

# British Palestine: The Civil Administration

## A. Purpose of the Exhibit

This postal history exhibit shows the highly developed range of postal services engineered by the British, during their Civil Administration, sanctioned by the League of Nations, and formally ratified as the Mandate for Palestine in 9/23. The Civil Administration began July 1, 1920, in the aftermath of World War I. It assumed control of civilian mail from the military's Occupied Enemy Territory Administration, and ultimately developed the most complete geographic coverage, broadest range of services, and greatest efficiency the Holyland had ever known. This exhibit encompasses these developments in Palestine's dramatic transformation from an impoverished backwater, to a vital cross-road of the Empire. It concludes with postal reflection of the increasing domestic chaos that followed the United Nations vote to terminate the Mandate, and shows uses of Mandate period materials by Israeli and Arab governments.

The Palestine Mandate period is important because Palestine represented a major link in British East-West trade within the Empire. This was initially focused on India, and was later extended to include Australia. The value to the British was apparent in the effort expended to continue the Mandate, despite periods of major domestic strife in the each decade of British rule. The unresolved conflicts of the day continue to play out in the daily news now, some 60 years later.

## B. Challenge Factor

This exhibit represents the culmination of greater than 15 years of avid collecting of this specialty, with some 10 years of serious effort at acquisition of the best available material for each Mandate field presented. The scope is sufficiently broad that it has not been possible to acquire every rarity available, but substantial efforts have been made to ensure the strength of each topic presented in this exhibit.

## C. What is Presented

This exhibit is now fully expanded to ten frames, to allow for even greater development of the full range of Palestine Mandate postal history. It starts with the transitional period, characterized by the initial use of Military Administration materials by the Civilian Government; an unsuccessful initial introduction of Mandate-conforming adhesives; use of temporary paid markings; then a series of overprinted adhesives that ended with the Civilian Government Pictorial series, used for the duration of the Mandate. Shown are scarce postmarks, rates, registry, and unusual usages, as well as government and military mail, 1947-1948 disrupted postal communications, use of improvised materials, and uses of abandoned Mandate postal materials by Arab and Israeli governments are shown. *The Israeli and Arab re-uses of Mandate materials section specifically shows only the use of **Mandate-origin** materials used later, and is not intended as an all encompassing "Second Interim" period exhibit.*

## D. Organization

See attached title page for exhibit plan.

## E. Material Highlights

A brief listing of the scarcest material presented follows:

Unrecorded manuscript registry for Jerusalem in the early transitional period

Very scarce Jerusalem registry handstamps

Unrecorded use of prepaid marking for Haifa, during the initial stamp shortage

Two inverted, one doubled London II overprint, all on covers.

Jerusalem Talavera Barracks and Jerusalem – Lydda TPO postmarks, amongst the very scarcest of the Mandate period

Multiple registered, scarce small town postmarks.

Early Provisional Registered envelopes, including the scarcest second and third issues.

**The highest known franking of the entire Palestine Mandate period, on a cloth sack, presumed to be for a crate of documents shipped to the United States in World War II. (Tel Aviv Stamps, Sale 25, January 14, 2004, lot 808.)**

Multiple examples of the 20 mil internal registered rate of May-June 1940.

Reduced newspaper rate for newspapers registered at the central post office (see scarce 3m and special, reduced rate 2m frankings on intact papers)

Scarce substantiated use of the air mail "late fee" procedure, by clear addition of a separate 2m fee.

The very scarce COD procedure.

The uncommon forced registration procedure.  
First Postage Dues.  
Experimental internal airmail flights, Haifa-Tel Aviv-Jerusalem.

Tel Aviv LZ-127 Zeppelin Orient Flight “wild drop” mail.

A Zeppelin South American Flight cover, originated in Palestine.

**Arguably the two earliest known censored letters to Palestine of WWII**, both show use of the pre-censorship era “Economy Use” label for letter re-closure, both unrecorded (See Gladstone for discussion of the only recorded example). One of these two is likelier the earliest known censored incoming mail, given known transit time for the Gladstone recorded example from Lebanon to Palestine.

Jerusalem 1948 siege mail correspondence.

Arab use of the Mandate Isdud small town postmark.

Israeli use of forced registration procedure with Mandate origin officially sealed labels. Ethiopian Air Lines cover, forwarded to Israel from the USA (Paine Field, Everett, WA), then returned to the USA, and then back to Ethiopia, a remarkable, much traveled cover.

## **F. Informational Sources**

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