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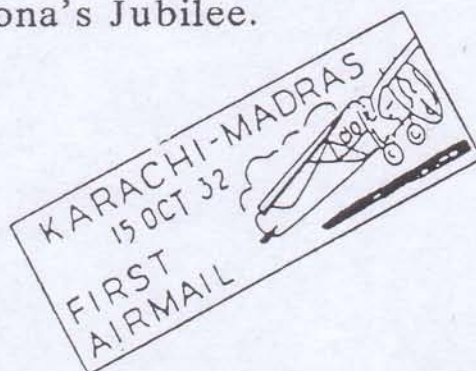
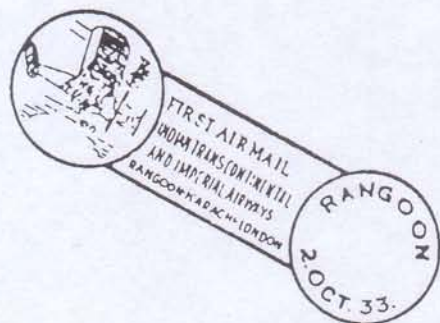
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THE HOLYLAND PHILATELIC SOCIETY



## THE JORDAN REVENUE &amp; "AID" OVERPRINT STAMPS

by Dr. A. Kaplanian

The introduction of new Kingdom of Transjordan revenue stamps in the late forties caused a big storm. As was clearly visible, the illustration on the stamps was that of the ruins of Palmyra, the capital of Queen Zenobia in the middle of the Syrian Desert, and definitely not the Roman city of Jerash in the north western part of Jordan.

Although some resemblance exists between the "Arch of Triumph" of Emperor Hadrian in Jerash and that of the Palmyrene Queen Zenobia in Syria, no archaeologist, historian or even a layman could see on these stamps anything except the Syrian city of Palmyra.

The cause of this blunder was that a clerk of the Department of Finance had mailed a picture of the Victory Arch and colonnade in Palmyra to the printers in England; who in turn did not recognize his mistake until it was too late to correct.

The opponents of the then King Abdullah hurriedly declared that this was no fault at all. They reasoned that the Palmyra Arch and the colonnade had been carefully selected in order to express the sentiment that Syria, Jordan and Iraq should be united in one Hashemite Kingdom. (Thirty years earlier, Jordan and Syria were unified as parts of the Great Syrian Kingdom under King Faisal I.)

But, faulty or intentional, these revenue stamps were reprinted

many times and were used until late into the sixties. Some were overprinted "FALASTIN" in Arabic for use on the West Bank. In 1950 some of these were overprinted with the word "AID" in Arabic and English. But more about this later.

These Palmyra revenue stamps were issued in four different designs: two in the "Mils" and two in the "Fils" denomination. The main distinguishing features of the first Mils issue, ("Mils I" illustrated as figure 1), are:

- 1) The Arabic name on the top of the stamp is less straight and is clearly different from the next (Mils II) issue:
- 2) The country name in English is "The Hashimite Kingdom of Trans-Jordan";
- 3) All denominations of this issue (5 Mils to 1 pound) are printed in the same colour, viz. light blue.

Mils I



Figure 1

The second Mils issue, i.e. Mils II (figure 2), distinguishes itself from Mils I, by having the Arabic name in a completely different setting, while



the various values were printed in different colours.

same colour per denomination.

Mils II



Figure 2

The two "Fils" denominations are almost identical in design. However, two differences help us in identifying the Fils I from the Fils II issues. These are:

1) The country name, in English, of the first reads, "The Hashemite Kingdom of The Jordan" (figure 3);

Fils I



Figure 3

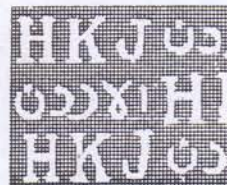
while that of Fils II lacks the word "The" (figure 4).

Fils II



Figure 4

2) The Fils I has the Multiple Script CA watermark (figure 5), while the Fils II has the new HKJ watermark (figure 6). Both Fils issues have the



Figures 5 & 6

## OVERPRINTS

The first Mils issue, i.e. the one with the country name "Trans-Jordan" was overprinted with the word "Falastin" in Arabic only (figure 7, opposite). As far as I can tell, all the denominations from 5 mils to £1 were overprinted, and all these values were in the same light blue colour. There are two types of this overprint: the small one measuring 8.5mm and the larger one 10mm. The dots under the Arabic "i" of "Falastin" can be found either high, (almost the same level as the base of the Arabic letter Nun), or low, that is, 0.5mm lower than the base of the Nun; (again see figure 7).

The most interesting of these four revenue types is the Mils II issue reading, "The Hashemite Kingdom of The Jordan". The 5 and 10 Mils values were overprinted with the word "Aid" in Arabic and English. The use of these two values was obligatory on all internal and external mail. The overprinting was executed in black on the 5 Mils orange stamp and in carmine on the 10 Mils violet stamp. As these stamps were used over a period of seven months only, they are relatively hard to find. Covers carrying such stamps are indeed scarce (figure 8, below).





A



B



C

*The Mils I (Trans-Jordan) Revenue stamp overprinted with FALASTIN in Arabic. Stamp (A) shows the short version (8.5mm) of the overprint; Stamp (B) carries the longer (10mm) overprint, while Stamp (C) shows the dropped dots of the Arabic letter "i".*

Figure 7

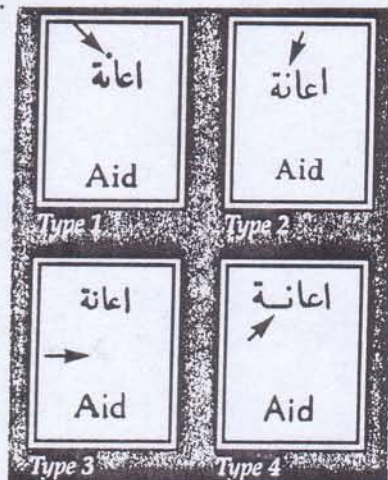




Figure 8

There are four major types of this overprint and they are all listed on pages 280-281 of the fifth (1996) edition of part 19 of the Stanley Gibbons Middle East specialized catalogue. For the sake of clarity, I am showing these types here and naming them types 1, 2, 3 and 4 (figure 9). All four types were used on the 5 Mils denomination, while only the first type was used on the 10 Mils value.

Figure 9



As big blocks and multiples of these elusive overprinted stamps are very hard to find, let alone complete sheets, it was always extremely difficult to study and describe the various varieties that appear on the individual stamps. But lately I was lucky to obtain two full sheets of these "Aid" stamps. The first is of the 10 Mils violet stamp with type 1 overprint, and the second is of the 5 Mils orange, with the type 2 overprint, (figures 10 & 11). These sheets are the Stanley Gibbons numbers T297 (10 Mils) and T298 (5 Mils). The hand-set overprint plates of the type 1 were made in such a way that they covered half of the sheet of 100 stamps, requiring the right and left halves to be overprinted successively.

... (The author's findings are summarized below.)





Figure 10



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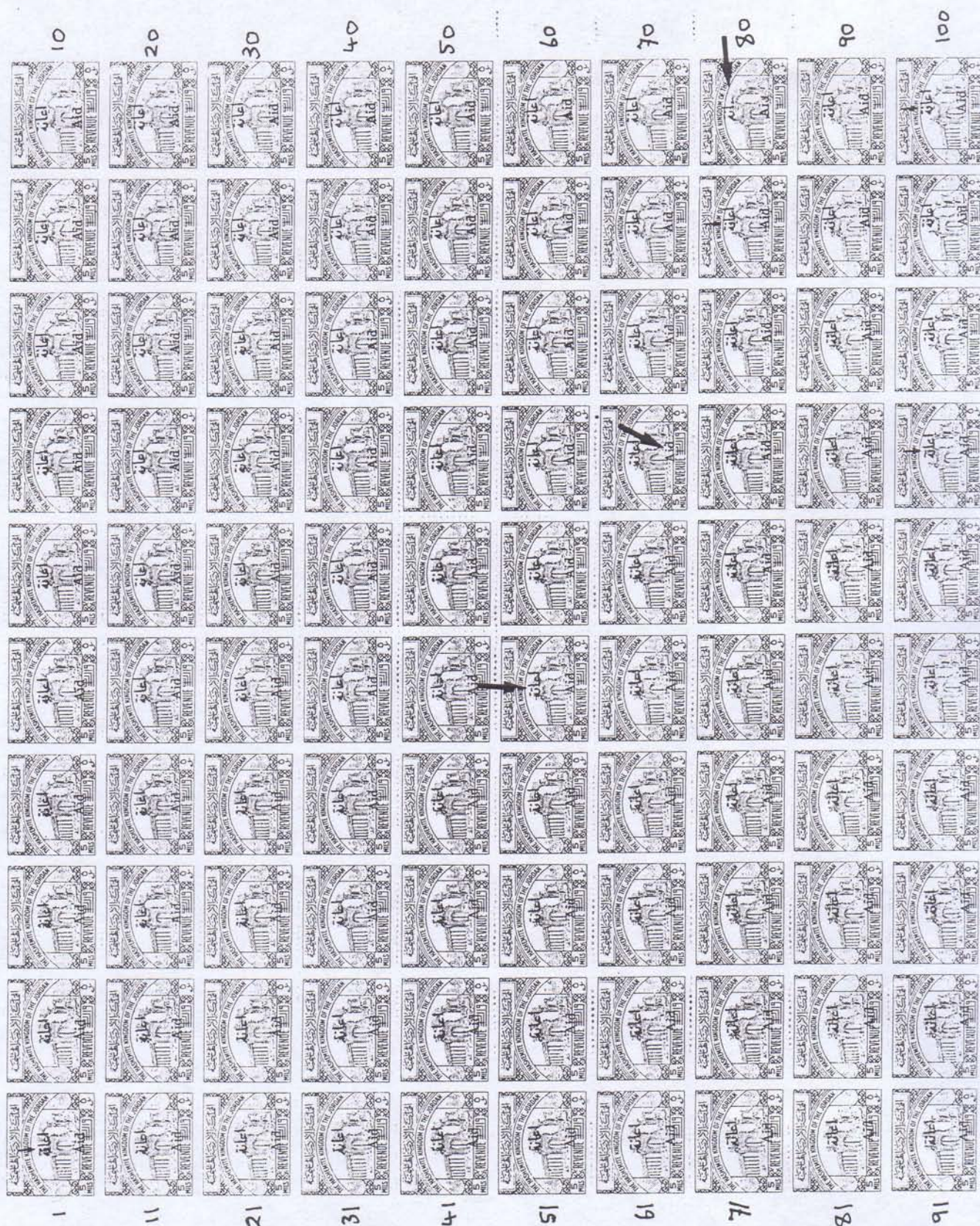


Figure 11 A complete sheet of 100 stamps of the 5 Mils orange stamp with type 2 ovpt. (SG T298). Notice bigger base of Arabic Nun on positions 1, 79, 97 and 100; thinner "i" in English "Aid" on position 67; two dots on Arabic Nun on pos. 55; and missing Arabic Alef and part of "ain" in Arabic Aid on pos. 80.



### Summation

Adding what has been published by Stanley Gibbons and Mr. Abed Najjar of England, in his book "The stamps of Jordan 1920-1965", to my findings, based upon the study of these said sheets, I arrived at the following summation of the constant overprint varieties:

Overprint Type 1: Arabic line 5mm wide; lines of ovpt. 7.5mm apart; English "Aid" with serifs; dot of Arabic Nun is raised. The main varieties are:

A) On the 5 Mils orange stamp

- Lower dot on Arabic Nun: pos. 2,4,7,9,13,14,18,19,23,28,33,38, 63,64,68,69,83,88,93,95,98 & 100.
  - Letter "A" of English "Aid" without serifs: pos. 5,10,15,20,35 & 40.
  - Above two varieties combined: pos. 25 & 30.
  - Flat top of "A" in English "Aid": pos. 4 & 9.
- (For some of these varieties see figure 12)



Figure 12 A marginal block of 15 stamps with type 1 ovpt. (S. G. T296) in positions 1-5; 11-15 and 21-25. Notice the:

- lower dot on Arabic Nun: pos. 2, 4, 13, 23 and 25.
- flat of "A" in "Aid" : pos. 4.
- "A" of "Aid" without serifs: pos. 5, 15 and 25.
- lower dot on Arabic Nun plus "A" without serifs: pos. 25.

B) On the 10 Mils violet stamp

- Lower dot on Arabic Nun: same as above.
- Letter "A" of English "Aid" without serifs: same as above.
- Above two varieties combined: pos. 5, 10, 25 & 30.
- Flat top of "A" in English "Aid": pos. same as above.
- No dot on Arabic Nun: pos. 3, 8 & 10.



- Double overprint.
- Double overprint (black and red).

Although these two stamps carry the same type 1 ovpt., closer study shows four main differences in addition to what is listed above:

	<u>5 Mils orange</u>	<u>10 Mils violet</u>
Pos. 4	dot of Nun lower	dot of Nun lower, plus top of "A" in "Aid" is flat
Pos. 5	"A" of "Aid" without serifs	" A " o f " A i d " w i t h o u t serifs, dot of Nun lower
Pos. 9	dot of Nun lower	dot of Nun lower, plus top of "A" in "Aid" is flat
Pos. 10	"A" of "Aid" without serifs	"A" of "Aid" without serifs, plus no dot on Nun.

These variations prove that there is indeed a difference between the ovpt. on the 5 and 10 Mils. Thus, while the combined variety of lower dot on Nun plus the "A" without serifs occurs only twice on the 5 Mils stamp, pos. 25 & 30, the same variety appears four times on the 10 Mils one, viz. on positions 5, 10, 25 & 30.

Special attention should be paid to stamp no. 10 in the 10 Mils sheet, for this one has the "A" without serifs plus the dot of Nun is missing. I am sure that this missing dot is the lower one for it is a repetition of stamp no. 5 overprint which has the lower dot. This means that we have two stamps with these two combined varieties on the 5 Mils sheet; and four with the same combined variety on the 10 Mils sheet, one of which, (pos. 10) with the dot of Nun missing. Therefore, technically, on the 10 Mils sheet, we have three stamps with the combined two varieties of "A" without serifs and dot of Nun lower (pos. 5, 25 & 30) and a fourth one (pos. 10) with the new variety of missing dot on Nun, plus "A" without serifs.

Overprint Type 2; 5 Mils only: Arabic line 5mm wide; lines of ovpt. 6mm apart; English "Aid" with serifs; dot of Arabic Nun is lower, almost at the same level with the two adjacent dots of Arabic "t"; in general, the English letters of ovpt. are thinner and lighter.

Main varieties:

- Bigger Arabic Nun: pos. 1, 79, 97, & 100.
- Two dots on Nun: pos. 55.
- Inverted "d" in "Aid" or the so-called "aip" variety, (Fig. 13). This misprint was corrected later and this resulted in a visibly thinner "i" in the English "Aid" (figure 11 pos. 67).
- Missing first Arabic letter alef and part of 'ain in Arabic "Aid": pos. 80.
- Missing "A" in English "Aid" (figure 14).
- Double overprint (figure 15).





Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15

Overprint Type 3; 5 Mils only: Arabic line 5mm wide; dot of Nun is very low, always lower than the two adjacent dots of the Arabic letter "t"; lines of ovpt. 8.5mm apart; right bar of "A" in English "Aid" is very thick.

No ovpt. varieties are known on this type.

Overprint Type 4; 5 Mils only: very different Arabic and English type. Very long second part of Arabic "Aid" (on the left); the whole Arabic line measures 8mm; English "Aid" without serif; lines of ovpt. 9mm apart.

This type has only one ovpt. variety, viz. lines of ovpt. are 7mm apart instead of the usual 9mm (figure 16).



Figure 16. Two different spacings between lines of overprint. The left one is 9mm while the right one is 7mm.



*(Special thanks to Mr. Norayr Agopian of Limassol, Cyprus, for his valuable comments on the "Aid" overprints and to Mr. Jacques Kaufmann for his photographic contribution.)*

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