

Transjordan

Forgeries of 1923 (April) 3-line and 1924 (March - May) overprints.

By: Martin Lovegrove

حكومة

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الشرق العربية

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٩ شعبان ١٣٤١

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1923 (April)

1924 (March - May)

Genuine overprints

The overprint plates used for the 1923 (April) and 1924 (March - May) issues were constructed from moveable type which not only allows type to be replaced when worn or damaged, but also gives the possibility of individual characters, complete words or lines, moving horizontally. Therefore, 'floating' a scanned image of a genuine stamp over one being checked, can only be used as one tool in a toolbox and not as a definitive check for genuineness.

The overprints for these two issues were so similar in appearance that any forgery could apply to either one.

Personal comment:

I have to disagree with Darlow¹ when he states '*Of course only the " errors " were worthwhile forging*'. Those who are familiar with Hejaz philately will know that even the most common stamps were forged in order to meet the demand from collectors and the 10p on 5p surcharge shown on the next page is hardly an error or even an expensive stamp.

Forgery type 1

This forgery has so far only been recorded on the two surcharged stamps of the Hejaz; but may well occur elsewhere.

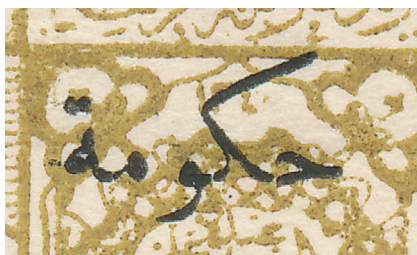


| | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Plate size | Not known |
| Plate construction | Moveable type. |
| Different settings | Not known. |

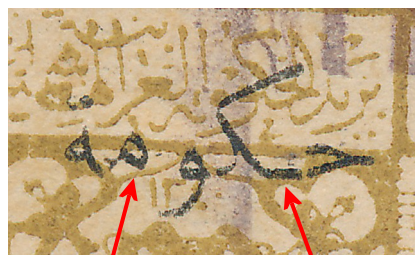
At first glance, this forgery appears to be the same as the genuine, but the differences are easily seen. The most noticeable difference is the possible use of the Arabic *tatweel* used to join the first two characters of *hukumat*. Also in that word, the Arabic *meem* is somewhat larger than the genuine. As if that was not enough, the dot in the Arabic *noon* is a distinct diamond shape and in a slightly different position compared with the genuine.

On the 10p on 5p Hejaz surcharge stamp, the surcharge appears to have been applied by handstamp and is less than convincing. The three dots forming the Arabic *sheen* appear as round dots, the dots in *teh marbuta* are like a sausage and the dots in *qaf* are missing.

Both copies of this forgery seen appear to be identical, suggesting a single cliché plate or a handstamp made using moveable type.



Genuine



Large *meem*

tatweel

Arabic *noon*



Genuine



Forgery

Hejaz surcharge forgery

Although not a Transjordan overprint, the forgery is shown here in order to facilitate the detection of the Transjordan 3-line overprint.

عشرة قروش

Genuine

عشرة قروش

Forgery

The genuine surcharge was applied using a plate of 36 clichés produced using moveable type, each one being slightly different; the forgery may have been a handstamp.

Forgery type 2

A crude attempt with poorly formed letters, probably a handstamp. The colour and quality of this forgery are similar to the Hejaz surcharge forgery shown above. Plate size unknown.

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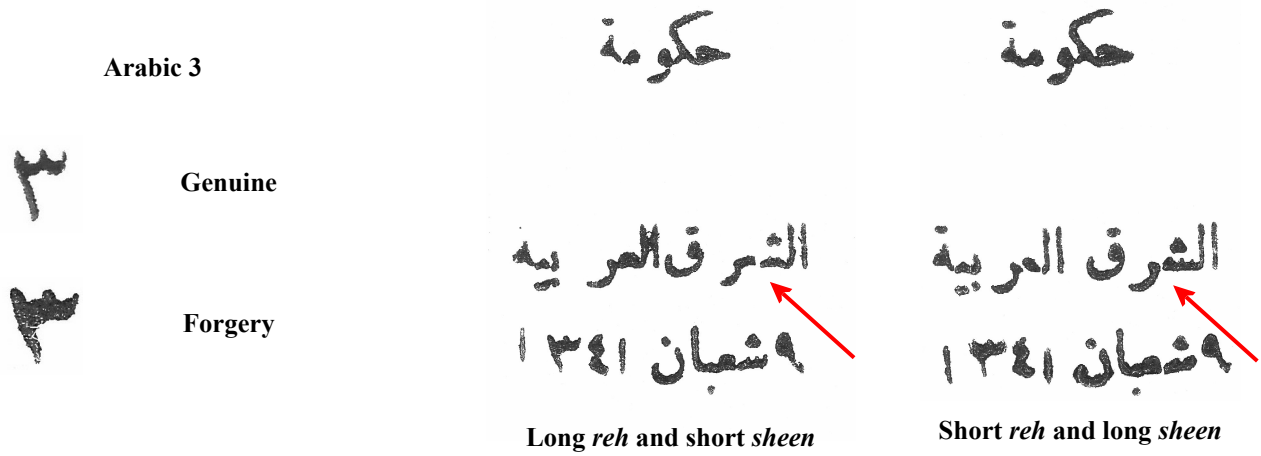
Stamps

The only copy seen to date is an inverted overprint on the 3p brown.



Forgery type 3

A good attempt but not as crisp as the genuine overprint; the type is thicker and less clear. The plate was constructed from moveable type but with inconsistent spacing. The plate has 18 clichés (three rows of six). The Arabic number 3 differs from the genuine and is the key for identification.



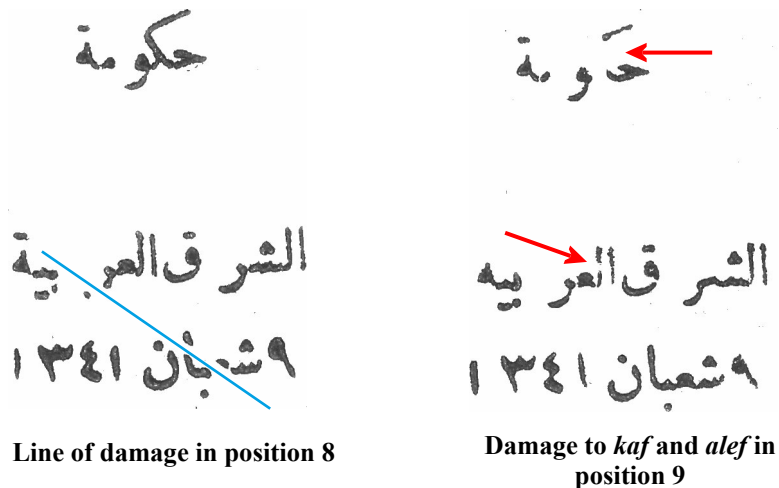
The forgery has been seen only on genuine Hejaz stamps and the ½, 1½, 2 and 5p have been seen (no 3p brown). A double overprint has been seen on 1½p and other errors probably exist. The other values of Hejaz stamps used for the 1923 overprint, namely the ¼ and 1p, have type 4 forgeries on forged Hejaz stamps. This forgery has also been seen on the 5p with a forged 10p surcharge similar to that illustrated with forgery type 1.

Position 1 has جكرمة (*jakramat*) instead of حكومة (*hukumat*) in line 1 and position 7 has an error الشزق for الشرق in line 2. As with the genuine, short and long varieties of *reh* and *sheen* in line 2 exist but in different plate positions:

- Short *reh* and long *sheen*: 8,10,13,14,15,16,17,18.
- Long *reh* and short *sheen*: 1,3,4,6,9,11,12.
- (Unknown: 2,5)

There is damage to position 8 as though part of the plate was grooved and position 9 has damage to *kaf* in top line and broken *alef* in line 2.

An inverted albino impression of the overprint is often found on the stamp and is more easily seen on the gummed side; it was caused by a complete sheet of 18 stamps being folded horizontally before being overprinted in two operations by the 18 cliché overprint plate.



Forgery type 3 plate positions



1

Not yet available

2



3



4

Not yet available

5



6



7

8

9

10

11

12



13



14



15



16



17



18

Forgery type 4

Similar to type 3 and possibly from the same forger. The plate for this forgery was initially constructed from moveable type, but subsequent stereotyping is a possibility. It also suffered from inconsistent spacing of words and setting of individual characters. Both of the digits 1 in the year are a good example of variations in setting. The plate has 12 clichés (two rows of six). The Arabic number 3 differs from the genuine and, together with the fact that this forgery only occurs on forged Hejaz stamps, is the key for identification. The inverted albino impression seen on forgery type 3 does not appear to occur on this type.

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All 12 plate positions have the long *reh* and short *sheen* as illustrated on the previous page. Position 5 has a short top to *kaf*.

An inverted overprint has been seen on the 1/3p but no doubt there are other errors on these stamps.

Upright



Inverted



| | | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| حكومة | حكومة | حكومة | حكومة | حكومة | حكومة |
| الشرق العربي | الشرق العربي | الشرق العربي | الشرق العربي | الشرق العربي | الشرق العربي |
| ٩ شعبان ١٣٤١ | ٩ شعبان ١٣٤١ | ٩ شعبان ١٣٤١ | ٩ شعبان ١٣٤١ | ٩ شعبان ١٣٤١ | ٩ شعبان ١٣٤١ |
| حكومة | حكومة | حكومة | حكومة | حكومة | حكومة |
| الشرق العربي | الشرق العربي | الشرق العربي | الشرق العربي | الشرق العربي | الشرق العربي |
| ٩ شعبان ١٣٤١ | ٩ شعبان ١٣٤١ | ٩ شعبان ١٣٤١ | ٩ شعبان ١٣٤١ | ٩ شعبان ١٣٤١ | ٩ شعبان ١٣٤١ |

Type 4 complete plate

Type 4 additional notes

One noticeable feature of this plate is the similarity between the two rows. Comparison of the positions of the digits in the year, and the spacing of the month and year in each column, suggests that after one line had been constructed stereotypes of the line were produced and two of these were used to produce the plate.

There is some history attached to this bogus issue. In Souan² there is a letter, written by the author, to 391 Strand, London, presumably Stanley Gibbons, on 20 May 1974 from Kuwait. The relevant part of this letter follows:

I have the pleasure to submit the following offer of some various rare material of Jordan stamps to your most esteemed Firm; hoping that it will be of interest and satisfaction. This lot of which enclose a photocopy I could obtain after tedious efforts I had to exert especially the blocks of six and four and which I could not list in my catalogue 'Philatelic History of Jordan 1920 - 1970 olden Jubilee' and that because I could obtain some items recently only.

The stamps are genuine and I hold full responsibility as to their genuiness; more over; they are mint and in very good condition as seen from the photocopy.

Included in the book are the illustrations sent to 391 Strand; it is obvious that they are all the Hejaz 'reprint' forgeries and one stamp even has the missing perforation pin found on sheets of those forgeries. If this is how some stamps and varieties got into catalogues, we have to treat such listings with care.

References

1. Darlow, Major J. J., Trans-Jordan A Straightforward Collection. London Philatelist Volume 41, numbers 485 & 487 (May & July 1932).
2. Souan, K. C. R., Philatelic History of Jordan, 55th Anniversary.