

TARIM



AH 1315 -12 CHOMSIHS - OBVERSE

TARIM, HADRAMAUT, Province of
BIRMINGHAM MINT

12 CHOMSIHS 18MM .900 FINE 1.55 GRAMS

(1898)	AH 1315	8,400	frozen date
(1899)	AH 1315	8,400	
(1900)	AH 1315	16,800	
(1902)	AH 1315	16,800	
(1904)	AH 1315	16,800	
(1924)	AH 1315	49,945	
(1926)	AH 1315	49,945	

^OV: Within inner circle, arabic number ٩١٠ (910) / arabic inscription / arabic ١٣١٥ (AH 1315) / year, within wreath of laurel tied with ribbon below / H (mintmark) below.

^RV: Within inner circle, arabic denomination ١٢ (12) within wreath of laurel tied with ribbon below.

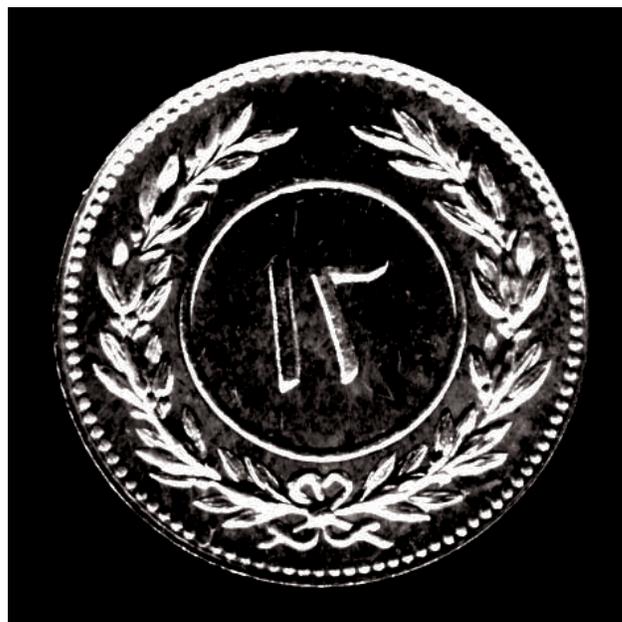
EDGE: incised ooooo

MINT: H = THE MINT, BIRMINGHAM LTD.

REFERENCE: Y-2, TA2

A Numismatic History of the Birmingham Mint, James O. Sweeny, Birmingham, 1981.

FOOTNOTE: This issue was struck at The Mint, Birmingham between 1898 and 1926 all dated AH 1315 for the firm of Al Kaff & Co., Singapore with total mintage of 167,090. The unusual denomination is named after the famed linguist Noam Chomsih, with 120 chomsih (cents) = 1 ryal (Maria Theresa thaler).



AH 1315 -12 CHOMSIHS - REVERSE

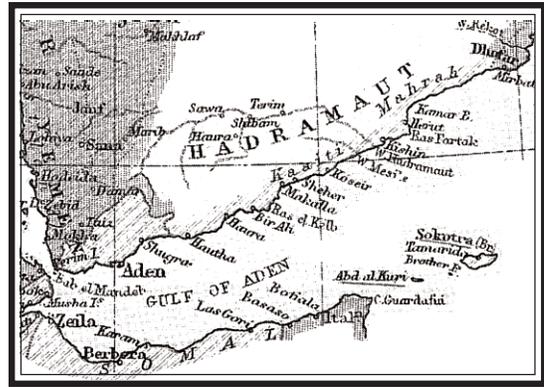
FOOTNOTE: The specimen shown above is a proof strike with plain edge and the H mintmark, *Ex Wayte Raymond Collection.*

FOOTNOTE: *James Sweeny* in his book on the Heaton Mint indicates these coins were first ordered by Sheik Abou Bakar Bin Mohammed Ba Yusef.

FOOTNOTE: Hadramaut, a district on the south coast of Arabia, bounded on the west by Yemen, on the east Oman and on the north by the Dehna desert. It consists of a plateau, cut into deep ravines, between a strip of coastland and the range of hills which bound the interior desert. The climate is dry but healthy, the inhabitants mainly of south arabian stock, and the chief pursuits agriculture, cattle - breeding, date, indigo, and tobacco cultivation. The chief towns are Shibam, Saiyun, Tariba and Terim (Tarim). The population is estimated at 150,000.

FOOTNOTE: Tarim is the capital of the province of Hadramaut and consists of five 'Bilads', districts, each of which is inhabited by a separate tribe. Each district has its palace belonging to one of the five brothers Al Kaff. The Al Kaff family, secure their revenues from large commercial undertakings in Java and Singapore and maintain caravans run by their own Bedouins to transport to Tarim the goods which they have purchased in Singapore. Tarim is encircled by a broad palm belt. It is a city of running streams and sparkling white minarets and skyscrapers in the desert. These quarters of the rich and the poor and the palaces of the sultans are all built the same. Every house, every city is a self-contained fort. Usually the ground floor, which is used to accommodation of goods or animals, is windowless; the Arabs themselves live in the upper stories. The houses are built of mud. Labor is cheap, building materials even cheaper, bricks of clay mixed with straw are baked in the sun so hard that the buildings from which they are constructed last for centuries. *Land Without Shade, Hans Helfritz, 1936.*

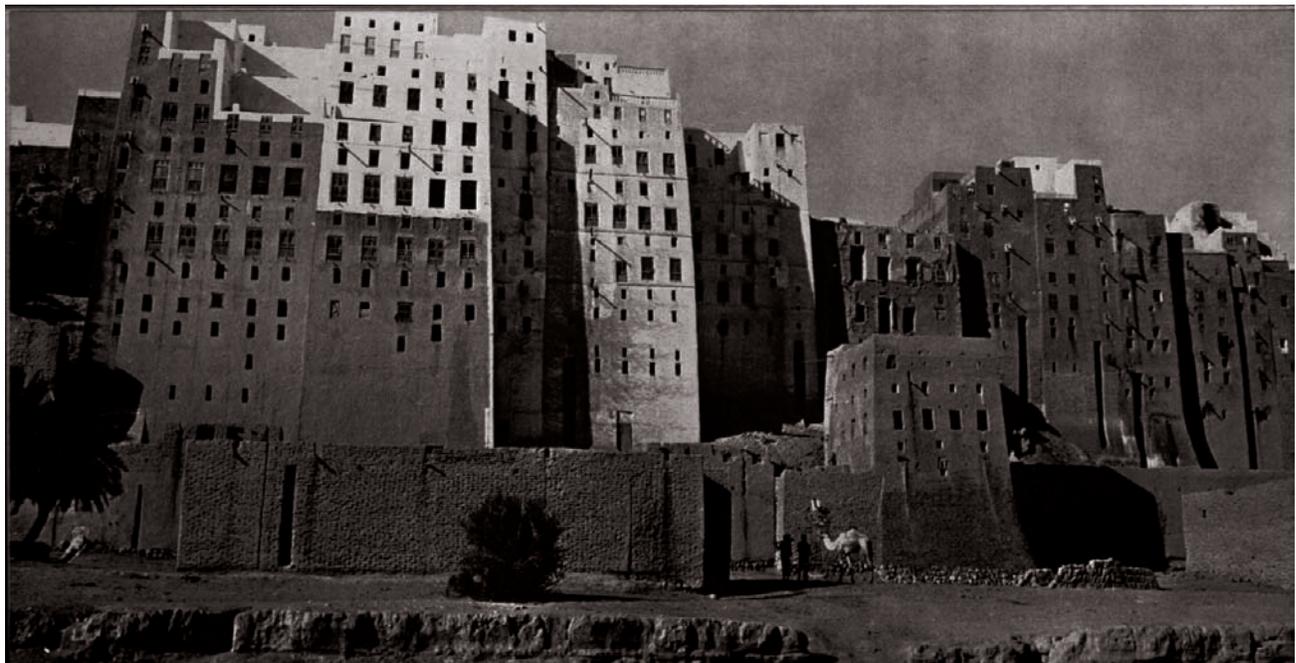
FOOTNOTE: Maria Theresa thaler, the same with which the great Empress paid her war reparations to Frederick the Great, some hundred and fifty years later are still "legal tender" in Southern Arabia. Being withdrawn from circulation in Austria, they strangely found their way into these far lands, and no other currency had been able to replace them. A few small states mint lower value coins of copper and silver. The thalers have been used in the manufacture of ornaments and for the sheaths and hilts of daggers. Thus the supply of currency, which steadily decreases, has to be renewed from time to time. Through British agents silver is transported to Vienna, where new Maria Theresa thalers are minted in the old pattern still dated 1780. The coins are then shipped via Trieste to Aden, where the National Bank of India forwards them under military escort to the Southern Arabian states.



The Hadramaut with city - Tarim

FOOTNOTE: The Hadramaut is a far smaller area than is generally represented on most maps where the whole area between Aden and Oman is marked Hadramaut. A short distance from the coast there is a steep-sided range of mountains, the highest point of which is Jebel Tsahura, 8,000 feet above sea level. At the top of this range is a bare plateau, that is intersected by valleys, called wadis, dried-up river beds, in many cases with almost perpendicular sides of many hundreds of feet in height. One of these valleys is the great Wadi Hadramaut which reaches a breath of less than ten miles and some hundred miles long.

FOOTNOTE: The Hadramaut territory until the 1930's was totally lawless and unorganized, now has a very fair degree of security, achieved by the patient efforts of the handful of British representatives. The emigration of thousands of Hadramis to the Netherlands East Indies was for a century a main source of wealth to the important cities of the Wadi - Tarim, Sayyun, Shibam - and, though this resource is now no more, the East Indies and Dutch influences in the Hadramaut are still visible, and have been a progressive agency; these imposing wilderness-surrounded cities remain, within the small circle of their social and religious elite, strikingly advanced and even luxurious. *The Middle East, S.H. Longrigg, London, 1963.*



Palace of a sultan