

In 1900, the Ottoman Sultan Abdülhamid II (reigned 1876–1909) put out an appeal to Muslims of the world to support the building of a railway connecting Damascus to the holy cities of Medina and Mecca. Built by public subscription and with the advice of German engineers, the line from Damascus reached Medina in 1908. Pilgrims who embarked from Haydarpaşa station in Istanbul could now travel all the way to Medina by rail. This reduced the journey from almost forty days to five. Thousands of pilgrims from Russia, Central Asia, Iran and Iraq also converged on Damascus to take the train. The railway never reached Mecca and during the Arab Revolt (1916–18) against the Ottomans during the First World War, parts of the railway were blown up by Lawrence of Arabia and his Arab allies. Hejaz Railway Project is the first Pan-Islamic Financial Project; A central collection committee was initially appointed by the minister of the treasury. Its chairman was a former official in the Ottoman Post Office. The postal and fiscal stamp taxes issued for aid to construction of Railway. The construction started in 1900 was completed in 1908 when the line reached the destination of Medina. The stations of this 1300 km long railway line from Damascus to Medina are Damascus Deraa, Zerka, to tar, Maan, Müdevver to Tebuk, Medinei Salih, El Ula, and extends far to Medina.

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The Hejaz Railroad Revenue Stamps were issued by the Ottoman authorities between 1904 and 1918 to finance the construction and upkeep of railway. They had to be used on all invoices and receipts as well as petitions and commercial papers.

OTTOMAN MIDDLE EAST RAILWAYS
3-4 HEDJAZ RAILWAY

EL-ULA Railway Station.

Railway station near town of 4000 people, 500 km North of Medina. Postal services: domestic and foreign letters, registered domestic mail, telegrammes in Turkish till midnight. When the railway was built, the foreign non-islamic staff were allowed to proceed no closer to Medina than El-Ula, so as not to offend the religious authorities. This ban applied also to the German chief engineer, Meissner, whose place was taken by Mukhtar Bey. A commemorative hand-stamp was used on August 19th, 1907 to celebrate the completion of the line as far as El-Ula. Most known examples are on cancelled-to-order postcards, many presented to Meissner.

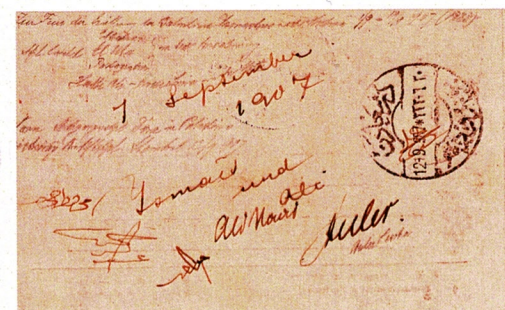
El-Ula was the beginning of the holy land, which was forbidden by the non-Muslim footsteps.



Heinrich August Meissner
(1862-1940)



The opening Ceremony of El-Ula railway station 1907



Most of the examples are Commemorative and non-properly use,
This is the properly postal use of EL-ULA POST OFFICE IMPERIAL RAILWAY



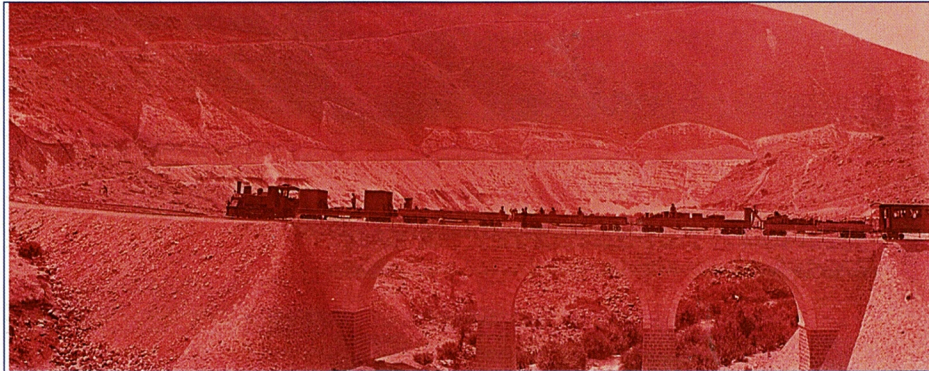
1905 Postal Stationery tied by 19.08.1907 special negative Commemorative seal (35mm) in violet postmark; EL ULA MEVKİ Fİ POSTA ŞUBESİ HATTI ALİ (EL ULA POST OFFICE IMPERIAL RAILWAY 19.06. 323 (1.9.1907) sent to Constantinople with DERA transitive seal. Recorded dates of use 1907. One of the 6 of properly use recorded (9)



HICAZ TIMOUR YOLU / HEDJAZ RAILWAY POSTCARD



1918 cover sent from Germany to Damas Hejaz Railway Unit bearing two times 7 1/2 phennig plus two times 2 1/2 phenic stamps to paid proper cover rate to Damascus along side showing all arabic, the only recorded "DAMAS RAILWAY UNIT" postmark (10).



Der'a was an important junction in the Hejaz Railway network. Active TPOs were: Damas–Caiffa, Damas–Medine, Bosra (Eski Sham)–Der'a, and Damas–Ma'an. Postal bags must have been exchanged at the station of Der'a and mail was sorted there too. Office was responsible for the mail handling (MEP-Bulletin 6).

Échanges de cartes postales illustrées

M^{lle} R. Miglievich, chemin de fer Hamidié du Hedjaz Damas [échange avec monde entier]. — M. A. Orgere et 6, rue de la Préfecture, Mâcon [échange cartes postales avec étranger et France, sauf le Rhône, l'Ain, la Saône-et Loire, Paris, Dijon, Besançon et Nancy. Timbres côté vue. Réponse assurée]. — M^{lle} Gasq, 23, rue de la République Marseille [désire cartes vues tous pays].

Miglievich & Miglievich

R. Miglievich, an Austrian, was operations manager of the Hejaz Railway in 1904.

His daughter, Mile. Miglievich, was apparently an avid collector of picture postcard, a widespread craze at the time amongst young ladies.

She advertised in journals for exchange partners (on PC).



SOUVENIR de DAMAS. — Tombeau de Saint-Jean

Damascus Deraa line is the first part of Hejaz Railway and opened at september 1903. It was 123 km and was parallel to DHP track without touching Muzeirib. 1905 postcard from Deraa to Beyrut in with 10 paras stamp tied by unrecorded .

"DERAA HAMIDIYE HICAZ DEMIRYOLU" (DERAA HAMIDIYE HEDJAZ RAILWAY) black only arabic postmark. (DISCOVERY PIECE) THE MIDDLE EAST PHILATELIC BULLETIN Number 6 Summer

OTTOMAN MIDDLE EAST RAILWAYS
3-4 HEDJAZ RAILWAY

TEBUK Railway Hospital Quarantine

A 1905 picture postcard sent from Maan (Jordan) to Tonkin (China) bearing on the picture side a 10 para stamp to pay the postcard rate tied by Arabic, "HAMİDİYE HİCAZ DEMİRYOLLARI MAAN" (HEJAZ RAILWAY) cancellation and **China destination** is interesting especially with same rate. Recorded dates of use are from 1905 to 1907.



Tebuk railway station
Quarantine Hospital

ADMINISTRATION SANITAIRE

N^o _____ Office de _____
ou
Lazaret de _____

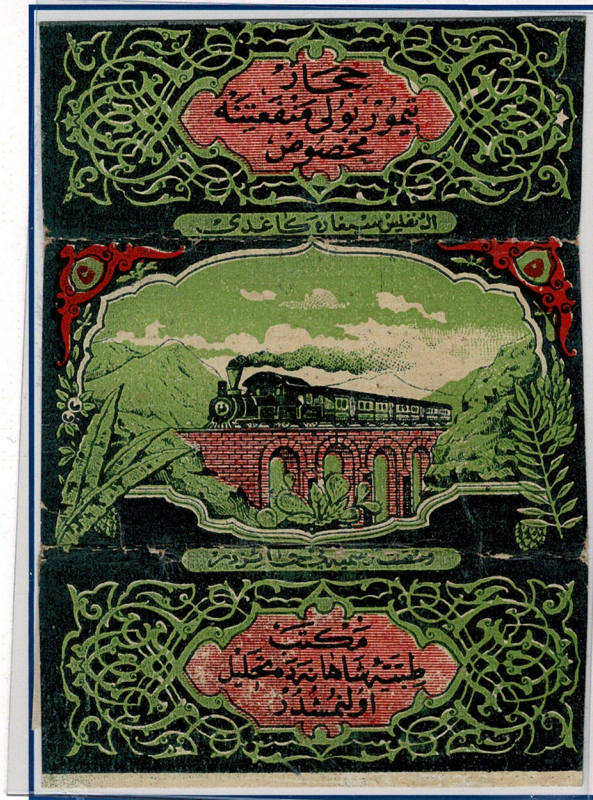
M _____ a payé pour _____
jours de quarantaine, du _____ au _____
la somme de Piastres _____
comme ci-dessous :

Droits personnels	_____	Piastres
Droits de gardes	_____	"
Frais éventuels	_____	"
	_____	"
		Total Piastres _____

Le _____ 19 _____

L. _____ Le Médecin,

Tebük Ottoman hospital for railway employees at 1908 The construction of the Hijaz Railroad brought security and economic growth to the village. Repair facilities were built at Tabuk as well as a railroad station and living quarters, water towers, and a sixty-bed hospital the lat-ter the personal gift of Kazim Paşa, were constructed. The Ottoman government set up a quarantine service for the Hijaz Railroad pilgrims at Tebuk railway hospital Quarantine document with ali arabic Tebük Tebuk hospital (tahaffuzhanesi)(Tebük hospital quarantine) **Discovery piece (9,11).**



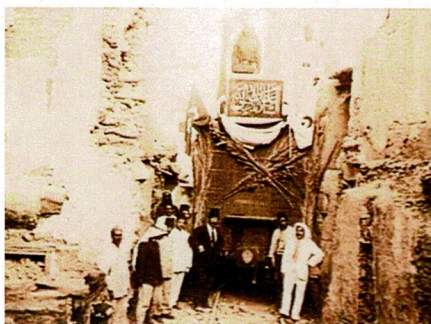
Route of Cover via Railway Line

Ottoman Hedjaz Railway Cigarette paper



August 1912 cover sent from Medine-i Münevvere to İstanbul bearing one piastre to pay proper cover rate tied by extremely rare bilingual "DAMAS-MEDİNE -6- HEJAZ" railway cancellation. AKSARAI İstanbul arrived cancellation at back date 16 September, transit time is 17 days. **DISCOVERY PIECE** and **ONLY EXAMPLE RECORDED** (1,4,9,10).

When the decision of building a railway to the Arabian Peninsula was made, British had declared their objection and begun to make a military build up to the Sinai Peninsula, since they had planned to establish dominance in the region. As a response, Ottomans sent their troops and invaded Thebe wells which were in just few miles away from the Province of Aqaba, near the Egypt-Ottoman border. This invasion was kept on until 1906 and as a consequence, British could neither prevent railway construction nor established any dominance in the region. So the conflict were solved by making peace and Ottoman troops went back to the border. In this instance, a line between Batn el Gûl and Akâbe port were planned to construct, and many non-Muslim engineers, like Meissner, worked in this construction site. By January 1906 an Ottoman troop leaving Aqaba had already established headquarters in this small village at a highly strategic location. Soldiers and their arms were sent via railway to Maan, and then beats of burden were used to reach Aqaba.



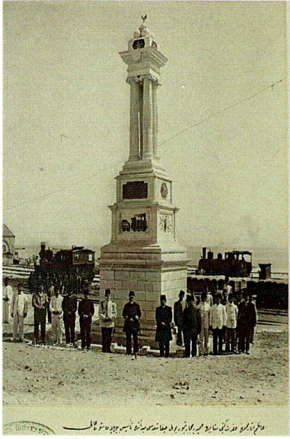
1916 Cover sent from Damas to Germany with 1,5 piastre registered rate with 4. army censorship. Sender was Heinrich August Meissner who was the Chief Officer Engineering at Damas



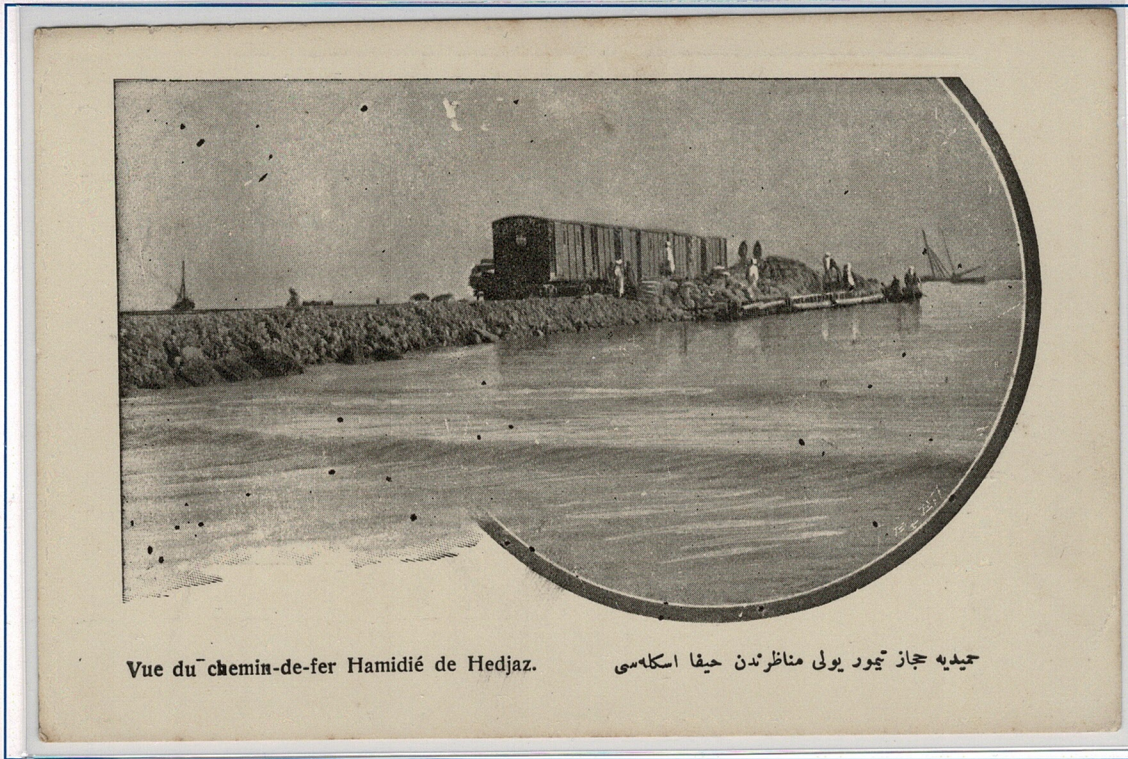
Hedjaz Egypte Branch



Ottoman Hedjaz Railway Egypt branch (hejaz egypt line) Chief Officer Engineering blue seal Heinrich August Meissner (pasha) with 4. army censorship. Hejaz Egypte Line cancellation is not known and mention anywhere Discovery piece (9,11).



Haifa Port



Vue du chemin-de-fer Hamidié de Hedjaz.

حميديه حجاز تيمور يولى مناظرندن حيفا اسكەسى

اخذ ايدىلن اجورات نوع ومقدارى

سائتم	غروش	
۱۰	۱۰	اسكە رسومي
		مغازه لردن اسكە به نقليه
		اسكە دن مغازه لره نقليه
		حماليه
		وينچ
		ارضيه
		تعطيل ادوات
		جزا: واسبابي
		جزا: واسبابي
۱۰	۱۰	بكون

۱۳ في

مأمورك امضاسى

اقيمه اعطا ايده نه و برونه جگدر

Haifa Port Cancellation

HAIFA HARBOUR HICAZ TIMOUR YOLU / HAIFA İSKELESİ Hedjaz Railway / Haifa Port
19.05.1914 black postmark; Only one customs from this cancellation has been recorded.
Only two copy known (ref 10 and Dr.Jeffrey Schneider)

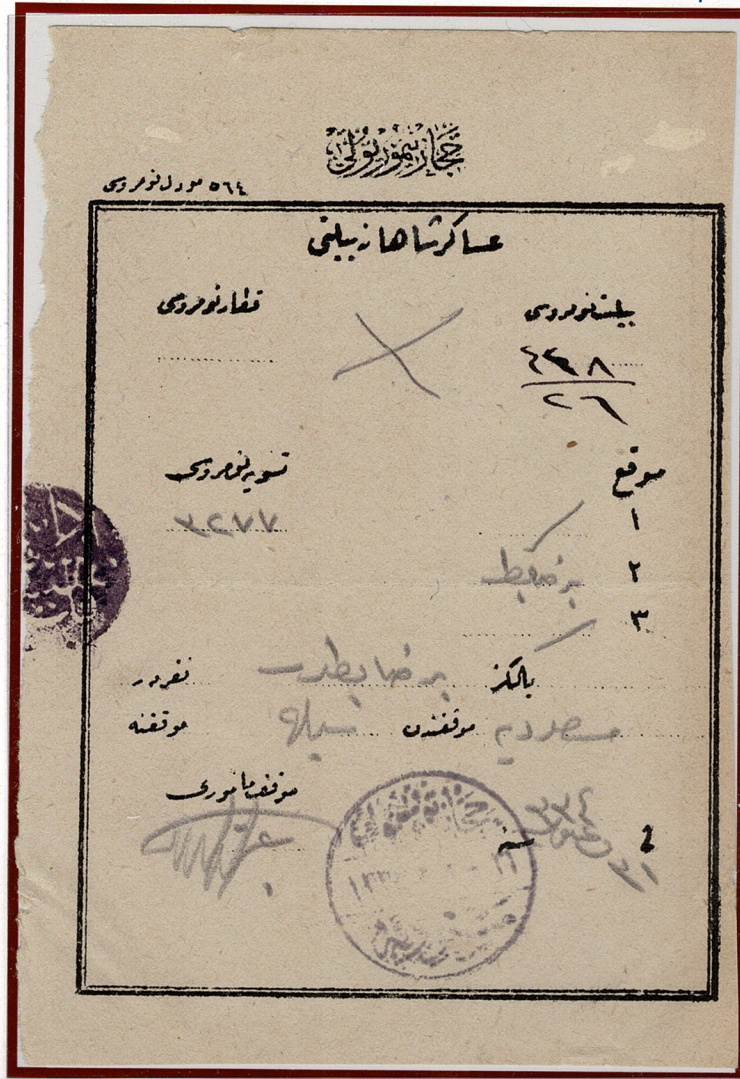


Formullary card sent to Damas Hedjaz Railway worker at 1918 6x5 paras total rate 30 paras tied by Field Post number 80 cancellation.



Large Official Cover sent to Constantinople tied by Head Hedjaz Railway Director of Engineering Hicaz demiryolu Ser Mthendisliđi plus I piastre tax stamp with hand cancellation. One of the few of recorded (9)

Ottoman Hedjaz Military Railway ticket (31.08.1918) one person Military first class between ME-SUDIYE (Sabasti-yah) railway station to SILE (Silat adh Dhahr). This is Afule-Nablus line that opened at 1914 used only military purpose, On seal; Hedjaz Timur yolu//Mesudiye istasyonu (Hedjaz Railway Mesudiye Station).
Only example recorded



Kadem-i Şerif



Hejaz railway
Haifa



Twelve philatelically prepared postcards were posted at Kadem i Sherif (Damascus) station. All except one have the stamp cancelled at Kadem i Sherif and received the Haifa postmark on arrival. Both postmarks are of the Hejaz Railway type. Just one of the twelve cards has been seen with the Haifa postmark cancelling the stamp. This had obviously missed being cancelled at Damascus and cancelled on arrival. PC sent from Damas to Haifa bearing on 5para to pay PC rate tied by all arabic HAMIDIYE HICAZ DEMIRYOLU KADEMI SERIF cancellation. Also along side HAMIDIYE HICAZ DEMIRYOLU HAIFA cancellation. One of the 12 of recorded (9)



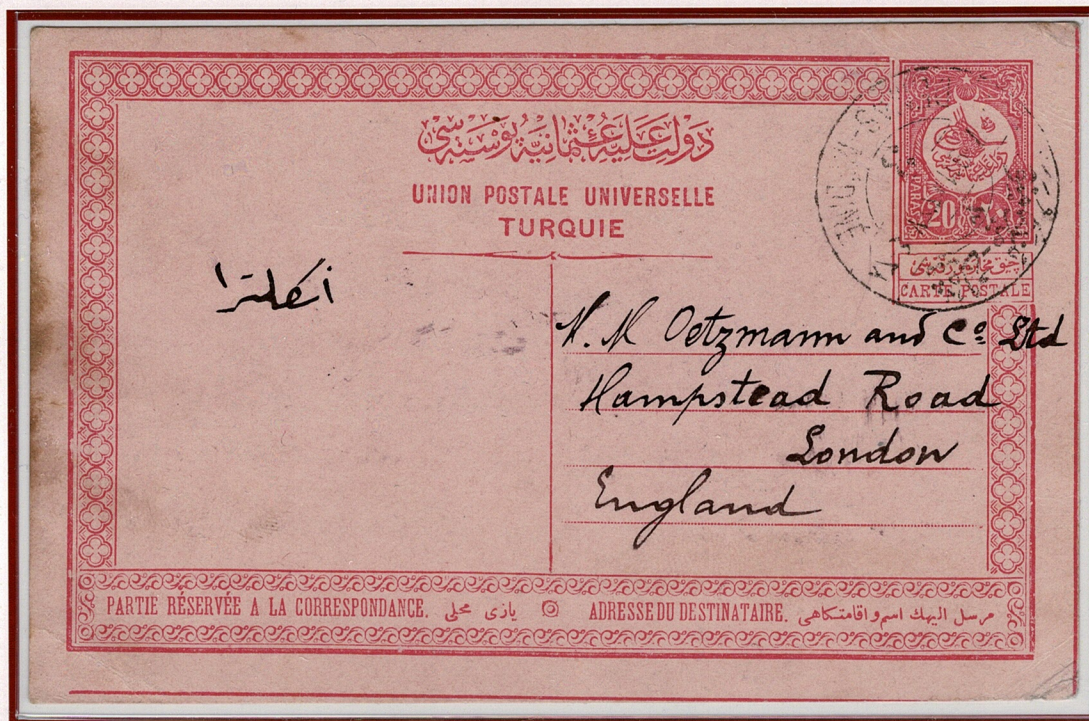
Ottoman Hedjaz Railway Ticket



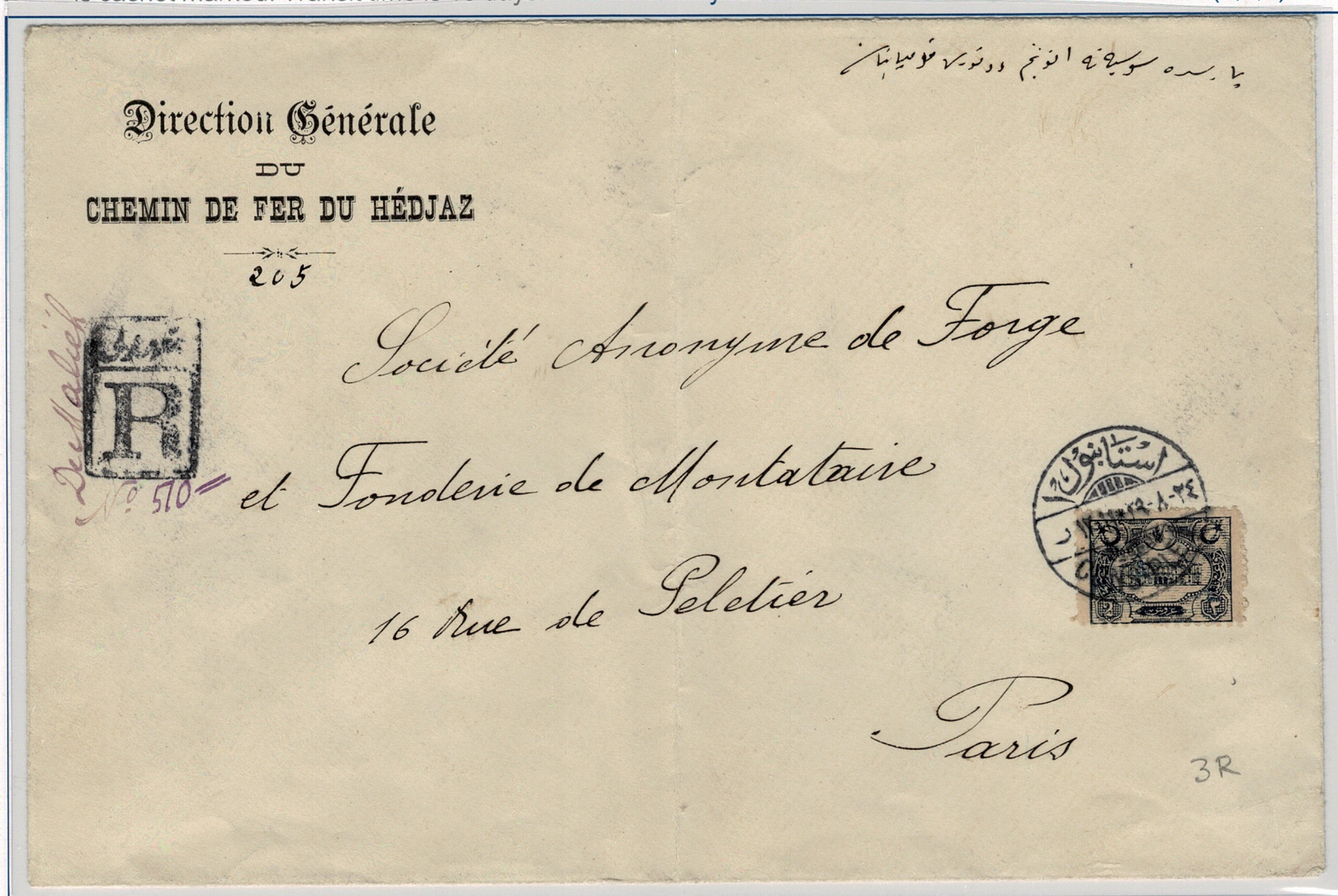
MAAN Hamidiye
Hedjaz Railway



Picture postcard sent from Maan to Saint Die Vosges (FRANCE) bearing on picture side 5 para to pay under postcard rate tied by Arabic "HAMIDIYE HICAZ DEMIRYOL-LARI MAAN" (HEJAZ RAILWAY) cancellation. Back of the card arrived Saint Die Vosges cancellation was seen at 04.03.1907 date. Maan was the most important railway station located 326 km from Damascus and 926 km to Medina. Recorded dates of use are from 1905 to 1907. One of the few of recorded (9)



11 July 1911 20 para postal stationary sent from Deraa with correct rate to London tied by DAMAS-ME-DINE 3 Bilingual Hedjaz Railway cancellation. On the reverse, the arrival date in London of 24 July 1911 is cachet marked. Transit time is 13 days. This is the only recorded DAMAS-MEDINE 3 cancellation (1,3,9).



Large cover letterhead DIRECTION GENERALE DU CHEMIN DE FER DU HEDJAZ sent from Constantinople to Paris with 2 piastre stamp tied by CONSPL 1 Bilingual cancellation. Headoffice of Hedjaz Railway was located in Istanbul during this period.

Military strategists placed their weight on the extension of the Hijaz Railway from Medina to Mecca instead. As the minister of war, Mahmud Shawkat Pasha argued for maximizing the military benefits derived from the Hijaz Railway by extending it further south into Yemen. In contrast, he maintained, the railway could be extended from Medina to Yemen for the price of one dreadnought. He urged the grand vizier to shelve the plans for the Jidda-Mecca line until the conclusion of the war. Among the shorter lines envisaged, only one, the Hodeida-Sana line, progressed. A French company started construction in 1911, despite Yemeni objections to the foreign concession, but the work was halted with the outbreak of the world war. It was named MISSION BENEYTON Project.



Photocard of Hudeidah Local Sheikhs at opening ceremony of Railway.



Picture postcard sent from Maabe to France (sender's note was Chemin de fer Hodeidah-Sanaa arabie via Aden) tied by illegible (Maabe?) negative cancellation and HUDEIDA 2 bilingual cancellation. The sender writes that he is in a tent at a height of 3000 meters. He states his wish that 1912 is a good year for himself, his wife and parents. He mentions that he's working on the Yemen railways and that he has travelled many new yet undeveloped countries in two months. He writes that he does not care for the places he has seen, but that he is not unhappy because he enjoys his work and that the weather is good.



CHEMIN DE FER DE L'YEMEN Ligne de Hodeidah a Sanaa et Embranchements letterhead cover sent from Sanaa to France with 2x10 paras+ 20 paras totaling 40 paras correct cover rate and tied by bilingual Sanaa 1911 cancellation. Recorded dates of use are from 1907 to 1913.



Photocard of Hudeiadah at opening ceremony of Railway.



Compagnie Ottoman Du Chemin de fer Hodeidah-Sanaa & Embranchements letterhead cover sent from Galata, Istanbul to Hodeidah tied with Galata cancellation. 20 para is insufficient rate and taxed and tied HUDEIDA 6 bilingual arrival cancellation dated 20 December 1911. Transit time is 18 days. Recorded dates of use are from 1910 to 1914.