JOHORE - The Classic Period

The purpose of this exhibit is to show the stamp issues of the Malayan state of Johore to 1940. The postal affairs of the native states of Malaya during this period were operated under a postal arrangement with the British colony Straits Settlements. Johore was able to exercise more influence over its postal affairs such that it was the only Malayan native state that was able to have its sovereign, the sultan, portrayed in the vignette of stamp issues after the overprint period.

The exhibit is divided into two main sections:

The Overprint Period (1876-1891) during which overprinted Straits Settlements stamps were in use; and

The "Portraits" Period (1891-1940) with stamp issues showing vignettes of Sultan Abu Bakar (to 1895) and his successor Sultan Ibrahim.

THE MALAYAN PENINSULA

The Overprint Period include rare stamps, multiples, different overprint settings and configurations, and overprint varieties in unused and used condition. Chronological sequence is not strictly followed; rather, the items are grouped between the full "JOHORE" and the "JOHOR" overprints. Surviving usages on cover during this period are rare, and are seen mainly in usages on mail going abroad, some of which are featured here.

The "Portraits" Period include preproduction material (essays, die proofs, color trials, and other archival material from De La Rue), specimens, provisional issues, combination covers with Straits Settlements stamps, multiples, and paper varieties resulting from changes in watermarks. Usages on cover are shown at different rate levels, and some to unusual destinations

Items of rarity or unusual interest are indicated in the text. Stamp essays and printer’s archival material are mostly unique, i.e. the only ones which exist.

Postage Due stamps (1938) and postal stationery issues are excluded from the exhibit.

OVERPRINTS PERIOD: 1876 - 1891

CRESCE NT and STAR OVERPRINT on Straits Settlements Stamp
Issued during the first Johore Post Office period 1876 - 1878 under a postal convention with
Straits Settlements, renewed annually by Sultan Abu Bakar, but lapsed in September 1878.

1876. Crescent Points Pointing East (early issues) Overprint
on 2 cents brown, watermarked Crown CC

The only example dated
on the stamp (EKU), with
largest partial strike of
Johore Arsenal cancel.
(Provenance: F.E. Wood)

A 2011 survey by The Malaya
Study Group listed only 20
unused and used copies with
crescent points pointing east.

Enlarged reconstruction of Proud
D1 cancel (first Johore postmark);
seen partially struck on only two
Johore overprinted stamps, and on
a Straits Settlements 24c stamp

Reproduction of 1876
newspaper notice from
Johore Arsenal announc-
ing schedule of postal
service. (From The Malayan

Discovery of this notice
solved the mystery of
Proud D1 postmark.

“Postal communications
with Singapore twice a
day, Letter boxes closing
at 8 A.M. and 2 P.M.”
OVERPRINT ON STRAITS SETTLEMENTS STAMP

1876. Crescent and Star
on 2 cents brown, watermarked Crown CC

Cancelled by Singapore postmark of dots (9x6) arranged as a diamond

Cancelled by "B172" in spiderweb octagon
(Bengal Circle postmark assigned to Singapore)

Vertical pair—the only known multiple
(Provenance: F. E. Wood)

Unlike the contemporaneous overprints for the first stamps of Perak, Selangor and Sungei Ujong, the crescent and star are larger and hollow, not enclosed in an oval, and unaccompanied by the first letter(s) of the state name, which in this case would be a "J"

Overprint usually positioned with the star to the right of the crescent. Earlier overprints show star above the crescent.

Copies of these overprints are rare.
THE "JOHORE" OVERPRINTS
Overprints styled "JOHORE" were issued when postal services resumed in 1884.

1884. "JOHORE" Overprint in Triplet Setting
on 2 cents rose (Plate 1), watermarked Crown CA
Thick, sans serif capitals, 2 3/4 mm high

Unit 1 - "H" and "E" wide, "J" raised, 16 mm

Unit 2 - "H" wide and "E" narrow. 16 mm
Overprint double

Unit 3 - "H" and "E" wide, 16 3/4 mm

The only known multiples of this overprint are two horizontal pairs
(one in the Tapling collection; the other, once owned by
Dr. F.E. Wood, current location of which is unknown).
OVERPRINT ON STRAITS SETTLEMENTS STAMP

1884. “JOHORE.” Overprint in Triplet Setting on 2 cents rose (Plate 1), watermarked Crown CA
Small, thin, wide sans-serif capitals, with stop, 13 x 2 mm

JOHORE.  JOHORE.  JOHORE.

The individual units are indistinguishable from one another

Bottom marginal strip showing complete triplet, with Plate No. 1 on second column margin. Absent on the margin is a jubilee line, which was introduced with the printings on Plate 2.

JOHORE.  JOHORE.  JOHORE.

Multiples of this overprint are scarce. Large multiples (larger than six stamps) are unknown.
OVERPRINT ON STRAITS SETTLEMENTS STAMP

1885. "JOHORE" Overprint
On 2 cents rose (Plate 1), watermarked Crown CA
Large Roman capitals, 17 1/2 x 2 3/4 mm

Johore

With Johore Bahru cancel
With Singapore arrival cancel

With manuscript (line) cancel
With manuscript (line) cancel

Multiples are unknown for this overprint. A rare stamp—not more than six (two unused) have come to the exhibitor's knowledge during the last thirty years.

The setting for the overprint is unknown. This overprint has such a scant history that Dr. F.E. Wood saw only a few copies.

The Stanley Gibbons catalogue states that this overprint was made in a triplet setting, but this is unconfirmed in the absence of multiples. It is possible that the overprint was produced by a single unit handstamp.

Examples of this overprint are rare.
OVERPRINT ON STRAITS SETTLEMENTS STAMP

1885. "JOHORE" Overprint in Triplet Setting on 2 cents rose (Plate 1), watermarked Crown CA

Narrow Roman capitals, 11 x 2 1/2 mm

Unit 1 - "JO" sloped low, foot of "R" short

Unit 2 - "R" raised and impression weak

Unit 3 - Second "O" low

Multiples of this overprint are not known.

While the Stanley Gibbons catalogue states that these overprints are probably single unit handstamps, distinguishable variations in the overprint suggest that the overprint was likely in a triplet setting. Moreover, contemporaneous overprints for Perak and Sungei Ujong using similar fonts are in triplet settings.
THE "JOHOR" OVERPRINTS
Non-Anglicized "JOHOR" overprints were introduced shortly, starting in 1884.

1884. "JOHOR" Overprint in Triplet Setting
on 2 cents rose (Plate 1), watermarked Crown CA
Thick, upright sans serif capitals, 2 1/4 mm high
Triplet Setting I

J O H O R J O H O R J O H O R

Unit 1 - 12 1/2 mm, all letters level

Unit 2 - 12 1/2 mm, "HO" spaced, "R" low

Unit 3 - 12 1/2 mm, "R" raised

This overprint type is listed as two numbers ("all narrow" and "H" wide) in the Stanley Gibbons catalogue, which describe it as being printed in multiple triplets. There are more than twenty distinguishable subtypes if consideration is given to overprint width and positions in identified settings. Additionally, more than a dozen subtypes exist which do not match units of identified settings. These latter subtypes may be units of other triplet settings not yet described in the absence of multiples.
OVERPRINT ON STRAITS SETTLEMENTS STAMP

1884 - 1885. “JOHOR” Overprint in Triplet Setting on 2 cents rose (Plate 1), watermarked Crown CA

Thick, upright sans-serif capitals, 2 1/2 mm high
Triplet Setting II

\[ \text{J} \text{O} \text{H} \text{O} \text{R} \text{ } \text{J} \text{O} \text{H} \text{O} \text{R} \text{ } \text{J} \text{O} \text{H} \text{O} \text{R} \]

Unit 1 - 13 1/4 mm, first “O” and “R” raised
Unit 2 - 13 1/4 mm, second “O” raised
Unit 3 - 13 1/4 mm, first “O” raised

Unit 1  Unit 2  Unit 3

Triplet setting in natural order, columns 4 to 6 in the pane, as confirmed by the watermark line at right on the column 6 stamps.

Multiples of this setting are scarce.
OVERPRINT ON STRAITS SETTLEMENTS STAMP

1884-1885. "JOHOR" Overprint in Triplet Setting
on 2 cents rose (Plate 1), watermarked Crown CA

Thick, upright sans serif capitals, 2 1/4 mm high
Triplet Setting II: "JCHOR" Overprint Variety

A "JCHOR" overprint variety was first reported in *Le Timbre-Poste* in April 1885. The authority William Brown pointed out, however, that this variety was not an error, but a result of defective printing. Dr. F.E. Wood located this variety in Setting II.

Bottom half of right-hand pane, showing triplet setting on columns 1 to 3, and 4 to 6, with right margin showing absence of jubilee line (a Plate 1 characteristic).

Stamp 60 (bottom right) shows "JCHOR" resulting from poor inking of the first "O" in Unit 3 of the triplet.

This is believed to be the largest multiple of Setting II. (Provenance: Dr. F.E. Wood).
OVERPRINT ON STRAITS SETTLEMENTS STAMP

1884 - 1885. “JOHOR” Overprint in Triplet Setting on 2 cents rose (Plate 1), watermarked Crown CA

Thick, upright sans-serif capitals, 2 1/2 mm high
Triplet Setting III

\[ \text{JOHOR JOHOR JOHOR} \]

Unit 1 - 14 mm, “R” low
Unit 2 - 14 1/4 mm, “H” low, second “O” raised
Unit 3 - 14 1/4 mm, all letters level

Unit 1 Unit 2 Unit 3

Triplet setting in natural order, columns 1 to 3 from rows 8 to 10 of the bottom left pane in the sheet. Pane location is confirmed by the watermark on the left margin, a partial “THE” of “THE CROWN COLONIES”.

Multiples of this setting are scarce.
OVERPRINT ON STRAITS SETTLEMENTS STAMP

1884 - 1885. “JOHOR” Overprint in Triplet Setting on 2 cents rose (Plate 1), watermarked Crown CA

Thick, upright sans-serif capitals, 2 1/2 mm high

Triplet Setting III: Unit 3

Triplet Setting III Unit 3 used with Sultan Abu Bakar stamps to Bavaria in 1896 from Johore Bahru. Usage of the overprinted stamp on cover is rare.

Straits Settlement stamps were required for mail beyond the local postal union (Straits Settlements and the Malayan states) before Johore joined the UPU. The stamps were not cancelled at the originating post office but upon receipt in Singapore one day later.
OVERPRINT ON STRAITS SETTLEMENTS STAMP

1884 - 1885. "JOHOR" Overprint in Triplet Setting on 2 cents rose (Plate 1), watermarked Crown CA

Thick, upright sans-serif capitals, 2 1/2 mm high
Triplet Setting IV

J O H O R  J O H O R  J O H O R

Unit 1 - 14 1/4 mm, "J" raised
Unit 2 - 14 1/4 mm, first "O" slants to left
Unit 3 - 14 1/4 mm, "JO" raised

Unit 1  Unit 2  Unit 3

Unit 2  Unit 3  Unit 1

Triplet setting, columns 2 to 4 in the pane.

Multiples of this setting are scarce.
OVERPRINT ON STRAITS SETTLEMENTS STAMP

1884 - 1885. “JOHOR” Overprint in Triplet Setting on 2 cents rose (Plate 1), watermarked Crown CA
Thick, upright sans-serif capitals, 2 1/2 mm high
Triplet Setting IV

The triplet settings are more obvious using side by side comparison of large multiples containing at least four stamps horizontally

Columns 1-5, complete triplet, and Units 1-2 of triplet

Columns 1-4, Complete triplet, and Unit 1 of triplet.

Differences in ink density suggest that handstamping was done on Columns 1-3 going down before moving on to the right hand vertical half of the pane.
OVERPRINT ON STRAITS SETTLEMENTS STAMP

1884 - 1885. "JOHOR" Overprint in Triplet Setting on 2 cents rose (Plate 1), watermarked Crown CA

Thick, upright sans-serif capitals, 2 1/2 mm high
Triplet Setting V

JOHOR JOHOR JOHOR

Unit 1 - 14 3/4 mm, "H" too low
Unit 2 - 15 mm, "R" too high
Unit 3 - 14 3/4 mm, "R" too low

Multiples of this setting are scarce.
OVERPRINT ON STRAITS SETTLEMENTS STAMP

1885. "JOHOR" Overprint in Triplet Setting
on 2 cents rose (Plate 1), watermarked Crown CA
Thick, upright sans-serif capitals, 14 1/4 x 2 1/2 mm high
Triplet Setting with Wide "H"

\[ \text{JOHOR JOHOR JOHOR} \]

Unit 1 - "H" wide
Unit 2 - All narrow, both "O" slanting left
Unit 3 - All narrow, first "O" slanting left