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3

# PERSIAN GULF

## (6) Henjam

By Major T. L. C. TOMKINS



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NOW, for a change, we come to an Island, that, so far as I can see, has very little recorded history. I can find no records amongst the old time writers or historians regarding this small Island in the Straits of Hormuz. Actually, it lies off the larger Island of Qishm, being separated from the cape of Ras Khargu by Henjam sound, about 1 mile wide. The island itself is about 5½ miles long by 3 miles wide, and is barren and rocky. It was formerly a British Naval station, but was handed back to the Persians in 1923. It is also a cable station, with connections to Jask, and Bushire. The main occupation of the inhabitants is pearl fishing, and there are salt mines on the Island. The Post Office apparently opened as late as 1913, and I have only seen one type of cancellation, Type 10, a double circle of 30 mm. diameter with the office name around the top, and PERSIAN GULF around the foot. It has the letters B.O. over the central belt containing the date. This cancellation I have seen in both black and blue. It is one of the more uncommon cancellations, and examples are scarce, at any rate in this country. My earliest date is 1920, but it is quite possible that there is an earlier type of obliterater which I have not seen recorded.

The English ships returned to Surat and gathered reinforcements with which they returned; the Portuguese fleet was again encountered off Jask, and this time they were engaged with such vigour that at the end of the engagement, the Portuguese limped away with what was left of their fleet. That ended the organised opposition, and thereafter English goods were landed without further trouble. With the opening of Bandar Abbas as a trading port, Jask lost most of its former importance, although it remained a useful station for the Southern part of Persia. In modern times the Cable from Fao and Bushire comes ashore there, before going on to Karachi, and there is also a cable to Muscat. Communications by sea are by British India boats (Intermediate), and in 1939 K.L.M. Aircraft called at Jask on the Amsterdam-East Indies run. Air France also used Jask for their service to Bangkok from Marseilles.

The Post Office was opened in 1880, and at first used Type 3. This can be found either used singly, or in conjunction with 3A. Both of these are very scarce indeed. Later in the '80's, Type 4 came into use, with four bars outside the small circle, and this was shortly followed by Type 5, with three bars. These two are also fairly difficult to find nowadays. With the opening years of the 20th century, Type 7 made its appearance. This was current until about the end of King Edward VII's reign. With the Georgian stamps, came the last cancellation I have seen, Type 10. This is slightly different from the normal Type 10, as after the words PERSIAN GULF, in the lower part of the circle, it has what appear to be the letters "DI" or "DT". None of my cancellations is clear enough to read these letters with certainty; I cannot see what DI would mean, but if it is DT, it might stand for District, as Jask is out of the Gulf proper. The use of Indian stamps in Jask ceased, in common with the other Persian ports, in 1923; and generally speaking, cancellations from this port are amongst the scarcest of the lot. This is hardly to be wondered at, as the amount of correspondence from Jask cannot have been as great as from many of the larger and more important ports.

## (7) Jask



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The port of Jask, although not actually on the Gulf itself, but on the Persian side of the Gulf of Oman, is important as being the original port from which the East India Company commenced their trading operations in these regions. It was Jask that the East India Company's Factors, Richard Steele and John Crowther, chose as the most suitable port in Persia, when having obtained a Firman from Shah Abbas 1st, they surveyed the coasts of Persia in the early 17th century. In a letter from Steele to the Company he says, "Herein are Portes in the Persian Countrye that a shippe of aboute one hundred Tonnes can hardly Anker ther, and yet nearer Ormus, then Cape Iasques (Jask) which I haue bene crediblye enformed of that shipping of 5 to 6 hundred Tonnes may Anker within Sacar shott of the shore, which great shipping as I Iudge is fitter to defend the assaults of the Portugalls than those of smaller burthen". Largely as a result of this survey, the first English ship, the "James" set out from Surat, the main factory of the Company in November, 1616, and arrived off Jask about twenty seven days later. This really marks the start of the English trading in the Gulf, and matters went so well, that by 1619 the first factory was established in the port, which remained the main trading station of the Company in the Gulf until superseded by Bandar Abbas, some years later.

The fact that the English had gained a considerable foothold in what was hitherto regarded as a purely Portuguese sphere of influence, annoyed the Portuguese greatly. They were having quite a lot of trouble at Hormuz as it was, so that, in December, 1620, an English convoy approaching, they sent out their fleet, and successfully prevented two English ships from entering Jask.



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(To be continued.)

The Honorary Secretary of the Northamptonshire P.S Mr. S. J. Andrews of 77 Bushland Road, Northampton, invites Societies in the neighbourhood to visit an Exhibition his society is mounting in the Art Gallery in that city from January 14th to February 11th next, which will be removed to Kettering Art Gallery from February 25th to March 18th.

Another Exhibition, which we regret came too late for advertisement, was mounted by the Ruston Society in Lincoln on September 8th to 10th. Nearly fifty members took part. The Ruston Society, being Lincoln's only philatelic society, accepts a limited number of associates who are not members of the Ruston & Hornsby or Ruston-Bucyrus group.



**PERSIAN**

(8) Kuwait



**GULF**

By  
Major T. L. C.  
TOMKINS



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IF, on your voyage up the Gulf, you happen, as you undoubtedly will, to pass a native sailing craft, such as a Battel, Buggalow, or Sambuk, all of which are called by Europeans (but not by the Arabs) "Dhows", it is any odds to a fiver that it was built at the shipyards of Kuwait; for Kuwait is famed throughout the Gulf for its shipbuilding.

The town of Kuwait, from which the Principality takes its name, is lucky in possessing the finest natural harbour on the Gulf. It lies at the south-east corner of the Bay of Kuwait, which is 13 miles long from north to south, and 24 from east to west. Kuwait itself is a sort of "Buffer State" between Iraq on the north and Sa'udi Arabia on the west and south, its capital being about 78 miles, as the crow flies, south from Busrah, to which it is connected by a good motor road. Historically Kuwait is young compared with most of the Gulf Ports, being settled by a tribe of the Utubi Arabs sometime in the 17th Century.

The town grew in importance largely owing to many of the inhabitants of Busrah moving to Kuwait during the Siege of Busrah in 1776, and in consequence much of the trade of Busrah passed to Kuwait. The British first came into contact with the town during the 1790's, owing to certain difficulties with the Turks at Busrah. It was never a trading post, however, and until 1896 little interest was taken in Kuwait. In this year the then Sheikh of Kuwait, one Sheikh Mubarak, being slightly apprehensive of Turkish designs on his territory, asked to be placed under British protection. It was not until 1898 however that Russian activity in the political affairs of certain Gulf Ports induced the British Government to enter into an engagement with the Sheikh. In this engagement, dated January 23rd, 1899, the Sheikh binds himself "Not to receive the Agent or Representative of any Power or Government at Koweit, or at any other place within the limits of his territory, without the previous sanction of the British Government; and he further binds himself, his heirs and successors, not to cede, sell, lease, mortgage or give for occupation . . . any portion of his territory to the Government of any other Power". This agreement was invoked the following year, when the German Railway Commission came looking for a suitable terminus for the proposed Bagdad Railway—part of the German "Drang nach Osten". It was from Kuwait, with the help of the Sheikh Mubarak, that Abdul Aziz 'Ibn Sa'ud set out on what was a forlorn hope, to drive the usurping house of 'Ibn Rashid from his father's lands; the successful outcome of which was the founding of the Kingdom of Nejd.

In 1904, following the establishment of a British Political Agency at Kuwait, a Postal Agreement was signed by the Sheikh, agreeing not to permit other countries to open a post office. The translation of this is as follows:—

"As the British Government has agreed in accordance with my desire and for the benefit of traders, to establish a post office at Koweit, I on my part agree not to allow the establishment here of a post office by any other Government. I accordingly write this undertaking on behalf of myself and my Successors. Koweit. Seal of Sheikh Mubarak-El-Sabah. The 11th Zil Haj 1321. (The 28th February, 1904.)"

In 1912 the Sheikh was made a K.C.I.E., and in 1914 a K.C.S.I. On the outbreak of war with Turkey, the Sheikh was asked (in a letter from the Resident for the Gulf) to co-operate with other reliable Sheikhs "to liberate Basrah from Turkish possession. Should this prove to be beyond your ability, you should make arrangements if possible to prevent Turkish reinforcements from reaching Basrah or even Qurnah, until the arrival of the British troops whom we will send, please Allah, as soon as possible". As you know, we did send them, and speedily, with the result that Basrah was "liberated" in November of the same year.

A large oilfield was struck in 1938 at Burgan, about 27 miles south of Kuwait town. This is under British control, and oil-loading jetties have been built at Shuwaikh, a couple of miles west of the town; here, also, there is a B.O.A.C. flying-boat base. Sea communications are as usual, a weekly B.I.S.N. boat to India.

(Continued on page 83.)

## Stamp Societies

- October 10.—Caterham: "An Evening's Intrigue", A. Walker.
- .. 10.—Canadian: "K.G.V Issues".
- .. 10.—Dovercourt: Bourse.
- .. 10.—Halifax: "Gambia", C. W. Hellawell.
- .. 10.—Horncastle: Competition and Debate.
- .. 10.—Ilford: Mystery Night.
- .. 10.—Sidmouth: Members' Displays.
- .. 11.—Ashford (Kent): "Covers", L. Ray.
- .. 11.—Ashton-u-Lyne: "T.P.O.s", C. Kidd.
- .. 11.—Birmingham: "Paquebots", C. H. Smith. "Canada" A. H. Handford.
- .. 11.—Croydon: "Film", Chas. Mozer.
- .. 11.—Devizes: "Jamaica", G. W. Collett.
- .. 11.—Forest: "Stamp Production", C. R. Clear.
- .. 11.—Glasgow: "Germany", G. McIlwrick.
- .. 11.—Ilfracombe: President's Night.
- .. 11.—Min. of Works: Committee Displays.
- .. 11.—Sale: Visit to G.P.O. Manchester.
- .. 11.—South Wales: Exhibition.
- .. 11.—Walton & Weybridge: Auction.
- .. 12.—Belfast: "Reminiscences", F. G. Cardwell.
- .. 12.—Blackburn: Bourse.
- .. 12.—Bury: "The day we went to Birmingham", Dr. J. A. Woodhead.
- .. 12.—Cheltenham: Exchange Night.
- .. 12.—Hastings: "Simple Life", Councillor J. Ireland.
- .. 12.—Leeds: "Campaign Covers", Mrs. E. L. Morgan.
- .. 12.—Rochdale: "Austrian Commonwealth", W. P. Sheargold.
- .. 12.—Sale: Visit to G.P.O.
- .. 12.—Shropshire: Informal.
- .. 12.—Tunbridge Wells: "B.N.A.", A. J. Nash, W. J. Pearce.
- .. 13.—Burnley: A.G.M.
- .. 13.—Cinque Ports: "Pen Cancellations", L. Ray.
- .. 13.—Greenock: Members' Displays.
- .. 13.—Hamstead: "Stamp Production", C. R. Clear.
- .. 13.—Horley: "Scandinavia", S. C. Daft.
- .. 13.—Hounslow: "British Stamps", R. C. Alcock.
- .. 13.—Huddersfield: "Campaign Letters", Mrs. E. L. Morgan.
- .. 13.—Hull: "Belgium", B. L. Barker.
- .. 13.—Orpington: "Stamp Production", R. G. Bennett.
- .. 13.—Sheffield: "X-Rays", W. Cheavin.
- .. 13.—Sutton: "Malta", H. T. A. Reed.
- .. 13.—Yardley: Informal.
- .. 14.—Bristol North: "Falkland I", F. J. Nokes.
- .. 14.—Ispswich: "Stamps G.B. & I", C. H. C. Harmer.
- .. 14.—Kingston: "Zeppelin Covers", W. Pearce.
- .. 14.—Kirkintilloch: "Introduction to the Classics", J. S. Merrylees.
- .. 14.—Pinner: Display by President.
- .. 14.—Plymouth: "Members favourite 8 sheets".
- .. 14.—South Downs: Competition etc.
- .. 14.—Southgate: "Paper and Printing", Dr. A. H. Wortman.
- .. 14.—Torquay: "U.S.A. Covers", Miss E. Harper.
- .. 14.—Tynemouth: Visit from Shields P.S.

**Kuwait**

(Continued from page 81.)

*Cancellations.* Although, as we have seen, the Post Office opened in 1904, I have been unable to trace any cancellations prior to 1914. The earliest type I have seen is Type 8. This is a double circle of 30 mm. diameter, with the office name spelt KOWEIT and the usual "Killer" arc. This type has the date line at the foot of the middle belt, as though it was intended to insert the time of day as well. With the introduction of overprinted Indian stamps in 1923 a new type was used, Type 9, which has the office name spelt KUWAIT at the top of a circle of 32 mm. with a simple ornament at foot. In the 1930's Type 8a was used, 30 mm. in diameter, with the name spelt KUWAIT, killer arcs, divided at the foot to show the name in Arabic, and the date at the top of the middle belt. Another cancellation in use from the late twenties onwards is Type 10, with the words PERSIAN GULF at the foot. This is still in use, as also is Type 9. During the second World War, there was a shortage of overprinted stamps, and as supplies were difficult to obtain—postage stamps presumably being low priority—ordinary unoverprinted Indian stamps were in use for some years. It was during this period that Type 14 made its appearance, a small single circle of 25 mm., with seven lines running to the right. This type is still in use at the time of writing, as I have seen it on the current stamps. I can only trace one Registered Cancellation, Type 13a, with the word REG. under the office name, and the Arabic equivalent at the foot.

**Types not illustrated will appear next week.**

(To be concluded :—Next Part : LINGA.)



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**PERSIAN****(8) Kuwait***(Concluded from page 83 last week.)*

13a

**GULF**

By

**Major T. L. C.  
TOMKINS****KUWAIT****T. (1) & K.R. 2.**

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Types 8, 8a and 9 were illustrated last week.

There is, by the way, a variety of Type 9, in which the office name is spelt KUWATT, which seems to be in use at the present time. On registered covers, but not cancelling the stamps, you can find a small straight line marking as Type KR 2., very similar to the one used at Bahrain. Another cancellation, but not a postal one, often found on high value Rupee stamps, is Type T.I. This is a telegraph cancellation, and as the Rypee values were used a lot for telegrams and cables it follows that this is quite a common marking.

One or two points about the stamps themselves for a change. It was originally intended that the overprint on the Indian K.G. V stamps should be KOWEIT, but for some reason, although these were prepared for use they were never issued, and the spelling of KUWAIT was used instead. These stamps overprinted KOWEIT are sometimes (but not often) met with, but are very rare. The Air Mail overprinted issue of 1933-34 has had the overprints extensively forged, especially the 4 annas drab. The forged overprint is usually slightly larger than the original, and in a different shade of black.

The lettering of the forgeries is also sometimes irregular and sloping, and all the letters are not the same size. There are also some "inverted" overprints on this issue, which I regard with the utmost suspicion: these should never be purchased without a certificate, or from any but a known and reputable source. There was, of course, one value of the 1923 set, the 3 annas, with an overprint inverted, which would appear to be in order, since it has attained catalogue rank, but here again discretion should be exercised by intending purchasers. The same remarks apply, as in Bahrain, as to the advisability of completing your sets of K.G. V, especially the top Rupee values, and the 8 and 12 annas of the first K.G. VI are worthy of attention before they go any higher. *(Next Post: LINGA.)*

