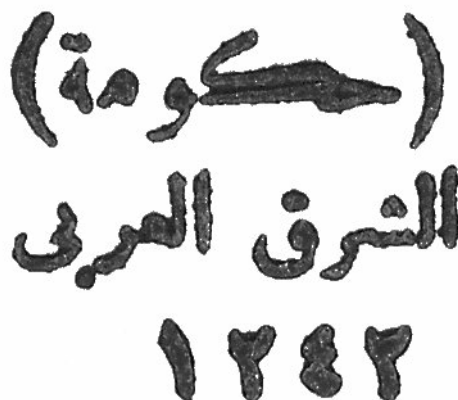


1924 Official.



(حكومة)
الشرق العربي
١٢٤٢

Overview

The above illustration is the generally accepted official overprint using a thick type. It was applied only to the ½p scarlet stamp of the Hejaz.

A version of the overprint using a thin, clearly defined, type also exists, but it has many errors and although it could be a forgery, there are similarities with the plate accepted as genuine. This is explained later in this document.

The lack of covers and stamps with genuine Transjordan postmarks means there is a possibility that this issue is either bogus or, at best, prepared but never issued. This issue is not mentioned by Darlow¹, Ledger⁶ or Robson Lowe⁴.

A clue may be obtained from the Filatco Sale² lot 663:

*...½ pi stamp issued for TransJordan, prepared hurriedly prior to King Hussein of Hejaz visit
- prodded by gov't. Officials, only a few sheets were prepared.*

The source of that information is, at yet, unknown, but it may explain many of the features of this issue.

This issue was a late addition to the Scott and Gibbons catalogues. The first Stanley Gibbons⁸ listing was in the 1974 Overseas 2 (D-J) edition.

It is not listed in The Encyclopaedia of British Empire Stamps Volume III, Robson Lowe, 1951.

It is not listed in the Whitfield King catalogues 1946 - 1949

It is listed in Philatelic History of Jordan 1920 - 1970, Souan, 1972.

Used copies seen have the bogus Makkah in Arabic cancels of the type applied to many Hejaz stamps. It is thought that these were applied to stamps salvaged from a fire at the premises belonging to E. L. Angeloglou. Random Notes #13⁷ states that the fire occurred at the end of 1951, so the official stamp must have been known about before that.

This document, therefore, is designed to provide information on what is actually known about the stamps and not to make any claim as to the status of the stamps.

Plate details (Thick type)

Plate size	36 clichés (6 x 6)
Plate construction	Moveable type
Different settings	Not known
Forgeries	Yes

Significant errors and flaws

Souan⁵ lists the 1242 error and Najjar³ lists the 1242 error and the position 31 errors. Broken characters are also present. Other flaws are generally the result of plate 'furniture' being set too high and receiving ink during the printing process. The flaws considered significant are:

Plate Position	Description
8,18,23,24	١٢٤٢ for ١٣٤٢ (1242 for 1342)
31	Dot after حكومة (<i>hukumat</i>) in top line
31	First 3 characters (الله) of <i>al sharq</i> in second line set too low



1242 error position 8



Positions 22 to 24 with position 22 normal and positions 23 and 24 showing the 1242 error.

Position 31



Dot at end of first line



First 3 characters set too low

Non-constant flaws

The non-constant flaws in the overprint have occurred in positions where normal overprints also occur; they are:

Plate Position	Description
14,35	Missing ۛ in <i>hukumat</i> in top line.



Missing ۛ, position 14



Missing ۛ, position 35

Plate furniture marks

These are marks left when plate furniture, the pieces of metal or wood used to hold the type in place, are set 'type high' and receive ink. They are not usually constant flaws; it depends upon the plate usage, cleaning and repairs. In this issue such marks can be found in several plate positions and two examples are shown below. The image of a complete sheet found in Souan⁵ and reproduced on page 4 contains some of these marks, one of which is at position 13.



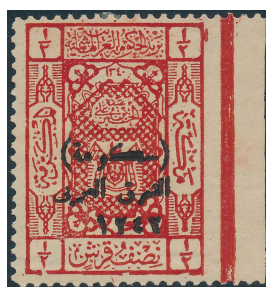
Position 13



Position 35

Perforation errors

As with most Hejaz stamps, perforation errors occur and are therefore likely to be encountered on Transjordan issues.



Imperforate between
stamp and margin



Double vertical
perforations

Used stamps

Used stamps can be found but those seen so far by the author are fake. The stamps below have a bogus Mecca postmark of a type frequently seen in Hejaz philately. Two used examples appeared in lot 468 of the December 2022 Cherrystone auction; one appears to have an Amman cds of 15 September but the year was not visible and the other had just the year ١٣٤٩ (1349 - about 1930). Both stamps had the cancels neatly placed in one of the corners.





Complete sheet from Souan⁵. This sheet contains two instances of double perforation.

The imprint is a date, reading ٢٦ ذى الحجة سنة ١٣٤١ (9 August 1923), and is one I have only seen on ½p Hejaz sheets supplied to Transjordan. This may indicate some official involvement in this issue, whether or not the stamps were officially released and used.



Plate details (Thin type)

(حكومة)
الشرق العربي
١٣٤٢

Plate size	Not known
Plate construction	Moveable type
Different settings	Not known
Forgeries	This overprint may be a forgery itself

Features

This overprint, originally thought to be a different plate, is almost certainly the first state of the overprint plate. On close inspection many of the cliches on this plate have the same characteristics as those on the plate with thicker type. These similarities are studied later in this document.

Significant errors and flaws

Najjar³ lists the four errors shown at the top of the next page; all recorded errors are listed below:

Plate Position	Description
1	Year omitted, ش and ق with correct number of dots Year present, ش and ق with weak dots, sometimes only one dot each
2	١٣٢٤ for ١٣٤٢ (1324 for 1342)
3	Year omitted
4	١٣٤٣ for ١٣٤٢ (1343 for 1342)
5	٤٢ (42) in year inverted and reversed
8	١٢٤٢ for ١٣٤٢ (1242 for 1342)
17	Year omitted (Ghassan Riachi)
33	First two characters in الشرق (<i>al sharq</i>) inverted and reversed



In the above, figure 7 has both the Arabic 4 and 2 inverted and reversed. ١٣٣٨

The stamps can be plated and will probably be the same as the overprint plate position. The above are: 5 - Position 4, 6 - position 2, 7 - position 5 and 8 - position 3.

To those we can add another with year omitted - position 1, and a different error 'inverted and reversed ال (alef) and (lam)' - position 33. Position 1 also exists with Arabic characters ش and ق in line 2 having only 1 dot.



الشرق
Correct

النسرق
Error

Position 1 - 'sheen' and 'qaf' with one dot.



Position 1 - missing year.



Position 33 - *alef* and *lam* inverted and reversed.

الشرق

With so many obvious errors, this plate would seem to be a forgery designed to provide collectors with 'something different', but that may not be the case. Not all plate positions have been examined and it is expected that more errors will be discovered.

Similarities between the thin and thick type plates

Type of Arabic *kaf* in the overprint



Medial - correct



Initial - incorrect

The medial form has a projection at lower right in order to connect with the previous character.

Two forms of the Arabic letter *kaf* have been observed on this issue and a study was made to record the type of *kaf* used in each position on the two apparently different overprint plates. As yet, the study is not complete and although complete sheets with thick type are known, the thin type overprints are proving to be elusive.

The results are shown below and there are indications that the two plates are actually different states of the same plate.

Thick type

1 M	2 M	3 M	4 M	5 M	6 M
7 M	8 M	9 M	10 M	11 M	12 M
13 M	14 M	15 M	16 M	17 M	18 M
19 M	20 M	21 M	22 M	23 M	24 M
25 I	26 I	27 M	28 M	29 M	30 M
31 I	32 M	33 I	34 M	35 I	36 M

M = medial *kaf*

I = initial *kaf*

Thin type

1 M	2 M	3	4	5	6
7 M	8 M	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17 m	18
19 m	20 M	21 m	22	23	24 M
25 i	26 I	27 m	28	29	30
31 I	32 m	33 I	34 M	35	36 M

M = medial *kaf*

I = initial *kaf*

Lower case are examples from Ghassan Riachi.

Ongoing Research

December 1, 2022 an enquiry was made with Stanley Gibbons to see if they had any documentation relating to the addition of this official stamp to their catalogue. The enquiry was allocated Case SC018014 and despite a follow-up on February 7, 2023, no response from the catalogue team has been received.

References

1. Darlow, Major J. J., Trans-Jordan A Straightforward Collection. London Philatelist Volume 41, numbers 485 & 487 (May & July 1932).
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3. Najjar, A. H., The Stamps of Jordan 1920 - 1965, ISBN 9780953259106.
4. Robson Lowe Ltd., The Encyclopaedia of British Empire Postage Stamps, Volume III, The Empire in Asia.
5. Souan, K. C. R., Philatelic History of Jordan 1920 - 1970 and Philatelic History of Jordan 1920 - 1995 STAMPEXO JUBILEE.
6. Ledger, R. T., Philatelic History of Jordan 1922 - 1953.
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8. Stanley Gibbons Overseas 2 (D-J) catalogue, March 1974, ISBN 0852596707.