

More Saudi Miscellany



June 22nd, 2024

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Where is
SHARMH
(Sharma)?



Sharma is in the Tabouk Region

It is located at the northern end of the Red Sea



Aerial view of Sharma



A small town with roads and houses –
and a Post Office!

Source – Planet Labs PBC

Aerial view of Sharma

A small town with roads and houses –
and a Post Office!



Sharma no longer exists. Why?



Source – Planet Labs PBC

The Reason is Project Neom



The area where Neom is being built has been described as the perfect "blank canvas" by Saudi leader Crown Prince Mohamed bin Salman. But more than 6,000 people have been moved for the project according to his government; homes, schools and hospitals have been demolished.

A Question of Franking (or Pre-payment)

The cover has three 1 qirsh airmail and a 2 qirsh (2p) World Refugee Year stamp.

So, was the postage rate 5 qirsh?

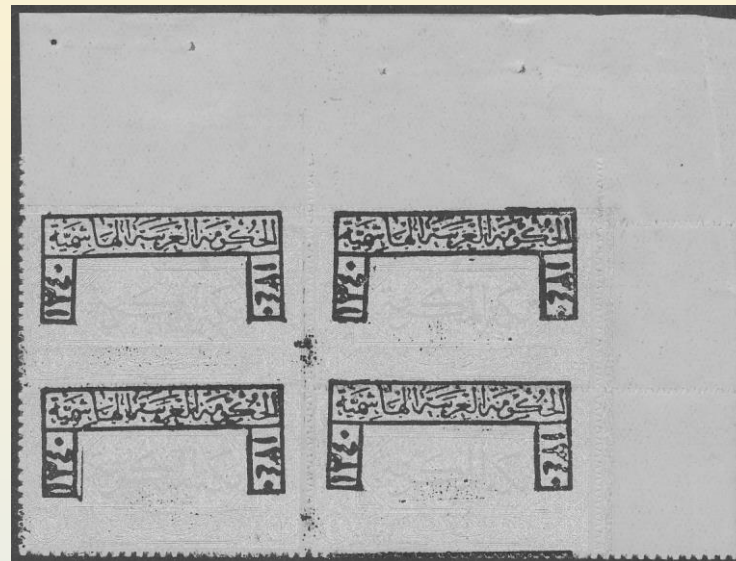
No. On the January 8th, 1960 a monetary change was put into effect whereby one Saudi riyal consisted of 20 piastres (qirsh) for both stamps and currency instead of 11 Saudi qirsh for stamps and 22 common qirsh for currency. It is confusing that for both old and new, the Arabic 'qirsh' is used. The use of old stamps was permitted but charged at the rate of 1 old qirsh equals 2 new qirsh.

The cover therefore had stamps to the value of 8p (new qirsh).

The undated, all-Arabic, postmark is that of Abu Arish. There is a Jeddah machine cancel from September 1960; the day is unclear.



A Recent Acquisition



I was unable to plate this block against my reference sheet, however it did look genuine but there are some doubts. Further investigation revealed that the top two rows of the overprint plate were modified at some time, but which version was the first? I do not believe it is possible to be sure, but flaws on the individual cliches may give a clue. Over to the experts on this one.....

A Recent Acquisition



¼p medical aid with double impression.
Postmark MECQUE 6-8-1379 (3 February 1960), Type SR56.

A Recent Acquisition



MECQUE 3 February 1960

Do these two examples suggest that a sheet of the double impression was used in Makkah in early 1960?

Because the stamps were sheet fed manually, it is likely that only one sheet of 50 stamps exists with a double impression.



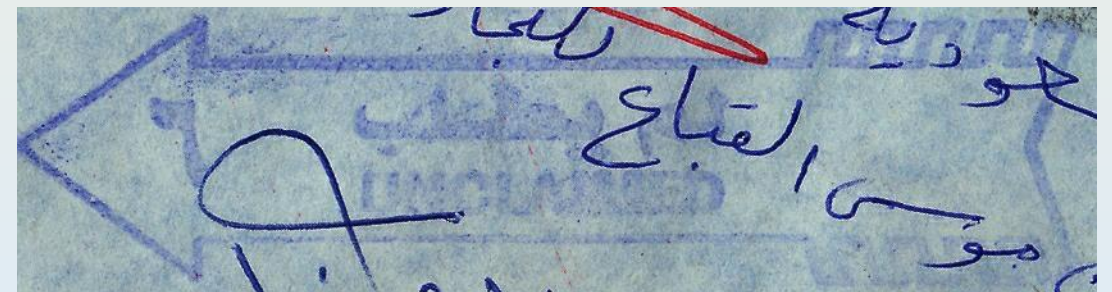
¼p medical aid with double impression shown in
Random Notes #95 page 3 item 1.
Postmark MECQUE 13 February 1960, Type SR56.

A Recent Acquisition



The first example I have seen of this type.

Registered letter from Egypt to Riyadh but unclaimed.
The only Saudi marks are the registration label and a handstamp 'UNCLAIMED 6'



This 'Show & Tell' will be published on the APAI website. If answers to members' questions are received, they will be added to the relevant page

The website URL is shown on page 2 of Random Notes