

ARABIAN GULF STATES

POSTAL HISTORY

QUARTERLY

(Including 8 colour plates)



Handwritten text, likely a postscript or address, is visible below the stamps.

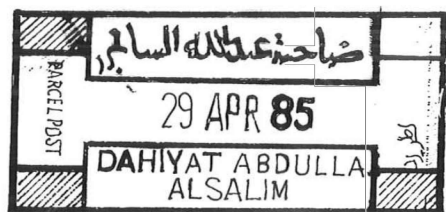
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No.2 Winter 2001

KUWAIT PARCEL CARDS

These cards bearing postage stamps are attached - usually pinned - to the parcel. The addressee is required to sign the card on the back to acknowledge delivery but this is not often done. The cards are returned to the Post Office.

The card shown here is clearly stamped with a standard pattern parcel post canceller which were introduced from 1958 onwards at all the State Post Offices. I have a photostat from G.E. Mitchell taken from the Kuwaiti Magazine dated 28.5.59. This illustrates the parcel post canceller from Mina-Al-Ahmadi and noted the date of issue at that office as 25.5.59. The two cancellers on the card are reproduced below. The single ring canceller dated 29.4.85 and reading Dahiyat Abdulla Al-Salim in the lower arc is placed in the box reserved for 'The stamp of the office of origin or the despatching office of exchange'. Usually the former. The cards are bilingual - French and English! The airmail cachet is also a post office strike.



KUWAIT CANCELLERS

The single ring Mabarakya St. introduced during the Postal Agency period, type 34 was taken out of service when the post office closed on 31.1.59. A State P.O. named Mubarakiya opened in the same location on 14.7.62 and type 34 saw temporary service until a bilingual type replaced it. (A.N.D. page 176)

Twenty years later on 27.2.82 an airmail cover to U.K. is recorded with this same canceller. Enquiries to the Kuwait P.O. about this very late use brought the following replies:

(1) dated 1.9.82

The canceller, with the name 'Mabarakya St.' was adopted and used temporarily when the post office was reopened. However this has been withdrawn from service and is not in use anymore - as noted above.

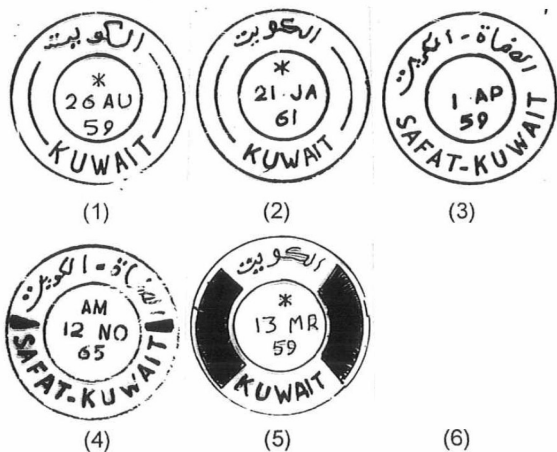
(2) dated 24.11.82

The canceller was inadvertently used and the same has since been withdrawn - never to be seen again?

ORDINARY MAIL CANCELLERS

The covers shown opposite have been cancelled by two of the 3.1cm diameter types which were in use during the early years of the State postal service. Neither bears the name of an office of origin but that on the top cover is recorded as Safat. (A.N.D. page 180). The origin of date stamp on the lower cover has not yet been determined. In March 1959, there were three offices in Kuwait Town, the General P.O., Safat and Sief of which only the second appeared to have a named canceller for ordinary mail. Over the page is a display of all the large (3.1cm dia.) date stamps which I have recorded. Number (2) is common but (5) has only been recorded once.

The large diameter date stamps 1958-67



(1) Is the only one recorded by AND (as type 38) and located at Safat P.O.

Recorded use: 11.3.58 - 30.7.66 and 10.2.81 from philatelic bureau. Seen with AM, PM and *.

(2) Not located.

Recorded use: 11.12.60 - 15.8.67 with AM, PM and *.

(3) The first named ordinary mail date stamp from Safat.

Recorded use: 23.4.59 - 17.11.65 with AM, PM and *.

(4) As above but including small wedges.

Recorded use: 13.2.63 and 31.5.64 as a backstamp with AM and PM respectively.

(5) As above but large wedges - location unknown. See previous page.

(6) Al Ahmadi recorded use: 23.7.59 - 8.8.67 with AM, PM and *. Also as a backstamp on 17.3.63.

SIEF, SAFAT and GPO Kuwait (QIBLA)

I have recorded no ordinary mail post marks bearing Sief although the name occurs on the large oval registered strikes. Qibla, the location of the new G.P.O. which opened 1.2.59 was not a name used on any date stamps as far as I am aware. It was however printed on the early registration labels but always excised or crossed out.

From 1.2.58 - 31.1.59 the Agency P.O. at Sief and the State P.O. at Safat operated side by side. Local ordinary mail from both offices was cancelled at Safat and any originating at Sief cannot be identified. Registered local mail can be identified by registration label as shown on the cover on the next page. The sequence of operations in this case was :-

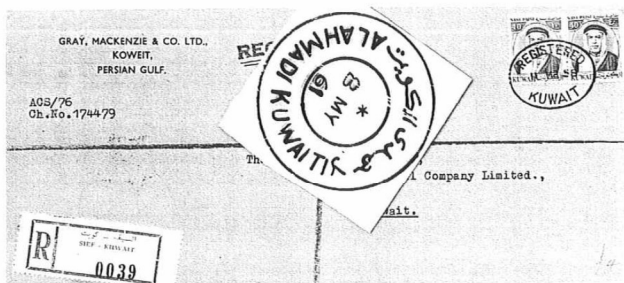
- i) letter handed in at Sief (Agency P.O.) and franked with local stamps. (Valid only within Kuwait.)
- ii) registered with bilingual label which again was for local use only.
- ii) cancelled and backstamped at Sief 11.3.58 with the registered oval T29.
- iii) transferred to Safat (State P.O.) and backstamped 12.3.58 : T38
- iv) despatched by Safat and received by Agency P.O. in Ahmadi 13.3.58: T30.

On 1 February 1959 the State Postal service took over the former agency offices and Sief received registered cancellers inscribed with the name Sief. It also started using registration labels printed 'Sief-Kuwait' in English only!

During this early period much of the local mail and incoming international mail bore a Safat backstamp indicating this and not the G.P.O. to be the exchange office.

To be continued.

Front of the local registered cover dated 11.3.58.
The registration label is printed blue on white with black serial number. The postal rate was 10 fils plus 40 fils registration.



The back of the cover which records the route. The postal service was meticulous in date stamping, backstamping and applying cachets to mail during this period.



BAHRAIN AEROGRAMMES

Aerogramme is the more modern and universally accepted word to describe lightweight mail sent by airmail. The earlier names, Air Mail Letter Card and Air Letter refer to the same although Card was never a suitable word to use.

The following aerogrammes are shown courtesy of J. Gillham and extend the types and usage previously recorded from Bahrain. None of the formula sheets are exclusive to the Gulf but excluding the 'Blue Triangle' type were available at civilian post offices.

Page 11 'Blue Triangle' type.

There are no Gulf postal markings but the sender has written the origin HMS Jufair (Bahrain Naval Base) and inside the date 29.1.46. This information would normally have been censored but was probably acceptable by 1946. The Post Office - Maritime Mail post mark has been seen before on air letters.

Page 12 'Corr.66' type.

This is a previously unrecorded sub-type with all instructional markings in upper case. The code on the back panel gives the date: 27.10.44 followed by the printing run 20,00,000. The latter is 20 lakhs where a lakh is an Indian unit of 100,000 (i.e. 2 million). The franking is 2x3 annas cancelled type 8,26.11.46 and finally returned to Bahrain on 14.2.47 via Madras as an unclaimed item. BAPCO had a mail office in Awali at this time but no Post Office until 1950 and the Bahrain postal markings on this letter are from the Manama Post Office.

It is interesting to reflect that more recent political attitudes in the Gulf States has resulted in Arabian replacing the more familiar Persian as written on this letter. By the 1960's some of the Gulf postal authorities were excising the name Persian from addresses on incoming mail.

Page 13 'Corr 66' type.

As previously but used in the British Agency period 8.7.48. This sheet with the same code numbers is printed on watermarked paper. I don't know the spacing of the watermarks on the paper to say whether some sheets were without because of the printing layout. The watermark reads :-

Govt. of India
I T P M Co. LTD.

This Air Letter was sent by the Superintendent/British Postal Agencies/Bahrain but is not an 'On Postal service' letter which were not generally franked. (A few of the later aerogrammes with the printed stamp designs have however been recorded with an O.P.S. cachet.) The message inside reads that he was acceding to the request of the addressee. Registered Air Letters are fairly unusual and this one probably confirms that formula sheets were available at the post offices before the first overprinted types came on sale in 1952.

Page 14 Bahrain BAL4a 10.1.55.

The Gulf aerogrammes have been listed and numbered in my catalogues. This particular sheet is a genuine commercial registered letter franked 6 annas postage+6 annas reg. fee which begs the question about the rate of 9 annas on the previous one. The date printed in red I take to record its delivery at the BBC.

Page 15 Formula sheet 10.9.63.

From Awali and not as far as I am aware a post office issue.

SECURITY: THINK - BEFORE YOU WRITE !!

SENDER ON ACTIVE SERVICE - FROM H.M. FORCES

BY AIR MAIL

IF ANYTHING IS ENCLOSED THIS CARD WILL BE SENT BY ORDINARY MAIL

POST OFFICE "BLUE TRIANGLE" AIR LETTER

C. H. MANSFIELD ESQR
HOLLYWOOD RADIO AND
TELEVISION INSTITUTE
810 WEST SIXTH ST.,
LOS ANGELES 14
CALIF. U.S.A.

I. A. F. F. - 1083 (TRIANGLE)

Signature: *Lord Mansfield*

private or family matters.

of this airmail letter card refer to nothing but

I certify on my honour that the contents

The following certificate must be signed by the writer: -

NOTE: This airmail letter card need not be censored

Regimentally. It is subject to censorship at the Base

Sender's Name: *K. N. PANDÉ*

Rank: *Leading Telegraphist*

No: *7924*

Written in: *English* (Language)

FOR USE OF H. M. FORCES ONLY

BY AIR MAIL

AIR LETTER
IF ANYTHING IS ENCLOSED
THIS LETTER WILL BE SENT
BY ORDINARY MAIL

15

BAHRAIN REVENUE
POSTAGE 3 ANNAS

BAHRAIN REVENUE
POSTAGE 6 ANNAS

S.D. Barfoot, Esq.,
37, Forestdale,
Southgate,
London, N, 14.

R
No 2412
BAHRAIN

CORR. 66

SECOND FOLD HERE

SENDER'S NAME AND ADDRESS—
Postal Superintendent,
British Postal Agencies,
Persian Gulf,
BAHRAIN.

1500, 607
2151
24/4/5

TO OPEN CUT HERE

S.S.P.LTD. P.O. NO. 5081/5/A-534—DT. 27-10-44 20.00.000

276

BY AIR MAIL
PAR AVION
AIR LETTER
AEROGRAMME

Registered

POSTAGE
BAHRAIN 6 CANNES

British Broadcasting Corporation
Arabic Section
London
England
32 JAN 1955

R
BAHRAIN
No 9034

Second fold here

Sender's name and address: Abu Khalid
96 Anwar
P.C.H.
Bahraw
P.G.

22 293

IF ANYTHING IS ENCLOSED THIS LETTER
MAY BE SENT BY ORDINARY MAIL

10 44 55
REGISTERED
BAHRAIN

ping. e
142 1243 35/2

Formula Air Letter from Bahrain
There are no imprints other than those shown below which
indicate either where it was printed or put on sale.

BY AIR MAIL
AEROGRAMME

If anything is enclosed,
this form will be surcharged
at rate for Air Mail Letters.

Mr. R. J. Flock
14, London Place.
OXFORD.
ENGLAND.

Second fold here

SENDER'S NAME A.R.S. Iyer
AND ADDRESS Bahrain

10/9/63

Late use of Agency cancellers in Bahrain

The State post offices in the Gulf kept various of the Agency cancellers in service well after the British Postal Agencies had closed. This included the more recent bilingual English/Arabic as well as the former English only types. The final Agency post office, Abu Dhabi closed 31.12.66 and the latest recorded use of an Agency canceller is from Bahrain as listed below.

The types are illustrated in Neil Donaldson's book but a brief description is included here.

Type	Latest recorded
English only :-	
21 s.r. Bahrain	2.12.82 #
24 d.r. Awali Bahrain	24.6.81
27A s.o. Reg. Bahrain 1	6.10.76
27A " " 2	20.5.76
Bilingual :-	
34 s.r. Manama Bahrain 1	6.9.82
34 " " 2	26.10.82
35 Awali Bahrain 1	30.12.70
36 Muharraq Bahrain 1	21.8.67
39 d.o. Muharraq Bahrain	22.10.80
English :-	
40 d.r. Bahrain 4	30.12.75
40 " 5	2.5.82
43 large s.r. Bahrain Paid (in red)	4.12.73

#Latest use of an Agency type with '18' replacing the *
s.r.= single ring;d.r.=double ring;s.o.=single oval and
d.o.=double oval.the last type is the same size and shape
as those brought into service by the State P.O.in Kuwait
around 1960.

This rounds off the Bahrain section for this quarter.Next
issue more on the 'War Tax' issues.

Comment

This edition has been compiled fast on the heels of the first before I have had any reaction to this new venture. Just by chance John Gillham sent me some Bahrain Air letters to examine. These have made an ideal centre feature. I have started my list of Kuwait cancellations which overlaps and extends the already published information and have received some very useful information from Neil Donaldson which will appear in future editions.

The next edition will visit Abu Dhabi and.....well it depends on you.

The initials AND which will occur quite regularly refer to A.N.Donaldson and his two publications :-

(1) The Postal Agencies in Eastern Arabia and the Gulf published 1975.

(2) supplement to the above published by Bridger and Kay Guernsey 1994 and still available.

Front Cover

A neat little cover sent surface mail from Muscat to Scotland franked 2 1/2 annas and cancelled type 14a. This Indian P.O. date stamp continued in service until at least May 1949.

Back Cover

An air mail Qatar to Yorkshire franked 3x10dh and 30dh(SG403,444) and cancelled Dukhan, Qatar 20.12.72. Is the boxed cachet ' 2ND CLASS / AIRMAIL ' a post office strike?

18
Muscat

To fully appreciate the time, place and the people who give the background and colour to an extra-ordinary cover shown and described in the following pages I recommend you read 'ARABIAN SANDS' by Wilfred Thesiger. This book first published in 1959 records his journeys on foot and camel through Southern Arabia and the harsh nomadic life of the Desert Arab tribes.

Referring again to the cover I received the following from Neil Donaldson :-

An interesting cover and I think you are right in assuming Said bin Taimur to have been the sender ; but I don't think that the Cairo to Muscat route was by air throughout. I would have thought more likely by air Cairo-Suez and thence by S.S. steamer from Doha to Muscat - but to prove this it would be necessary to establish a sailing from Doha during the first week of February 1951.

The oval seal (which was struck upside down!) reads 'Waslahat al niketa al Mesriya' - meaning 'Egyptian Censorship Administration (or Department)', and the two letters in the lower part of the oval are 'EM'. I enclose a photo (which please keep) showing a clearer strike of the oval. You will see that this cover had a MS 'A 3215', similar to your 'A 170' : I think these probably both originated in Cairo, possibly in the Censor's office.

I am afraid that the arabic on the wax seal is not clear enough to decipher.

Yours sincerely,

A. N. Donaldson
A. N. Donaldson

P.S.

& Cairo - Bahariya and on by B.L.

This article was intended for publication elsewhere but it doesn't fit easily into any specialist society slot. Aden, Egypt, Muscat, Oman all have a part to play in the story and the latter was at that time not even recognised as a country in the modern political sense. So it could be one reason for this booklet - a home for waifs and strays, but I hope interesting ones.

19
IT'S A LONG WAY TO MUSCAT
'The past is a foreign country we cannot visit'

The cover I describe here evokes a memory of the past in a country which has changed so rapidly since 1970 that little remains in written records of the former ways of life. There are only tenuous links between this cover and the dedicated fields of study of the specialist societies of the Indian and Gulf Postal Services but never the less it is a fascinating item of mail.

In 1951 only one post office operated in the country we now call Oman and that in the capital Muscat. It mainly served the local Indian business community whose trade was with the Indian sub-continent and other Gulf ports. Very little mail went elsewhere.

The Sultan had a palace in Muscat and a secondary residence in Salalah in the remote southern province of Dhofar. This cover was sent from Salalah but there were problems communicating with the world outside. There were no overland routes from the town and although it was on the shores of the Arabian Sea it had no harbour. How did this cover enter the postal system? A clue was provided by a reference in 'Arabian Sands'. Wilfred Thesiger records a flight he made from Aden to RAF Salalah in 1945 and a further reference in J.E. Peterson's 'Oman in the Twentieth Century' gave details of the air route which had been developed by the RAF in pre-war days from Aden to Guadur. This survived in truncated form serving Salalah and Masirah until the mid 1970's. The cover almost certainly went by this route to Aden where it was registered and posted.

Details :-

(1) Sender: Said bin Taimur /Salalah /via Aden

Was the sender the Sultan?

Written by his own hand? He did receive a British style education in India and increasingly spent long periods in Salalah.

(2) B. Woods Ballard was one of a succession of British expatriots employed in government service by the Sultan.

(3) The embossed 'Dhofar' printed in red indicates a letter of importance as does the wax seal.

Postal details :-

(4) Franked 7x2 annas (Aden SG 20) and cancelled Aden Reg.27.1.51.

(5) Transit Cairo - Farouk Airport 30.1.51 and less clearly below 31.1.51.

(6) Muscat 7.2.51.

Other markings :-

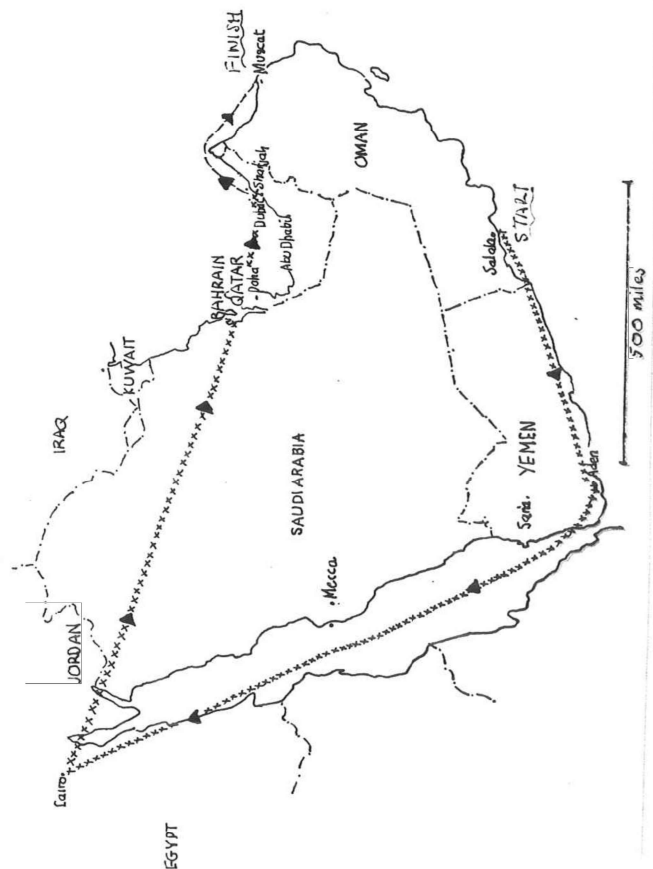
(7) Oval cachet reading 'Egyptian Censorship Administration'

(8) Blue crayon A 1Y0 and lines. Similar markings have been recorded on a cover from Kuwait to South Africa which went via Cairo in 1948. They may have been applied by the Censor's Office in Cairo.

Route	Mileage	Time
Salalah to Aden by air (RAF)	600	?
Aden to Cairo airmail	1500	4
Cairo to Sharjah airmail	1400	
Sharjah to Dubai	}	8
Dubai to Muscat by sea		
	3900	12 days

There is obviously speculation about some of the details which may yet be verified but there is no doubt that the letter nearly circumnavigated Arabia and took 12 days and 3900 miles to arrive at Muscat a distance of only 500 odd miles from Salalah.

Route : xxxxxxxx > by air and -----> by sea.
(Diagrammatic only)



QATAR 1972



Aerogrammes of the Arabian Gulf
Independence Issues
by
T.E.Jones
(Second edition 1998)
price £5 post paid or £7 airmail worldwide
This contains the most accurate and up to date
information.

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