

# THE TRUCIAL STATES

## Palm Trees and Dhow Series of 1961

**PURPOSE:** A one-frame study of stamps, cancellations and uses of the first and only issue.

**BACKGROUND:** After 1948, postal matters for the 7 sheikdoms of the Trucial Coast (Abu Dhabi; Ajman; Dubai; Fujeira; Ras al-Khaima; Sharjah; and Umm al-Qiwayn) were handled by the General Post Office in London via a Postal Superintendent in Bahrain responsible for all British Postal Agencies in the Persian Gulf. Rising Arab nationalism in the late 1950's made continued use of surcharged UK stamps undesirable and in September 1958, the Political Agency in Dubai suggested a new issue for general use in the Trucial States.

The design brief included:

- UNWATERMARKED paper to avoid an overt British connection (no Royal cyphers or crowns).
- Designs reflective of the Gulf area.

Although the issue was intended to be used by all the sheikdoms in anticipation of new post office openings, the ruler of Abu Dhabi objected—not all seven palm trees were the same height, implying that some sheikdoms were more important than others—and post offices in the other sheikdoms were never opened. Therefore, **Trucial States stamps were used only in Dubai from 7 January 1961 to 14 June 1963** by a population of 55,000 people.

### IMPORTANCE:

- Dubai the center for the carrying and entrepôt trade on the Trucial Coast.
- Mostly commercial use, yet few surviving covers. *Key items outlined/matted in deep red.*
- Forerunner to the pejorative "sand dune" (or just "dunes") issues of some of the 7 independent sheikdoms.

What Trucial States stamps were to eliminate: Use of QEII definitives in the Gulf region.



Trucial Coast in 1961

### Exhibit Plan

1. Designs & Printing
2. Cancellations
3. Postal Rates & Usage
4. Epilogue

—○ Denotes original research in blue.  
Non-philatelic information in brown italics.



Posted 4 September 1958 by D.F. Hawley, the British Political Agent in Dubai, to family in England. Correct rate (40np) for a half ounce airmail letter to Europe.