

ARABIAN GULF STATES

POSTAL HISTORY

QUARTERLY



BAHRAIN local mail from Muharraq 1953

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2
Local mail 23 May 1957



Mrs. A. E. Bostock,
Box 277, Awali,
Bahrain.

A good example of type 22 struck in purple 8.8.51



3

A postal history collection of Bahrain

The front page of this issue shows a classic cover from the more recent postal history of Bahrain. This is one of the items from a collection spanning the years 1949 to 1986 and I have been fortunate to get a detailed list of its contents before it was sold. A selection from the 1950's is shown in this edition. The owner's foresight in producing it with great attention to detail has enabled me to continue my postal history research and record information which could have been 'lost' to us. Each cancellation has been identified by its Donaldson number or those I published recently as a continuation of his list. Bahrain presently has 12 or 13 PO's (see issue 14, page 4). This is a manageable number to keep an eye on compared with the other Gulf postal authorities.

The information on date stamps given on page 8 of issue 14 now needs updating as follows:-

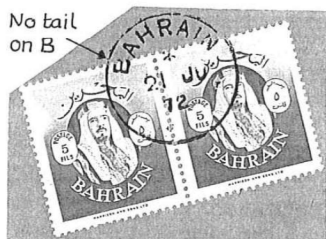
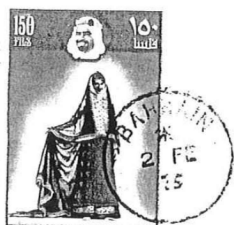
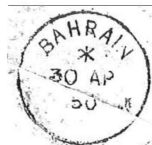
type description

21 single ring with *

dates recorded

21.6.49 to 1982

I have redrafted this paragraph five times as more information has filtered in. Type 21 presently has the longest history of any of the Bahrain types - 33 years. I have shown examples on the next page from 1950, 1975 and 1982. The tail on the down stroke of the 'B' identifies it as the same canceller in each case. However the 1982 strike has an '18' in the asterisk position - purpose unknown. Another variety has been recorded from 1972 with 'BAHRAIN' in broader more widely spaced letters and no tail on the 'B'. There is a lack of data to propose when it came into service except to say that the introduction of bilingual cancellers in 1959 didn't stop the continued use of the English types in the years after the Agency had closed. Indeed in 1968 a new post office was opened in Isa Town and was supplied with a single ring ordinary canceller and single oval registered in the same style (types 25&27).



22 'BAHRAIN REGISTERED' single oval 27.12.50 to 1952
This was struck in purple during 1950/51 and in black until it became so mis-shapen that it was replaced by a steel type in 1953. See Donaldson page 208 for a good strike.

22(1) 'BAHRAIN REGISTERED 1' 22.3.52

A previously unrecorded type struck in black.

22(2) 'BAHRAIN REGISTERED 2' 5.8.52

Another unrecorded type again struck in black.



type	description	dates
23	'Muharraq S.O. Bahrain' single ring	2.10.51 to 21.11.53

Rarely seen other than on philatelic covers with the overprint error 'missing 1/2'. The front of this issue shows a local cover from Muharraq post office bearing the first local stamp and type 21 canceller as receiving mark. Not only is the postmark scarce but local covers are rarely seen. I rate the cover on the front of this issue as a modern Gulf classic. The next issue will feature the local mail service of Bahrain to 1966.

24	Awali double ring with arcs	27.12.50 to 24.6.81
25	Awali single ring with *	- . 4.51 to 23.5.57

Pages 6&2 show two local covers cancelled with types 24/25.

Type 24 is struck on a 1962 cover franked with the local rate stamp from the 1966 post-Agency issue.

Type 25 is on a local cover from the Agency period franked with 3x 1/2 anna stamp issued for local mail.

Both are addressed to Awali Box numbers

26	BAHRAIN killer with large 'B'	2. 7.49 to 16.1.6 26
26A	BAHRAIN killer with small 'B' and letters more spaced out.	2.10.49 to 6.9.60

In 1953 steel registered cancellers superceded the distorted rubber type and there are four recorded varieties.

27	BAHRAIN REGISTERED	5. 4.53 to 25. 2.74
27A1	" "	1 16.6.71 to 6.10.76
27A2	" "	2 - .6.72 to 20. 5.72

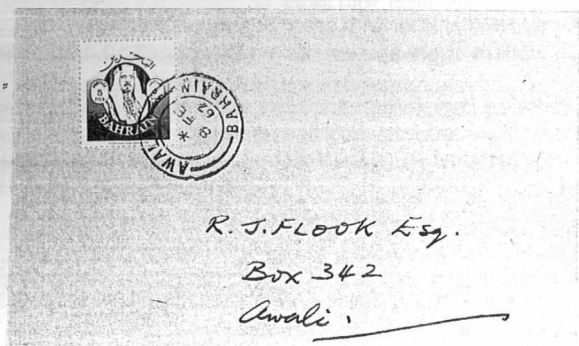
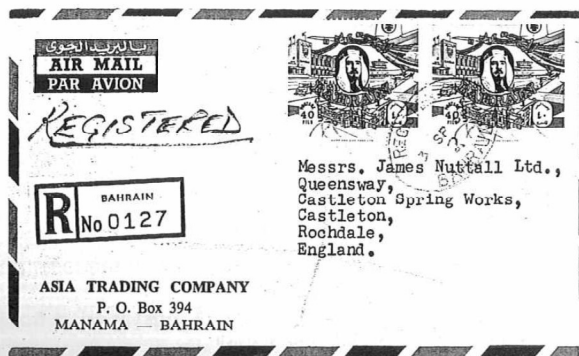
27B1	" "	1 26.3.73 to 15. 4.81
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This has the '1' in the arc, see page 9.

6

Top :Type 27A(2) 'Bahrain Registered 2' on cover to UK dated 3.9.68.

Bottom : Type 24 'Awali' double ring with arcs on local cover dated 8.2.67.



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Parcel cancellers

Type 28X

A number of high value GVIR stamps are known bearing a previously unrecorded cancellation. It (or they) appear to be a rubber type ; distorting with use. The 2R (l) has a part strike which shows 'star between lines', similar to the Exchange Office type 33. The 10R(c) is struck with a polygon, possibly 10 sided and the same star device. The other 2R (r) bears a distorted strike with a discernable 'BAHRAIN' and 'May 50'.



Type 28

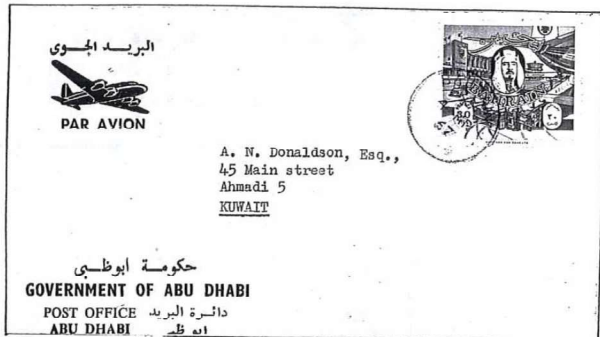
This is the familiar British PO rectangular design used here on an airmail packet to London.



Mail from Abu Dhabi?

Two covers from Abu Dhabi Post Office have been recorded franked and cancelled in Bahrain. The first is dated 5.2.67 and the second shown below is dated 4.3.67. Why did this happen considering the dates of despatch were some months after the closure of the British Postal Agencies?

The Bahrain agency closed on 31 December 1965 and the British Postal Agencies ceased to exist after 31 December 1966 when the Abu Dhabi post office was transferred to state control. During the British Agency period all the issued overprinted stamps were accepted by any agency office irrespective of location and there are numerous examples of cross use. This did not apply once the PO's became independent and Abu Dhabi wasn't transferring mail to Bahrain in 1967. The answer may lie in the staffing of the newly created postal authorities. H (Harry) Wynn became Postmaster of Abu Dhabi after previous Agency service in Bahrain. D.W. (Dickie) Thorpe was Superintendent of the British Postal Agencies before becoming Postmaster of Bahrain in 1966. Did H visit D and take the opportunity to post some of his office mail in Bahrain? It seems plausible - or do you know different?



'Registered Bahrain 1' type 27B1 22.4.74

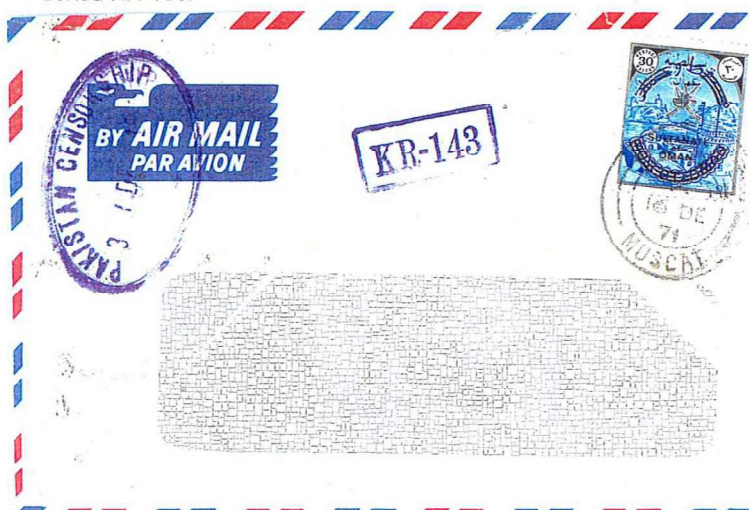


Isa Town Registered type 27 dated 3.9.79

This office was opened after postal independence and supplied with British PO style cancellers made up in English.



A cover from Muscat censored in Pakistan 21.12.1971 and bearing a backstamp of the same date but otherwise illegible. The boxed KR-143 I think refers to Karachi and with 143 identifying the person examining the letter. A second cover from the same period has boxed KR-136.



Sharjah returned mail 1966



Khor Fakkan

I am grateful to Ian Gregory for letting me see the cover shown on page 10. It is philatelic, no doubt about that, and similar to one shown in a previous issue. Of great interest are the eight cachets and two manuscript markings it picked up as returned mail.

Boxed 'Undelivered for reason stated' applied in Huddersfield?

Boxed 'Maison Vide' (House Empty) " " "

Straightline 'RETOUR' and boxed 'RETOUR' Who knows?

Manuscript 'F1 21083' and 'SHARJAH' under the address presumably in Huddersfield. Although there is no return address on the cover the sender could be identified in Sharjah from the registration logbook.

Manuscript '16252 and initials' (Arabic).

One of the two dated marks is the bilingual single oval registered 30.7.66. We can safely assume this was applied in Kuwait which was the main postal link for international mail from the Trucial States. The single ring 'Returned Letter ...' of 1.8.66, two days later must logically be Sharjah PO which used GPO style datestamps.

The French connection: French was/is the international postal language and some of the Gulf States including Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Kuwait* and Sharjah followed the convention at this time with regard to cachets and even cancellers in some instances i.e. Isle Das.

*See page 15



I am very pleased to include this thought provoking article from Alastair Gunn.

Early Muscat Cancellers

Alastair Gunn,
(thanks to Thomas Johansen who asked the questions).

I suggest the following about the earliest of Muscat's cancellations and wax seal. It is an extension of an idea raised by Parson in his 'The Indian Postal Agencies in The Persian Gulf Area' and uses Cockrill, Donaldson, Tomkins and the first edition of Gunn / Allen 'Aspects of Omani Postal History'. It can not currently be proved unless new material turns up from this 1864 -1870 period.

Firstly it is central to look at equivalent Persian Gulf Post Offices as what happens in one is likely to happen elsewhere. Bushire, having the Consul-General for the Persian Gulf, has special importance. Bushire Post Office began in 1864 (the same year as Muscat's Post Office) with a non-duplex 12 bar diamond with number 308, then followed a 'horseshoe' in 1865. In 1868 a duplex 308 was issued with 14 bars.

Below are the three relevant Post Offices of the time.¹ I have left out the 'unique' marks as I am looking at the types that were applicable across Post Offices.

Town	est.	type 1	type 2	type 3
Bushire	1864	12 bar diamond 1865-67	horseshoe 1866 no stamp	duplex new horseshoe and 14 bar 1868-70
Busrah	1868		horseshoe 1868 unpaid	duplex damaged; new horseshoe by 1870 and 14/15 bar diamond alongside 1869
Bagdad	1868		horseshoe 1870 unpaid	Bagdad duplex; 13/14 bar diamond and horseshoe. 1868.

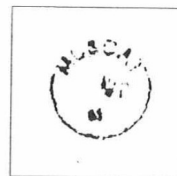
It does look as though there is a typical sequence for the Post Offices at this time - 12 bars, followed by a duplex. When mail was without stamps the 'horseshoe' was applied. The use of the above makes the placement of Muscat's material easier. There is no logical reason why Muscat's cancellers should be issued in a different sequence.

Neil Donaldson's type 1 is the first type (see Bushire type 1) and his Type X (the horseshoe) is later. It is worth noting that Donaldson does not date type 1, which can cause confusion. -

¹ I have ignored Guadur as being a sub-Post Office.

As mentioned, at the same time a 'wax seal' showing 'Muscat Post Office' is known on the two pieces known bearing the 12 bar cancels. It makes sense; people used wax seals before the modern postal system. To have it in use when the postal system was being established is understandable. It is worth noting that the lettering and the circle looks uneven, suggesting a local Muscat manufacture which explains why wax seals are not known elsewhere in the Gulf. It is only known on pieces to Bushire. (It is not uncommon for local initiatives to occur - consider the rectangular Bushire mark of 1866.)

There are two sorts of horseshoes in use in the Gulf - the later horseshoes in the duplexes are more professional. The Muscat horseshoe seems amateurish but is no more so than that illustrated in Cockrill for Bushier in 1866 or in Parsons for Busrah (page 33), Bagdad (page 29) etc.



Muscat Horseshoe (Donaldson type X)

The Muscat covers seen have the dates inserted upside down causing lack of symmetry and a more 'blobby' inking. (The illustration above, for example, shows 11 Jan.) There is a second type of horseshoe used later in duplexes elsewhere in the Gulf region where the name is more above the circle than within it as above. Given the earlier comments about Musat's history it is worth noting Donaldson's dates for this type from December 1867 to November 1868. It is worth noting that of those covers known - and we are speaking a bare handful - the majority are January / February 1868.

Finally comes the 16 line diamond and the horseshoe cancel is gradually replaced. What is interesting is that Muscat did not seem to get the second type of horseshoe as elsewhere in the Gulf, namely that with MUSCAT above the circle. I suggest that reflects the historic circumstances in the town at the time.

So I suggest the following sequence and times -

Type 1) the 12 bar diamond - used in 1864
(Potentially used up until the first known horseshoe in 1867)

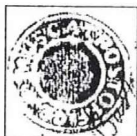
Type 2) Wax Seal - also used in 1864, at least on important mail
(Potentially used up until the first known horseshoe in 1867)



Type 1 - courtesy of Neil Donaldson

The 12 line diamond was most likely issued in 1864 with the start of the Post Office.

Parsons suggest that in 1864 there was trouble in Muscat causing the Post Office to work from a ship for two months. No record of this can be found. However in March 1866 the British (including most of the Indians who would have used the mail) abandoned Muscat after Salim b. Thuwaini killed his father, the Sultan. They stayed away until May. However, the British were dissatisfied with Salim, so there was no political agent in town from then until March 1867. There was a native agent, but I doubt that much mail was handled. Things remained calm until October 1, 1868 when Muscat was again abandoned for a very short time when Azzan b. Qais overthrew Salim and established a very conservative religious regime for three years. The English and their Indian friends did not leave for an extended period this time. In 1868 the town of Muscat was in major disrepair - 'The city is half-ruined, many streets being impassable because of rubble which has never been cleared away. The forts stand in disrepair ... Only two Europeans reside in Muscat: the British Consul and the representative of British India Steamships'.² Given these problems I think it is evident that there would have been little, if any, mail between March 1866 until a little after October 1868. As well I suggest holding early mail from 1864 until 1866 would have been a luxury, that little overseas mail would have been written and that it is not surprising that the only known pieces with these early 12 bar diamonds (and with the wax seal) are to the important Post Office in Bushire.

Muscat Wax Seal
courtesy of Neil Donaldson

² P.34 A. Germalin, report from 'Bulletin de la Societe Geographique de Paris', in P. Ward's *Travels in Oman*, 1987.

British PO receipt for a registered item from Kuwait.
Was this a stop gap or the regularly supplied receipt?

Certificate of Posting The undermentioned postal packet has been registered and posted here this day. (Ordinary postage ... if varied)

Regn. No. 6264 Regn. fee paid MINIMUM (Leat inland or Overseas)

Date Stamp 17 APR 1866

Accepting Officer's Initials [Signature] FOR REGULATIONS SEE ...

Registration of a Postal Packet

(For fuller details see Post Office Guide)

INLAND

1. Consignments of loss of or damage to a registered inland postal packet are insured by the Post Office. The regulations for inland postal packets have been issued by the Post Office. The regulations provide for the packet to be sent up in a reasonably strong container, to be marked with the words 'Registered Packet' and to be accompanied by a receipt from the Post Office. The regulations also provide for the packet to be sent up in a reasonably strong container, to be marked with the words 'Registered Packet' and to be accompanied by a receipt from the Post Office. The regulations also provide for the packet to be sent up in a reasonably strong container, to be marked with the words 'Registered Packet' and to be accompanied by a receipt from the Post Office.

OVERSEAS

2. Consignments of loss of or damage to a registered overseas postal packet are insured by the Post Office. The regulations for overseas postal packets have been issued by the Post Office. The regulations provide for the packet to be sent up in a reasonably strong container, to be marked with the words 'Registered Packet' and to be accompanied by a receipt from the Post Office. The regulations also provide for the packet to be sent up in a reasonably strong container, to be marked with the words 'Registered Packet' and to be accompanied by a receipt from the Post Office.

Limit of Compensation

3. The limit of compensation for loss of or damage to a registered postal packet is £10 for inland packets and £20 for overseas packets. The limit of compensation for loss of or damage to a registered postal packet is £10 for inland packets and £20 for overseas packets.

Verification of acceptance label January 1967
French and Arabic

AV 10

إدارة الإرسال
Administration des Postes
Kuwait

موظف الإرسال
Agent expéditeur

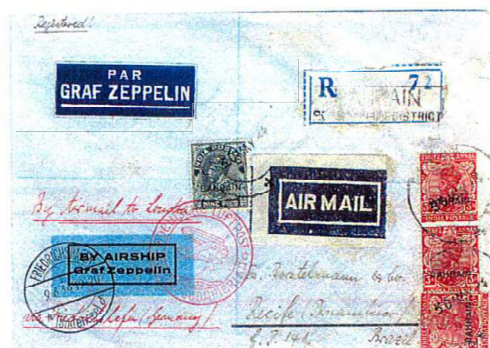
بالبريد الجوي
Par avion

رسائل وطاقات
HOLLAND

الرجو في حالة الخطأ ارفاق هذه البطاقة بورقة التحقيق
En cas d'erreur prière de joindre cette étiquette au bulletin de vérification.

Convention, Vienne 1964 art. 186 (1)

Zeppelin covers from Kuwait and Bahrain 1934



concluded from page 14.

Type 3) Horseshoe in isolation - used 11.12.1867 - 7.11.1868
(But potentially used as early as 1865)
Horseshoe with 16 bar diamond - 1.2.68 - 1.10.68

Type 4) 16 bar diamond used with varieties of Donaldson type 2 - 1870 on.

I can not prove the above; my aim is to suggest a historically likely series of cancellers given events elsewhere in the Gulf and specific events within Muscat. Obviously this may not be the final answer and I am more than interested in continuing this discussion. If people would like to send scans I would be very pleased to receive them. Please email awgunn@tiscali.co.uk!

Update on the Kuwait Post Offices

This list has been sent in by Mashael Alhajeri from the AL Shaker publication 'Kuwait Postal Cancellations and Stamp Design after Liberation' and extends my own list based on 1980 data supplied by Kuwait PO and published in issue No.1, Autumn 2000. The English transliterations have variable spellings, particularly in the use of vowels. 'Ozailiya' is one office whose name is recorded on a cover dated 7.7.81 but cannot be identified with any on the list. The 'Mail Sorting Centre' is a more recent PO and may be the new name of the Airport PO but the listed date of closure, 1999, doesn't accord with the facts as a cover is recorded bearing an Airport datestamp in August 2002. See pages 23 and 24.

No. رقم	Post Office Name اسم مكتب البريد	Date Opened تاريخ الافتتاح	Date Closed تاريخ الإغلاق	Remarks ملاحظات
1	AAQOOL العاقل	1975	1989	Closed
2	ABDULLAH AL-SALIM عبد الله السالم	1975		Open
3	ABU HALIFA أبو خليفة	16/10/1965		Open
4	ADALIYA العضيلية	1/06/1966	7/04/1984	Closed
5	ADDAN عدان	9/08/1997		Open
6	AHMADI الأحمدي	1/05/1950		Open
7	AIRPORT المطار	24/11/1958	1999	Closed
8	ARDIYA المارضية	1978		Open
9	AYOUN العيون	28/02/1998		Open
10	BAYAN بيان	2/04/1983		Open
11	DAHAR الظهر	30/07/1999		Open

12	DAIYA	الدعية	17/02/1969		Open
13	DASMAH	الدسمة	19/09/1964		Open
14	DASMAN	دسمان	10/03/1965		Open
15	DOHA	الدوحة	1982		Open
16	EDUCATION EXHIBITION **	معرض العلم	15/04/1963	30/04/1963	Closed
17	FAHAHEEL	الفحاحيل	19/07/1958		Open
18	FAHAHEEL CENTRAL	الفحاحيل المركزي	1975		Open
19	FAHAA	الفيحاء	17/06/1968		Open
20	FAILAKA	فيلكا	16/07/1962	2/08/1990	Closed

21	FARWANIYA	الفروانية	8/04/1963		Open
22	FINTAS	الفتطاس	15/08/1972		Open
23	FIRDOUS	الفرردوس	1986		Open
24	GPO	مكتب البريد العام	1/02/1959		Open
25	HADIYA	هدية	1980		Open
26	HAWALLI	حولي	19/07/1958		Open
27	IDAILAYA	العداية	1/06/1966		Open
28	JABER AL-ALI	جابر العلي	1/05/1999		Open
29	JAHRA	الجهراء	13/11/1963		Open
30	JELEEB AL-SHUYOUKH	جليب الشيوخ	1/06/1966		Open
31	JEWAN	جيوان	7/04/1954		Closed
32	KAIFAN	كيفان	15/10/1964		Open
33	KHAFFI	الخفجي	16/02/1963		Closed
34	KHALDIYA	الخالدية	1/10/1969		Open
35	ABRAQ KHITAN	أبرق خيطان	27/04/1964		Open
36	KUWAIT ***	الكويت	21/01/1915	31/01/1959	Closed
37	MUBARAKIYAH	المباركية	14/07/1962		Closed
38	MUBARAKIYAH STREET	شارع المباركية	14/04/1954	31/01/1959	Closed
39	MANSOURIYA	المنصورية	1984		Open
40	MENA SUAD	ميناء سعود	11/05/1970		Closed

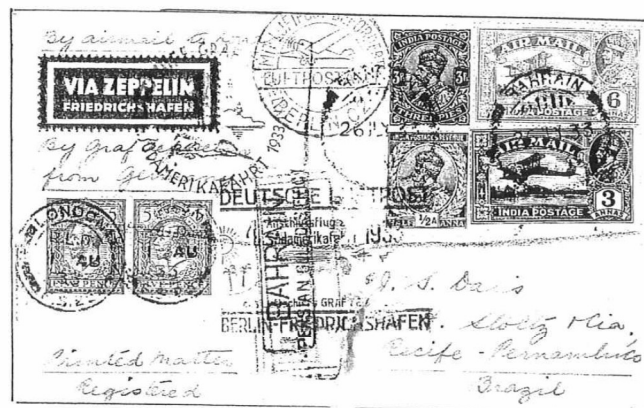
No. رقم	Post Office Name اسم مكتب البريد	Date Opened تاريخ الافتتاح	Date Closed تاريخ الإغلاق	Remarks ملاحظات
41	MENAA AL-AHMADIميناء الأحمدى	1/08/1953	17/12/1961	Closed
42	MESHREFمشرف	7/03/1998		Open
43	MIRQABالمرقاب	19/07/1958		Open
44	NEWAYSEEBالنويصيب	11/05/1970	2/08/1990	Closed
45	NUQRAالنقرة	1974	1/02/1993	Closed
46	NUZHAالنزهة	1980		Open
47	OMARIYAالعمرية	1981		Open
48	PHILATELIC SECTIONمكتب هواية الطوابع	1950'S		Open
49	QADISIYAالقادسية	10/02/1969		Open
50	QASARالقصر	13/11/1963		Open
51	RAASالراس	2/09/1972		Open
52	RABIYAالرابية	1984		Open
53	RAWDAالروضة	1/12/1970		Open
54	REQQAالرقعة	1980		Open
55	RUMAIHIYAالرميثية	1/10/1969		Open
56	SABAH - Aصباح السالم أ	Nov.-1988		Open
57	SABAH - Bصباح السالم ب	Aug.-1992		Open
58	SABAHIYAالصباحية	5/07/1981		Open
59	SAFATالصفاة	1/02/1958		Open
60	SALMIYAالسالمية	24/05/1958		Open
61	SALMIYA CENTRALالمركزي	24/10/1966		Open
62	SEIFالسيف	1/02/1959	14/07/1962	Closed

No. رقم	Post Office Name اسم مكتب البريد	Date Opened تاريخ الافتتاح	Date Closed تاريخ الإغلاق	Remarks ملاحظات
63	SHAAB الشعب	1/05/1972		Open
64	SHAMIYA الشامية	24/02/1965		Open
65	SHARQ الشرق	5/04/1958	15/04/1981	Closed
66	SHUAIBA الشعبية	25/05/1964		Open
67	SHUWAIKH الشويخ	1983		Open
68	SHUWAIKH - B الشويخ ب	1983		Open
69	SHUWAIKH - CENTRAL الشويخ الصناعية			Open
70	SHUWAIKH - INDUSTRIAL الشويخ الصناعية	1975		Open
71	SOUK ALAMIR (before) سوق الأمير (الاسم القديم)	18/12/1993	Feb.-1994	Name changed
	SOUK ALDAKLY (now) سوق الدخلي (الاسم الحالي)	Feb.-1994		Open
72	SOUTH AL-SABAHYAH جنوب الصباحية	1978	2/08/1990	Closed
73	SULAIBIKHAT الصليبخات	1/10/1966		Open
74	SULAIBIYA الصليبية	1985		Open
75	SURRA السرة	1988		Open
76	TAIMAA تيماء	1984		Open
77	UM AL-HAYMAN أم الهيمان	1981		Open
78	WAFRA الوفرة	11/05/1970	2/08/1990	Closed
79	WAHA الواحة	1988		Open
80	ZOUR الزور	1970		Open
81	QURAIN القرين	1999		Open

Bahrain Zeppelin mail

Thomas Johansen has sent me details of the first Zeppelin cover he has seen from Bahrain. It was sent on the 4th South American flight, postmarked Bahrain 26.7.33, London 1.8.33, Friedrichshafen 5.8.33 and received 9.8.33. The registration cachet type 18 is impressed on the standard blue/white 'R' label but this doesn't show clearly on the picture.

Four months later I was sent details of a later flight. This cover shown on page 16, was postmarked Bahrain 30.5.34 with the same registration label and type 18 cachet. Other marks include a Cairo transit. Both covers were franked 9a9p but the earlier one was also franked 10d in London. I don't know why.



Kuwait Zeppelin mail

The covers originating in Kuwait are well known and this is similar to that shown on page 122 of the Donaldson handbook but despatched on 28 September 1934 and received Pernambuco 26.10.34. Possibly the 10th South American flight. This cover is shown on page 16.

Editorial

There is no let-up in the flow of information and those of you who are in credit with your subs will be assured of getting value for money for a few more issues yet. Please note the price will be raised to £2.75 per issue commencing with No.15.

I now have available black and white reprints of all previous issues. A set of 14 costs £25 inland, £28 Europe and £35 the rest of the world, all postage paid. Colour reprints are £4.50 per issue.

Review 'Aspects of Omani Postal History' by Gunn and Allen.

2nd Edition, 2003, 66 pages A4 bound £20

This book is a data base of the postal marking of Muscat Post Office (1860's to 1966) and the Sultanate of Oman (1966 to 2003). There are detailed listings of date stamps, registration labels, instructional markings including those recorded from FPO's. The authors have published some new data from the Agency period and tried to collate information from the 94 post offices currently open in Oman. They have reported information from 40+ of these offices which is quite an achievement considering the lack of commercial mail and social contact between Oman and the West. Each type of mark is clearly reproduced, described and identified by the authors' own coding system. These are correlated with the Donaldson handbook which they have used as the main source for the Agency period data. Recent auction realisations have been used to assess the rarity of the early material.

It is a well produced book and one of the first to venture into the modern Gulf scene.

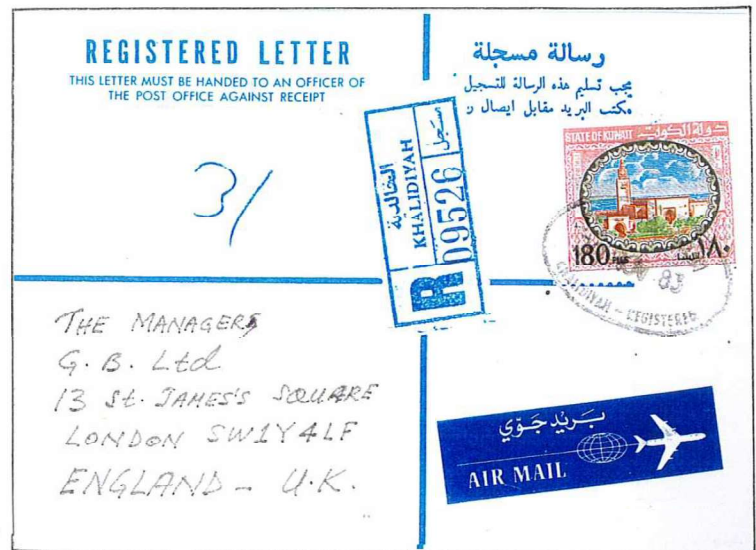
Abu Dhabi

SG80a albino overprint. Please report any examples you have mint or used and particularly blocks in order to ascertain how many sheets exist.

Kuwait Airport 7.4.66



Formula registered letter from Khalidiyah Nov.1983



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Change of name: Souk Amir became Souk Aldakaly in February '94 but the old registration labels continued until at least April '95.