



I (A)



I (B)

BAGHDAD

By MAJOR T. L. C. TOMKINS

BAGHDAD, the ancient city of the Caliphs, lies some 400 miles from the mouth of the Tigris (as the crow flies), in the level plains of the upper Iraq delta. Although probably one of the best known of Eastern towns, it is comparatively modern (as Eastern towns go), being first heard of in history during the reign of the Abbasid Caliph, Jafar al Mansur (754-775 A.D.). He chose this site as his capital on account of its central position at the junction of the routes from Persia, Syria, the head of the Gulf, and Mosul. The fact that the site was also excellently placed for a military camp, may possibly have influenced his decision, although the original name of the town was "Dar as Salam", the Abode of Peace. Baghdad enjoyed great prosperity under the Caliphs, but suffered a certain decline during the Persian occupation of 1508-1534. On the expulsion of the Persians in the latter year by Sultan Suleiman I, its prosperity was restored, and Ralph Fitch, an adventurous Englishman who visited it in 1583 said of it, "Populous and of great traffic of Strangers, for that is the way to Persia, Turkey, and Arabia". At the time of his visit, there was already a bridge of boats spanning the Tigris, a forerunner of the pontoons of the '14-18 War.

From 1546 until the outbreak of the Great War, Baghdad was the seat of a Pashalik of the Ottoman Empire.

The English arrived on the scene in 1798, when the East India Coy's Resident, an official with Consular rank, moved his office to Baghdad from Basra in that year, and English prestige grew greatly during the early part of the 19th century under their very able representative, Claud Rich. During the Napoleonic wars, the East India Coy instituted a courier service from Basra, via Baghdad and Aleppo to the Mediterranean ports, and this in turn led to the Chesney expedition of 1837, which explored the Euphrates from Turkey down to the mouth of the Shatt al Arab. The lower reaches of the Tigris were also charted, and this led to the opening of these two great waterways for steam navigation (by a British Company).

The latter half of the 19th century was taken up by the consolidation of British power in southern Iraq, or as it was commonly known Mesopotamia, the land of the Twin Rivers. This consolidation was necessary to check Russian and German ideas of gaining control of the route to the Indian Ocean via Iraq. During the Great War of '14-18, the campaign in Mesopotamia, from small beginnings, rapidly became the biggest side-show of the war, and culminated in the capture of Baghdad on March 11th, 1917. After the Armistice, Iraq became independent of the Turkish Empire, and was placed by the League of Nations under British Mandate. The British lasted, peaceably enough (except for an Arab revolt in 1920 which lasted from June to October) until 1932, when Iraq became an independent state.

(Continued on page 533)

Baghdad (Continued from page 531)

POSTAL HISTORY

The Post Office opened at Baghdad in 1868. The Indian Post Office, that is, as normally the inhabitants used Turkish stamps, which can be identified by their cancellations. Indian stamps were used, as was the general custom in the Gulf wherever trading posts had been established. Handstruck markings are known during the late '80's and early '90's, the type in use being 3 (a). This was struck in black, and the office name is spelt "BAGDAD". The Indian Post Office remained open until the outbreak of war in 1914.

Cancellations

The earliest type I have seen is Type I (A). This can be found used on its own, or in duplex with I (B), a diamond of slanting lines, from left to right downward, with the number 356 in the centre. This was followed by Type 2 (A), once again used singly or with 2 (B), the number in the latter case being 18. Both these early types are scarce especially so on entire. The next cancellation I have recorded is Type 3, which as I have mentioned, was used as a handstruck stamp for several years. It has been seen cancelling Indian stamps with the office name spelt BAGDAD in a straight line across the circle, and an acute accent over the first A. It is also found used without accent in conjunction with Type 3 (i), during the time Baghdad was in the Karachi Circle; the Number in the Bars being K-6. Type 3 can also be found, after the post office was transferred to the Bombay Circle, in conjunction with Type 3 (A); the B in square of bars; this usually cancels the stamp, and the office name stamp is generally elsewhere on the cover; in parenthesis, my views on the desirability of collecting covers are well-known, and need not be repeated here. I cannot trace Type 3 (B), the B in circle of bars, ever having been used in Baghdad (but no doubt it was, and I shall almost certainly hear about it from the customers who always write, bless 'em). These last few cancellations are also reasonably scarce these days. With the introduction of Type 4 in the '80's, spelt BAGDAD, copies become easier to obtain, as this cancellation had a fairly long innings before it was superseded by Type 7 in the last years of Queen Victoria's reign. Type 7 lasted for general use until the post office closed in 1914, but Type 9 with the date across the centre belt, has been seen cancelling Indian "I.E.F." stamps after the occupation of Baghdad, in 1917. During the early 1900's, Type 11, a single circle was used on Registered mail; it can also be found with PAR. in place of REG., denoting use in the Parcel office. This again lasted until 1914. During the latter days of the war, Type G, the Indian Army F.P.O. cancellation was used in Baghdad, the number being 301; here let me say that F.P.O. numbers allocated to Units which were in or near Baghdad, at one time or another exist, but the idea of an F.P.O. being to mislead the enemy (and the collector) it is often difficult to state categorically which was where and when. At this time (1918) Type G4 was in use at Baghdad, which was, by then, the Base Post Office, removed upstream from Basra. Indian type cancellations, both civil and F.P.O. continued to be used for some time after the war, and amongst them may be noted F.P.O. II (Type G) used at Baghdad, on the reverse of an envelope, the stamp being cancelled by Type 8, with the date and time in two lines, the stamp itself being one of the "Iraq, in British Occupation" type. During this after the war period, Types II (REG. and PAR.) are also met with on the same issues. Finally, during the 1920 rebellion, Indian F.P.O.'s (Type G) were in use in the districts affected, but I cannot pinpoint any one of them as definitely in use at Baghdad. The later cancellations of Baghdad, and indeed of Iraq generally are full of interest, but come more properly under the heading of "Iraq", which is outside the scope of this article.

(By the same author, "Persian Gulf". Published by Stamp Collecting Ltd. at 3s. 9d. post free (50 cents U.S.)



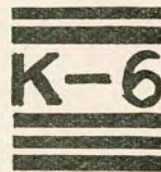
2 (A)



2 (B)



3



3 (i)



3 (A)



4



4



8



9



11



G



G 4



1

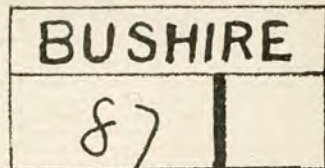


5

Persian Gulf

Additional Notes

By N. SNOWDEN, B.A. (Admin.)



2

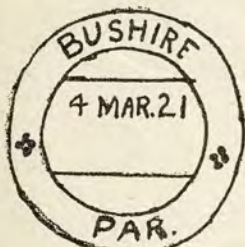
A SERIES of articles on the Persian Gulf by Major T. L. C. Tomkins was published in *STAMP COLLECTING* in 1949 and was reprinted with amendments in May 1950 in the form of a handbook. The following notes give a few minor additions to the information already published with regard to Bushire and Busrah.

Bushire

Major Tomkins states that he has not seen a copy from Bushire of Type 7 of his list of cancellations. I have this mark on a registered cover from Bushire to Bombay dated "7 JA. 00" (Fig. 1) and back-stamped on arrival at Bombay "JA. 18. 00". The outer circle is 25 mm. and the inner circle 16½ mm. in diameter and the date tablet is approximately 7 mm. in depth. The registration mark on the cover is of Type RB2 and is numbered in manuscript (blue pencil) 87 but not initialled (Fig. 2).

Another mark, unfortunately not quite complete, rather similar to Type 9 of Bahrain is illustrated in Fig. 3. A short word of about four letters, probably beginning with "C", follows "BUSHIRE". The outer and inner circles are of diameters respectively of 32 mm. and 22 mm. and the date tablet is 9½ mm. in depth.

On a 2 rupees Geo. V stamp with single star watermark I have a cancellation similar to Type 9B of Bahrain, but with the addition between the two circles of "PAR." at the foot and ornaments at either side (Fig. 4). The outer circle is approximately 32 mm. in diameter and the inner 22 mm., with a date tablet 12 mm. deep. It is dated "4 MAR. 22".



3



4

It will be found that cancellation Type 6 shows two distinct varieties of dating. When the mark first appeared the date was shown with the month first, e.g. "MY 197", but quite early in the 1900's this changed and the day was given first and continued in this form until the use of Indian stamps ceased, e.g. "7 DE 22".

Busrah

A peculiar cancellation, very like Type 11(A) appears on a piece which I have and is illustrated in Fig. 5. It consists of a single line circle 26 mm. in diameter with "BUSRAH" in sans-serif capitals inside the upper portion of the curve of the circle and the date in two lines "17 JA 80". As the mark cancels two 2½ annas King Edward VII stamps it would seem that the figures of the year in the date stamp have been transposed and should read "17 JA 08".

As with Bushire, the early examples of cancellations of Type 6 showed the month first, e.g. "FE 23 00", but this changed to a cancellation in which the day appeared first, as "16 OC 02".



Answers to Quiz

(By Mr. Reg Mehegan, with the Editor's help?)

- (1) "Three Sisters" of Ascension on the current 6d. stamp.
- (2) The Lord Forrest stamp of Australia shows a compass behind his head, but the East is obscured.
- (3) Adam's Peak on the 3c. Ceylon, and it is 7,360 feet high.
- (4) A volcano on the current 2s. British Solomon Islands.
- (5) The angle 180° is a geometrical half-circle. Add it to the first Fiji 6d. (S.G. 260) and you have S.G. 261, which is catalogued at 1s. against 35s.
- (6) Hong Kong Postage Due has scales on it.
- (7) "394a" of Ceylon is catalogued £18 (G.S.M. Supplement, December, 1950), "589b" of New Zealand is now £15, while "145" of the Seychelles is £7.
- (8) The "Parrot Fish" on the current Cayman I. (8a) A "cat boat" shown on the current Cayman I. ½d.
- (9) (a) Indian State issued one stamp in 1942.
(b) Native of North Borneo.
- (c) The most southerly point of the Island of Anguilla, shown on the current £1 stamp of St. Kitts-Nevis.
- (10) British Honduras shows "Chicle" from which chewing gum is made on its current 2c. and 50c. values.
- (11) Alexander Bell. "Fame" on the Canadian stamp issued in 1947 is shown balanced on a globe, holding out a laurel wreath.
- (12) The Red Fort, Delhi, named after the colour of its stone, is shown on the current 1r. stamp of India. (It also appeared on a Jap label issued during the war.)

(The Name of the Winner is on page 409)



The Persian Gulf

—Addenda

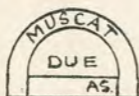
By MAJOR T. L. C. TOMKINS



U 1

SINCE writing the story of the Gulf last year, I have received several cancellations which are new to me, and which were not originally recorded; some of them I have found on covers purchased in the normal way, others have been shown me by the kindness of my friends, amongst whom I must mention Mr. E. E. Ellison, and Lieut. G. J. Raymond of the U.S.A.F. Details are appended here, so that those of you who bought, borrowed, or otherwise acquired the original work, can insert the new illustrations in the appropriate place.

Bahrain. Type E 3. An experimental P.O. marking emanating from the small island of Muhurraq, off Bahrain Island. The cover bears the date 4th October 1947, and is the only one I have seen from this place, which incidentally was spelt "Moharq" by the sender. Apparently it was used to service the local Airfield and it will be interesting to see whether a C.D.S. ever takes its place.



D 2



O 1

Bushire. A small single circle of 19 mm. diameter dated 6 Feb 1895, on an official postcard from the Postmaster of Bushire to the British Vice-Consul there, announcing the rate of exchange then current in Rupees/Sterling. Presumably, as there is no adhesive on the card, this is an official paid marking. (O.I.)

Guadur. During the years 1929-1938, Guadur was a stage on the old Imperial Airways route to India, the stage being changed in the latter year to Jiwani. During 1934-38 type 10A was used for Airmail from this port.

Muscat. Type U.1 seen on a letter from Pakistan in 1948, and is the first seen by me, also on same cover, Type D2. (4 annas to pay).



E 3



10 A

Politics in the Gulf

British citizens are assisting the Sheik of the Trucial Oman Coast in developing the long peninsular of QATAR, which juts into the Persian Gulf immediately to the East of the Island of Bahrain. On or about May 21st last a party began operations, and their mail was franked on the spot by Bahrain stamps (overprinted on G.B.), postmarked by a large circle reading "OFFICE OF THE POLITICAL OFFICER /QATAR" round the circumference with the date in the middle. The earliest known date is May 21st, 1950. After about two weeks however, according to our information, which is gratefully acknowledged to H. E. Wingfield of the Strand, London, the Sheikh of the Trucial Oman, whose seat of Government is at DOHA on the East coast of Qatar, objected strongly to the use of Bahrain stamps in his territory. It seems that there is a long-standing feud between him and the Sheikh of Bahrain, and he feared that the use of the stamps could be considered an act of aggression against his country. Therefore, the use of the stamps on Qatar was discontinued, and at present mail is sent to Bahrain for franking and postmarking. However, it is likely that shortly the normal

Doha Gets a Postmark

As forecast in our article on page 483 of July 1st, the Independent State of the Trucial Oman has now given permission for British stamps surcharged with new values in annas and rupees to be used at DOHA (capital of the State on the peninsular of Qatar). The postmark has three rings, the centre ring being broken at the top by the word "DOHA" while the centre carries — /Date /Year. The values shown us (by Mr. J. D. N. Dow of Colchester), are $\frac{1}{2}$, 1, 3, and 6 annas posted at Doha on July 13th, 1950.

Qatar

We now illustrate the special postmark used by the British in Qatar (Trucial Oman Coast) which was mentioned on page 483 last week.

