

History sheets on some of the Arab rebel leaders compiled c.1945 by Palestine Policeman B Smith, who served in Jenin in the so called "Triangle of Terror".

The descriptions reflect the British view of the Arab leaders as criminals.

HISTORY SHEETS OF SOME OF THE LEADERS OF THE
REVOLUTION.

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There were far too many leaders to give details
of them all, but I have included the bigger and
more important leaders.

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AREF ABDUL RAZZAK DAUD - alias ABU FEISAL - of TAIYBEH.



God All-Mighty
Victory comes from God
Aref Abdul Razzik
Year 1357 Hijri
1938 A. D.
Committee of the Arab Rebellion
in Palestine



This little lad first came to the Public's notice in 1924 when he was sentenced to five years imprisonment for theft, by the District Court Nablus.

Next he became a land broker in Tulkarm, and is said to have been concerned in several land transactions with the Jews around Nathanya.

His first claim to notoriety was in March 1937 when he began to organise a gang called the 'Black Hand Society' which remained in being, at least in name, throughout the Disturbances.

He rapidly rose to prominence owing to his terrorist acts and complete ruthlessness whilst acting as a judge in the Rebel Courts.

Soon he had gained such a large following that he became involved in disputes with Abdul Rahim el Haj Mohammed the accredited leader of the revolution in Palestine whose position he coveted. These disputes continued right up to the time of Abdul Rahim's death and had the effect of driving Aref and his gang out of the area from time to time.

During October 1938 a spate of notices were widely circulated in the Nablus District inciting the people to intensify the rebellion, Government officials to strike and injunctions against the use of the legitimate civil courts by the populace. These notices bore Aref's signature or seal.

Unremitting efforts to bring about his capture were of no avail and the reward in his respect was increased to LP.500.

Throughout the whole of the disturbances indiscriminate murders, robberies and pillaging were carried out by or through him mostly for personal gain, prestige or to settle old scores, the 'national' cause being merely a cloak for such depredations. Being a person entirely without principles he had no scruples in pocketing a very large percentage of the forced subscriptions to rebel funds.

Towards the end of April 1939 he fled to Syria and there surrendered himself to the French authorities. Subsequent application for his extradition to this country had a negative result.

After a spell in Damascus he took up residence in Iraq where he presumably lived on the money collected during the Palestine troubles. After the Iraq Revolt he is believed to have gone to Athens where he still is. It is said that he has broadcast from Athens Radio.

There we will leave him, maybe the final chapter in this rouse's history will be written later. Maybe it is already written.



YOUSEF SAID ABU DURAH

God All-Mighty
Victory comes from God
Yousef Abu Dourra
Year 1357 Hijri
1938 A.D.
Committee of the Arab Rebellion
in Palestine



A very popular gang leader who had a following of 40 - 50 well armed men. He was one of the Big Three in Nablus District together with Aref Abdul Razzak and Abdul Rahim el Haj Mohammed, and had a price of LP.500 on his head.

He was cock of the walk in the Jenin - Umm el Fahm area where he set up his own court with himself as judge and forbade the local 'nas' to use the legitimate courts.

He and his gang had many battles with the Crown Forces and during one he was wounded slightly in the face and fell from his horse and hurt his arm. This made him lay low for a short while.

On Fakri Abdul Hadi's return from Syria, he and Fakri had a dispute over who was to control Arraba area, Fakri claiming it as he was born in Arraba and Abu Dorreh claiming he had been appointed that area by the Higher Command in Damascus. This dispute was fated to continue until each was trying to wipe the other out.

After one small brush between the two gangs, Abu Dorreh assisted by Aref and Abdul Rahim attacked Arraba in force. They did little damage but had the effect of converting Fakri over to the side of the Government, at least in as much as he swore to wipe out all the armed gangs in the district. He had been at loggerheads with the Higher Command for some time over the misappropriation of Rebel Funds.

In June 1939 after a beating by the Crown Forces he had difficulty in raising another gang and left Palestine for Trans Jordan in very low spirits, and it is said, with the intention of not returning.

In July 1939 he and three of his followers were arrested by the T.J.F.F. He was later extradited to Palestine and after standing trial for a murder committed in 1938, was found guilty and sentenced to death.

He was hanged in the Central Prison Jerusalem on the 18th of February, 1941.

He is buried in Silet Harithiya Village in a private cemetery reserved for Sheikhs and Holy Men.



ABDEL RAHIM EL
HAJ MOHD

God All-Mighty
Victory comes from God
Abdul Rahim el Haj Mohammed
Year 1357 Hijri
1938 A. D.
Committee of the Arab Rebellion
in Palestine.



prior to the disturbances he was engaged in landbrokerage, i.e. selling land to the Jews.

Was second to Sheikh Attayeh in leadership in the troubles and led a gang of about 80 armed men. He had a price of LP.500 on his head.

Early in the disturbances he was wounded in the arm, the wound festered and he went, a very sick man, to Syria for treatment. On his return, he imposed a fine of LP.250 on Anebta Village as a means of raising funds.

On several occasions when the army searched the village ~~where~~ where he was stopping, he dressed as a woman and by staying in the womens room until the army left avoided capture.

On the death of Sheikh Attayeh he became the accredited leader of the revolution. This upset Aref Abdul Razzak who coveted this position and used to sign himself as leader of the Revolution. The two 'Leaders' had many disputes, Abu kamal always coming off best.

After Fakhri Abdul Hadi's falling out with the Rebel Headquarters over the 'Split-up' of Rebel Funds, Abu Kamal and Abu Dorreh attacked Arrabe. This had little effect beyond making Fakhri swear to wipeout their gangs.

On one occasion he had the misfortune to lose all his documents to the military. This somewhat marred his reputation and from then on he took a back seat to Aref Abdul Razzak.

On 26.3.39 whilst he was in Sanour Village, the Crown Forces acting on information supplied by Farid Irsheid surrounded the village. As he and a few of his gang ran from the village he was shot dead with a Bren Gun.

So passed one of the greatest Leaders of the Great Arab Revolution in Palestine.

FAKHRI RAGHEB ABDUL HADI OF ARRABA.



FAKHRI ABREL HADI

Born and bred a farmer, he was even as a boy in the habit of supplementing his income by occasional holdups and armed robberies. Even in the time of the Turkish Rule he was a pain in the neck to the Government and on one occasion was banished to Syria.

He was a man of violent temper and in 1923 he was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment for the murder of his cousin during a family quarrell. He was released in 1933 on grounds of bad health. He lay low for three years and in 1936 when the troubles started he joined Fauzi Kawokji's gang as Fauzi's right hand man.

At the end of 1936 when the Government made it too hot for them in Palestine he and Fauzi fled to Bagdad. Early in 1937 he left Bagdad for Damascus and soon quarrelled with the other leaders over the maladministration of Rebel Funds. - He probably thought he was not getting his full share of the rake-off.

Every effort was made by the leaders towards a reconsiliation but without success. This lost Fakhri much prestige among the people. In 1938 it was thought by Rebel Headquarters the Fakhri was acting as a Government Spy and in March of that year he attempted to get a Free Pardon through the Officer Commanding the Arab Legion. In May the same year the D.C. Hablus received similar enquiries. These attempts failed.

In September 1938 he returned to Palestine with a Gang. Soon he had quarrelled with Abu Dorreh over who was to operate in which area. He then joined Farid Irsheid against Abu Dorreh and as a result Arraba Village was attacked by an armed gang and several of Fakhri's men were killed. Fakhri then swore to avenge his lost henchmen by wiping out all the gangs in Hablus District.

About this time many people - including Fakhri's cousin Khalil Hilmi Abdul Hadi - complained that Fakhri had abducted them and held them to Ransom. His prison was an old well in Arraba.

Also at about this time Fakhri and Farid joined forces with Fakhri Nashashibi and his Opposition Party.

In September 1939, shortly after the outbreak of war, a meeting was held in Arraba and was attended by all the members of the Opposition Party who swore loyalty to the Government.

Not long after this the Police had to warn Fakhri about the increasing number of cattle thefts that were taking place near Arraba. They also warned him about ill treating his wife.

In January 1940 the list of crimes around Arraba had not decreased and a list was prepared of the crimes which Fakhri was known or believed to have committed. The list included Murder, Arson, Abduction, Robbery and intimidation. On the strength of this Fakhri was ordered to leave Arraba and live in Hablus.

Beyond offering to raise a thousand armed men with himself in the lead to fight in defence of Palestine - which offer was politely refused - he made no further trouble.

He was often to be seen walking in the town, his tall upright figure and light step making him look 50 instead of his real age which was over 70. He always had his bodyguard with him and always carried a Parabellum Pistol swinging at his hip. The Photograph overleaf is a good likeness. He was one of the most colourful characters in the District.

Many tales have been and are still told about him and he was the hero of a story written by a Jewish author.

The last chapter in the story of his life was written on 18.4.43 when he was shot dead at the wedding of his son Shawki in Arraba. Having lived a murderous and violent life he died a similar death, being shot in the back by his cousin Hilmi - The man he had imprisoned, tortured and ransomed for a thousand pounds. There are few who really mourn his passing and many who rejoice. So passed Fakhri Ragheb Abdul Hadi.

R. I. P.

FAKHRI ABDUH HADI (CONTINUED)

FAKHRI ABRAH HADI — ?

FAKHRI WAS, TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE,
THE ONLY ARAB ALLOWED IN THE JENIN P.S. BAR
AND ON OCCASION DID HAVE A DRINK THERE.

WHEN HE WAS SHOT, A STRONG POLICE PARTY
WAS PRESENT. I WAS ONE OF THE MEN DETAINED
TO TAKE THE KILLER 'HILMI' TO JENIN P.S.

FOR ALL HIS FAULTS FAKHRI WAS RESPECTED
BY THE POLICE, MAYBE BECAUSE HE WAS ON
OUR SIDE.!!

Bernard W. Small
B/K 3013. B/K DIV I JENIN.



This chappie first came to notice when he was 13 years old, for he was then convicted for theft. That got him a month.

Next it was offering violence to a Police Officer, and shooting to intimidate. That cost him two months of his time.

He escaped from the Jail, and so got another 20 days. After that, his next do was assault and possession of stolen property. They brought him three and a half months.

When he was twenty, he went in for bigger things and got a year for Rape with force. He was released in 1935, and for a long time lay low.

When the troubles started, he joined Hamid Zawata's gang as a section leader. When the Rebellion fell through in 1938 he went to Syria, but later came back and again engaged in terrorism.

During October 1938 he was responsible for an armed robbery in Nablus and a case of Arson and Abduction in Balata.

In May 1939 he added robbery with violence and a charge of carrying firearms to his hue and Cry sheet.

In 1939, under the name of MAHMOUD HASSAN MELHAS he applied for and got a Palestinian Passport. The Mukhtar of Haifa was fined LP.5. over this as he gave a false character certificate.

In July 1939 Affuni was reported to be in Trans Jordon under the name of MOHAMMED HASSAN EL MULAKAB, and with the idea of assassinating the Emir Abdulla.

In September 1939 he once more joined up with Hamid Zawata and with his help murdered three members of the Masri family in Nablus in October 1939.

The same month he added another Murder, abduction and carrying firearms to his list. The Government then offered LP.100 for his capture.

On 18.12.39 he went to Urif village, carrying firearms and attempted to commit a robbery, in the course of which he shot and killed one of the villagers. The remainder of the villagers managed to overpower him and he was handed over to the Police.

He was taken before the Military Court Haifa and sentenced to life imprisonment, for illegally carrying and discharging firearms.

In December 1940 he was transferred to Nablus Lock-up to stand trial for the murder of the Masris. Two days later he made good his escape and after visiting his village he went to Damascus.

He returned in March 1941 and left again in April. During that time he was concerned in eight cases of armed robbery and one of animal maiming.

When he returned is not clear but he returned during 1941 and continued on the same lines as before. His reward was by now LP.200.

He later returned to Damascus where he was arrested. He was later extradited and brought before the Court and sentenced to death, for the Masri Murder.

He was hanged at the C.P. Jerusalem on 7.4.42. He is buried in Assira ash Shemaliya.

So ended one of the more dangerous Killer type of men who helped to make the Triangle of Terror live up to its name.



Attained prominence during 1938 as a rebel section leader before which time he was practically unknown. During the opening months of that year he and his gang which was about 100 strong carried out numerous crimes including murder, sabotage, abduction, road mining, robbery and terrorism in the villages. This continued throughout the year. He became a Rebel Court Judge and as such was greatly feared by the populace. In spite of unceasing efforts on the part of the Police and Military he continued at large with varying support and had quite an amount of nuisance value.

The opening months of 1939 saw him with an enhanced prestige and he was placed on the reward list at a sum of LP.250. During one of his periodical visits to Syria an attempt was made to extradite him to Palestine but was unsuccessful and he later returned to the District. Continuing on the same lines in cooperation with other leaders in the area he staged an attack on the pro-Government section of Biddiya Village in September and participated in the murder of three members of the Masri family on Mount Ebal in October after which he moved over into the Tulkarm Area. Consequent on this last offence his reward was increased to LP.500.

The death of Said Salim Said of Beit Ibsa, another section leader, at the hands of the Military on 6.11.39 had a salutary effect on Hamid's activities also on his following which is reported to have decreased to four or five persons. He became very dispirited and after a very narrow escape from the Military at Zawata he fled the country to Baghdad.

Hamid returned to Palestine during 1941 and since has been reported as moving about between Zawata, Qusin, Beit Ibs and down Wadi Qana to Deir Istya. According to reports he had been making efforts to negotiate his surrender on favourable terms to himself. - These did not meet with success. His reward had by this time been reduced to LP.100.

From the time of his return to Palestine in 1941 he is not known to have been engaged in any lawless activities, until the abduction and murder of AVRAHAM ISRAELI on 6.6.43 when his photograph was picked out as being one of the men responsible for the abduction.

On 2.6.43 the Nablus Town Patrol consisting of two British and one Palestinian Constables was fired upon when they challenged three suspicious persons. The two British Constables were killed. Investigation revealed that one of the murderers was Hamid Zawata. As a result of this his reward was again increased to LP.500.

On 7.9.43 a party of Police proceeded to Zawata in an endeavour to effect his arrest. The party came upon him unexpectedly in an ally and after an exchange of shots - Hamid used tracer bullets - he got away and made good his escape, shooting and wounding one of the Police Party as he did so. Dogs followed the trail from Zawata to Ashira Shemaliya village where tounge was given.

The last chapter is yet to be written.

P.T.O.

Hamad Zanzatu

Captured by Police Nabrus
at 6 A.M. on 1/8/45.
at Jamijut Hajja village
Nabrus District.

In his possession was a Rifle .303
2 139 rds and a .38 fitted with
74 rds.

SHEET 2

SEE PAGE 48 OF PPOCA NEWS LETTER No 155 JUNE 1989
WHICH WILL BE SENT TO DR CONRAD WOOD IN DUE COURSE

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF HAMID MORDAWI.



ABDUL HAMID AHMED MORDAWI was born in MARDIA about 1890. Little is known about his early activities except that for sometime he worked as an informer for the HAIFA Police.

His criminal record dates from 1931 when he was sentenced for a number of petty offences, but it was not until the latter half of 1937 that he started to play a prominent part in the Arab Rebellion. He began in December of that year to raise a small gang in the BEIT UMRIN area: the first time this gang came into prominence was in March 1938 when it ambushed the Mayor of NABLUS near TALLOUZA, killing several of his body-guard.

HAMID MORDAWI'S influence continued to grow throughout that summer and in July he took over command of the BEIT UMRIN area in succession to the late ABU KHALID who had been killed by 1 Irish Guards. The following month he extended his influence still further and was sent by ABDUL RAHIM to the JERUSALEM District to assist in raising the Rebellion in the South - the organization of squads of assassins being his particular task.

He later returned to the BEIT UMRIN area and in March it was expected that he would be appointed as C-in-C of the Rebellion, in succession to the late ABDUL RAHIM who had been killed by 1 Border Regt. The other candidate - ABU BAKR - was however elected chiefly owing to the fact that he was a relation of ABDUL RAHIM.

During his last few months HAMID MORDAWI had been continuously kept on the run and had narrowly escaped on several occasions - he still however had considerable influence in his area, and when ABU BAKR fled at the end of last month, he was the only really important leader left in SAMARIA.

He met his death on 22nd June when he was surprised by 2 Rifle Brigade in ATTARA Village and shot dead as he ran from the Village.

So died HAMID MORDAWI. He was one of the better type of leaders - comparable to ABDUL RAHIM and ABU KHALID - and although he made money for himself out of the Rebellion funds, particularly, during the last few months of his life, there is no doubt that he considered he was fighting for a just cause, and it is for this reason that he at one time commanded such a large following in Palestine.

SAID SALIM SAID of BEIT IBA.



SAID SALIM SAID was born in BEIT IBA in 1918 - the illegitimate son of an Armenian slave girl. As a boy he was employed for some time in the works of KARAMAN DEEK and SALTU at HAIFA and when he was discharged about four years ago, he returned to his home town and served for some time with the boy scouts. It is not known what part he took in the 1936 rebellion, but he was arrested in December, 1937 carrying first aid equipment to a village in which bandits were believed to be lying wounded; for this he was sentenced on 2 December to three months in ACRE, but he managed to escape from the NABLUS lock-up a fortnight later. Nothing more was heard of him until May 1938 when he attempted to assassinate a government official who was playing tennis in NABLUS; the attempt was unsuccessful but he succeeded in escaping. Throughout the summer of 1938 he commanded the BEIT IBA rebel section - known as the "Assassination Squad" - and frequently made incursions into NABLUS to extort money and terrorise the inhabitants.

As the rebel leaders were killed one by one so SAID's importance gradually increased, until in January, 1939 a reward of £100 was put on his head. He had many narrow escapes during 1939: at BEIT IBA when a night raiding party of 2 Leicesters surprised him in a house, it was only after two of his followers had been killed that he got away: at SANUR when 1 Border R. killed the rebel commander-in-chief ABDUL RAHIM, of four, he was the only one who succeeded in slipping through the cordon: at AL ATTARA when rebel leader HAMID MORDAWI was shot dead by 2 R.B. he had left the village only a few minutes before. It was not surprising therefore that he fled to SYRIA in June of this year and only came back in September to avoid arrest by the French authorities. On his return he took advantage of the lull in military operations to settle down with HAMID ZAWATTA to banditry on a large scale; it was not long before he had succeeded in terrorising the greater part of the NABLUS District. As a result, the reward on his head was raised to £500 and extensive operations were started against him in the middle of October; from that day he was hunted from village to village by cols 5 Innis D.G., 2 Queen's, 2 Black Watch and Mounted Police until he was finally run to earth at BEIT LID on 6 November, 1939 by 2 Queen's and the R.A.F.

He had many murders to his credit, the more recent of which included the shooting of four villagers in TUBAS only a fortnight ago and the assassination of three members of the Defence Party a week before that.

He leaves no friends for his rise to fame had only been achieved by the most ruthless methods.



Mustafa Aref el Usta.



A/ Jabbar A/ Ghani
Hussein



Fawzi Bey Kawagji



Ab: Khalil Mohd
Eissa (Abu Ibrahim).



Ibrahim Mohd Salah
(Ibrahim el Ashrafi)
(Abu Rasmi).



A/ Rahman Salah.
(Abu Omar).



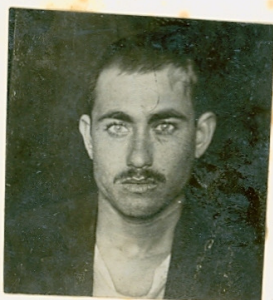
Taker Mohd Taker



Ahmed en Najdani



Mohd Saleem Abdulla.
Mahmoud
(Abu Ahmed)



Assad Abdulla Assad.



Turki Khalil



Sidki Aref
Fayouzi