

Holy Land VI

Postal History 111-112

OFFICIAL BULLETIN OF THE SOCIETY OF THE
POSTAL HISTORY OF ERETZ-ISRAEL



15.9.1918, late use of "Nablus 1" postmark on Ottoman parcel form, Collins PM 10, who notes 8.9.1918 as the last date of use (page 418).

HOLY LAND POSTAL HISTORY

Official Bulletin of the Society of the Postal History of Eretz-Israel

Affiliated to the Israel Philatelic Federation

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Correspondence

For general Society matters - Dr. E. Leib (Chairman),
P.O.B. 151, Qiriat Bialik 27101, Israel.

New members and other Society business - Z. Aloni (Secretary),
152 kedem St., Shoam, Israel.

Society dues and other payments - R. Nachum (Treasurer),
4 Moshe Dayan St. Yahud 56450, Israel.

HLPH editorial matters, Yehuda Kleiner, yehudak73@gmail.com

Society Publications and HLPH back Issues, Dr. Z. Shimony,
P.O.B. 10175, 91101 Jerusalem, Israel

Society annual membership fee: \$30 (includes Bulletin by airmail).

Life membership: \$250, payable in 2 yearly instalments.

Publications: Holy Land Postal History bulletin back issues available:
2-107 at \$7.- Each.

Index for Vol. I - Vol. IV - \$3 each.

M. Sondek, "Jerusalem Postal Services during the Siege of 1948" (reprint) - \$15;

J. Aron "Forerunners to the Forerunners: a Prephilatelic Postal History
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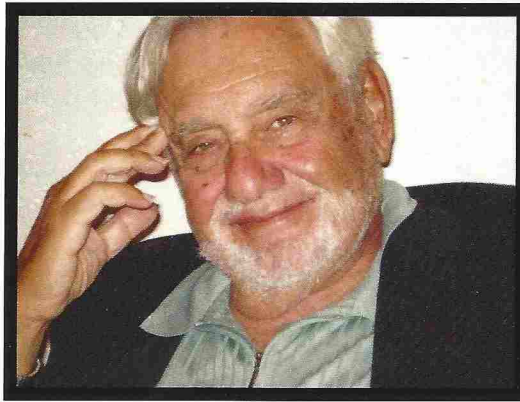
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In Memoriam



התאחדות נולדאי ישראל
הספריה

Marvin Siegel z.l. June 1930 – January 2009

To write about Marvin in past tense is an end of an era.

Marvin died in Florida on the 30th January 2009 and was buried in Long Island on 1st February 2009.

I first met Marvin in 1973. He was already an experienced dealer and I was a young collector. We were close friends for 35 years.

I was immediately impressed by his deep knowledge, not only in British Mandate and Zionist philately in which, of both, he was an expert, but in all other specialties; from the Turkish Forerunners to modern Israel. All this in addition to his vast general knowledge – he was a human Encyclopedia.

Marvin was a devoted Zionist and loved Israel. He and Evelyn, his lovely supporting wife, shared their time between their daughters and grandchildren in the USA and their apartment in Ramat-Gan.

The family donated funds to various projects in Israel, especially for the welfare of children. Marvin was also very active in the organization for the benefit of Israeli Invalid Soldiers. He served as the president of the USA branch and his activities were much appreciated both, in Israel and abroad.

Marvin was one of the greatest contributors to Holy Land philately. Hundreds of his articles were published in the Israel Philatelist (USA), BAPIP (GB) and in the Holy Land Postal History bulletin (Israel). The book "Israel Foreign Postal Links" that he wrote, together with Chaim Shamir, gave the push for other publications to see light.

Marvin guided a large group of philatelists. His "News Letter", published for over 40 years, was eagerly awaited as were his "Mail Auction" lists. He encouraged students to develop collections of relatively neglected fields and their published findings are today the definite sources for these subjects. Among these collectors are Dr. Arthur Groten, Dr. Carlos Goldstein, Dr. Arthur Hochheiser, Donald Chafetz, just to name a few.

In 1990 Marvin convinced me to leave my job as a civil engineer and to establish my own auction house. I am grateful to him. We created a firm which is today known worldwide especially for its expertise in Holy Land and Judaica material.

Philately and its bulletins, collectors, the clubs he used to lecture in, all will be poorer with his passing.

I, personally lost a friend, helper and adviser.

May his memory be blessed

Yacov Tsachor

The Holy Land Postal History Society
Its Officers and its Members mourn the
loss of Marvin Siegel, great philatelist,
supporter and friend. Our sincere
condolences go out to his family. He
will be missed by all of us.

New Book

The longtime anticipated Part 2 of Volume II of the Series "The Postal History of the Transition Period in Israel, 1948", has at last been published.

Like its predecessor, Part 1, it deals with the Postal History of the places in Israel which did not have a regular postal service during the war of Independence. Part 1, which dealt with Safad and Jerusalem, was published five years ago¹.

The New Book covers: Nahariya. Rishon Le Zion, The Negev Settlements, Sdom, Gush Etzion, Ben Shemen, Haifa "Messengers Mail" as well as, the Tiberias, Affula and Nahalal "Emergency Mail"

Another book in the Series, "Israel Foreign Postal Links" (Vol. III), is also available.

Apart from the New Book (II 2), the two other books of the Series are still available and a buyer of one of them (or both) will get a special discount for the New Book.

Each of the 3 books may be purchased by order through the post by a check to the Israeli Philatelic Federation addressed to POB 4523, Tel Aviv 61045 or directly to the Office of the Israeli Philatelic Federation, 2 Pinsker St. Tel Aviv

Prices are as follows (in NIS)

Vol II Part 1 200

Vol II Part 2 220 (the new book)

Vol III 100

Each of the two "old" books, if bought, awards an 20 NIS discount on the New Book. When ordering through the Post please add 10 NIS for postage.

¹ It was awarded a Gold Medal in Tel Aviv 2004 National Stamp Exhibition.

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Editorial

It is unfortunate that the first page of the bulletin is again an obituary. This time it is the late *Marvin Siegel*. In the previous bulletin it was the late *Zvi Alexander*. Both of them were great philatelists, admirable people and wonderful friends to most of us.

Shall they rest in piece.

In this issue two letters to the Editor are published. I am happy about these, as I wish members to participate in our bulletin, both, by providing articles and by responding to articles, or to any other relevant subject of the Society. So please write.

The Hejaz railway is a remarkable historical feat, which has unique postal history, as shown by an article on the subject. For many of us, of the older generation, "The Valley Train" (Rackevet Haemek), section of the Hejaz railway and the stories about it, causes nostalgic notions to many, it being part of the folklore of the Holy Land. Once again, thanks to the Alexander Collection, we can learn and enjoy a ride on the train!

The controversy, about the accuracy of certain facts in the stamp issue to commemorate 60 years of friendship Israel-France, through the First (post) Flight Israel-France is discussed. The use of the Czechoslovakian Airways to carry airmail letters from Haifa to Europe, including letters to France, during the early period of Israeli statehood is explained.

To reflect unusual use of stamps and cancellations is one of the important subjects of postal history. Such cases often come about during transition periods from one political entity to another. The transition period from the British Mandate to Israeli statehood is no exception and several rare and outstanding philatelic items from besieged Jerusalem belong to this period. These are shown and discussed in an article on the subject.

In the article "Travel books to the Holy Land and Postal History", the application of information from travelers' accounts to the research of letters; to Acre dating 1471, and from Acre dating 1682, 1689, helped

to ascertain the origin and the authenticity of the letters. A fascinating experience.

With this bulletin we send the reminder for the payment of membership dues to those who have not yet done so. Please be aware that *non payment of dues jeopardizes the publication of our bulletin. In addition none paying members are unfair to members who do pay. Some of the members have not paid their dues for several years and we seriously consider terminating their membership. Please, let us not come to this.*

Y.K.



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Letters to the Editor

Our member Joshef Wallach sent the following comments that refer to the article "Mail contacts between Israel and Arab countries-a summary", by Lawrence Fisher, published in HLPB bulletin number 109-110.

1. Page 345-Fig.14: "From Saudi Arabia to Gaza via the Allenby Bridge."

Fig. 14, illustrates the point in the article that: The cover "received the 'T' for tax handstamp. There is no evidence that the tax was paid".

Comment: **The tax was indeed paid.** The letter is franked by 2x1.10 IL. stamps. One stamp paying the regular letter rate the second paying the tax. (Postage due with fine doubles the regular letter rate).

In addition, one can discern between the outer circle of the 'T' cachet and underneath the left side of the 1.10 IL stamp the word "ZAHAL" being part of the I.D.F Allenby postmark. This postmark was applied by the postal agent at the bridge, but the stamps were affixed at Gaza and canceled by the Gaza postmark, and there postage, and the tax were collected.

In Figure 1, a similar cover is shown which, clarifies the procedure of receiving the post at the bridge. Upon arrival from Jordan, the courier (travel agent, tourist guide, or visitors) that did not have Israeli stamps would deposit the cover unfranked in the bridge mailbox. At the bridge, the Zahal Allenby Bridge post mark and the 'T' cachet would be applied. Payment for postage, regular and tax would be collected at destination, where stamps would be applied and cancelled by the postmark of the destination.



Fig.1: Zahal Allenby Bridge 27.10.77 postmark and 'T' on front of letter, Nablus 31.10.77 transit postmark, 1.11.77 Zahal Ramalla destination postmark, canceling the double 0.65 IL rate, on back of letter.

2. Page 349-Fig. 18: "Box" cachet on letter interpreted as Israel censor mark.

The rectangular shaped box stamped on the letter is **not an Israeli censor mark.**

The fact is that this cachet was applied upon arrival at the London post office.

In Figure 2 (On the next page), four examples of letters from the occupied territories to London are shown. **None of these was censored (do not bear censor mark), but all bear the rectangular cachet.** The letters are from Gaza, Azzun, Abassan Camp and Hanara. The exact clean strike of the cachet, may lead to the belief that it was applied by a machine. The reason for it is not known so far.

Any information about it from our readers would be most welcomed!

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Fig. 2: Four covers with the rectangular cachet erroneously supposed to be a censor mark.

Our member Les Glassman from Jerusalem wrote:

1745, Ecclesiastical Letter Jerusalem – Venice. HLP 109-110

Dear Yehuda,

You asked me about the translation of the text by which it was possible to establish that the letter, written in eighteenth's century Greek, originated from Jerusalem. This was necessary as there was no indication to the place of origin on the front or on the back of the letter.

A few years ago I acquired this letter and as I could not find any indication about its being from the Holy Land, I consulted the late Mr. Muentz, who suggested having the letter translated. We hoped that from the translated text we would know the place of origin.

I am indebted to LIMOR MADAR from the 'Herzel Institute at Haifa University, for introducing me to DR. ANGELIQUE KOUMANOUDI from the Greek Studies Department at the University, who sent a copy of the letter to MR. TSELENIKA from the National Bank of Greece, Cultural Foundation in Athens. He translated the letter from Eighteen's Century Greek to modern Greek and sent it back to DR . KOUMANOUDI who in turn translated it from Greek to English. The long route of translations confirmed that the letter originated from Jerusalem.

The Editor would like to Join Les in expressing sincere appreciation to the above mentioned academics, who voluntarily invested time and effort in the translations, thus helping to further our knowledge of Holy Land postal history. And a word of appreciation also goes to Les for his persistence.

The Hejaz Railway Mail during the Ottoman Period - The Alexander collection

Zvi Alexander (z.l.) & edited by Zvi Aloni

In conjunction with the exhibition "The Faith Train - The Hejaz Railway - 100 years", which takes place in the "Alexander Museum of Postal History & Philately" in the Eretz Israel Museum, we would like to bring to our readers attention a few philatelic items from the collection, shown in the exhibition.

The Hejaz Railway was originally built to transport pilgrims from Damascus to Mecca for the Muslim Pilgrimage. This was the main reason for the project, but in addition there was the desire of the Turkish Empire to better the control and the supply to the army in the remote parts of the Empire.

The idea was first put forward in 1864 during the height of the age of the great railways around the world, (Railway Mania), but it was not until 40 years later (1908), that the Hejaz Railway came into being.

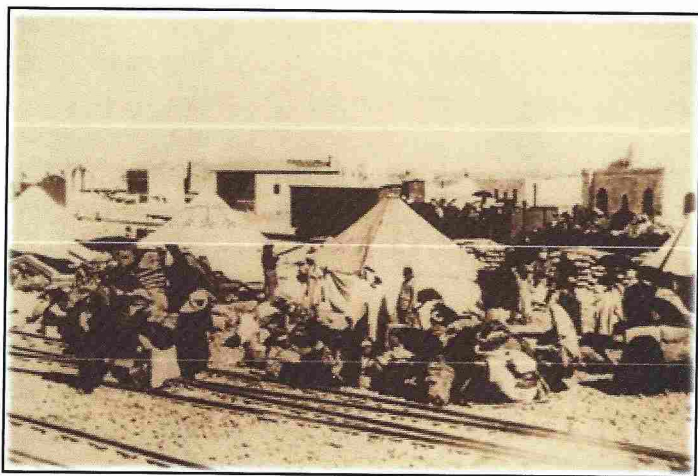


Fig. 1: Muslims pilgrims waiting near the rails of the Hejaz Railway.

The construction of the Hejaz Railway presented a financial and engineering challenge. It required a budget of some US \$16 million

dollars, a huge sum at the beginning of the century. Contributions came from; the Turkish Sultan Abdulhammid, the Khedive of Egypt, and from the Shah of Iran. Other contributions, or forced "contributions" came from the Turkish Civil Service, the Armed Forces, and through other various fund-raising efforts. These included for instance, the sale of Pasha or Bey Titles to citizens who could afford the price of such honor.

The construction of the railway started with an official ceremony held on the first of September 1900 in Damascus. The Sultan Abdulhamid the Second used the services of the German train engineer, Heinrich August Meisner for the design and for the construction of this huge project. Meisner decided to build a narrow gauge railway of 105 cm. and that Haifa, a little village at the time, and not the port of Acre, would be the port for the Hejaz Railway building materials and rolling stock. This decision was very crucial for the future and development of Haifa, and had a huge impact on the northern region of Palestine.

The construction of 1400 km, part of it under extreme arid conditions, between Damascus and Medina, and a branch from Dera (today Syrian Golan Heights) to Haifa, was executed in a record time of eight years. The ceremonial inauguration journey between Haifa and Damascus, took place on 15.10.1905, the birthday of the Sultan Abdulhamid the Second. The Palestinian part of the Hejaz Railway, from Dera, stretching between Samakh (south of Lake of Galilee) and Haifa, ran through the northern valleys, therefore it was called: "The Valley Train".

As the train was the only means of transport in the area, most of the Jewish settlements, which were founded at the beginning of the 20th century, were located along its route. Thus, the train had great economic and social importance and became essential for the development of the area.

Construction, maintenance and guarding of the Hejaz Railway presented enormous difficulties. The task was mainly done by 5,000 Turkish soldiers. Driving a railway across the Arabian deserts proved very difficult. The ground was very soft and sandy in places and solid rock in others. There were also major climate and geographical obstacles to cross, such as the Naqab Escarpment in southern Jordan. While drinking water

and water for the steam engines were in short supply, winter rainstorms caused flash floods, washing away bridges and banks and causing the line to collapse in places. A further problem was the frequent attacks on the trains by the desert tribes and by furious caravan operators who made the journey to Madina a bit dangerous.

On the first of September 1908, the railway was officially opened, and in 1912 it transported 30,000 pilgrims. As the pilgrimage journey became easier, business boomed, and by 1914 the number of passengers soared to 300,000. Not only were pilgrims transported to Madina, but also the Turkish army began to use the railway as its chief mode of transportation for troops and supplies. This was to be the railway's undoing, as it was severely damaged during the First World War (1914-1918), by Lawrence of Arabia and the Arab Revolt.

The Ottoman Empire trains were used to carry mail since the first days of their operation. During some periods, the Ottoman Post reduced rates for mail from or to cities connected with the railway and equaled it to the littoral postal rate. Post offices were opened in the train stations and the Traveling Post Office (TPO) was established. According to travelers' descriptions, a special wagon was divided between luggage and the Post office, and a postal employee equipped with cancellers and other postal equipment, was stationed on board the train in a special chamber. Special postmarks are known to be used on board the trains. Several examples are shown on the following pages.

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Fig. 2: General view of Damascus train station 1900



Fig. 3: Turkish 20 para Postcard sent from Kibbutz Degania to Jaffa, posted on board the Hedjaz Train traveling from Damas to Haifa on the 10.9.1914 cancelled "DAMASCAIFFA 1" postmark. The postcard was written by Jossef Bussel one of the founders of Degania to Dr. Ruppin in Jaffa.

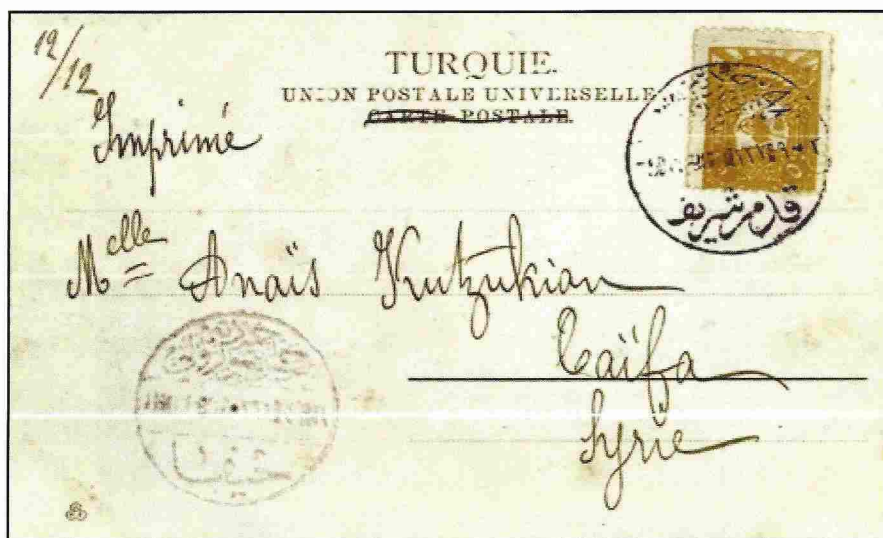


Fig. 4: Picture postcard franked 5 para Turkish stamp sent at printed matter littoral rate, from Damascus to Haifa, cancelled "HAMIDIYE HICAZ DEMURYOLU -KADEM-I-SERIF" 15.11.1907 and arrival postmark "HAMIDIYE HICAZ DEMURYOLU - HAYFA". Kadem-I-Serif was a large train depot just outside Damascus.



Fig. 5: Haifa train station 1905.



Fig. 6: Turkish 20 para Postcard sent from Damascus to Jaffa, posted on board the Hedjaz Train traveling from Damas to Hama on the 8.6.06 cancelled "Bur. Ambul. DamasHama" postmark.

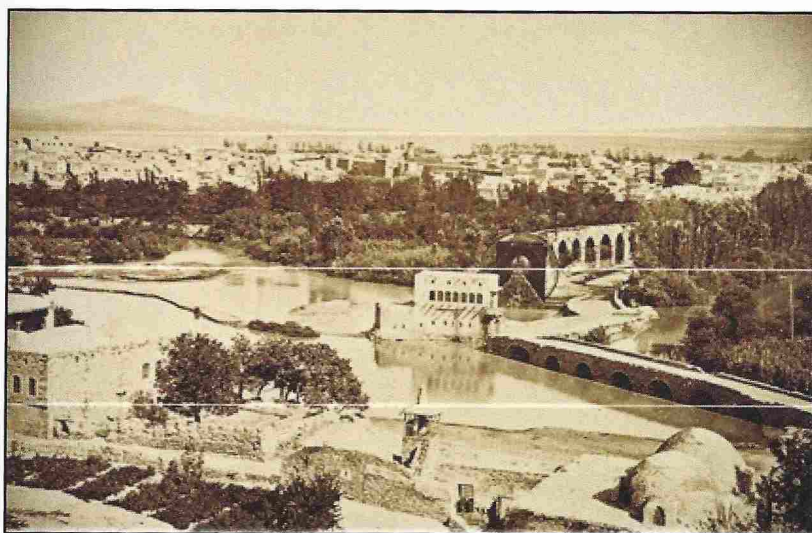


Fig. 7: A general view of Hama 1898.

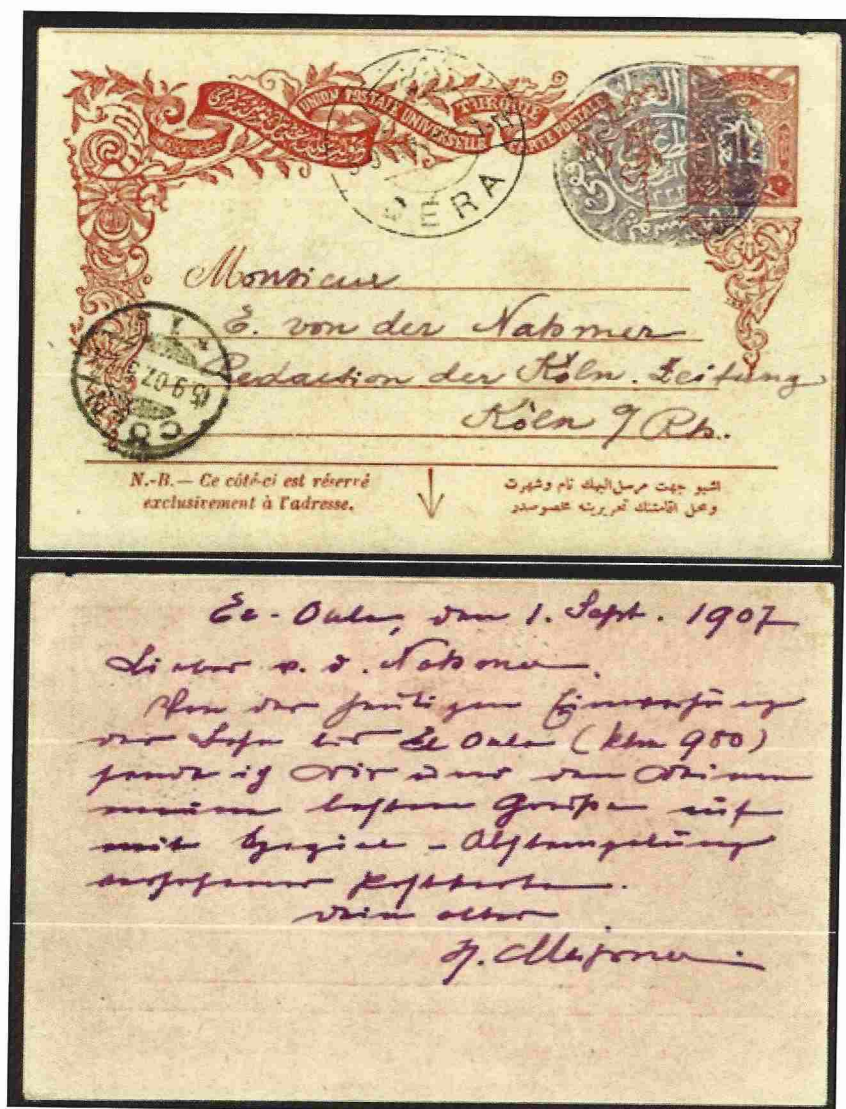


Fig. 8: Turkish 20 para Postcard sent from El-Ula to Koln in Germany. Cancelled by the special commemorative seal "EL ULA MEVKIFI POSTA SHBESI HATTI ALI "19 AGUSTOS 323" (EL ULA STATION BRANCH POST OFFICE AUGUST 1907). Addressed to the editorial office of the "Koln Zeitung" & reads: "From today's inauguration of the railway to El-Ula (Km. 980) I am sending you my best regards, on a postcard that bears the special commemorative postmark" signed "your old friend J. Meisner".



Fig. 9: Letter franked 1 piaster Turkish stamp, from Katarana to Istanbul, cancelled "HAMIDIYE HICAZ DEMURYOLU - KATARANA" on 22.05.1910, by the Hijaz train.



Fig. 10: Der'a train station



Fig. 11: Jesim Bridge on the Amman-Maan line 1903

First Flight Israel France Stamp Issue – Comments The Czechoslovakian Airliner Post Service.

Chaim Shamir, Rishon Lezion

To mark 60 years of friendship between France and Israel, a co-issue of stamps and a souvenir leaf, dedicated to the first flight Israel - France, was issued in November 2008, (Fig. 1). The plane shown on the stamps, apparently being an Air France company plane, landed at Haifa airport on June 9th. 1948, took mail destined to several countries, left Haifa on June 11th, landing at Le Bourget Paris airfield on 12th. June 1948. The landing dates at Haifa and Paris are indicated by the postmarks shown on the stamps tabs in the design of the commemorative issue.



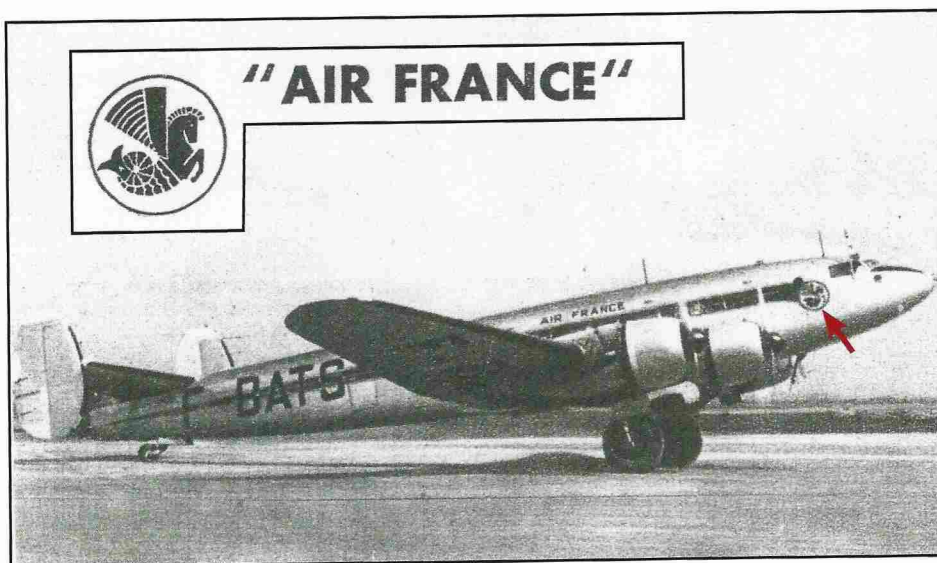
Fig. 1: The souvenir leaf dedicated to the first flight Israel – France.

This issue gives rise to several questions, which the author wishes to address. In commenting the author draws on his knowledge of the subject being the co-writer with the late Marvin Siegel, of the book "Israel Foreign Postal Links", published by our Society.

* * * * *

Was the flight shown on the stamps the first Air France flight to the newly born state of Israel?

The plane shown on the stamps apparently, belonging to Air France does not carry that Company's symbol as one would expect. Neither does it show the name of the airliner nor the registration of Air France at the time. In Figure 2, an Air France plane of the period is shown in which, under the pilot's cabin window the "Flying Seahorse", the symbol of the Company can be seen. An example of the symbol is shown in Figure 2. Of course, the absence of the Air France symbol does not necessarily indicate that it was not an Air France plane; it could have been an oversight of the designer of the stamp, or another reason, but in being so it leaves the identity of the company's plane to interpretations.



Figs. 2: Air France plane with the "Flying Seahorse" symbol of the Company, under the pilot's cabin window and an example of the symbol.

Assuming that it was an Air France flight, was it the first one to the state of Israel?

The postmarks on the tab of the stamps are dated 9.6.1948, dispatch from Haifa and 12.6.1948 arrival at Paris. These dates are not the earliest ones of Air France flights carrying mail to the state of Israel.

In Figure 3 a telegram from Haifa Postmaster to the General Postmaster in Tel-Aviv, dated **31 May 1948**, is shown. Translation of some of the content: "We have received on **29 May 1948**, 6 bags of mail that were carried by an **Air France plane**. One bag contains regular letters and five contain printed matter. The bags were not closed by the French post, but by the representative of the of the Paris office of the Jewish Agency. The airline attaches their airline labels to the mail bags."

The flight carrying the mail mentioned above is ten days before the date mentioned on the stamps of the commemorative issue.

כב אייר תשי"ח
31 למאי 1948

מדינת ישראל
מחלקת הדואר והטלגרף
משרד הדואר הראשי, חיפה

מנהל הדואר הכללי,
תל אביב.

חגירות:
דאר אויר שהתקבל באוירון של חברת אויר פרנס
ביום 29 למאי 1948.

חגיר עליי.
חגירי לאחר את מברקי מיום 30 למאי 1948 שאני

* למנהל הדואר הכללי תל אביב
קבלנו ששה שקי דאר אויר עיי אוירון של חברת
איר פרנס כ 29 למאי 1948 נקודת הדואר חיה
מרכב משקד אחד מכתבים וחמשה שקים דברי דפוס
נקודת הדאר לא נסגר על ידי הדאר הצרפתי אלא על
ידי בא כח הסוכנות כפרים נקודת קיבנור גם מכתבים
דפוסים כלי אום פרוט או דפוסת לואי כל שמיא
נקודת הדרכיה הונכה על ידי חברת האוירונים נקודת
השקים לא נסגרו על ידי הדאר הצרפתי אלא על ידי חברת
האוירונים שהדרכיה מתקים משלח על נכר השקים נקודת
המשקל דברי דפוס 148.300 קג מכתבים 32.200 קג
נקודת הדאר כולל מכתבים מאוסטרליה, נורמניה,
רומניה, בולגריה, וצרפת נקודת האירוי המשלוח בין
9 ל 27 למאי נקודת . מספר נכר של המכתבים ללא
בולטים זללא חותמת דאר כל שהוא נקודת נא להודיעני
אם לחשיל קנס ובאיזה סכום.

מנהל הדואר הראשי
חיפה

Fig. 3: Telegram from the Haifa Postmaster reporting the arrival of mailbags from Paris by an Air France plane, on 31st. May 1948.

On May 16th.1948, Egyptian planes bombed the air field in the northern outskirts of Tel-Aviv (later called Sde Dov). An Air France plane that parked on the runway was hit. The post that was on this plane was transferred to the Tel-Aviv Head Post Office on May 17th. 1948. The clipping of the Palestine Post newspaper where this is reported is shown in Figure 4.



Fig. 4: Newspaper clipping announcing damage to Air France plane at Sde Dov on May 16th. 1948.

Further to this incident, in a letter dated **June 18th.1948**; the Tel-Aviv Postmaster advises the International Post Service Manager that no mail arrived from Paris since the bombing of Sde Dov airfield on May 16th. 1948.

Thus, the cachets "First Flight-State of Israel France" shown on the commemorative issue dated 9.6.1948, should have been phrased differently.

In fact, the first **official** indication about mail **dispatch from France to the state of Israel, by an Air France** plane, that left Paris on July 6th. 1948 arriving in Haifa on July 8th. 1948, can be found in a letter from the Haifa postmaster to the Paris postmaster asking about 120 registered letters that were missing from the consignment, although these were listed on the delivery note of the consignment.

The new born state of Israel *officially opened airmail postal services with France on June 6th. 1948*

indicated by the notice to Haifa postmaster and Tel Aviv postmasters (Fig. 5) in which it says, translated from Hebrew:

1. Air mail services to France (both ways) renewed as of today.
2. Mail shipments to be closed at Haifa main post office in closed bags bearing address label Haifa – Paris.
3. All air mail letters from Tel - Aviv to France are to be handed every day to Haifa in boundless bearing appropriate labeled address.
4. Haifa postmaster will arrange transportation of mail and delivery to the representative of the Czechoslovakian airlines.
5. Former postal rates are to remain.

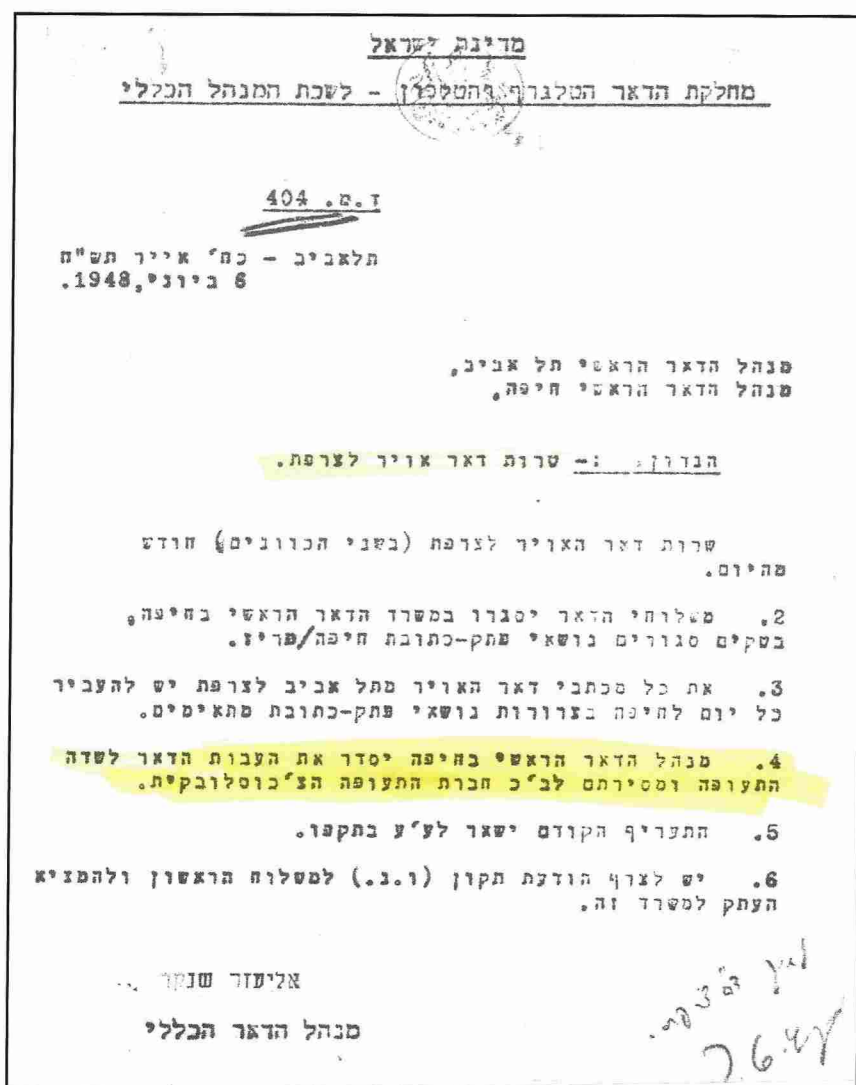


Fig. 5: Notice of the Haifa postmaster about airmail postal services with France, June 6th. 1948.

The **official notice** to the public about the post connection was issued the next day June 7th. 1948.

The main question about the notice in (Fig. 5) is *why deliver the mail bags destined to France, to the representative of the Czechoslovakian airline rather than directly to Air France's representative?*

Between 26 April and 5 May 1948, there was an almost total suspension of all Civil Mail both by air and surface to and from Palestine. Some communication did exist through airliners, noticeably the Czechoslovakian one. Czechoslovakian Airlines began flying to Palestine in August 1946. It was late in 1947 that Mr. George P. Taussing accepted the position of the official representative of the Czechoslovakian Airline in Palestine. Mr. Taussing was a member of the Hagana (Jewish defence force during the British Mandate) and was committed to keeping the Czechoslovakian Airline service with Palestine and later with the young State of Israel operational, to carry the supply of arms from Czechoslovakia to Palestine/Israel as well as mail. A regular route Prague-Rome-Athens-Tel Aviv and return was now established. Sometimes an additional stop was required at Nicosia, Cyprus, when the lack of fuel in Israel forced refueling.

However, the problem of the mail to be sent abroad had still to be solved. On May 11th. 1948, Taussing requested the Czech Government to accept mail although the new state had not yet been proclaimed and so obviously was not a member of the U.P.U. On May 15th. The Czech Government/Post agreed to accept the mail and allowed it to be franked with Palestine British stamps.

A regular weekly flight service carrying also mail was established with the planes usually flying to Tel Aviv, Sde Dov airport.

With the threat of the Tel Aviv air port being bombed by Egyptian war planes, Taussing diverted, as of May 14th. 1948, the landing of the planes of the Czechoslovakian line from Tel Aviv to Haifa. Air France continued to use the Tel Aviv airport, and an Air France plane was hit and destroyed, when the Egyptian bombed Tel Aviv airport on May 15th. 1948, (Fig. 4).

As the Czechoslovakian Airline provided regular service from the the secure Haifa airport mail destined to and from abroad, during May and June 1948, was sent through this Company and it explains the directive issued by the Haifa postmaster shown in Figure 5.

Mail items handled by the Czechoslovakian Airliner at Haifa are shown in Figures 6, 7 and 8.

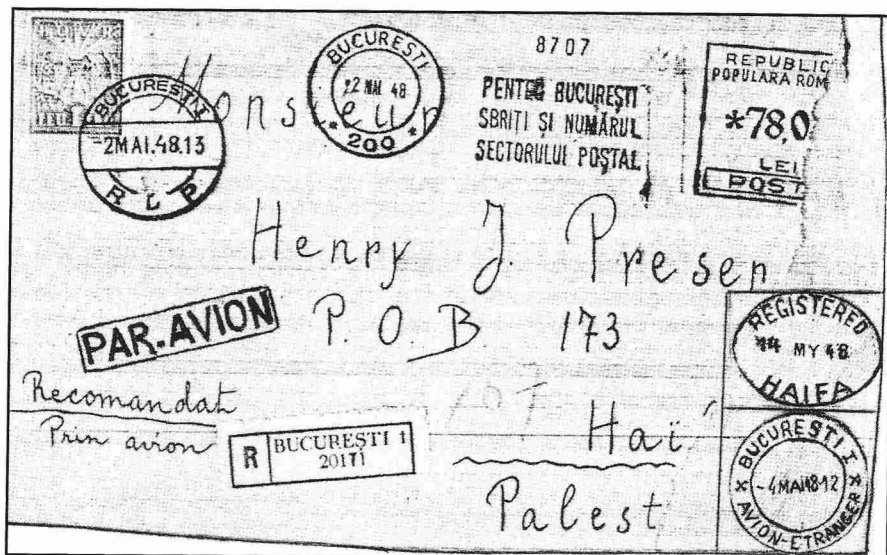


Fig. 6: A Bucharest. of the 2nd. of May 1948, sent by the Czechoslovakian Airlines to Haifa, arriving May 14th. 1948.

L'Etat d'Israel

P.T. 508.

Administration des Postes de ~~XXXXXX~~
Postal Administration of Palestine.

Bureau d' Haifa C. 18 d' CZECHOSLOVAQUIE
Office of

BULLETIN DE VERIFICATION
B. d. v. No. 6/48

VERIFICATION NOTE

pour la constatation, la rectification des erreurs et
for the verification and correction of errors and
irrégularités de toutes sortes reconnues dans la dépêche
irregularities of all kinds observed in the mail

No. 1 du bureau d'échange d' Haifa
No. from the office of exchange of
pour le bureau d'échange d' Prague
for the office of exchange of

Par Avion

No. 1 expédition du 26.5.48
despatch of the 19 at

Stamp of the Receiving Office of the V.N.

3305-25000-24 846-G.C.P.

ERREURS OU IRRÉGULARITÉS DIVERSES ERRORS OR IRREGULARITIES
(Manque de la dépêche, manque d'envois recommandés ou de la feuille d'avis, dépêche soignée, etc.)
(Non-receipt of the Mail, non-receipt of Registered Articles or of the Letter Bill, mail tampered with, bag torn)

Fig. 7: A Prague cover sent on May 21st. 1948, by the Czechoslovakian Airlines destined to TEL AVIV, but transit Haifa May 27th. 1948.



Fig. 8: A letter from Haifa to Amsterdam sent on 26.5.1948, by Czechoslovakian Airlines and returned to sender.

To be continued.

Travel Books And Postal History

Yehuda Kleiner, Raanana

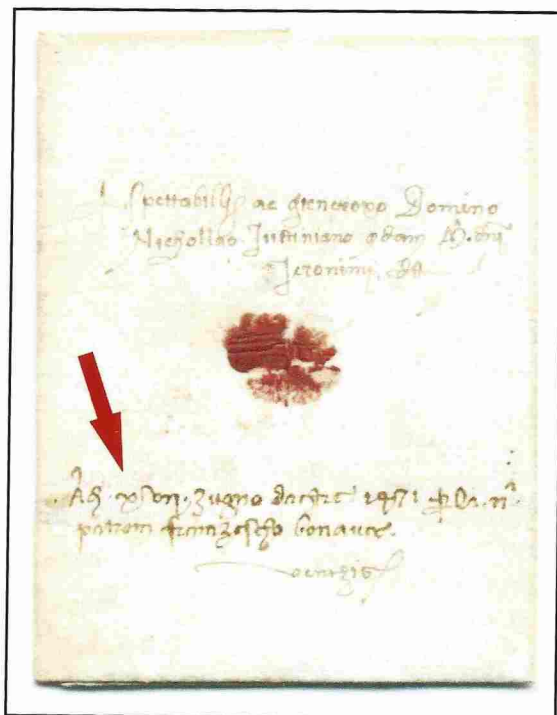
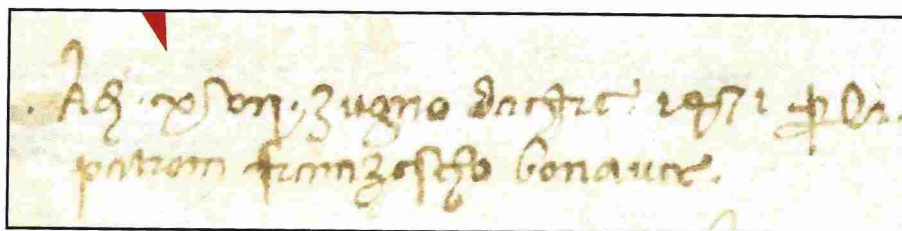


Fig. 1: 1471 letter from Acron (Acre in the Holy Land) to Venice.



*The enlarged endorsement of the address panel. The second word is **ACRON** in the typical calligraphic style of the time with no spacing between the letters.*

The cover shown in Figure 1 was bought at the Robson Lowe postal history auction of 7th. December 1988, (lot 637). The lot was described; "1471(7 April, arr. 17 June) E.L. from Francesco Gambetta , baulo, at

Acre to Nicholo Zustignani in Venice, endorsed on address panel *Adi XVII Jugno drodit 1471 per ne patron Franzecha Bonavia (by the ship of Capt. Francesco Bonavia).....*" (Fig. 2).

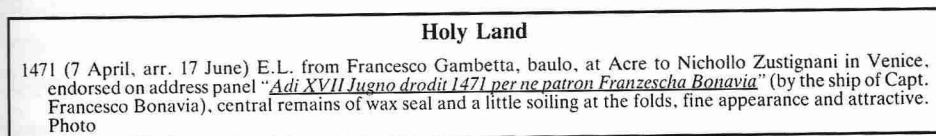


Fig. 2: The endorsement on the address panel of the letter as per the auction catalogue.

I bought the letter. I wondered however, why the endorsement on the address panel as described in the catalogue (Fig. 2), does not mention the place of origin, as was customary with such endorsements made by the recipients at the time?

Therefore, the determination of Acre being the place of origin must have been done from the text inside the letter. In addition, I was curious about the meaning of the part of the endorsement, which was not translated.

Upon receipt of the letter, the study of the endorsement revealed that the second word of the endorsement "**Acron**" is missing from the description in the auction catalogue, and for some reason was replaced by **XVII** (Fig. 2). So **Acron** must be the place of origin, since the first word "Adi" means from. "**Acron**" is also mentioned as the place of origin in the text inside the letter.

Thus, the translation of the whole endorsement would be: "*From Acron. The junior Spicer (spice merchant) 1471 by Captain Franzesco Bonavia.*"

Is Acron, the port of Acri or Acre or Akko in the Holy Land?

Names of places have undergone changes during various periods, for instance Haifa was called Cayphas as shown later. So where is **Acron**?

I keep a small library of antiquarian travel books to assist me when tackling problems as the one being discussed. One of the books is "Early

Travels in Palestine", which is a collection of travel accounts by travelers to the Holy Land, from 700 A.D. to 1699, published in London in 1847.

An account in this book by the Crusader Saewulf, dating 1103 A.D. in which he describes the cities in the Holy Land under Crusaders domination says: "Baldwin the flower of kings has possession of these cities ..., next after these is the very strong city of Acre, which is called Accron;..." (Fig. 3).

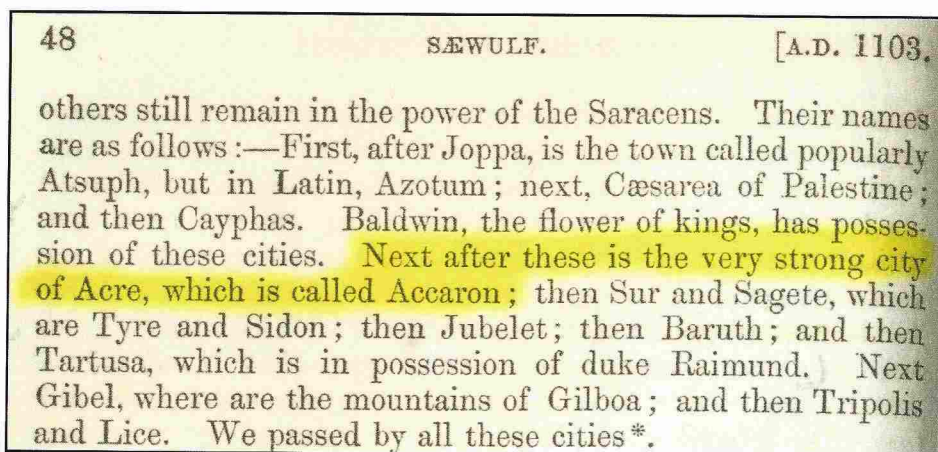


Fig. 3: The passage from the book showing Accron=Acre.

Further evidence about Accron and Cayphas being Acre (Akko) and Caiffa (Haifa), can be found in the Ebsdorf map dating 1224, that shows the shore line Haifa-Akko, (Fig. 4).

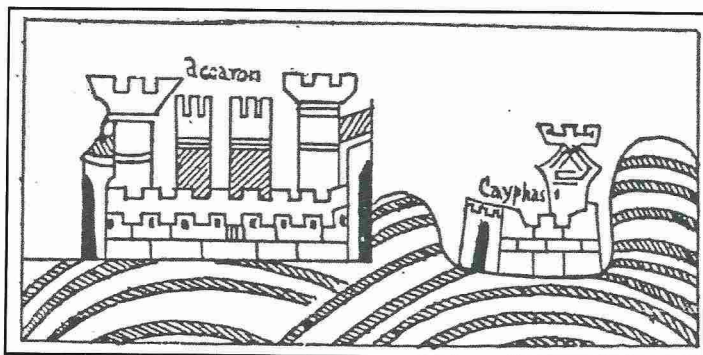


Fig. 4: Accaron (Akko) and Cayphas (Haifa) in the Ebsdorf map of 1224.

Overtimes several other names were given to the city. The Crusader Sigrud names it "Akersborg" in his narrative from 1109¹, the traveler Sir John Maundeville, calls it Akoun in 1322². It is interesting that in the letter being discussed, dating some 370 years later, the name Acron is still used. Saewulf also gives an account of the location of Accron; "From Sichem we come to Caesarea of Palestine, from Caesarea to Cayphas (Haifa) and from Cayphas to Accron. Nazareth is about eight miles to the east of Accron".³

Travel books can also be used to "find" the persons to whom the letters were addressed, as well as those who wrote these. In figures 5 and 6 two letters are shown. The first sent in 1682 from Marseille to "**Joseph Estoupan in Acri**", the second sent in 1689 from **F. Dedier in Acri** to Maseille. Both were French merchants who traded or were agents of the Venturni merchant family from Leghorn (Livorno) in Acre.



Fig 5: 1682, letter to Joseph Estoupan in Acri.

-
- 1 Early Travels in Palestine page 80.
 - 2 Early Travels in Palestine page 142.
 - 3 Early Travels in Palestine page 46.

Fr. Domenico di Camarata laico.

Gli Mercatanti in Akri.

Console.	M. Rosquet.
Monfieur Croisset.	M. Haydus.
M. Didier.	M. Bauffier.
M. Stuppan.	M. Meyfran.
M. Arnault.	M. Bertrand.
M. Ripert.	M. Haubert Procura
M. Icart.	tore di Terra San
M. Clouier.	ta.

Nella borasca pafsata fi fommerfe vn Vafcello Francefe carico di ceneri, e lentifchi, ftando nel Porto con quattro anchora; e fotto vna Iloletta fi faluò tutta la gente, anchora, e gomene: il carico fi perdette, mentre le ceneri bagnate non vagliono cofa alcuna.

Due miglia d'Akri, è Saretta, bella Terra di 200. cafe in circa: e qui fi moftro la rouine della cafa, doue Elia refcuscitò il figlio della Vedoua, e doue la Cananea importunaua Giesù Crifto Nofiro Signore: tranuerfando vn gran bofcho, nella ftada di Nazaret fi truoua la Città di Saffer, afsai rouinata: reftano in piedi 80. cafe: di effa fi feuo pre il Campo d'Efraelon, gli monti di Gelboe, la Città di Nain afsai riuerita da' Pellegrini, per effere ftata Patria di Zebedeo, e de' fuoi figli, S. Giacomo Maggiore, e S. Giouanni Euangelifta.

Fig. 7: The list of European merchants in Acre as per De Burgo's book of 1686, Didier is second on the list and (E)stoppan is third.

The Use Of British Mandate Stamps And Postmarks During The 1948 Transition Period In Jerusalem

Itamar Karpovsky, Tel-Aviv

A transition period between two postal authorities, often creates interesting and sometimes outstanding philatelic and historical collectible items.

Such was the case with the transition of the British Mandate postal authority to the Israeli one, while in between operated temporarily, the Minhelet Ha'am post. The siege of Jerusalem and its disconnection from other parts of the country made this situation even more complicated, causing the Transition Period in Jerusalem to stretch to mid September 1948. During this time, the non valid British Mandate stamps and postmarks were used in certain instances by the new Minhelet Ha'am and the Israeli postal administration.

Officially, the last day of operation of the Mandate Head Post Office in Jerusalem, should have been May 5th, 1948. (According to Notice No. 53 by the British Mandate dated April 13, 1948.) Actually, the last day of the British Post in Jerusalem, that we know of today, was April 26th, 1948.

In Figures 1 & 2, letters from besieged Jerusalem are shown: A regular 10 mil commercial letter to Tel-Aviv and a **registered** letter franked 25 mil to Haifa. Both letters were sent on April 26, 1948, the last day of the British Mandate postal service.

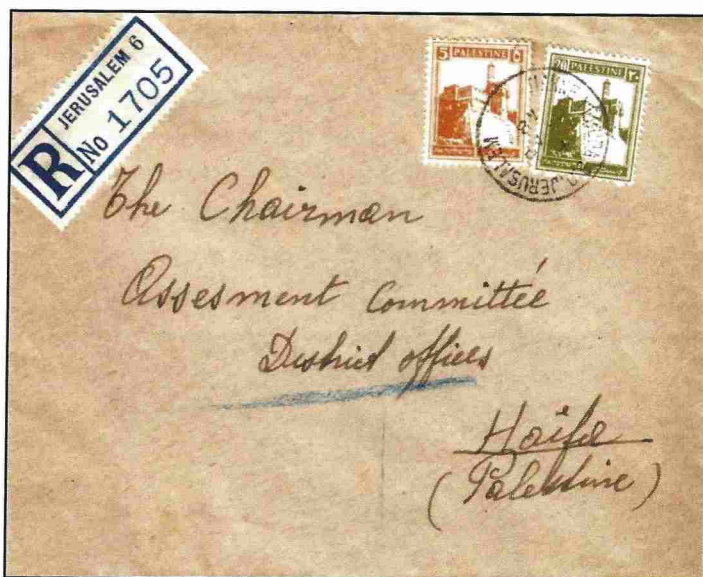


Fig. 1: April 26, 1948 Mahne Yehuda B.P.O. Mandate postmark tying 25 mils stamps to a registered cover to Haifa, last day of Mandate postal services in Jerusalem. Haifa arrival postmark 27.4.1948 on back. The only one recorded.

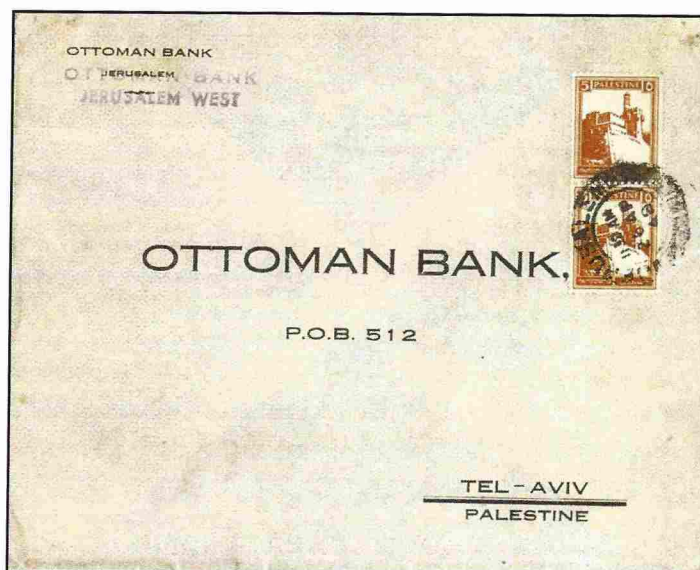


Fig. 2: April 26, 1948 British Mandate postmark tying 10 mils stamps to an Ottoman Bank cover to Tel Aviv, last day of Mandate postal service in Jerusalem.

The first day of Minhelet Ha'am post in Jerusalem was May 9th, 1948. the letter in Fig. 3, is franked 10 mils Mandate stamp and cancelled by single circle Mandate postmark dated May 9th, this letter with few others, were posted in the mail boxes around the town between April 26, and May 9th, and subsequently were collected and cancelled for dispatch in the sorting office. The sorting office did not receive a Minhelet Ha'am hand stamp until May 13th. The Mandate device was used as a temporary solution.

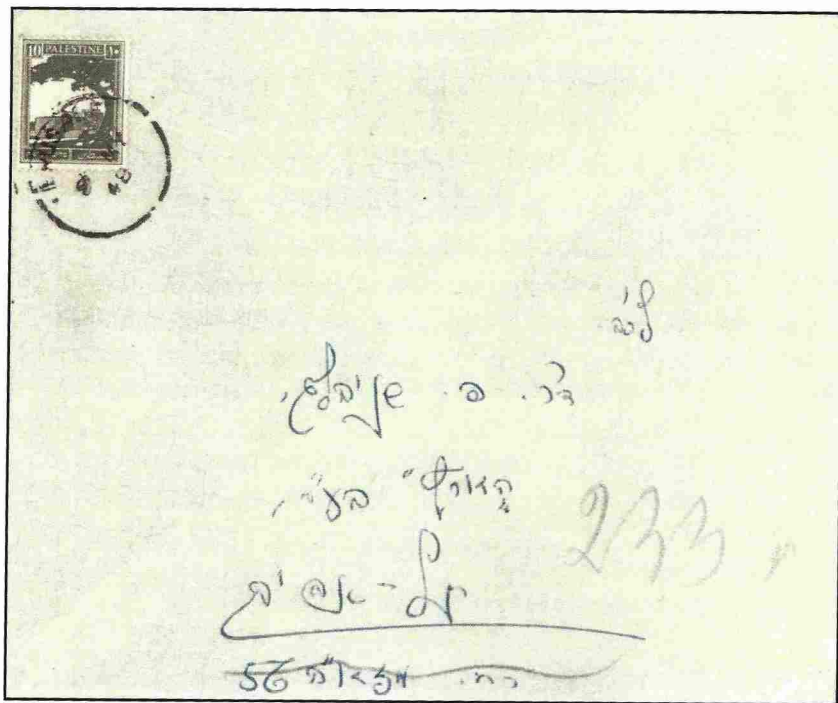


Fig. 3: May 9th, 1948 British Mandate postmark tying a 10 mil Mandate stamp to a cover to Tel Aviv.

The reopened sorting office used Mandate cancellers for four days only, May 9-12, (Fig. 3). On May 13, a new Minhelet Ha'am "Rosette" postmark was introduced. The British Mandate stamps became officially invalid on Friday May 14th, at the end of the business day. As a result, the combination of letters franked with Mandate stamps and cancelled by the Rosette Minhelet Ha'am postmark were possible only for 2 days May 13 & 14 (Fig. 4). Letters canceled with regular Minhelet Ha'am branches postmarks were possible between May 9th, and May 14th, (figs. 5 & 6).

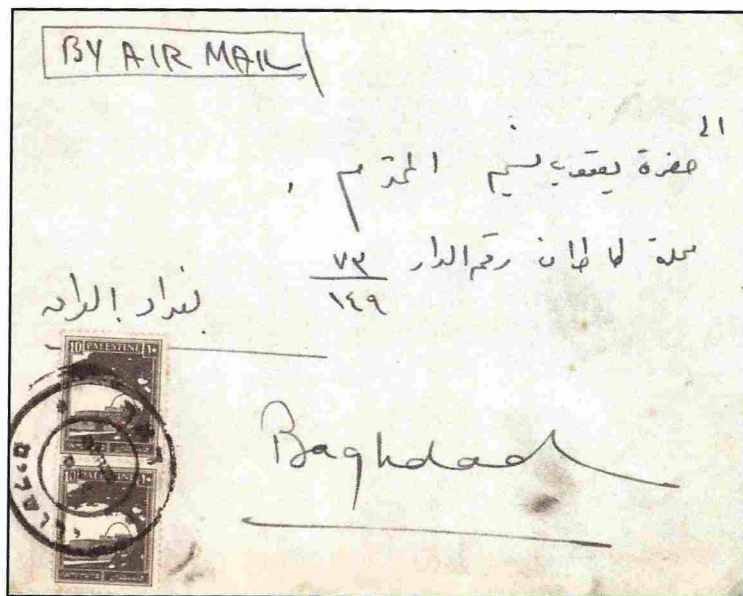


Fig. 4: British Mandate 10x2 mils stamps tied to a cover addressed to Baghdad, cancelled by the Jerusalem Minhelet Ha'am "Rosette" postmark.

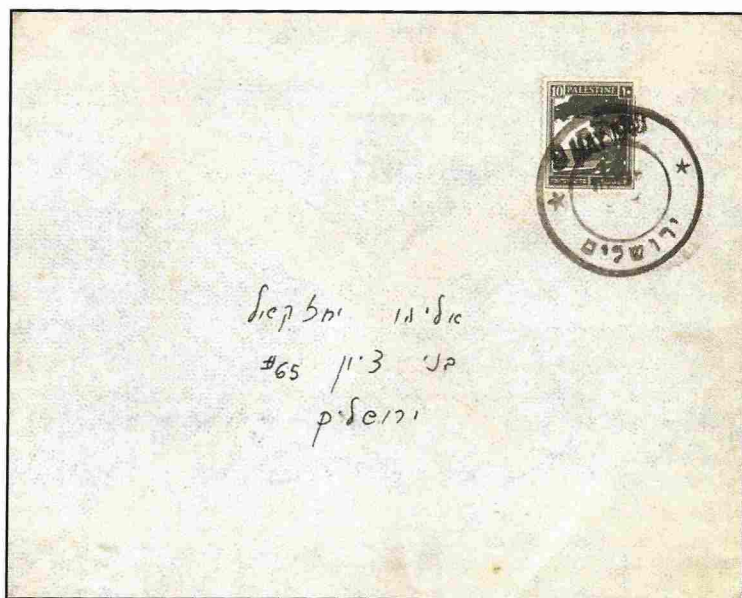


Fig. 5: May 9th, 1948 British Mandate 10 mils stamp tied to a locally mailed cover, Cancelled by the Jerusalem Minhelet Ha'am "Rosette" postmark



Fig. 6: May 13th, 1948 Rehavia B.P.O. Registered letter franked with 27 mils Mandate stamps cancelled by Minhelet Ha'am postmarks. Addressed to the American Consulate in Jerusalem, receiving date on the back, 19th, July 1948.

The situation in Jerusalem allowed the simultaneous use of stamps that were issued by two different postal authorities, namely, British Mandate stamps and local stamps. This was allowed during a very short period, from May 9th, to May 14th, when Jerusalem local stamps of the first and the second printing could be affixed together with Mandate stamps. Covers with such mixed franking are very rare, (Figs. 7 & 8).

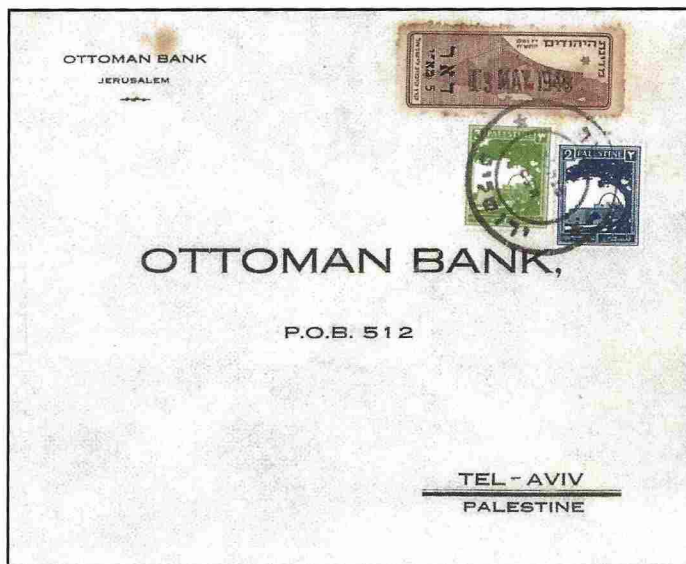


Fig. 7: May 13, 1948 letter franked 10 mils mixed franking of Mandate stamps and a Jerusalem local stamp. Cancelled by Minhelet Ha'am postmark addressed to Tel Aviv.



Fig. 8: May 13th, 1948 Rehavia B.P.O. Registered letter franked 25 mils mixed franking of Mandate stamps and a Jerusalem local stamp. Cancelled by Minhelet Ha'am postmark addressed to Tel Aviv. Sent in the second convoy to Tel Aviv, June 21st, 1948. The only one recorded.

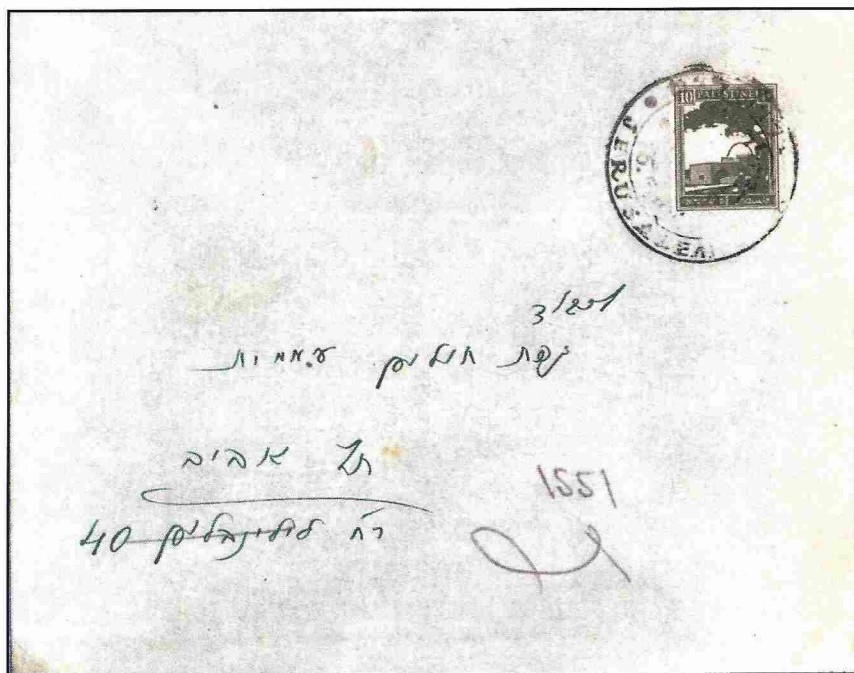


Fig. 9: May 16, 1948 letter franked 10 mils Mandate stamp and cancelled by the Minhelet Ha'am Independence Day commemorative postmark. Addressed to Tel Aviv.

To commemorate the Independence Day, Minhelet Ha'am authorities in Jerusalem issued a special bi-lingual postmark to be used only during May 16th, 1948. The cancel was applied on demonetized Mandate stamps, as well as on local emergency stamps. Letters franked with British Mandate stamps that were found in mailboxes in the town on the morning of Sunday May 16th, 1948, were tolerated and processed as if correctly franked. This caused an interesting situation by which Mandate stamps were cancelled with the Independence Day commemorative postmark of Jerusalem. (Figs. 9,10 & 11)

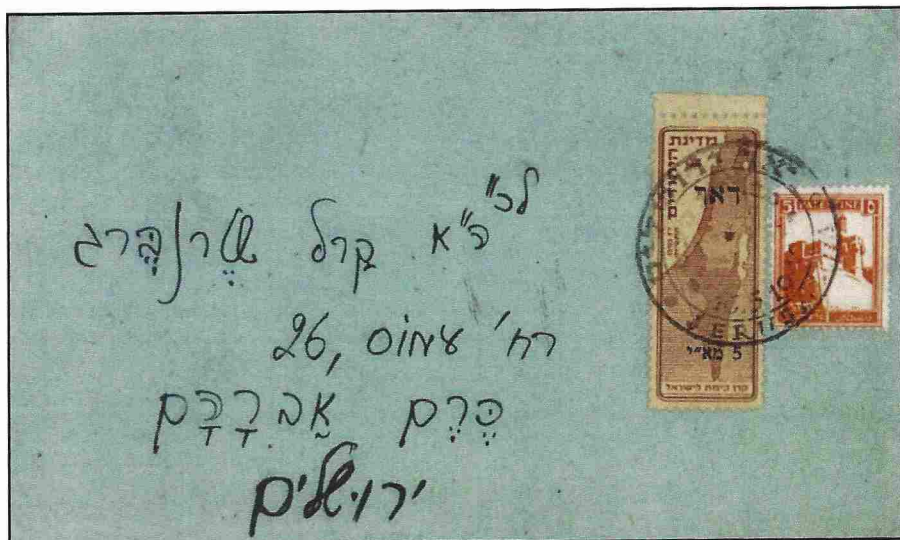


Fig. 10: May 16th, 1948 letter franked 10 mils mixed franking of Mandate stamps and a Jerusalem local stamp. Cancelled by Minhelet Ha'am Independence Day commemorative postmark. Addressed locally in Jerusalem.

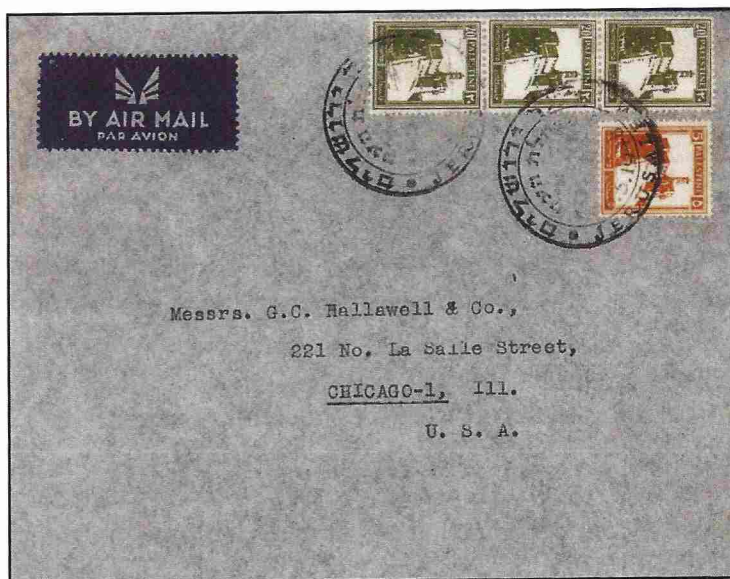


Fig. 11: May 16th, 1948 letter franked by 65 mils Mandate stamps cancelled by the Minhelet Ha'am Independence Day commemorative postmark. Addressed to the USA, the only one known.

On June 6th, 1948, about three weeks after the establishment of the state of Israel, a letter to the "Kaduri" agricultural school, is still franked with a 10 mil Mandate stamp and canceled with the Jerusalem Minhelet Ha'am postmark. Despite, the late use of a Mandate stamp, the letter was accepted and not taxed! (Fig. 12).

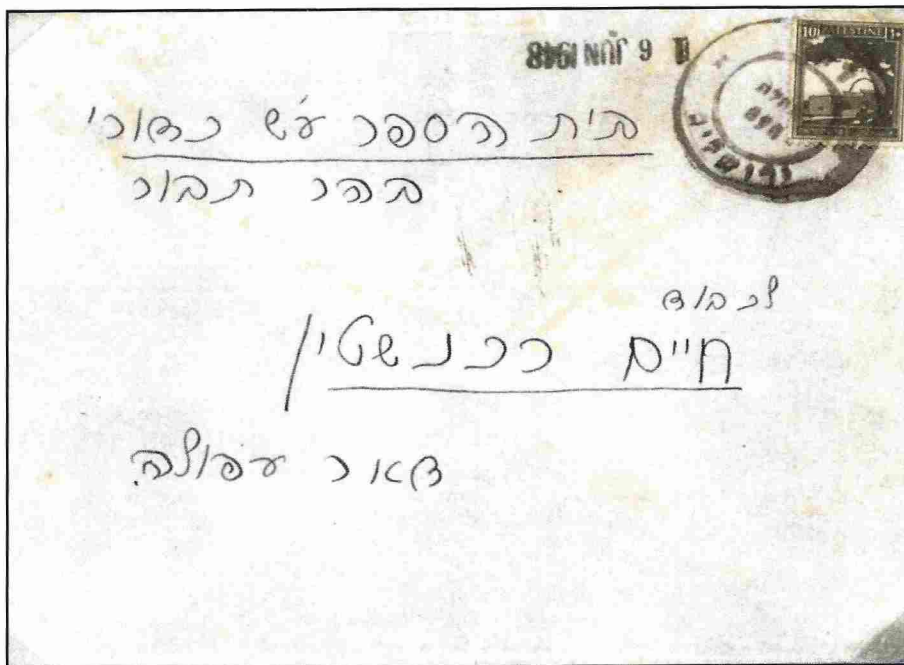


Fig. 12: Sixth June 1948, late use of a Mandate stamp.

A letter to the Telegraph Office in Haifa (Fig. 13), franked with a 10 mil Doar Ivri stamp, paying the domestic letter rate, is canceled by the S.C. Mandate postmark, dated July 8th, 1948, about two months following the termination of the British Mandate. This postmark was used at the H.P.O, to cancel telegram forms even after the termination of the Mandate. Apparently, since both, the addressee and the sender of the letter worked in the "Telegraph Office", it was considered internal correspondence. This may explain the belated canceling of the letter by the Mandate postmark.

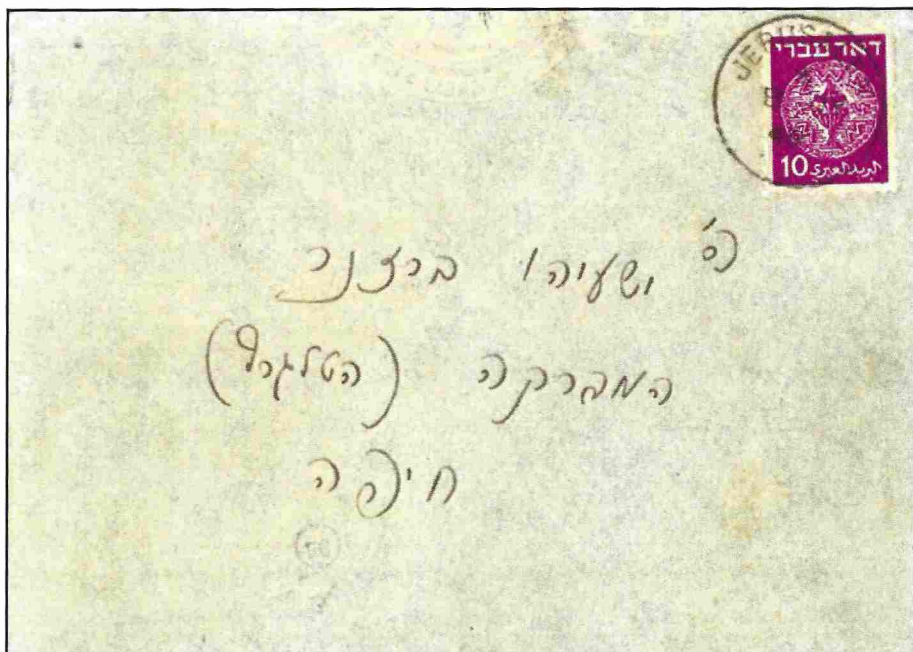


Fig. 13: July 8th, 1948 letter franked by a 10 mils Doar Ivri stamp and cancelled by the single circle Mandate postmark, addressed to Haifa Telegraph office.

The Doar Ivri stamps on the two commercial letters from Jerusalem to Kiryat Anavim and to Haifa shown in Figure 10, are canceled by the "Mahane Yehuda" Mandate postmark, which was reintroduced in late July 1948. It was put again in use for a few days until the new Israeli trilingual cancel arrives. The letters are dated July 23rd, and July 30th, 1948. The Kiryat-Anavim registered letter has on the back the "Mea-Shearim" S.C. Mandate postmark, dated August 2nd, 1948. The Kibbutz which is located near Jerusalem, had a postbox in the "Mea-Shearim" section of Jerusalem.



**Fig. 14: July 23rd, 1948 Mahne Yehuda B.P.O. reintroduced
Mandate postmark tying 50 mils Doar Ivri stamp to an express
cover to Haifa. Haifa arrival postmark 26.7.1948 on the back.
The only one recorded**



**Fig. 15: July 30, 1948 Mahne Yehuda B.P.O. reintroduced
Mandate postmark tying 25 mils Doar Ivri stamps to a registered
cover to Kiryat Anavim. The only one recorded.**

Another group of letters from Jerusalem franked with British Mandate stamps should be mentioned here. Those are letters addressed to foreign countries mailed in the besieged city before May 16th, 1948. Those letters, according to the Minhelet Ha'am regulations, had to be franked with Mandate stamps and cancelled with Mandate postmarks. As the letters left Jerusalem only in June with the First Convoy, they were processed in Tel Aviv on June 18th, and cancelled by Israeli trilingual postmarks. (Fig. 16).

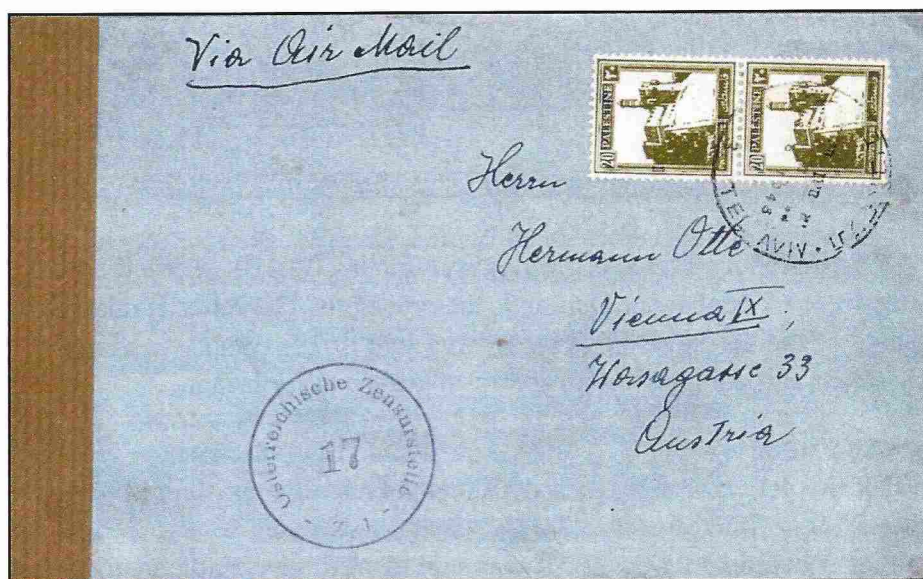


Fig. 16: A letter sent from Jerusalem to Austria during the Transition Period, franked 40 mils Mandate stamps to pay the air mail rate to Austria. Cancelled with the trilingual Israeli postmark dated June 18th, 1948, as per regulations. The letter arrived in Tel Aviv with the First Convoy, and was censored upon arrival in Austria.

Further information on the subject is provided in the book: "Jerusalem and Safad Postal Services in the Transition Period", by Shimoni, Rimon and Karpovsky, published in 2004, by our Society.

Short Notes and Discoveries

The postmark "Nablus 1", which cancels the stamps on the packet form shown on the cover of the bulletin is dated seven days later than noted by Collins, as the last date of use. (15.9.1918 versus 8.9.1918).

Since the official date of the occupation of Nablus by the British is 22.9.1918, it is conceivable that this cancel would be used after 8.9.1918 as demonstrated by this packet form. Users of the Collins catalog are advised to update this entry in the catalog.

The Earliest cover known with Adhesive stamps to Jerusalem

The cover picture of our bulletin number 109-110, showed an early letter from Copenhagen, Denmark to Jerusalem. The letter franked with stamps of the second Danish issue, was sent in 1861 and was thought as one of the earliest letters with stamps to arrive in Jerusalem.

An earlier letter (Fig.1, shown on the next page), has now emerged. In fact this letter, sent to Jerusalem in 1851, is now considered to be the earliest one, franked with adhesive stamps that was sent to Jerusalem. The letter dated 19th. May 1851, was sent from Rugby, England addressed to The Right Rev. Dr. Gobat, Lord Bishop, Jaffa, Jerusalem. Franked by 1841, 2d. blue plate 4, horizontal strip of three Queen Victoria stamps and a single 1847 Embossed 1 sh. Green stamp, all canceled by "659" obliterations of Rugby. Postage: 1s.6d. for a letter not exceeding 1/2 ounce. Carried by the British packet via Southampton to Alexandria, Egypt. Then by ship to Jaffa and through the Ottoman post to Jerusalem.



Fig. 1: 1851, letter from Rugby, England to Jerusalem, considered to be the earliest one franked with stamps to arrive in Jerusalem. (Courtesy Corinpila Auktionen, Zurich)



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Holy Land Postal History Bulletin Index

Our first Bulletin appeared in the summer of 1979, thus with the current issue we celebrate our 30th Birthday. *Mazal Tov*.

We still have several members from the old days but most members joined later as we ventured along and many of them did not had the opportunity to read the earlier issues of the bulletin. They might find it worthwhile to order back issues. For this purpose we shall, as of this issue as space allows, publish the index of back issues and we encourage members to order.

The index is subdivided into three parts: the "Ottoman Period", the "Mandate Period", the "Transition and Israel Period". The entries in each of these parts are alphabetically arranged. References are cited by issue number and page of the relevant article or note, e.g. 12-651 means issue No. 12, page 651. Major references for a certain entry, i.e. references in which the subject is dealt extensively, are underlined.

Back issues are at \$ 7.00 each plus \$ 2.00 to cover airmail postage. Postage for orders comprising of several issues would be advised.

Orders to: Dr. Z. Shimony, P.O.B. 10175, 91101 Jerusalem, Israel.

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