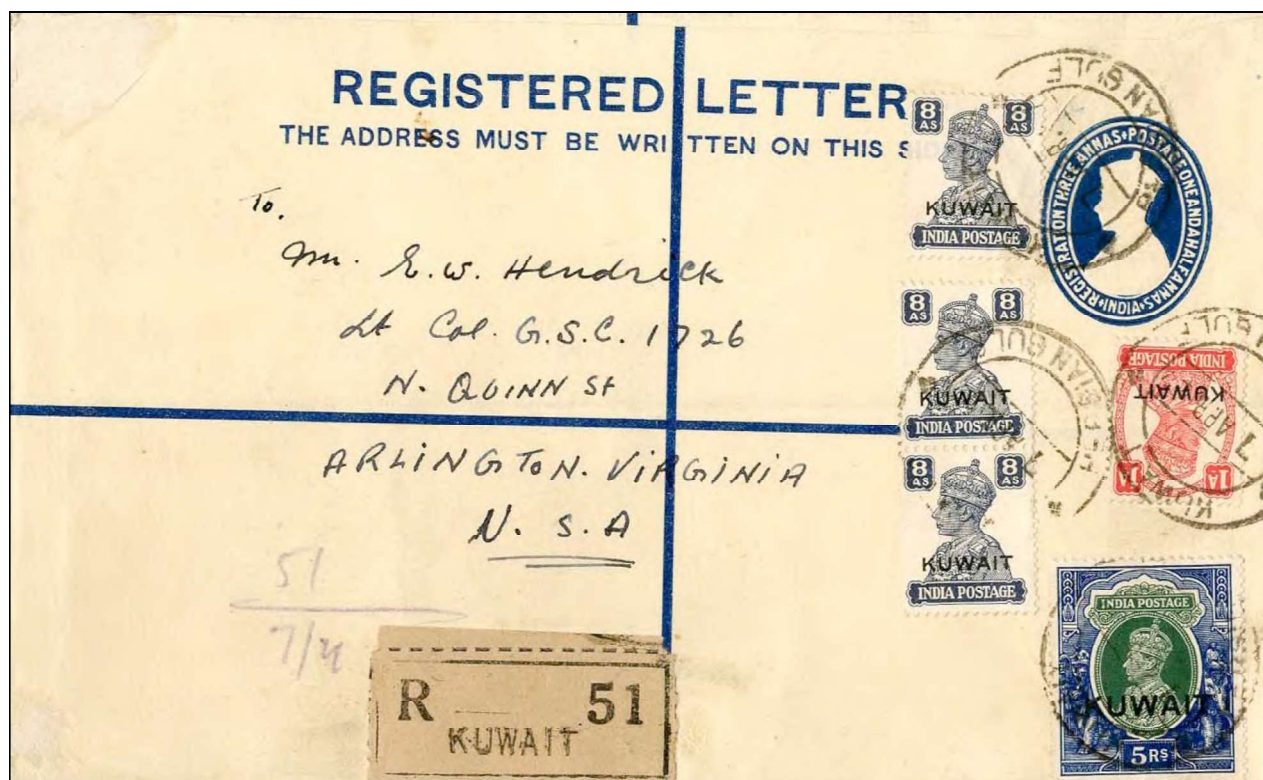
It has been franked with the 9np Victory value, which was the only one of the four Victory values to be issued on 8 February 1946.

The rate of 2as9pn is an overpayment of 3np.



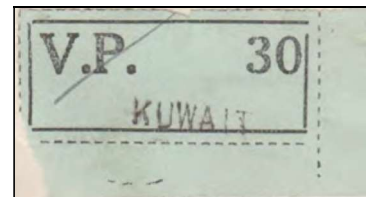
The below stationery is the 3as + 1½as KGV I Indian stationery which has been sent from Kuwait to the USA on 7 April 1947 where it arrived on 23 April – it has had Cairo (18 April) and New York (20 April) transit stamps applied to the back.

The stationery has been paid with a total of 109½as, which with the going air fee at the time being 23as would have covered a weight of 2 ounces (4 x 23as + 3as registration + 3½as for first ounce surface + 2as for second ounce surface = 100½as) meaning the cover was overpaid by 9as.





The above cover was sent to Austria on 18 December 1947 and is franked with 6½as covering the registered surface fee. The Austrian censorship is common and a practice that continued well in to the 1950s given Austria's occupied status, however, covers from Kuwait's Indian Period to Austria are uncommon.



The cover has had a VP-label applied as a substitute for a registration label being practice that Donaldson confirms to have taken place in 1943 and 1947. However, he documents the use of red and cream VP-labels in 1947 while the green labels were used in 1943.



The cover shown here was sent to Switzerland on 26 November 1945 and has been franked with a total of 26½as covering the 20as air fee plus 3½as surface fee and 3as registration fee.

The 20as air fee was first mentioned in the 1946 postal guide but was introduced shortly after the end of WWII.



The two covers shown here both have “Overland” applied in manuscript to the front of the cover – indicating that the sender’s desired route was via the Baghdad – Haifa Nairn Service. The two top covers, dated 5 October 1935 and 19 December 1936, probably went by this route in spite of the lack of a Baghdad transit stamp as proof. A third and similar dated 3as cover, not illustrated here, has several transit stamps including Baghdad and Alexandria but it was sent to Malta. Confirming Overland mail from Kuwait is more difficult than from Bahrain since the Overland Surcharge was suspended within the Iraqi Postal Administration in 1929. Therefore the 3as rate illustrated here also represents the standard surface rate to destinations like Malta and England.

The cover franked with 5as may give us an idea as to how the Kuwait Post Office dealt with converting the Iraqi “Fils” rates to Annas. The first 20 grams of weight was charged at 15 Fils, so 3as, while the next 20 grams was charged at 8 Fils. Judging from the 5as cover above it would seem that the Kuwait Post Office converted the 8 Fils to 2as and that the 5as cover is a double-rate surface/Overland cover.

In order to get a better idea of how Overland mail was transit stamped during the mid- to late 1930s I had a look at Overland covers from Bahrain and found the following rather mixed picture of practice.

1933	Basrah transit only – 1 cover	1934	Basrah transit only – 1 cover
1935	Basrah Baghdad transit – 1 cover	1936	Basrah Baghdad transit – 3 covers
1937	Basrah Baghdad transit – 3 covers (1 cover from Kuwait)		
1937	Basrah transit only – 2 covers	1938	Basrah Baghdad transit – 1 cover
1939	Basrah transit only – 4 covers	1940	Basrah transit only – 1 cover

Miscellaneous covers from the British Period



The top left cover is a large-size cover sent registered to England on 11 December 1948. It has been franked with a total 2Rs 15as of which 3as is the registration fee. The remaining 44as covers 3½ ounces, which at 6as per ½ ounce leaves the cover overpaid by 2as. The cover was damaged during transit and has been resealed in London where it also passed customs – there is no mention of contents on the cover



The above cover was sent from Amman, Jordan to Kuwait on 27 February 1955 and was addressed to M.A.J. Nahas, C/O Salah Jamal, Kuwait. The way the address was applied resulted in the cover having an “Insufficiently Addressed – P.G.” hand-stamp impressed on the front - this in spite of the postal clerk at the Kuwait post office also applying “Return to sender – addressee left” in manuscript. The “Exchange Office” hand-stamp is previously unrecorded.

Muscat & Oman



I forwarded the two scans of the above document (back and front) to Saleem Al Shakar in Bahrain for translation and got the following notes in reply to what Saleem refers to as an Oman Merchandise Certificate.

1. I think this form is printed in Iraq as its language is Arabic with mixed Uthmanli (Turkish) used in Muscat.
2. Merchant from Muscat (seller) sending material I think an apparatus used in ship to merchant (buyer) in Baghdad through the owner of ship or boat called (Kola).
3. The hand writing text in including blank filling words we call in Bahrain Khat Quraan.
4. There is no mentioned for the Fees Certificate or the price of the material.
5. In the certificate the word Bandar is used instead of Menaa – both mean port.
6. In the rubber cancellation (the left one) there is also Arabic text “Furdha Muscat” which means Muscat Jetty. In local language we used Furdha as Menaa.
7. In rubber cancellation (the right one) there is also Arabic text at the top written Sultan in Arabic, and at the bottom Year 1305(year the Sultan took the power) in between name of Sultan read from bottom to top (Faisal bin Turki bin Saeed bin) there is extra bin written in the cancellation.
8. Approximate translation of the Arabic text is found below:

In the Name of God Almighty

Original

The shipment in the ship called (KOLA) from Bandar Muscat to Bandar (BAGHDAD) sender from Al Haj (JAFFAR IBIN GHULAM) Addressee Al Haj (HUSSAIN TURK) that for

transportation of Nos (17) Siran Tablet Muscati under model {or meant brand} (JG) that for of crops to be Muscat{the home town} concept in{or date} (12) Month (JUMADA 2) Year (1327) {Muslim calendar 12/6/1327 AH} the on line for the cancellations

First on R Signature {written Sahehe Manshi could be Turkish words}

Second on L in Charge of Fudha Muscat {written metwalli Al Furdha Muscat}

There is some difficult to read handwriting of first name of seller (sender) could also read as (HABAQ IBIN GHULAM ALI). There is a word besides figure 17 read LAWEI, which I do not know what is meant for between bracket to fill by Merchant seller.

9. The back of certificate used by Iraqis port:

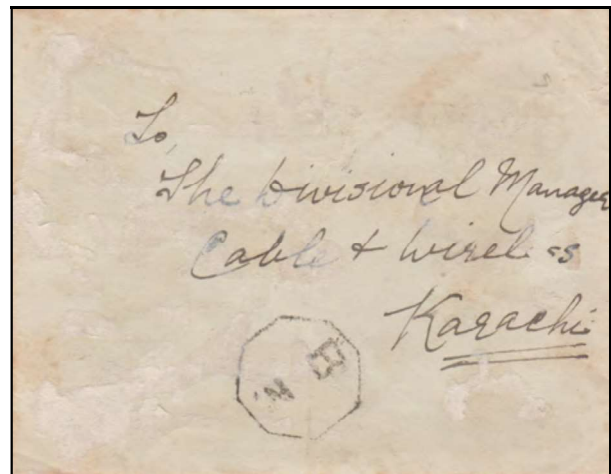
1st line is a name but I cannot read it, then under the name is the Uthmanli date.

2nd line is again a name that I cannot read – 3rd line is a repeat of 2nd line

4th line is No 17 2nd and the rest is uthmanli which I can not read.

5th line could be taxation evaluation of the material 6/11 the rest is Uthmanli

6th line could be taxation evaluation of the material 11/11 and then some more Uthmanli



Above is a cover with commercial use of the 1944 Al Bu'Said issue sent from Muscat on 13 January 1945 to Karachi. The cover has been franked with a two 1a and one 1/2a Bu'Said values making up the required airmail fee for the first 1 tola.

The hexagonal B 3 censor mark was applied at Karachi and is listed on page 23 of the CCSG book on British Asia Censorships. Though number 3 is not specifically mentioned the censor mark was in use from April 1943 until August 1945 for the number 1 to 73 and it was always applied in black.

To the left is illustrated the 1926 1R Service value (SG O117) cancelled at Muscat on 15 September 1932 with Donaldson Type 13.



The cover shown here was sent from Muscat to the UK on 6 December 1952 and shows the invalid use of the 1944 3np Bu'Said value.

The postal clerk, presumably at Muscat, has correctly spotted the problem and circled the stamp with pen, leaving it un-cancelled. The 2½as Olympic stamp has been cancelled is per norm.

What then happens is a bit of a mystery but it would seem that some confusion was created by the presence of the Bu'Said stamp on the cover resulting in the cover being charged postage due.

To start with the going surface rate to the UK at the time was 2½as so the cover was paid correctly. However, a circular "T" mark has been applied to the cover before it left the Gulf, either at Muscat or Bahrain, where the cover would have transited. Two other covers, one leaving Bahrain in 1952 and one coming in to Bahrain in 1953, have somewhat similar circular "T" marks confirming the existence of circular "T" marks as part of the British Agency's. The short of it all being that the "T" mark should never have been applied in the first place.

The 3D I.S.T. was applied at London which raises the next question being that 3D is a lot more than 3np x 2 so how was the postage due calculated by London? Thanks to Philip Kaye we have the following explanation sourced from Michael Furfie's "British Postage Due Mail 1914-1971". In his book he has an interesting chapter on 1943 -1953 British Regulations and Practices which tells us the following:

If a cover had been sent prior to October 1950, the postage paid of 2½as would have been converted to 2½d, which was equal to the Empire Letter Rate - so no deficiency and no charge. Since the cover in question was sent after October 1950 the 2½as postage paid was still converted to 2½d, which was subtracted from the new Foreign Letter Rate of 4d to give a deficiency of 1½d, which was then doubled to give a charge of 3d. So postage due in the UK was calculated not based on what the rate should have been out of Muscat but what the corresponding rate out of the UK was and then doubled, all this resulting in the addressee paying 3d incorrectly.



BPAEA SG 58a was discussed in Edition 33 and 34 with the image of a stamp from the so-called "Sheet 4" illustrated on page 25 of Edition 34.

Shown here is the "Sheet 4" stamp, this time in company of a certificate. It would appear that the stamp in Edition 34 and the one shown here are the same stamp.

The State of Oman is not an area normally covered by the Quarterly but a large amount of covers that recently sold on eBay illustrated some divergence in how this mail transited via various Gulf post offices as “Return to Sender” mail.



The above cover was sent to Kenya, where it arrived on 17 February 1969 being transferred to the Nairobi RLO on 18 February. The cover then returned to Amman on 21 April followed by Kuwait on 29 April finally ending its journey on 14 May in Dubai.

The below two images show the reverse of two covers, one sent to Cleveland, USA while the other was sent to Cheshire, UK. Both covers made their final transit through Dubai Post Office (19 September 1968 and 11 April 1969) via Amman the cover on the right also passing through Kuwait on 22 March.



The final cover is shown below and was sent to Athens. Unlike the above three covers it has no Amman or Kuwait transit stamps but only a “RETURNED LETTER SECTION” G.P.O. Abu Dhabi stamp dated 19 June 1969.



Qatar

Miscellaneous covers from the British Period

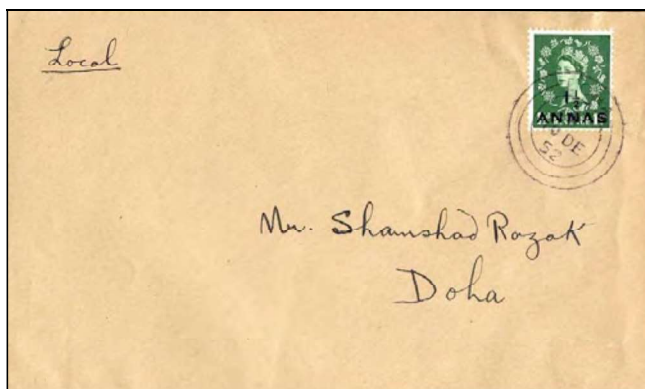


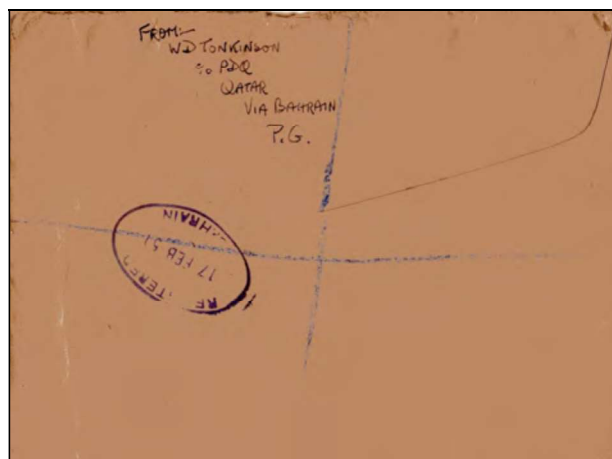
The three covers shown here were recently sold at the December 2012 Philagenta auction.

The top cover is a pre-post office cover sent from Qatar via Bahrain and cancelled at Bahrain with Type 26 on 23 March 1950. It has been franked with the standard 6as airmail rate to the UK.

The cover on the left is illustrated in Donaldson's book on page 219 and represents the earliest recorded use of the Doha Type 2 canceller. The cover has been franked with two Bahrain KGVI 2½as and one KGVI 1as making up the required 6as for airmail to the UK.

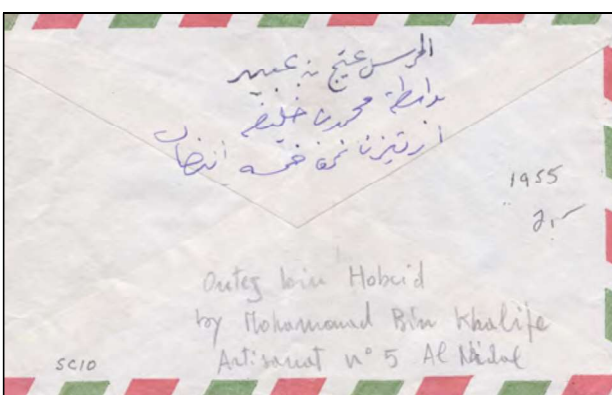
The final two covers have both been franked with 1½as – one sent within Qatar, dated 10 December 1952 with the 1½as representing the local rate, while the other, dated 3 December 1951, was sent to the Political Agent in Bahrain with the 1½as rate possibly representing the intra-Gulf surface rate. The airmail rate between Gulf States was 3½as.





Three more covers, the top of which is a “Via Bahrain” cover sent after the opening of the Post Office in Qatar. It is dated 17 February 1951 and has been franked with 1R making up the double registered airmail rate to the UK – 2 x 6as plus 4as registration fee.

The next cover was sent from Qatar to Dubai via Bahrain on 22 June 1955 with Qatar written in Arabic in the top right front corner. The 2as rate is currently up for discussion.



The final cover is another “via Bahrain” cover with sender’s address applied as QPC, Dukhan, Bahrain. It has been cancelled at Umm Said with Donaldson Type 6 dated 25 February 1957 and has had a “Bahrain 1” registration label attached to the front of the cover.



UAE – Dubai

The Independent Period

The following is a prelude for a broader presentation of Dubai's Independent Period, which will be done over the course of the next eight issues due out in 2013 and 2014 covering both stamps and postal history. The introduction has been written by Howard Courtney for his Dubai Catalog and can also be viewed on his website:

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

Introduction and Preparations for Dubai's First Stamps by R. Howard Courtney



My interest in the stamps of Dubai began in the late 1970's when I received an auction catalog from the stamp auction firm of Robert Lippert. The catalog contained numerous pages of printer's waste, proofs, stamps, and who knows what else, from Dubai and the other sheikhdoms. I had never seen anything like this material previously and I found that I kept returning to the catalog as the weeks went by. The Dubai material particularly interested me but conditioned by the then current feeling in the philatelic press, I knew I should avoid it as five of the seven Trucial States (Referred to in this catalog as Sheikhdoms) relied on their stamp issues to

support their governments, and the respective agents for the sheikhdoms began to flood the market with dubious issues, imperforate issues and souvenir sheets. Although Dubai was not one of those needing the revenue as badly as the others, the Philatelic Agency jumped on the bandwagon and produced a multitude of issues. These policies caused them to be negatively referred to as "sand dune issues."

Twenty-three years after the last stamp was issued for Dubai, the reputation of the sheikhdoms lived on as evidenced by an ad that appeared in the September 25, 1995 issue of Linn's Stamp News:

"A great, great stock of superb mint, complete sets & souvenir sheets, all never hinged, from 32 different colonies!!! No Trucial States, No junk!"

The stamps of all the sheikhdoms, except Abu Dhabi, received the A.P.A (American Philatelic Association) "Black Blot" and condemnation of the F.I.P. (Federation Internationale de Philatelic). It was unanimously voted in 1967 at the F.I.P. Amsterdam Congress that the banned listings could not be shown in F.I.P. stamp exhibits. It is ironic that one of the stamps they banned was a Sharjah issue commemorating the F.I.P. To support the F.I.P the German Michel Catalog placed a lozenge-shaped figure next to the "banned" issues. They abandoned this practice in 1985. The Scott catalog to this day does not list all the issues under Dubai, but does list the majority of them at the back of the catalog with little information about them.

All of Dubai's issues were "black blotted" and "banned" by the F.I.P. and while the A.P.S. black blot was never officially ended, it was allowed to die a natural death and no new listings were

published after 1982. The F.I.P. ban ended in the mid-1980s when it's rules failed to specify stamps that exhibitors were forbidden to display.

In retrospect, I think one of the reasons I was drawn to the Dubai material is because the word "Dubai" is very attractive when written in Arabic script. I had earned a Master's degree in Arabic, took many classes in Middle Eastern subjects and have a graduate certificate in Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Utah. I had also lived in the Middle East (Jordan) on two occasions, where I taught at Friend's Boys School in Ramallah, and later at Bir Zeit College, in Bir Zeit. I also have done graduate work in Mesopotamian Archaeology and Persian Literature at the University of Chicago.

Because of my interest in that part of the world I found teaching jobs there. My first job was at Friend's Boy's School in Ramallah and ended in a disaster of sorts. Having just come from two months of hitchhiking through Central America, I ended up in the American University of Beirut Hospital in Beirut, Lebanon, with a bacterial infection on my mitral valve. I was a patient in the hospital when Kennedy was assassinated. After two months of being in the hospital I returned to Ramallah to find that my health dictated that I should return to the States. Two years later, I married and my wife and I obtained teaching jobs at Bir Zeit College (Now renamed Bir Zeit University). I taught, Anthropology, Sociology, Great Literature of the World and an English class in the affiliated high school. Both schools are in the West Bank and are now in the occupied territory.

Eventually I drove 350 miles to Michigan to the auction and bid on all the Dubai lots. With little competition I was about ninety percent successful in my bidding on all the Dubai material. In the following days I examined the material and soon came to the conclusion that the standard stamp catalogs I had access to were of no use in making sense of what I had purchased. Even the auction house had problems describing the material. There would be a description of a particular item in one listing but they neglected to mention the same item that was found in other lots, often in multiples. Other items were not mentioned at all even when there were multiples in the grouping.

For the next few years I made lists, wrote letters (this was all before the Internet) and traded a tremendous Saudi Arabian collection for a tremendous early Dubai collection. That introduced me to the lengthy history of the Dubai postal service under the British (1909 – 1963), a subject I had known nothing about previously.

At the time, one could easily add covers from the British period to a collection, but it was almost impossible to find genuinely used stamps and covers from the 1963 -1972 period. For those who currently collect the later material, it is apparent the situation has not changed much. What has changed is that the early British period material has skyrocketed in price. This is partially due to the increased interest of Arab collectors from the Gulf area.

I am reminded of a story told to me by M. Max Mayo, who wrote the first catalog for the Saudi Arabian material during this period. After his catalog was made available he said it became harder to buy the material. On one occasion he flew to Switzerland to an auction and was

surrounded by Arabs all reading his catalog. As a result, he was not very successful with his bidding and shortly thereafter decided he needed to find a new collecting interest and sold his collection. At the time, it was undoubtedly the most extensive collection of that material in existence.

Within a few years I had amassed an interesting collection of independent Dubai material, but still had no reliable information to work with. For various reasons, in the late 1980s I sold my collection and lost all interest in stamps. Being a collector at heart (I have had collections of Persian carpets, stained glass windows, WWI posters, antiquities, autographs, antiques, jazz posters, art, etc.), I kept my notes, photostats, and correspondence for future reference in case I might need them, and a few covers.

A few years later, with nothing to do on a Sunday morning, I attended a stamp show. While wandering around and looking for something that might interest me and possibly lead me back to collecting, I found and purchased a few common Dubai sets. Once I had returned home and dug out my previous notes, I was solidly hooked again and started writing and telephoning collectors to see what they had to sell or trade.

Back in the 1970s I had been in contact with Mr. Michel Stephan (pictured here) who lived in Beirut, Lebanon. I had obtained his address from the late Bruce Conde when I told him of my collecting interests. Mr. Stephan had indicated he had a large stock of Dubai material and needed to sell some of it as this was the period when Lebanon was involved in their civil war. When I would write to him he would always answer my letters but indicated he did not have the time to deal with small orders. He would make offers for quantities of material that I could not afford, nor would I know what to do with it if I could. After I sold my collection our correspondence ceased.



Surprisingly, in the early 1990's he sent me a letter from Morocco where he had moved to avoid the turmoil in Lebanon. I put the letter aside but did not contact him as he was again trying to sell quantities of material. In 1993, I contacted him and told him of my plans to write a catalog on the issues of Dubai. He indicated his willingness to help, stating he still had the original contract and "lots of Dubai material." It was only at that time that I found out that he had been the Agent for the early stamps of the country and he was "The Dubai Philatelic Agency". Mr. Stephan owned the Baroodi Stamp Company that had obtained the contract with the Sheikh of Dubai, under that name. After signing the contract he created the Dubai Philatelic Agency to handle and sell the stamps. Eventually we began to do business and I would constantly ask questions about his role in producing the material, or information regarding specific issues. He had originally led me to believe he had all the records from his time as the Agent. It was very frustrating for me as he would virtually never fully answer a question and I found that I was asking the same questions of him, years later.

Mr. Stephan eventually returned to Beirut and we continued our correspondence once he was settled, and I began to telephone and fax him when I had questions, or was looking for particular items. Remember that this was before most people had computers and email access. It soon

became apparent that Mr. Stephan was willing to be of assistance, but little would be revealed, pointed questions would not be answered and specific topics were taboo. He would often state he knew nothing about a particular subject or person and eventually stated his records had been destroyed in the Lebanese Civil War. Whether this was true or not, I will never know. It certainly provided a wall, which he could hide behind when I asked specific questions he didn't want to reply to. When he would tell me he didn't remember someone's role in the production of an item, I would ask him if he could give me the individual's address so I could contact him. His first reaction was to ask if I wanted the address to try to buy stamps from the person.

For someone who told me he was willing to cooperate and provide information, his answers were for the most part very vague. When I asked the full name of the designer of a set of stamps, the response I received was "he is a photographer in Beirut". It was not uncommon for his partial answers to questions to have provided completely new information on the subject at hand, but not offering the information requested. That often led to the need to ask multiple questions about the same subject, which in turn, were not fully answered. In all fairness, it was also obvious to me that he did not realize the importance of documenting much of this information, nor did he want the truth to be known about some of his activities.

One area I wanted to pursue was the creation of the Dubai aerogrammes. Mr. Stephan had told me that Mr. Lorenzo had "made all the arrangements" and he knew nothing about them. That was certainly an odd response from the person who had the contract to design, print and issue all the material, since they made a great deal of money selling them to collectors. When I asked for Mr. Lorenzo's son's address, as I knew he had sold some stamps to dealers after his father's death, he wrote, "I like to know why you want his address and whether you think if he has a stock of Dubai for sale especially in complete sheets of the definitives". The subject of the definitives was not something I had even inquired about at the time. I soon realized I was not going to get much information from the one source that could provide it and the prospect of a catalog began to fade.

Mr. Stephan was a Palestinian who fled Palestine, along with many others, when the State of Israel was created. At the time he had been working at the post office and was a part-time stamp dealer. He fled to Beirut, Lebanon and worked for the Barody Stamp Company and eventually became the owner.

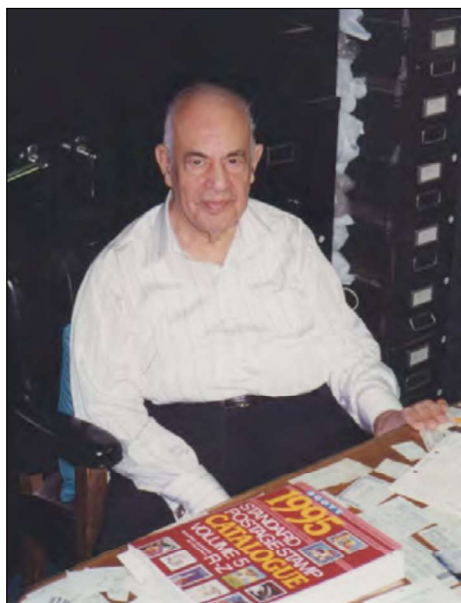
The late stamp dealer Patrick Hudson, who had lived in Beirut, Lebanon for a while, had told me back in the early 1970's about a Palestinian dealer in Beirut who would listen to what you were looking for in Palestine stamps and then tell you to return in a few days. In many instances he would then have the item you asked about. It turned out that he was forging stamps and covers. Patrick did not want to reveal the dealer's name but I was persistent and he eventually stated it was the owner of the Barody Stamp Company, i.e., Mr. Stephan.

Mr. Mosden (more about him later) told me that at the time Mr. Stephan fled Palestine, he was an employee of the Post Office and he took the cancellers with him to Beirut and kept them. He then laughed and asked, "Are the covers he made really fakes"? He then alluded to Palestinian overprints he, himself, had made.

Mr. Stephan had had a less-than-honorable reputation as a dealer for years and was known to traffic in forged overprints. Consequently, many auction houses in Europe and the U.S. refused to accept consignments from him. Mr. Stephan himself related that to me, as did several well-known stamp firms. However, he did not mention that he was the one responsible for creating the fakes.

In the 1990s he asked me to contact a dealer who he claimed owed him money. I did not want to get involved in a dispute that did not involve me and I simply sent a letter to the dealer stating that I was asked to pass on the information. Evidently there was more to the situation than I had been told and Mr. Stephan wanted me to contact the APS and file a complaint against the dealer, in his name. I declined, but sent him the information on how to pursue the issue.

Prior to his death, he spent considerable time telling his methods of producing fake and forged items to a confidant, who is now following in his footsteps and for several years has been producing more Dubai fantasies and similar items for at least one of the sheikhdoms. The individual himself related the information regarding learning how to make the fakes from Mr. Stephan to me. Many of the items are so blatantly fraudulent that I am surprised action has not been taken against him.



During one telephone conversation he mentioned that his American agent during this period was Mr. Ezzet Mosden (pictured here), who lived in Las Vegas, Nevada. I was surprised as I had made several Dubai purchases at a stamp show from Mr. Mosden's brother back in the 1970's. When I had asked where he had obtained the material he mentioned that he gotten it from his brother. I obtained his brother's address and then contacted Mr. Ezzet Mosden and made several purchases from him. At that time neither he nor his brother had mentioned their involvement with Dubai, even though they knew I was greatly interested in the Dubai items they were selling.

Once I made contact with Mr. Mosden, I came to realize he was the key to putting things into perspective as he was very open in his correspondence and our telephone calls and related the stories behind some of the issues.

Eventually I flew to Las Vegas and spent four days with him. He was very cooperative and helped me fit the myriad pieces of the puzzle together for most of the period of the Baroody contract. His candor was often shocking after the silence, half-truths and denials I had been getting from others. When talking about Mr. Stephan Mr. Mosden stated to me when I visited him, "I was double-crossed several times, even Michel Stephan was bribed by U.S. dealers such as Fatoulla and Lazar and Heishaupt and reprinted stamps and sold issues to British dealers too. Mr. James Davis got the Innsbruck overprint. When I confronted Mr. Stephan he told me I had the Agency for the U.S. and he could sell in Beirut to anyone who came there". He also stated that some of the Dubai issues only made it into the European catalogs because he was persistent and kept after them to list them.

Their partnership was at times a love/hate relationship as one would create an item and make the other buy them if he wanted them. Years later they both were concerned about the other and often asked me what I knew about the other's health and to offer my best wishes when I had contact.

When I would ask Mr. Stephan about specific instances Mr. Mosden had related to me he would deny everything or tell me he didn't remember. Without Mr. Mosden's assistance this catalog could not have been written.

Those who were involved in the production and sale of the early stamps have either passed away or are now in their late 70's or 80's. Both Mr. Stephan and Mr. Mosden passed away several years ago, and Mr. Lorenzo prior to both of them. I had wanted to get this project finished while Mr. Stephan and Mr. Mosden were still living but over the years was not able to obtain the information I needed for the later Dubai issues. Since I would not have wanted to embarrass either of them, I would have left out some of the questionable practices they were involved in, but now include in this catalog.

With the withdrawal of the British from the Gulf, and the creation of the United Arab Emirates in 1972, Dubai ceased to issue its own stamps, as did the other sheikhdoms. In his book *THE POSTAL AGENCIES IN EASTERN ARABIA AND THE GULF*, that deals with the postal history of the Gulf prior to the sheikhdoms issuing their own stamps, Neil Donaldson ended the chapter on Dubai with the following two paragraphs:

"An official announcement declared". . . a special policy for issuing attractive stamps in limited quantities according to the market demand and easily obtained at normal prices by all subscribers who comply with our sales conditions. . .". "Unfortunately, they then allowed a philatelic agency to take control of the stamp issuing policy. . . and subsequently issues were unattractive and were not easily obtainable at normal prices! However, the error of their ways soon became apparent and, from 1965 onwards, all stamps issued by the agency were at least readily available at the Post Office. From March 1967 the Government of Dubai reassumed full control of its stamp issues."

The last paragraph nearly sums up the totality of what was written about the philatelic history of independent Dubai during that period. I had not been able to locate any detailed literature on the stamps, aerogrammes, postal cards, first day covers, cancellations, nor any other aspect of interest to collectors, other than an extremely interesting and thought provoking article by Ken Lawrence and an article on the 1966 overprinted Definitives by S.A. Jones. Occasional articles appeared with an overview of the sheikhdoms that included from a paragraph to a page on Dubai, but nothing detailed.

Nearly forty years after the last Dubai set was released, collectors still have no reference source for the 1963 - 1972 period. Items are still surfacing in the philatelic markets that have not been seen by more than a handful of people with many of those individuals now deceased. Often these items cannot be properly identified and appear in auction catalogs and on the Internet as "proofs", "essays" or "trials", when in fact they are no such thing. Over the years there emerged a body of misinformation about Dubai's issues that has come to be accepted as fact and it is my

hope that my catalog and its presentation in the Quarterly will help clarify matters

The one response I could count on in the past when I told anyone I was writing a catalog on the stamps of Dubai was, "Why are you writing a catalog on Dubai?" followed by laughter or a sarcastic comment. Ken Lawrence's article best sums up my reason:

"...most of the Trucial States issues were chronicled as they appeared. If only to provide grist for acid commentary, but philatelic scholars avoided gathering comprehensive information about them at the time when it would have been readily available, leaving a large void for today's researchers," and "...The stamp hobbies gradually changing attitude justifies a new look at the stamps that once were regarded as beneath contempt."

He continues and states that his article was an attempt to begin the process

"Many years after the last Dubai set was issued, collectors still have no reference source for the stamps, First Day Covers, aerogrammes and postal cards, other than the major stamp catalogs that are incomplete and contain numerous errors. Fortunately others have begun to document the various postal cancellations and markings that were used during this period."

Mr. Lawrence additionally writes,

"From today's perspective, Dubai had embarked on a pioneering adventure in issuing popular topical stamps and marketing them to collectors through a foreign philatelic agent (in Beirut, Lebanon), a practice subsequently pursued by many counties, including the United States"

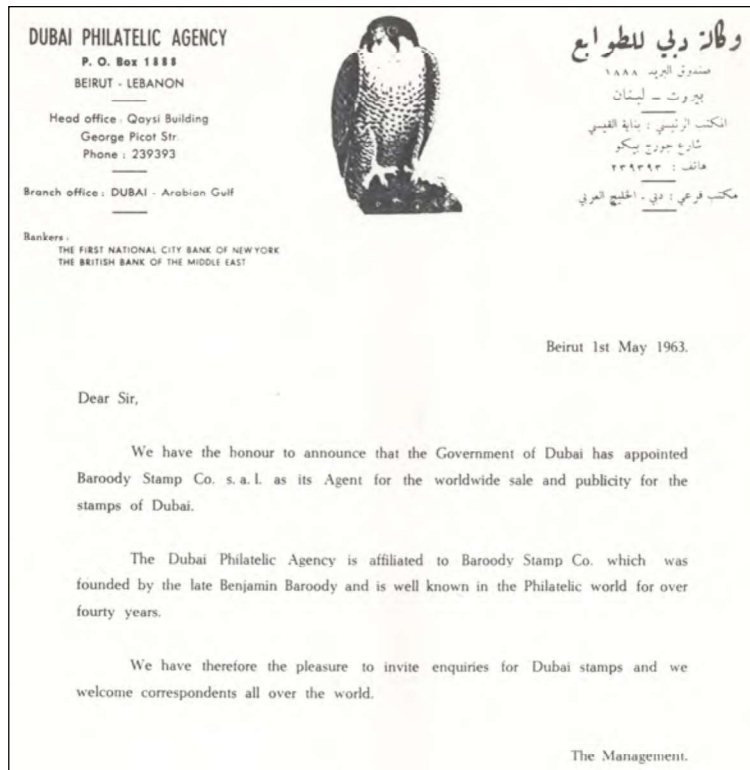
My inquiries about the period in question to the Sheikh of Dubai, the Postmaster of the United Arab Emirates, and the former Secretary of the Sheikh, who was involved in the contract to produce Dubai's first stamps, and indirectly, later issues, all went unanswered. Fortunately, the Postmaster gave my letter to a fellow collector in Dubai, Mr. Malek Omer, who, as a sidelight to his architectural business, wrote articles on stamp collecting for the KHALEEJ TIMES (GULF TIMES). He contacted me and directed me to a few collectors living in Dubai who might be able to help me. Through the contacts provided by Mr. Omer and others, I was told that there was no one in the Post Office who was around during the period in question and that no records had been kept. Others told me that that period in their postal history was an embarrassment to the government and I would most likely not receive any help from them. I was also told that no one took the issues seriously, and no one collected them.

Rather than publish the information I have in print form, I have chosen to post it on the Internet for anyone interested to view. When Thomas asked me if he could use the research from my website to present it in the Quarterly using stamps as the foundation for a broader look at Dubai's Independent Period incorporating the various components of postal history I found it to be a good way to create further awareness about this very interesting period. My intention is to add to this catalog, or make corrections as readers and collectors provide new information to me. A great deal of information is still needed to present the total picture, but this effort will hopefully serve as a frame upon which information can be added.

PREPARATIONS

The ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Rashid bin Makhtoum, signed an agreement with the Baroody Stamp Company of Beirut, Lebanon, after the British, who had maintained the Dubai post office, indicated they were withdrawing from the area. The contract gave Mr. Stephan the right to print,

choose the subjects, determine the quantities and colors, and sell the stamps for the Government of Dubai. This was to take place under the guidance of Mr. Lorenzo and a Post Office board. The government was to pay all the expenses and Mr. Stephan was to pay the Sheikh \$12,500 per month. He was permitted to purchase all the stamps he wanted at a 15% discount off the face value and resell them at full face value. Mr. Stephan was in actuality operating at two levels: 1) Representing the Government of Dubai and 2) Operating the Dubai Philatelic Agency where he was making money for himself.



The letter shown above was mailed to the public on 1 May 1963 by the Dubai Philatelic Agency announcing the agreement. The falcon image at the top was used as a center image for four of the first airmail stamps.

The Ruler of Dubai sent the letter on the right announcing the appointment of the Baroody Stamp Company. This is dated 15 June 1963 being the date that Dubai took over control of the Post Office and the date of the first three sets of Dubai stamps.

An agreement in Arabic between Michel Stephan and the Sheikh of Dubai for the production and sale of their stamps is illustrated on Howard's website – the English translation of the document, done by Khalid Omaira, is found on the next page.



Further to our meeting with Mr. Mohammed Mahdi Al Tager, concerning submitting the postage stamps of the government of Dubai project, we submit our proposals indicated below:

1. The company undertakes to provide purchaser of definitives and commemorative stamps amount to US\$ 330.000 per year.
2. The company undertakes to perform all matters concerning propaganda such as printing brochures; and distributing cultural and advertising publications to all dealers, philatelist, the UN organizations, ANSCO and to the postal administrations on its own expense.
3. The company undertakes to prepare all drawings, to contact the owners of the printing press, to facilitate the task of those who responsible for issuing the stamps and to develop programs for each version in accordance with the consent of the government and under its supervision.
4. The company shall submit official letter for determining the date of meeting with the responsible persons for consideration and developing the program of versions intended to be issued, at least once each three months.
5. The company shall organize with the responsible agencies program for issuing one or more versions. The date of each version shall be pre-determined by the agreement of the two parties to enable the company to promote for the same previously.
6. The company undertakes to open credit equals to the full amount of the stamps intended to purchase one month before the date of delivering the stamps.
7. The purchased quantities shall be delivered by the company in Beirut or in the country where the stamps printed. Each party shall bear its incurred expenses of transportation.
8. The company shall sell a limited quantity of each publication to local traders and collectors by the post general manger.
9. Enabling the company to perform all its undertakings as per the provisions of the above mentioned items without facing any criticism by the traders of stamps all over the world, with the charge of monopoly, we think that it is most appropriate to produce the official legal form for our work by getting an official permit from your government granting thereby the company the right of representation in capacity of general agents for publishing propaganda and duly selling Dubai Stamps for requesters; In our capacity as general agents, therefore, we shall show all quantities we hold until finishing with its name price after the pattern of the amateurs of the United Arab Republic Office and others.
10. In consideration of these services submitted by the company, the profits of the blocked funds, the expenses of broad propaganda including printing of publications, brochures and advertisements in various competent international papers, as well as the wages of employees and stationery services, the company asks to be granted legal share as per the value of one dollar, five rupees and 75 paisa
11. This contract shall be automatically renewed unless one party notifies the other of non-renewal before three months of the expiry of the contract.
12. This contract shall be valid form June 15, 1963

13. The company shall pay sixty thousand dollars upon signing this contract. This amount shall be counted of the purchases of the company from the initial issues by the post general manager when finishing stamps' printing.

We trust that our offer will receive your approval so as to be able to performing our undertakings and submitting the services you required.



In 1962, Mr. Mahdi al-Tagir (left), the then Secretary of Sheikh Rashid bin Makhtoum, the ruler of Dubai, made frequent business trips to Beirut, Lebanon. During these trips he allegedly contacted friends and business associates with the intention of locating an ex-Palestinian official to serve as a postmaster for Dubai as Sheikh Rashid had indicated he wanted an Arab for the position. The position was eventually offered to the late Mr. Edmund Lorenzo, a

Palestinian then living in Beirut. Mr. Lorenzo contacted his old friend and neighbor in Palestine, Mr. Michel Stephan, who had the contract for producing Dubai's stamps, and after discussing the situation, accepted the position.

Mr. Stephen met with Mr. Lorenzo (pictured below on the far right) and discussed possible stamp issues and the possible subjects of these issues. Later, they met with Mr. al-Tagir for two hours at the Phoenician Hotel in Beirut and went over the contract between the Government of Dubai and the Broody Stamp Co, which was to handle the production, distribution and sale of the new Dubai stamps. The three of them also discussed possible subjects for the stamps.

Mr. Stephan stated that Mr. al-Tagir frequently mentioned that the British office in Bahrain, that operated the postal services in the area, always declared that the Dubai Post Office was not self sufficient and always lost money. He was not convinced and wanted to prove to the British that stamps alone can produce a profit.



Within a short time, agreements by the Baroody Stamp Company and others were made with the remaining sheikhdoms. Since five of the seven Trucial States relied on their stamp issues to support their governments, the respective agents for the sheikhdoms began to flood the market with dubious issues, imperforate issues and souvenir sheets. Although Dubai was the first sheikhdom to issue and sell it's own stamps, it was not one of those needing the revenue to survive. This multitude of dubious issues caused the stamps of many of the Gulf countries to be negatively referred to as "sand dune issues".

Shortly thereafter, the newly created Dubai Philatelic Agency began to issue and sell the stamps of the new country. The goal of any stamp agency is to promote and sell the stamps of the county they represent, and at the same time make a profit for themselves. The new agent, Michel Stephan and his American partner, Ezzet Mosden, had been stamp dealers for years and began

issuing stamps almost immediately, thus beating Sharjah in releasing its first stamps, even though Sharjah had been negotiating to release its own stamps for some time.

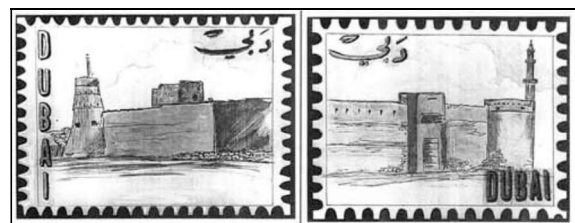
Mr. Stephan always avoided the subject of how they obtained designs and drawings for the stamps whenever I broached the subject. He did state that he was permitted to keep the rejected designs, but not those that were accepted. He would never relate who ended up with the approved designs or who submitted them. At one point he sold me two small photographs of proposed, unaccepted designs and years later sent me a stack of photostats of more unaccepted designs. He wrote that he would sell me reproductions of some of the designs as he had printed multiple copies to sell on the market. What he had printed was the center designs of some of the accepted sea life designs for the first issues.



The two small photographs of proposed designs mentioned above. It appears that two different artists did them. While the lettering is the same for "DUBAI", the frames are different. The design of the fort on the right is not of the same quality as the mosque. Size of photos: Left - 3 1/4 x 2 3/8ins. Right - 2 5/16 x 2 3/4ins. See the illustration below of the drawing and the comment. This Mosque view was never used on any of the stamps of Dubai.

Proposed Drawings for the Definitives

Please be aware that these are scans of photostats made many years ago and were "cleaned up", using a computer program to do so. The drawings were done in black and white. Also, all the drawing that were eventually selected for use were modified by shading, etc., but the images are basically the same.



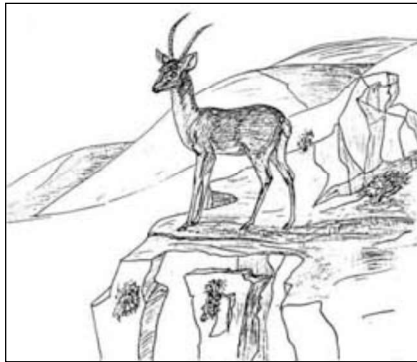
FIRST PAIR: (Left) One of the most amateurish drawings of the group. (Right) Note that the drawing shows a value. Neither drawing has a frame around the images

SECOND PAIR: (Left) A drawing of al-Fahidi Fort, that was rejected, but a similar view of the fort, done in a better rendering was used for the 1R stamp. See below for the accepted design. (Right) Another view of the fort that was not used, but again, a better drawing from the same viewpoint was used on the 3R value.

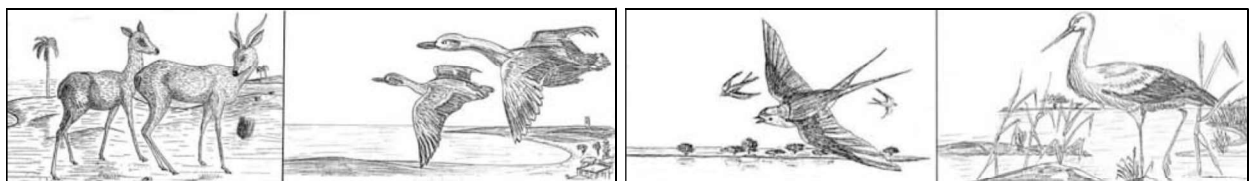


FIRST PAIR: (Left) A drawing of al-Maktoum Bridge that was not used. A view of the bridge was eventually used for four of the airmail values. (Right) This is the drawing that is illustrated above in the small photograph. While this design was rejected, a better quality drawing was accepted, but flipped horizontally and used for the issued 2Rs value.

SECOND PAIR: (Left) A crude drawing of Sheikh Makhtoum that was not used, but a similar image (a photograph), flipped horizontally was eventually used for the 10Rs value. (Right) This photo of al-Maktoum Bridge, that spans Dubai Creek, was somewhat similar to the drawing that was eventually used on four of the airmail stamps.



Mr. Stephan sent the following photostats of drawings along with the ones illustrated above, but I have no idea if they were part of a group of drawings he had wanted for Dubai, or if they were done for the other sheikhdoms for which he had the contracts. Obviously, the images of Dubai would have been for Dubai, but in a telephone conversation we had he mentioned discussing with Mr. Lorenzo and Mr. al-Tagir, the possibility of using images of the local fauna on Dubai stamps. At least two of these images were used on the essays for some of the sheikhdoms and one of the two, also for Audhali.



None of the above five drawings were used on any essays or stamps for Dubai or other sheikhdoms for that matter.

The following drawings were considered or used for other Gulf area entities.



FIRST PAIR: (Left) The image of the flying cranes was used for the 5np value essay of Umm Al-Qiwayn and it most likely came out of the series of drawings of birds and animals of the Gulf

area shown above. (Right) This drawing of a hawk, or falcon, was used for the 10np essay for Fujaira and for a proposed issue of Audhali.

SECOND PAIR: (Left) The drawing shows the Fujeira Fort and could only have been prepared for the essays for Fujeira. It has the layout used in their design. (Right) The drawing on the right of the camels has been laid out with areas for the portrait of an individual, the name of the entity and in each bottom corner areas for the values. Since this is the format for the essays of the three sheikhdoms he prepared it creates a problem. Was this part of the series on Fauna of the Dubai area that he had discussed with Mr. Lorenzo and Mr. al-Tagir or was this done as a possible design for the three sheikhdoms?

The First Definitive Issue

The following drawings of sea life, plus the three similar drawings under the Postage Dues, were the final accepted designs used for the centers of the stamps. It was these images Mr. Stephan had reproduced and offered for sale.

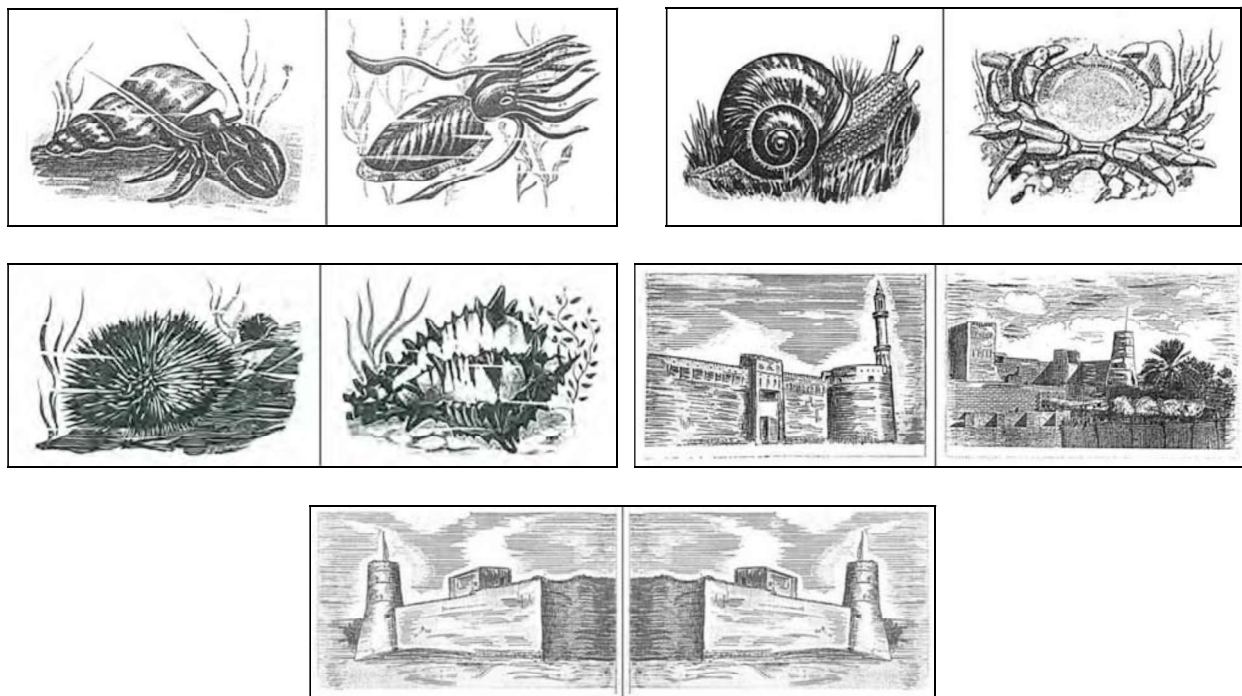


IMAGE 1: (Left) The Hermit Crab was shown on the 1np and the 15np values. (Right) The image of a Cuttlefish was used on the 2np and 20np values

IMAGE 2: (Left) The 3np and the 25np values portrayed a snail. (Right) A crab was used for the 4np and the 30np values.

IMAGE 3: (Left) A sea urchin was portrayed on the 5np and 35np values. (Right) For the 10np and the 50np the murex was used.

IMAGE 4: (Left) A second design of the fort that was used for the 1R value of the first Dubai definitives. It was printed in salmon color with a blue frame. (Right) This second rendering of this view of the fort was eventually used but was flipped horizontally and used on the 2Rs value in a red-brown with a yellow-bistre colored frame.

IMAGE 5: After being redrawn and flipped horizontally the drawing of al-Fahidi Fort, the home

of the Sheikh, was used for the 3Rs value and printed in black with a Carmen frame. (Right) The final approved and printed image.

The M. Kamoo Essays

Mr. Mosden had several essays of unacceptable designs illustrated on his Dubai pricelist but they were quite expensive and he would never give me any details regarding them when I would raise the subject. When I finally met him I purchased all of the varieties that he had and he stated Mr. Stephan was responsible for printing them. Mr. Stephan eventually told me a Mr. M. Kamoo, who was, or had been, a business partner/investor in the Barood Stamp Company, submitted them. He provided no more information regarding him, nor the nature of their relationship. From the discussion it was apparent that he and Mr. Kamoo were no longer affiliated. The designs had been worked up into essays and printed, but eventually rejected. The designs consist of a mosque with a view of Dubai City and the Gulf, and the Sheikh. None of the essays showed any value or the name of the country.



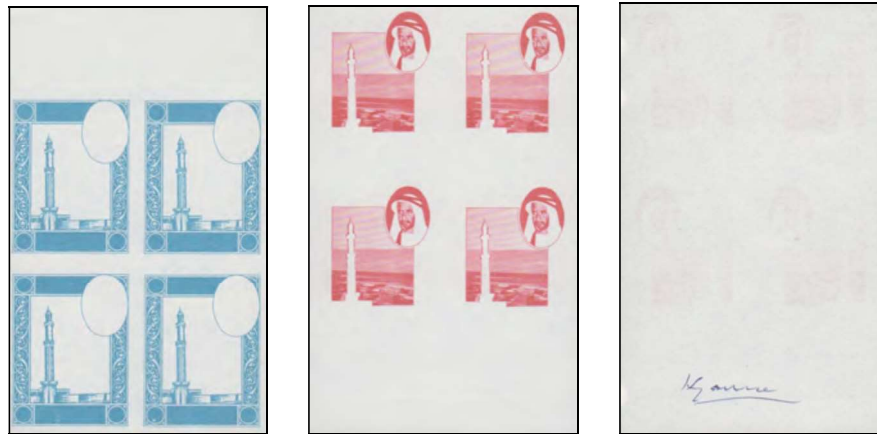
Above are two composites of which the left image was used to make the essays illustrated below. The Mosque and view of Dubai and the Gulf is a combination of photography and drawing. The image of the Sheikh is a photograph and was not used in this format. Note that the printed essay below of the Sheikh's head is taken from this photograph. The frames are the same as the printed essays. Size: Each is 6 3/4 x 8 7/8ins.

The above right image is so similar to the left sheikh image that it looks as if it is a manipulated photograph but it is a drawing of the above photo. Of all the Kamoo essays, this is the only one that has his name printed on it. It is to the left at the bottom under the bar and illustrated above. Apparently, a decision had been made to portray the sheikh in a larger portrait on the high value of the first set of stamps, as opposed to a small image in the corner of the other stamps in the set. The issued stamp has a similar image to the large black image above it but was flipped horizontally so he is facing the opposite direction.

The next page illustrates some of Kamoo's work with the top left image showing the frame and oval to carry the Sheikh's portrait. All one had to do was print this image in various colors and change the denominations to have a set of stamps. The minaret of the mosque and the wall at the bottom are a drawing as is the frame.

On the right is the center for the composite stamp consisting of a portrait of the Sheikh, the city

of Dubai and the Gulf. These three elements are from photographs, whereas the frame and mosque mentioned before are drawings. I have never seen a composite of any of the stamps with the red center shown above but most likely they exist.



The three blocks of essays are the only composite copies of the image I have seen. What is unusual is that there is no mention of Dubai on the essay even though the mosque is in Dubai and the view in the background is of Dubai. All three of these essays and the frame and composite stamp are signed on the reverse by Mr. Kamoo as illustrated by the top right image.

The mosque in the Kamoo essay was used in a different format on the issued 5Rs stamp. Again, the mosque is a drawing but the background is a photograph. The issued stamp has more details in the background and has clouds in the sky that were drawn in as in the other approved drawings.

The First Airmails Issue

Mr. Stephan did not send me any copies of drawings for the airmail designs. I have taken the two images below from the centers of the two issued stamps. The al-Makhtoum Bridge drawing is different from the other drawing that was considered for one of the two airmail designs, but closer to the photograph illustrated earlier. The falcon image was used exactly like this for both

the airmail image illustrated on the first announcement and for the revised issued design. This image was also used on the stationery for the Dubai Philatelic Agency.



The al-Makhtoum Bridge design that was used for the 20np, 50np and 75np values. In the First Announcement sent out by the Dubai Philatelic Agency, a different image of the al-Makhtoum Bridge was to have appeared on the 20np, 30np, 50np and 75np values. The falcon appeared on the 25np, 40np, 60np, and 1R values. It was also portrayed at the center, top of the stationery of the Dubai Philatelic Agency.

The First Postage Due Issue



The image of the Common European Cockle was used on the 1np, 4np and 15np values while the Common Blue Mussel was used on the 2np, 5np and 25np values. The Portuguese Oyster is portrayed on the 3np, 10np and 35np values.



The frames of each of the three sets - Definitives, Airmails and Postage Dues, have different designs, which one does not readily notice. The clever addition of the small rectangle to the right of the Sheikh's portrait squared off the center space, whereas the frame portrayed on the first announcement, while the same, had a different appearance. The Postage Dues have an interesting pattern of different shells, which is related to the center images of various shells. Surprisingly, I have never seen a copy of these frames offered by any dealer and was unaware of them until I obtained the worksheets of the NCR. These images were taken from the worksheets for the purpose of illustrating the different frame designs.

The NCR Worksheets

The stamps with printing on the reverse were only discovered when two of them came loose. By holding the sheets to the light it was possible to see that there were two others as well. After scanning them, they were glued back into their original position on their respective sheets.



ABOVE: The 2np frame front (left) while the reverse has partial imprints of a 1np frame and a 4np frame, inverted (right).

BELOW: The 4np frame front (left) while the reverse has a partial 10np frame inverted (right).

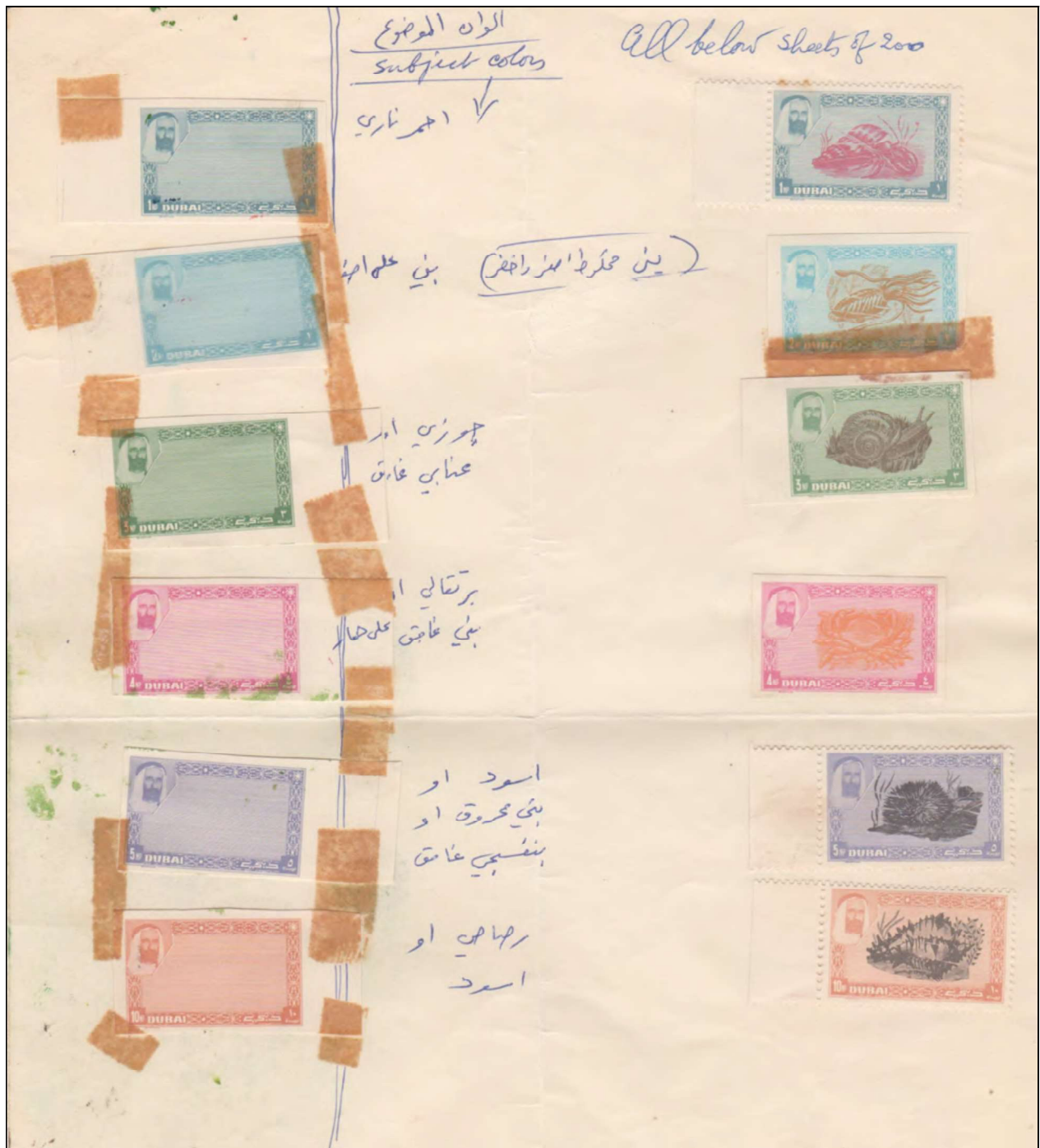


ABOVE: The 10np front (left) while the reverse has a partial 4np frame, inverted (right).

BELOW: The 15np front (left) while the reverse has a very light impression of a partial 10np impression, inverted (right).



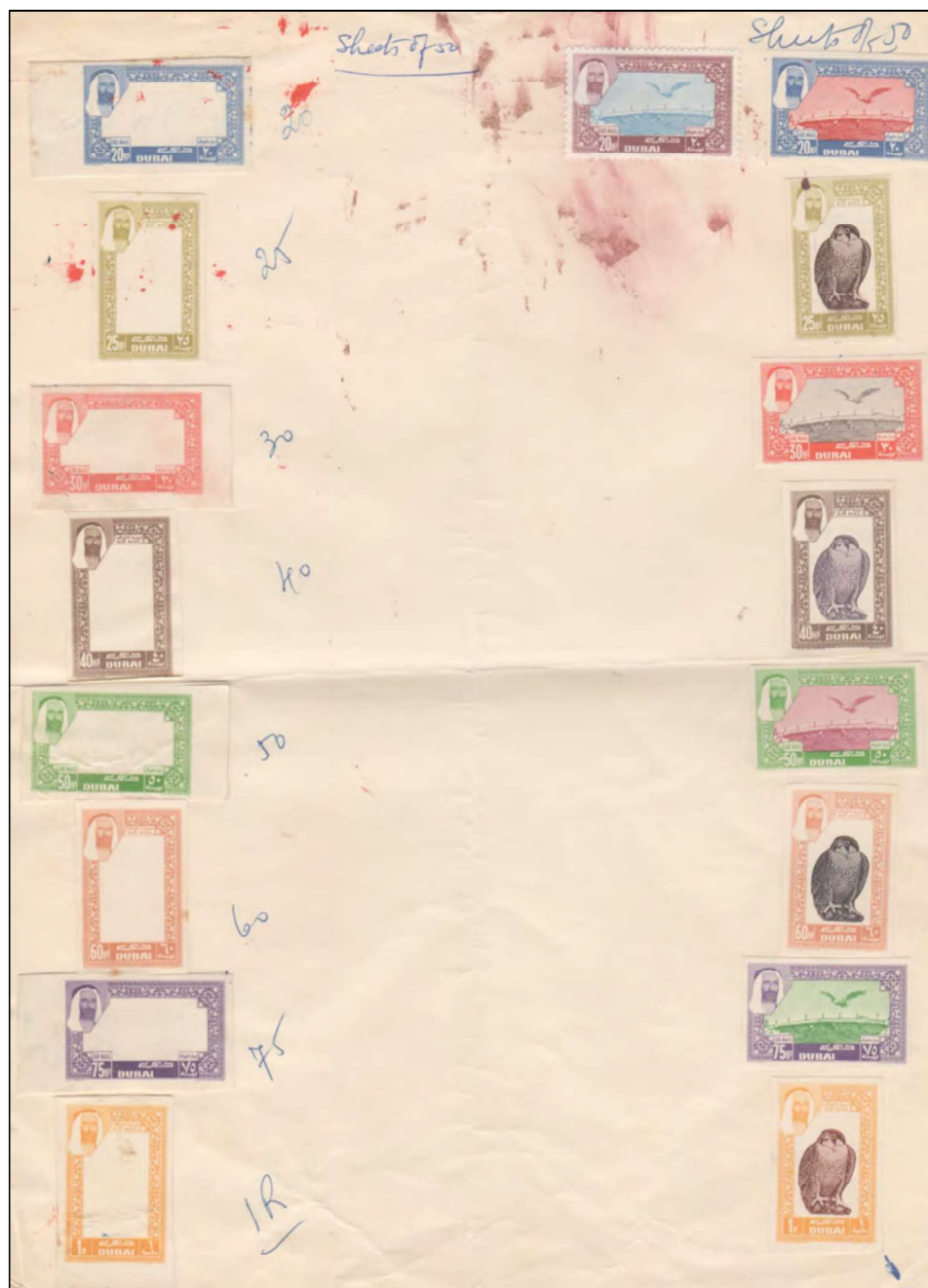
These illustrations are of the NCR (National Cash Register), Joseph Chaloub worksheets, for the First Definitive Issue, the Airmail issue and the Postage Due issue. NCR, Joseph Chaloub was the name of the firm that printed the first stamps. You will note that the left side is of frames only, while the stamps at the right are the completed composite of the frame and the center. All the stamps were glued to the pages, with the exception of the few that were taped. Unfortunately the tape has dried out and has stained the page and the stamps. Fortunately, it was only used on the first page. The first illustration has three perforated stamps on the composite side. On the high value page (illustration number 3) all of the composite stamps are perforated. All frames and other composite stamps on all the sheets are imperforated. There are two composites for two of the designs, the 5R Definitive and the 20np Airmail. Evidently they still had not made a decision, which colors to use.



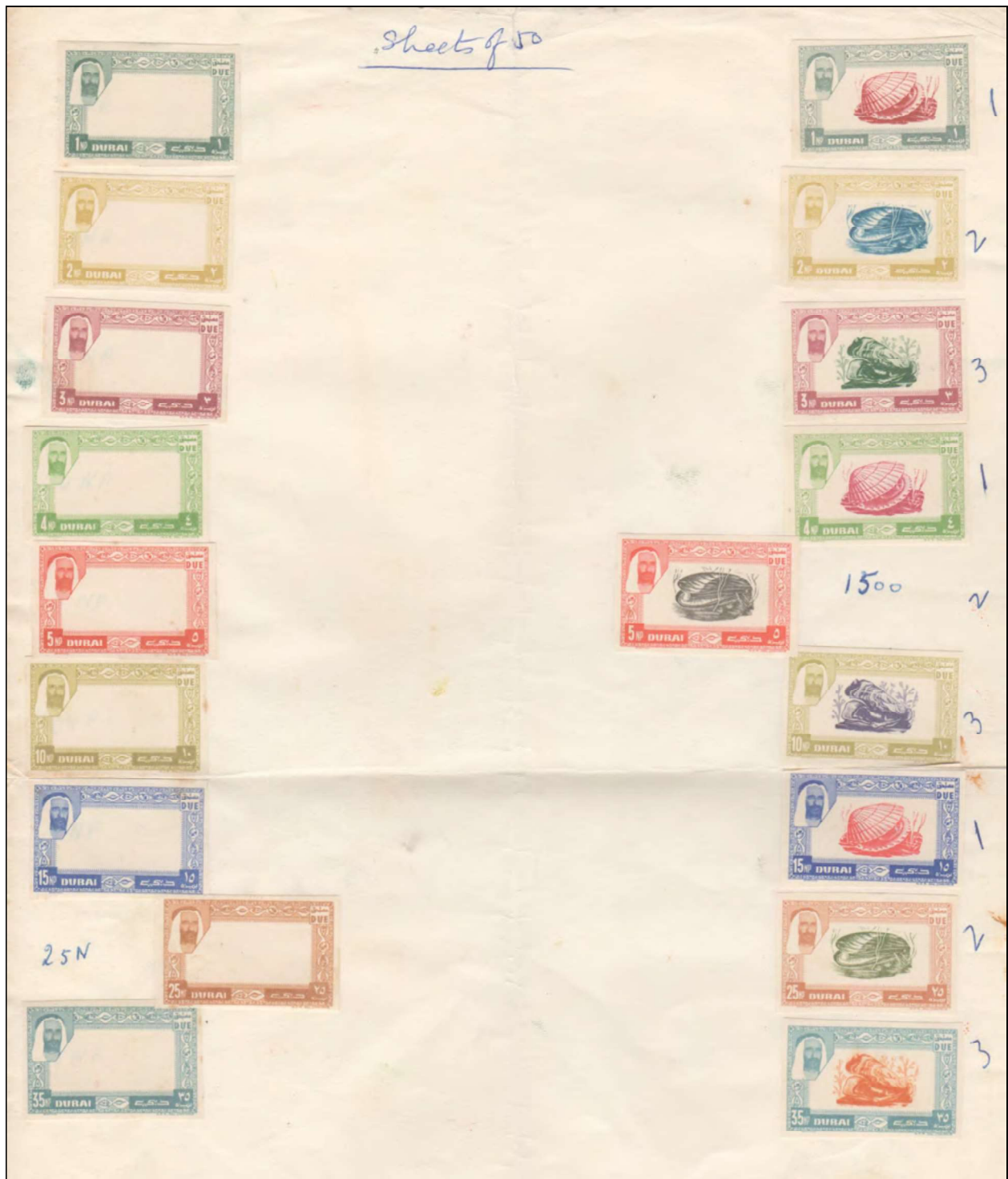
The above sheet contains the low definitive values from 1np through to 10np. At the top right of the sheet it says the sheets would each consist of 200 stamps. I have seen a few of these sheets and they are unwieldy and impossible to store.

The sheet at the top of the next page contains the 15np through 50np values. At the top in the center, again, it states they will be sheets of 200 stamps. Under the 15np stamp at the top, but covered by the stamp, it states "Sheets of 50".

This sheet at the bottom of the previous page holds the 1R through 5Rs values with a 10Rs stamp completing the set. There is no frame for the 10Rs stamp, possibly because the center consisted of two colors - turquoise and black. Note that above the line after the word "Grey", it states "Turquoise and Black". The stamp also has extra perforations horizontally through the Sheikh's shoulders and above his head. Also note that there are two colors for the 5R stamp. All of the stamps on the right are perforated, while the frames are imperforated. Under the top right stamp is written "Sheets of 50". In the bottom left corner is the date 12.2.63 (not illustrated here).



Above is the sheet with all eight values of the airmail stamps plus an extra color for the 20np value. The indication at the top left and right is that these are to be issued in sheets of 50 stamps.



The final NCR sheet is shown here and covers the Postage Due issue. The note at the top states the stamps are to be printed in sheets of 50. The numbering on the right side of the sheet is to note which denominations will have the same center with the different centers being assigned a number. Under each stamp on the left is written the value of the stamp affixed to it in that spot. Under the stamps to the right is written – descending from the top: 5,000 – 3,000 – 3,000 – 1,500 – 1,500 – 300 – 300 – 300 and 300. The significance of these numbers is unknown at this time.

UAE & Sharjah

The following is a presentation of Sharjah's first issue based on an article written by Bruce Conde for the 2nd issue of "The Arab World Philatelist" – a magazine published by Howard Courtney in the fall of 1978. It is a reproduction of the 1978 article (except where stated) but whereas the original article contained black and white images the updated version here includes six color images plus a black and white photo with additional information supplied by Howard Courtney. The late Bruce Conde supplied all the illustrated items to Howard Courtney back when the original article was written.

"How a Stamp was Born: Sharjah's First Definitives" by Bruce Conde



Anything could happen in the Arabian Nights atmosphere of the Arab/Persian Gulf principalities during the closing days of the British Raj in the 1960's – and often did.

During a second exile from Yemen for supporting Crown Prince (later Imam and King) Muhammad al-Badri's reforms of 1959, I found myself passport-less and stateless. Mentioning this to a visiting friend from the Gulf, His Highness Sheikh Saqr bin Sultan, the Ruler of Sharjah, while sipping aperitifs on the balcony of his Beirut seaside home brought the response of "No problem". April 2, 1961 found me disembarking at Sharjah's British R.A.F. airport on the last day of validity of my Yemeni "Laissez Passer". There I picked up my new British-protected Trucial States (of Oman) passport under the superscription of Sheikh Saqr of Sharjah, together with Sharjan nationality.

Wishing to reply in some measure the Ruler's kindness, I agreed to make a feasibility study of a separate postal system for Sharjah to replace an unsatisfactory arrangement with the British-administered Trucial States post office so that the small principality could issue its own definitive's to replace the rather unimaginative set for all seven of the Trucial States.

His Highness said, "What about Stamps? I wish them to be the best in the Gulf"

I explained that to achieve this it would be necessary to retain the services of Britain's leading security press – Harrison and Sons of London. Also, it would be desirable to pack the greatest amount of symbolism possible into the first issue.

"Precisely what?" he asked

"First, we must acquaint the world with where Sharjah is," I replied.

He winced at this, as though I were telling him most people did not know where the country is, or anything about it. He read my feelings and replied, "Go ahead"

To do such, we needed a map of the Trucial States, with Sharjah standing out in a separate color. I obtained an enlargement I had made of a Sharjan middle school (high school) class project map that showed the crazy quilt pattern of the seven sovereign states with their innumerable separated

enclosures scattered over the northeastern “hook” of the Arabian Peninsula. Sharjah’s four component parts stood out in brilliant red.

I explained, “At the top, to cover the Sultan of Oman’s Musandam Peninsula enclave, which doesn’t belong to the Trucial States, we can put an oval portrait of your highness and the flag of Sharjah in full colors. This will show the world your portrait, the national flag and the fact that Sharjah is the premier and most important state of the peninsular Trucial States.”

This pleased Saqr to no end and he said, “Let it be done.”

“To whom shall I entrust the art work and design?” I asked.

“Do it yourself. I don’t trust anyone else to carry out your suggestions exactly and without changes,” was his response.

“But I’m no artist,” I replied.

“Use Harrison’s staff artists, but you must make a rough sketch of what you have explained to me for them to follow, and they must follow it exactly or I won’t approve the design.

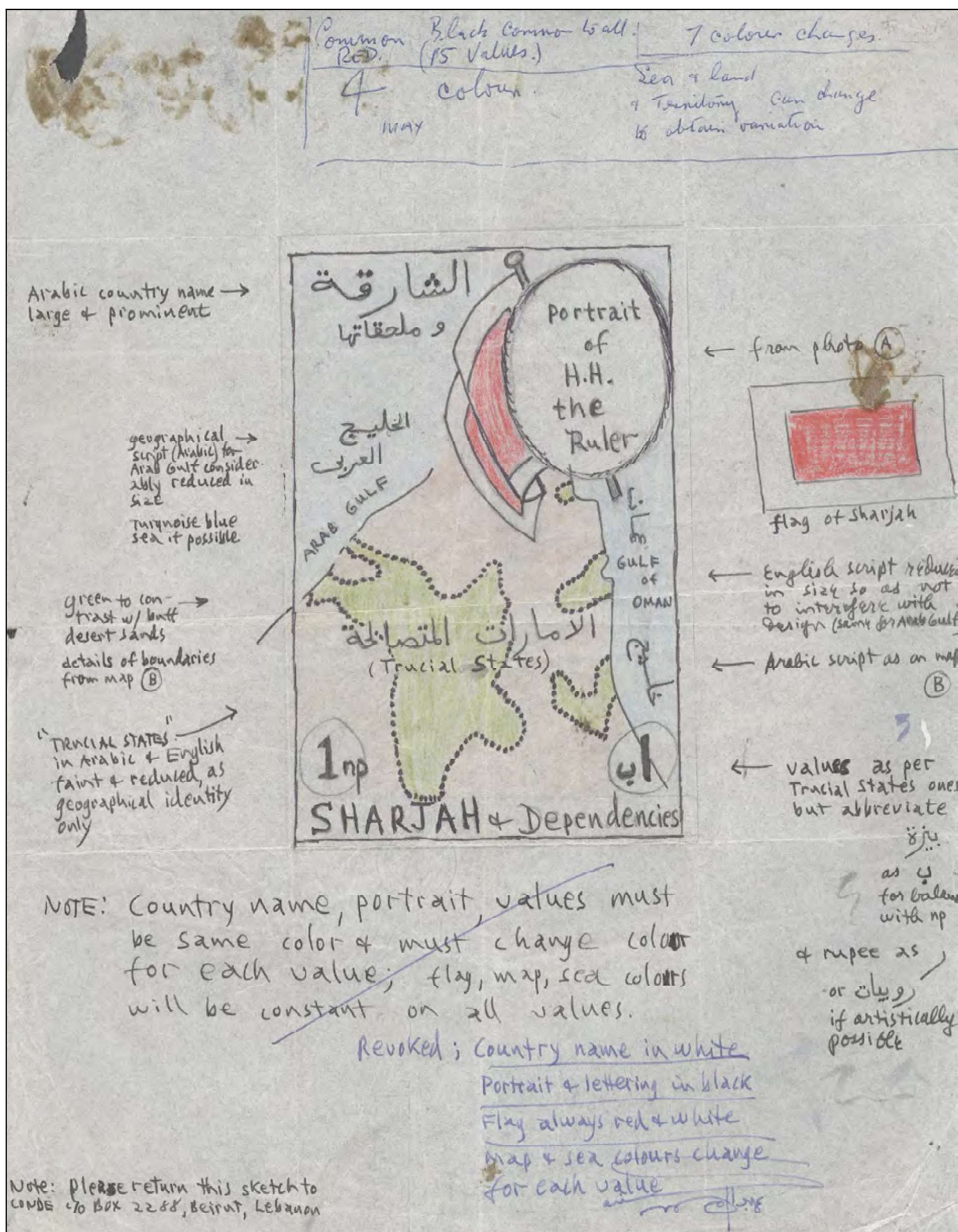
Then he took his favorite official portrait from a silver frame he had on a bookcase near his desk and said, “Use this portrait and draw in the flag in correct colors on your sketch.”

And so it came to be, as seen from the accompanying illustration of my original first draft, which he approved and ordered sent to London (see the next page). From this, Harrison’s artists drew the second pen and ink sketch, into which they inked a rough pen-picture of the Ruler. They rearranged the lettering and finally agreed on a color scheme of four colors per stamp, with the map and sea colors changed for each value. The resultant 1np low value (illustrated at the top of the previous page) was the final product and prototype of the 15-value postage and 6-value airmail set. The airmails, in addition, carry the silhouette of a hawk and the words “AIRMAIL” in Arabic and English.

The additional symbolism of the hawk recalls the Ruler’s name, “Saqr”, which means “hawk” in Arabic, and his fine group of famous hunting hawks on their golden perches. The completed set turned out to be one of the finest and most colorful of all Harrison’s printing of postages and was never equaled by subsequent Sharjan or other Trucial States issues.

The stamps should have been issued in late 1962, but due to technical reason, construction and postal arrangement delays, as Saqr would have nothing but the best, other states got wind of the project. Entrepreneurs from Beirut scrambled all over the place to get in on the act. As Dubai, the next state to the southwest of Sharjah, already held the British Trucial States main post office and postal facilities, it had a head start in that instance, but had not had the long and careful planning and execution period for an initial issue. Sheikh Rashid of that state, rather unfortunately for himself, called on one of the Beirut entrepreneurs to duplicate Sharjah’s efforts. The result, ready on June 15th, nearly a month before Sharjah’s planned first day ceremonies, was a long set of bi-colored sea life topicals (snails, urchins, crabs, etc.), in various colors with poor Sheikh Rashid tucked away, as an afterthought, in an irregular corner plaque in the same color as the stamp margin.

This is the original sketch made by Bruce Conde on onionskin paper, and sent to Harrison and Sons, Ltd., to be worked into a drawing and eventually the stamps. The size of Bruce Conde's drawing is 8½ by 11 inches.

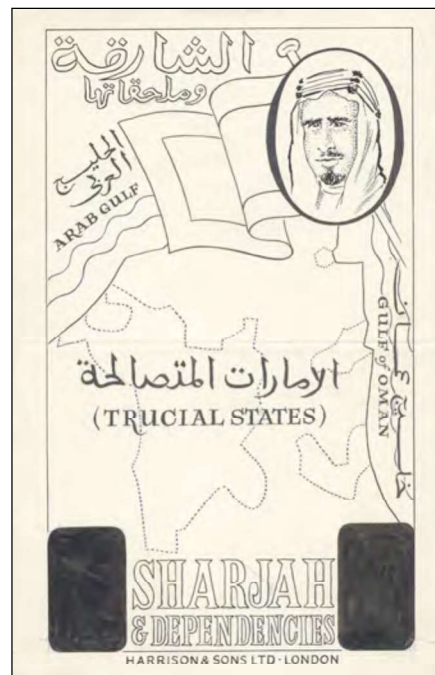


While the stamps were being prepared, postal negotiations with the British Postal Agency for the Gulf, in Bahrain, were completed, airmail contracts were signed, postal equipment and personnel hired and a small two-room post office constructed on the plaza in front of the Ruler's palace.

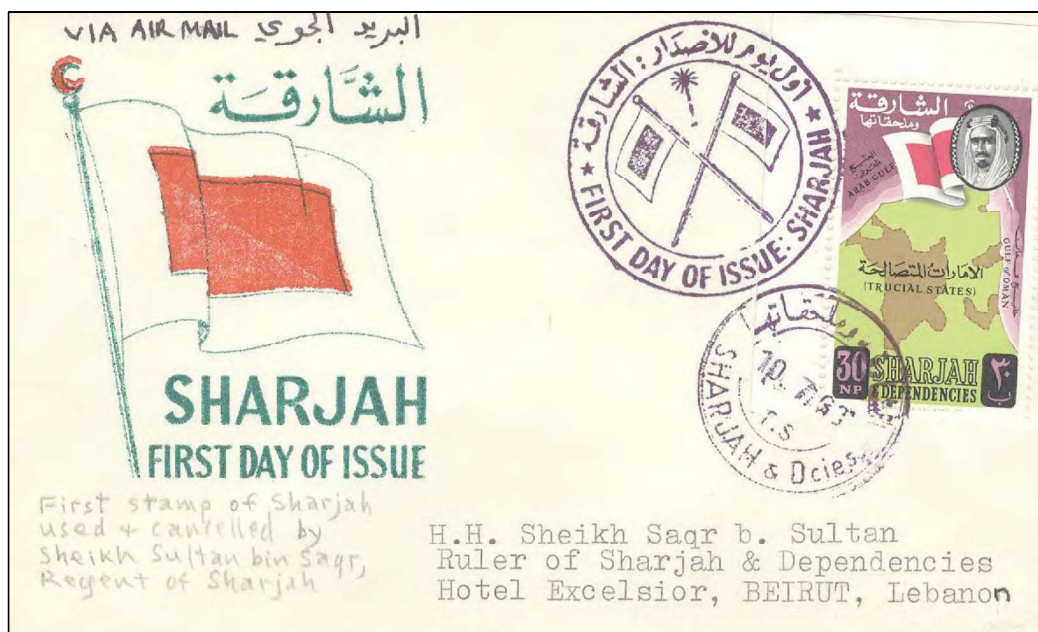
Shown here on the right is the original Harrison pen and ink drawing made from Bruce Conde's original sketch. The staff at Harrison and Sons Limited made the drawing and it measures 5 1/8 by 7 3/4 inches.

On July 10th, 1963 Saqr's teenage son, Sheikh Sultan bin Saqr, Regent of Sharjah, presided with Her Britannic Majesty's Political Agent for the Trucial States, Michael de Burton, over the opening of Sharjah's first Post Office and officially received from Postmaster General Yusef Salim Tadros the first sheet of Sharjan stamps.

He affixed one of them to a first day cover addressed to his father in Beirut and cancelled it with his own hand. Political Agent de Burton affixed and cancelled the second cover. The first of these, with a 30np Arab Postal Union area rate stamp affixed, was later given by Sheikh Saqr to me and is illustrated with this article (below).



The original First Day Cover sent to His Highness Sheikh Saqr bin Sultan, Ruler of Sharjah & Dependencies, who was staying at the Hotel Excelsior in Beirut, Lebanon, by his teenage son, who presided over the first day ceremonies. The note under the cachet on the left, in pencil, reads, "First stamp of Sharjah used & cancelled by Sheikh Sultan bin Saqr, Regent of Sharjah". The First Day Cover measures 6 by 3 1/2 inches.



Further to the First Day cover on the previous page if you look carefully you will notice that the stamp used is actually the top left corner stamp – so the first stamp of the first sheet on the first cover sent from Sharjah.

The first issue of Sharjah, unlike subsequent Trucial States fantasies, was a “clean” issue, with no imperforates, souvenir sheets, artificial errors, “deluxe” or “numbered” sheets, marginal imprinted waste, or “rare varieties”. It still sells for only a few dollars and its total face was less than 3 Rupees for the postage values and 25 for the airmails. No so Dubai, whose nominal face

ran to 56 Rupees (\$12.32), with so many varieties and “errors” that they have not been discovered in their totality today. The explanation is simple, they were what is called in the States a “basement printing job”, rather than products of a security press.

The only oddity discovered among Sharjah’s first issue post office stocks and presented by the Postmaster General to me, was a somewhat embarrassing one. It appears that the black geographical and postal lettering was printed separately from the fine black oval portrait of the Ruler, and on one sheet of the 5np value, particularly at the bottom of the sheet, this black plate had slipped to the left, leaving “Gulf of Oman” neatly lettered across the country’s eastern desert.

Illustrated here is the only known variety of the first Sharjah issue. It is a shift in the black printing to the left.



One sheet was discovered, of which this is the plate number block. Due to the fact that Harris and Sons, Ltd. were a security press; they made every attempt to pull any sheets that did not meet their rigid standards. That is standard practice for any security press.

Although there were no imperforated stamps, imperforate color essays, on a gold-embossed Harrison & Son card, beneath the British Royal Arms and “By Appointment To Her Majesty the Queen, Printers”, were submitted to the Ruler for his Highness’ approval. One of these, the 5 Rupees airmail, was given by Sheikh Saqr to me and is illustrated here.





The final image is this photograph, which measures 3 1/8 by 2 1/8 inches and was sent by Bruce Conde to Howard Courtney for inclusion in the original article.

As Conde describes it the building in the background is the newly constructed Sharjah Post Office, with Conde standing on the left holding the Sharjah flag with the Postal Assistant Tony Muawwad. Postmaster General Yusef Salim Tadros is on the far right next to the postal clerk

To complete the story about Sharjah's First Definitives Bruce Conde's original letter, as it was sent to Howard Courtney back in 1978. This is the first time it has been illustrated anywhere.

HOW A STAMP WAS BORN: Sharjah's First Definitive Value
Bruce Conde

Anything could happen in the Arabian nights atmosphere of the Arab (Persian) Gulf principalities during the closing days of the British Raj in that part of the world in the 1960s — and often did. The writer, during a second exile from Yemen, on the opposite corner of the peninsula, for supporting Crown Prince (later Imam and King) Mohammed al-Badr's reforms of 1959, was passportless and stateless. Mentioning this to a visiting friend from the Gulf, His Highness Sheikh Saqr bin Sultan, the Ruler of Sharjah, over Lebanese aperitifs on the balcony of his Beirut seaside home, brought the response of "no problem" from the Ruler, as he took another puff of the maghili or water-pipe. April 2, 1961 found me disembarking at Sharjah's British R.A.F. airport on the last day of validity of my Yemeni laissez-passer. There awaited me a new British-protected Trucial States (of Oman) passport under the superscription of Sheikh Saqr of Sharjah, together with Sharjah nationality.

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Once postal negotiations with the British Postal Agency for the Gulf, in Bahrain, were completed and airmail contracts signed, postal equipment and personnel secured and a small two-room post office constructed on the plaza in front of the Ruler's palace, His Highness said: "How about stamps? I wish them to be the best in the Gulf." I explained that to achieve this it would be necessary to retain the services of Britain's leading security press, Harrison and Sons, of London, as well as to pack the greatest amount of symbolism possible into the first issue. "Precisely what?" he asked me. "First, we must acquaint the world with where Sharjah is." He winced at this, as though to say "Are you telling me my whole country is unknown to the world at large?" I looked back at him in a way which said "yes", so he subsided and said: "Go ahead." To do that we need a map of the Trucial States, with Sharjah standing out in a separate colour" and I unrolled an enlargement I had made of a Sharjah Middle School (high school) class project map of the crazy quilt pattern of seven sovereign states with innumerable separated enclaves scattered over the northeastern "hook" of the Arabian peninsula, with Sharjah's four-component parts standing out in brilliant red. "Then, at the top, to cover the Sultan of Oman's Musandam Peninsular enclave, which doesn't belong to the Trucial States at all, we can put an oval portrait of Your Highness and the flag of Sharjah, in full colours. This will also solve our other three problems of showing the world the Ruler's portrait, the national flag, and the fact that Sharjah is the premier and most important state of the peninsular Trucial States." This pleased Saqr no end and he said: "let it be done." "To whom shall I entrust the art work, the design?" I asked. "Do it yourself, I don't trust anyone else to carry out your suggestions exactly and without changes." "But I'm no artist." "Use Harrison's staff artists, but you must make a rough sketch of what you have explained to me, for them to follow and they must follow it to the letter or I won't approve the stamps." He then took down his favorite official portrait from a silver frame on a bookcase near his desk and said: "Use this picture, and draw in the flag in correct colours on your sketch."

And so it was, as may be seen in the accompanying illustration of my original first draft, which he approved and ordered sent to London. From this, Harrison's artists drew up the second pen-and-ink sketch, into which they dubbed a rough pen-picture of the Ruler, rearranging the lettering and finally agreeing on a colour scheme of four colours per stamp, with the map and sea colours changed for each value. The resultant 1 naysa paria low value, illustrated beside the Harrison sketch, was the final product and prototype of the 15-value postage and 6-value

airmail set, running up to 100 n.p. for the former and from 1 through 10 rupees for the latter. The airmails, in addition to carrying that inscription, have a hawk superimposed above the map of the main part of Sharjah. This additional symbolism recalls the Ruler's name, Saqr, which means "hawk" in Arabic, and his fine group of famous hunting hawks on their golden perches. The completed set turned out to be one of the finest and most colourful of all of Harrison's printings of postage stamps and was never equalled by subsequent Sharjah or other Trucial States issues. Technically these stamps should have been issued in late 1962 but due to technical, construction and postal arrangement delays — as Saqr would settle for nothing but the best Trucial States postal set-up — other states got wind of the project, with entrepreneurs from Beirut scrambling all over the place to get in on the act. As Dubai, the next state to the southwest of Sharjah, already held the British Trucial States main Post Office and postal facilities, it had a head start in that instance but had not had the long and careful planning and execution period for an initial issue. Sheikh Rashid of that state, rather unfortunately for himself, called on one of the Beirut entrepreneurs to duplicate Sharjah's efforts. The result, ready on June 15th, nearly a month ahead of Sharjah's planned first day ceremonies, was a tawdry set of some of the most unprepossessing bird-themed "sea life" topicals — (snails, urchins, crabs, etc.) — in dull colours, unimaginative designs and with poor Sheikh Rashid tucked away, as an afterthought, in an irregular corner plaque in the same colour as the stamp margin.

On July 10th, 1963, Saqr's teenage son, Sheikh Sultan bin Saqr, Regent of Sharjah during the absence of his father in Beirut on state business, presided, with Her Britannic Majesty's Political Agent for the Trucial States, Michael de Burton, over the opening of Sharjah's first Post Office and officially received from Postmaster General Yusef Salim Tabros the first sheet of Sharjah stamps. He affixed one of them to a FD cover addressed to his father, in Beirut, and cancelled it with his own hand, with Political Agent de Burton affixing and cancelling the second cover. The first of these, with a 30 n.p. Arab Postal Union area rate stamp affixed, was later given by Sheikh Saqr to the writer and is illustrated in this article.

The first issue of Sharjah, unlike subsequent Trucial States fantasies, was a "clean" issue, with no imperfs, souvenir sheets, artificial errors, "deluxe" or "numbered" sheets, marginal imprinted waste, or "rare varieties". It still sells for only a few dollars and its total face was less than 3 rupees for post and 25 for airmail. Not so, Dubai, whose nominal face ran to 56 rupees (\$12.32), with so many varieties and "errors" that they have not been "discovered" in their totality today. The explanation is simple: they were what is called in the states a "basement printing" job instead of products of a security press. The only error discovered among Sharjah's first issue post office stocks and presented by the Postmaster General to the writer, for illustration in this article, was a somewhat embarrassing one. It appears that the black geographical and postal lettering was printed separately from the fine black oval portrait of the ruler, and on one sheet, particularly at the bottom of the sheet, this black plate had slipped to the left, leaving "Gulf of Oman" neatly lettered across the country's eastern desert!

Although there were no imperf stamps, imperforate colour essays, on a gold-embossed Harrison & Son's card, beneath the British Royal Arms and "By Appointment To Her Majesty the Queen, Printers", were submitted to the Ruler for His Highness' approval. One of these, the 5 rupee airmail, was given by Sheikh Saqr to the writer, and is illustrated as a tailpiece to this article on the birth of Sharjah's first stamp.

Links, Contacts and Credits

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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/arabgulfsandyemenstampgroup>

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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Payment Methods:

1. PayPal payment can be made to my PayPal account: arabiangulfphilately@gmail.com

2. Pound Sterling payments can be wired to my UK bank account with HSBC Jersey:

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