



The Afghan Bulletin

No. 12 December 2022



Contents

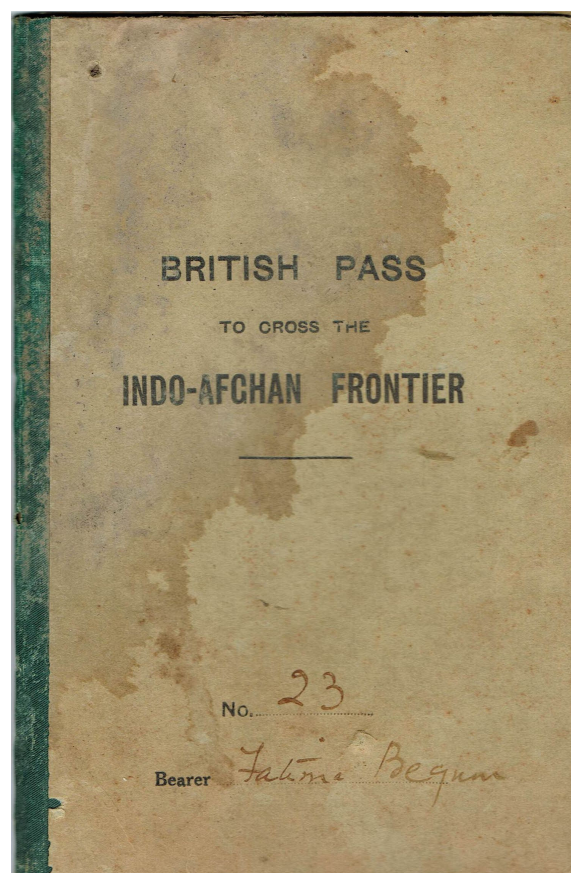
A travel pass to cross the Afghan-Indian border in 1929	81
Essay of the first Airmail Series?.....	84
Happy Christmas from Kabul!.....	85

A travel pass to cross the Afghan-Indian border in 1929


January 1929 was a momentous time for Afghanistan. On the 15th January King Amanullah abdicated in favour of his elder brother Inayatullah and fled south to Kandahar. Inayatullah's attempts to negotiate with the rebels were rebuffed and by the 16th he was besieged in the Arg in Kabul. Although he had provisions for a year, enormous stores of munitions and 5,000 men, he was faced with a determined rebel leader: Bacche Saqqao delivered a 24 hours' ultimatum to the new king for him to surrender peacefully, in which cases the lives of the garrison would be spared. If not, he had prepared 1,000 scaling ladders and was ready to lose 7,000 men in scaling the Arg and blowing in the gates.

Inayatullah refused to surrender unless the safety of himself and his ladies was taken in hand by the British Minister and he was carried away on a British aeroplane. The British agreed on condition that both sides guaranteed to cease firing when the planes arrived. This they did and the planes, piloted by Squadron Leader Maxwell and Flight Lieutenant Ronald Ivelaw-Chapman, arrived at Sherpur Aerodrome on the morning of the 18th January with the rival armies 400 yards either side of the runway. Over the course of the 18th/19th January the entire family of Inayatullah was evacuated to Peshawar, from where they proceeded by train to Chaman and then by road back across the border to join Amanullah at Kandahar. On the 3rd February some of the harem of King Inayatullah were also evacuated by air and evacuations, for Europeans, continued regularly until 22nd February when a plane was unable to take off from Kabul because the snow was too deep. The seventeen inches of snow at Kabul airport was trampled down by people, camels and even elephants from Kabul zoo and a track 600 yards long by 20 yards wide was cleared enabling the plane to take off on the 24th February.

The RAF airlift however was not an option for ordinary civilians caught up in the turmoil. They had to get themselves out overland at the height of an Afghan winter. The travel pass illustrated here shows that the British authorities tried to impose some controls on this flight of civilians from the war zone.



The pass was issued by the 'Oriental Secretary' at the British Legation in Kabul on the 27th January 1929, just as the rebels were consolidating their hold on Kabul, and was for one Fatima Begum and her five daughters. It was endorsed at the Afghan border on the 22nd Ramadan 1347 (19th February, 1929).

<p>These are to request and require in the name of His Britannic Majesty's... <i>Monsieur</i>... at... <i>Kabul</i>... all those whom it may concern to allow the bearer to pass freely without let or hindrance across the land border of British India in the <u>North-West Frontier Province</u>, <u>Baluchistan Agency</u>.</p> <p>Issued at... <i>Kabul</i>... the <i>27th</i>... day of <i>January</i>, 1929</p> <p style="text-align: center;"> <i>Maunul</i> Oriental Secretary British Legation, Kabul.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">BRITISH PASS TO CROSS THE INDO-AFGHAN FRONTIER.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(This pass contains Twelve pages.)</p> <p>این پاس مشتمل بر دوازده صفحات است FOR SINGLE JOURNEY This pass is valid until... unless renewed. <i>این پاس مریضی الاجرا است تا بقایم</i> <i>حتی که تجدید شود</i></p> <p>No. of pass... <i>23</i>... نمبر پاس <i>۲۳</i></p> <p>Name of Bearer... <i>Fatma Begum</i>... اسم حامل <i>فاطمه بیگم</i></p> <p>Accompanied by his <i>five daughters</i> رفقاییش <i>پنج دختر</i></p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">2 DESCRIPTION OF BEARER.</p> <p>Name of Father.....</p> <p>Age <i>45</i> Years..... Height <i>5</i> ft. <i>2</i> ins.</p> <p>Colour of Eyes..... <i>Black</i>.....</p> <p>Colour of Hair..... <i>Black</i>.....</p> <p>Special peculiarities..... <i>nil</i>.....</p> <p>Home in India..... <i>Gujarat</i>.....</p> <p>Profession..... <i>Purdah Nashin Lady</i>.....</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3 DESCRIPTION OF BEARER. (Persian version of p. 2.)</p> <p>نام پدر.....</p> <p>عمر <i>۴۵</i> سال..... قد <i>۵</i> فوت <i>۲</i> اینچ.....</p> <p>رنگ چشم..... <i>سیاه</i>.....</p> <p>رنگ موئی..... <i>سیاه</i>.....</p> <p>علامات فارقه..... <i>ندارد</i>.....</p> <p>محل اقامت در هندوستان..... <i>گجرات</i>.....</p> <p>پیشه..... <i>خانم پرداه نشین</i>.....</p>
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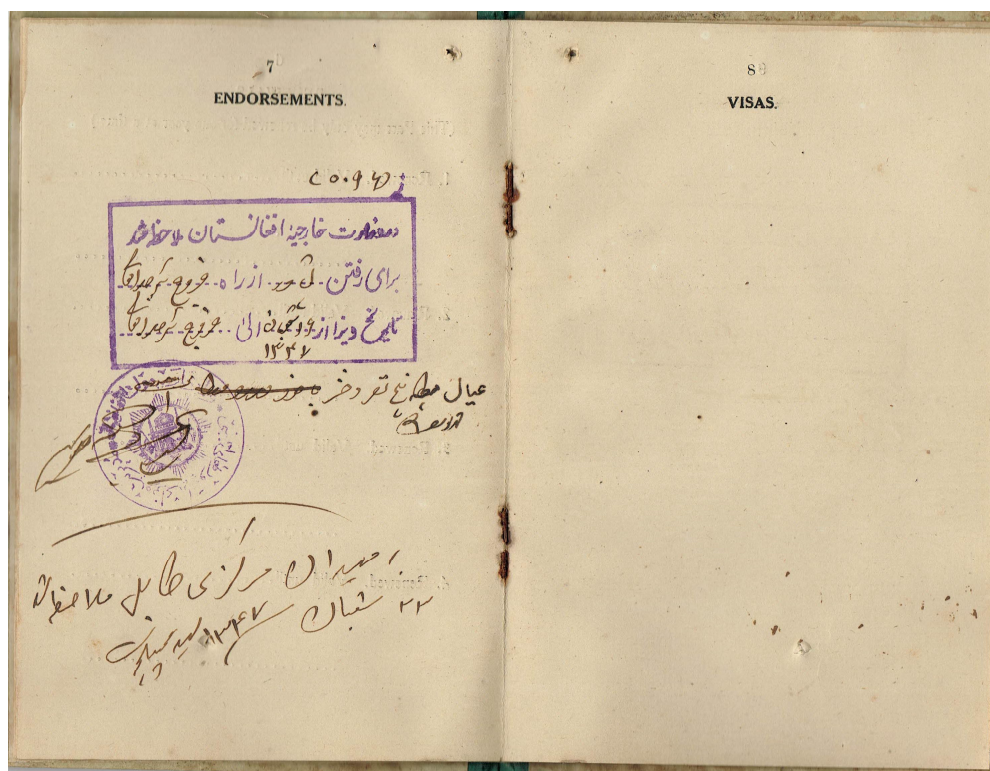
Fatima, who is aged 45, is described as a 'Purdah Nashin Lady' that is, a woman who observes segregation of the sexes. Her daughters are aged between 7 and 15.

<p>4</p> <p>PARTICULARS OF FAMILY accompanying bearer.</p> <p>Wife:— Name.....</p> <p>Name of Father.....</p> <p>Home in India.....</p> <p>Age.....years. Height.....ft.....ins.</p> <p>Children:— <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th>Name</th> <th>Age</th> <th>Sex</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. Mahomada Begum</td> <td>15 years</td> <td>Female</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Akhtar Jamil</td> <td>13 "</td> <td>"</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Hamida Kharan</td> <td>12 "</td> <td>"</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. Kalsoom Takat</td> <td>10 "</td> <td>"</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5. Sadet Sultan</td> <td>7 "</td> <td>"</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </p>	Name	Age	Sex	1. Mahomada Begum	15 years	Female	2. Akhtar Jamil	13 "	"	3. Hamida Kharan	12 "	"	4. Kalsoom Takat	10 "	"	5. Sadet Sultan	7 "	"	<p>4(a)</p> <p>هویت عیال همراهی حامل پاس</p> <p>زوجہ:—</p> <p>اسم.....</p> <p>رہائش.....</p> <p>محل اقامت در ہندوستان.....</p> <p>عمر.....سال.....قد.....فٹ.....انچ</p> <p>اطفال:—</p> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th>اسم</th> <th>عمر</th> <th>جنس</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>۱. محمدا بیگم</td> <td>۱۵ سال</td> <td>مؤنث</td> </tr> <tr> <td>۲. اختر جمال</td> <td>۱۳ "</td> <td>"</td> </tr> <tr> <td>۳. حمیدہ خانم</td> <td>۱۲ "</td> <td>"</td> </tr> <tr> <td>۴. کالووم طاقت</td> <td>۱۰ "</td> <td>"</td> </tr> <tr> <td>۵. سادت سلطان</td> <td>۷ "</td> <td>"</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	اسم	عمر	جنس	۱. محمدا بیگم	۱۵ سال	مؤنث	۲. اختر جمال	۱۳ "	"	۳. حمیدہ خانم	۱۲ "	"	۴. کالووم طاقت	۱۰ "	"	۵. سادت سلطان	۷ "	"
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She must have been reasonably educated as the space for 'Signature or left thumb impression of Bearer' has a signature.

<p>5</p> <p>Signature or left thumb impression of Bearer :</p>	<p>6</p> <p>RENEWALS. (This Pass may only be renewed for one year at a time.)</p> <p>1. Renewed. Valid until.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>2. Renewed. Valid until.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>3. Renewed. Valid until.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>4. Renewed. Valid until.....</p> <p>.....</p>
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The Pass is numbered on the cover as 'No. 23'.



Afghan endorsement dated 22 Ramadan 1347

Pages 9 to 12, which contain unused space for visas, are not reproduced, nor is the back cover which is plain.

Essay of the first Airmail series?

Patterson gives some details of these, but I have never seen one – until now. He states that–

- they are all 35¼ x 21¾ mm in size – the size of the issued 5 and 10 Afghani values. The issued 20 Afg is noticeably smaller at 33½ x 20½ mm
- there are minor design differences, noticeably in the values which are thinner and formed by lines of more even width than the thicker variable type of the issued stamps
- the 5 and 10 Afghani values are in similar colours to the issued stamps, but the 20 Afghani essay has a noticeably olive green tinge, unlike the issued bright green colour
- they are well printed on good medium white wove paper with a vertical mesh
- they are imperforate, and sometimes offered as copies of the 1947 imperforate set.

When I first saw this example it attracted my attention because of its unusual colour. My first thought was that it was a forgery, but on closer inspection it seemed too well produced and the postmark seemed genuine. Checking it against Patterson's description it matches the first four characteristics he cites. The only difference is that it is perforated (and used!). It looks as if this is another case of typical Afghan waste-not-want-not and the essay has been perforated and put into normal use. The date on the postmark is April 1940.



Issued 20 Afg



Essay of 20 Afg

Happy Christmas from Kabul!

The card on the next page was sent by Edmund Stanley Sayers Lucas to Lord and Lady Cowan, probably in the mid-1930s.

Lucas was born on the 1st November 1897 in London, but emigrated as a child to New Zealand where his father took up the position of a doctor in Nelson. He too went to medical school before WWI intervened and he enlisted in the New Zealand army in October 1917. He was promoted to Lance Corporal in June 1918 and discharged, in the UK, on the 27th November 1919, so that he could complete his medical studies. This he evidently did, becoming a surgeon. During WWII the now Lieutenant Colonel Sayers served with the British Army in Persia at the 29th Indian General Hospital and, in 1944, was awarded the Order of the Crown (5th Class) by the Shah.

In *Sport and Diplomacy: Games within games* edited by J. Simon Rofe, it is recorded that "Legation surgeon, Edmund Stanley Sayers Lucas, 'rides, shoots, swims and plays squash'." Judging by the photograph on his card, he also skied!



