



A



B



C



D



E

PALESTINE POSTMARKS IN JORDAN

STUDENTS of postal history, whatever their field of interest, have one regret in common: That they did not start their collection much, much earlier; when those rare cancellations were still current, when those now famous post offices were still operating. "Those were the days," sighs the enthusiast. If only one had started 30 years ago, what a wonderful collection there would be now!

But in regretting the missed opportunities of the past, let's not overlook the chances the present has

By
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to offer. Postal History (as any other form of history) is not of the past alone, it is continuously being made in our own time.

More than in many other fields, this is evident in the postal history of the Holy Land. While many publications have dealt with the cancellations of Israel, the postmarks of the Jordanian parts of Palestine do not appear to have received much attention. Yet they are of great interest for several reasons: firstly, their historical associations, places such as Bethlehem, Hebron, Jericho being situated in the area; secondly, to the lover of postmarks as such for their infinite variety; thirdly, to the collector of Palestine postmarks of the Turkish and Mandate periods as

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an indispensable and logical addition to his collection.

Apart from all this, their greatest attraction lies in the fact that they represent contemporary postal history. They have none of the disadvantages of older periods. It is not too late to start such a collection to-day. On the other hand, the material is not so easily obtainable as to miss the stimulant of hunting for the more elusive and for the obsolete. Here is a splendid opportunity to compile a collection of lasting historical and philatelic value.

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First two upper postmarks are type F and the other is type G. Below are types H and I and the "Paid Jerusalem" mark.

and Jordan was concluded on 3rd April, 1949, the area coming under Jordan administration contained 12 post offices and postal agencies. Ten of these were kept in being at the time: Beit Jala, Bethlehem, Hebron, Jenin, Jericho, Jerusalem, Nablus, Qalqilya, Ramallah and Tulkarm.

Of the remaining two, Salfit has since been re-opened, while Bir Zeit remains closed. On the other hand, a number of new post offices and postal agencies have been opened since.

At first, two types of British Mandate cancellations were in use at the ten original post offices (Types A and B). These were soon superseded, however, by Type C, a single circle of 26 mm. showing the place name in Arabic on top and in Roman lettering at the bottom.

These were followed by types D and E. They are of a rather unusual design which seems to be conditioned by the fact that more room is required to accommodate the Arabic script than the Roman lettering which latter easily fits between the two circles. The main difference between D and E consists, of course, in their size, 34 mm. and 29 mm. respectively. Type D furthermore shows the date in one line and has an index letter, A, B, C underneath, while E has no index letters and the date appears in two lines.

The specialist will find some variations in the sizes of cancellers for different places. To name but the most outstanding ones, Type D of Jerusalem has a diameter 32½ mm., i.e., 1½ mm. less than the usual. This leads to the inscription touching the outer circle. In type E sizes vary from 30 mm. (Jericho) to 28½ mm. (Nablus, Hebron, etc.) and 27½ mm. (Beit Jala, Bethlehem, etc.).

Both types D and E seem to have been in use side by side from the end of 1949 till 1953. Similar conditions seem to have existed regarding the earlier types. My latest example of Type B is dated April, 1950. The earliest date for Type C is "28 AP 49," so there seems to have been considerable overlapping in their use.

With the introduction of the now current Type F (circle of 33 mm., bridge of 9 mm.), all types mentioned so far became obsolete. The current type occurs with numbers 1 and 2 at the post offices of Bethlehem, Hebron,

Tulkarm. In the case of Jerusalem, numbers run from 1 to 5, with the addition of two more cancellers for Jerusalem Citadel.

Of the post offices and postal agencies opened or re-opened by the Jordanian postal administration three of them use a canceller of Type F: Aqabat Jabr P.A., a Refugee camp near Jericho, Tubas P.A., south-east of Jenin, and Salfit P.A. which was re-opened, a village near Nablus. In addition to the place names, the Arabic inscription also gives the equivalent to Postal Agency: Sh'abat Barid.

Type G, a single circle without bridge, is in use by two postal agencies only: Thoury P.A.—Jerusalem (40 mm.) and Selet el Daher, east of Tulkarm (32 mm.).

Type H shows a double circle with bridge. This type is the first cancellation of Beit Sahour, near Bethlehem. This canceller has since become obsolete. Mention must also be made of the postmarks of Yabed, west of Jenin (see illustration) and of El Bireh. The latter is known to collectors of Palestine forerunners for its rather rare Turkish cancellation. No post office seems to have operated in that village for more than 20 years!

bridge, comprises the current type c. Beit Sahour, and the obsolete type of Halhoul P.A., north of Hebron. The latter is remarkable for the fact that it does not bear a date.

The "Paid Jerusalem" cancellation (see illustration) also conforms to this type. It owes its existence to a shortage of stamps after the assassination of King Abdullah and the abdication of King Talal when new stamps were not yet available. (R. T. Ledger, Philatelic History of Jordan, page 67.)

The next and last type is a double oval; there is a horizontal one of Abu Dees P.A., south-east of Jerusalem. The inscription is in Arabic only and reads at the top: "Al Mamlaka El Ardonia El Hashimia," i.e., The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and at bottom: "Sh'abat Barid Abu Dees," Postal Agency Abu Dees. Perhaps this P.A. is for inland mail only as U.P.U. regulations would demand a French translation of the Arabic text otherwise.

A similar, but vertical oval is presented by the current postmark of Halhoul which has now the date added to it.

The illustrations show the six types of postmarks which were or are used at the ten original post offices.

Between Our Shelves

Catalogue of the Stamps of New Zealand. 107 pages illustrated. Published by Pim and Co. (N.Z.) Ltd., Auckland, New Zealand. Obtainable from Harris Publications Ltd.

Pim's New Zealand catalogue is a household name among all collectors of the British Commonwealth and this new edition, the first since 1951, lives up to its reputation. Well produced on fine art paper which does justice to the many illustrations, the book is bound in stiff board covers and has a coloured frontispiece of the famous Chalon portrait of Queen Victoria.

The publishers say that the catalogue lists every major variety of New Zealand stamps but does not include varieties of a minor nature.

"The philatelic value of the latter would vary considerably depending, upon the viewpoint of the collector so interested," say the publishers.

"To determine their true value would be a task we would not think of attempting."

Even so, the catalogue is highly specialised. Printings, papers, watermarks, re-entries, shades and all the other philatelia which delights the student are there in profusion, not forgetting notes of printers, designers and composition of the sheets.

Specialised Catalogue of Canada and British North America. 330 pages, illustrated. By L. Seale Homes, M.D., and Associates. Published by the Ryerson Press, Toronto, and obtainable from Harris Publications Ltd., price 55/-.

This eighth edition of a catalogue entirely devoted to the issues of Canada is long overdue for much revising has been necessary during the past five years. The essays and proofs of Canada have been rewritten and the stationery section has been revamped by a specialist group.

The catalogue lists and prices stamps in all sorts of ways—on and off cover, blocks, plate blocks and in some cases even in blocks of eight.

Much information and many illustrations are given on early post marks and the Revenue stamps have not been forgotten.

The Holmes catalogue is a must for every collector interested in the stamps and philatelic history of Canada.

