



The Afghan Bulletin

No. 13 July 2023



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Printer's Archive Material

Recently a number of photographic printer's proofs have surfaced of Afghan stamps issued between 1932 and 1952. These are listed and illustrated here for the record. It should be noted that they are generally larger than the issued stamps – where dimensions are known they are given, but the others seem also to be proportionately large. Note also that:

- All are black and white photographs, except the 10 poul 1932 Definitive.
- Some are glued to card, most of the others shows signs of having being glued down at some stage.
- Two have inscriptions on the back showing them to be contemporary to the designs they depict.
- Those listed in italics have design differences to the issued stamps and #11 and 13 are more in the nature of essays rather than proofs.

1. 1932 National Council/1934 Definitive, 2 Afg (53 x 37mm)
2. 1932 National Council/1934 Definitive, 3 Afg (64 x 42mm)
3. 1932 Definitive, 10 poul in BROWN (34 x 44mm)
4. 1933 Independence (39 x 29mm)
5. 1938 Independence
6. *1938 Independence, in negative*
7. 1938 Anti-Cancer, 15 poul (68 x 46mm)
8. 1939 Definitive, 30p Royal Palace
9. 1939 Official, 30 poul (46 x 58mm)
10. 1939 Official, 45 poul (47 x 59mm)
11. *1939 Official, 45 poul: a different frame and inscription, and white numerals on colour rather than coloured numerals on white as issued (45 x 57mm)*
12. 1939 Air, 5 Afg (61 x 38mm)
13. *1939 Air, 10Afg: evidently another preliminary design with a different frame and inscription*
14. 1939 Air, 20Afg (62 x 38mm)
15. 1945 Independence, 1.25 (73.5 x 46mm)
16. 1947 Independence, 35 poul (dated on back 11/5/26 = either 3rd August 1947 (British/European) or January 26 1948 (American))
17. 1947 Independence, 1.25 (72 x 46mm)
18. 1950 Independence, 35p (54 x 68mm)
19. 1950 Independence, 1.25p

20. 1950 10th Anniversary of the Faculty of Medicine, 1.25 Afghani (dated 1329 on back = 21 March 1950 -20 March 1951)
 21. 1952 UN 35p, reverse image (123 x 60mm)
 22. 1930s 10 poul Habibia postal stationery card imprint (70 x 45mm)
- My thanks to Mohammed Javed and Shakeel Ahmad for allowing me to illustrate items from their collections.



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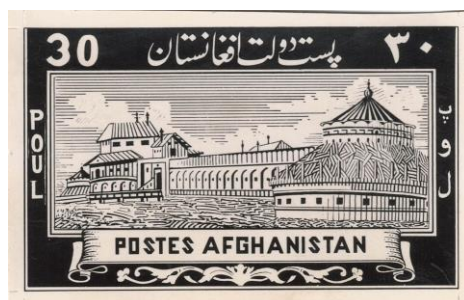
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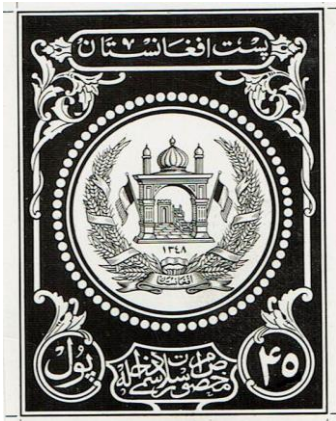
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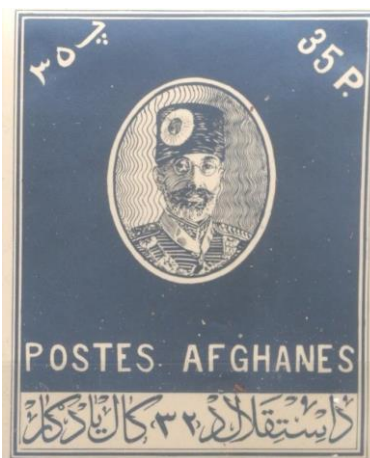
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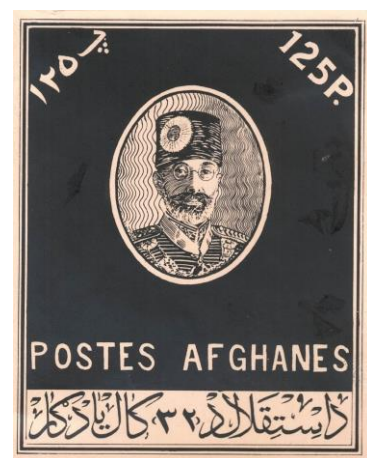
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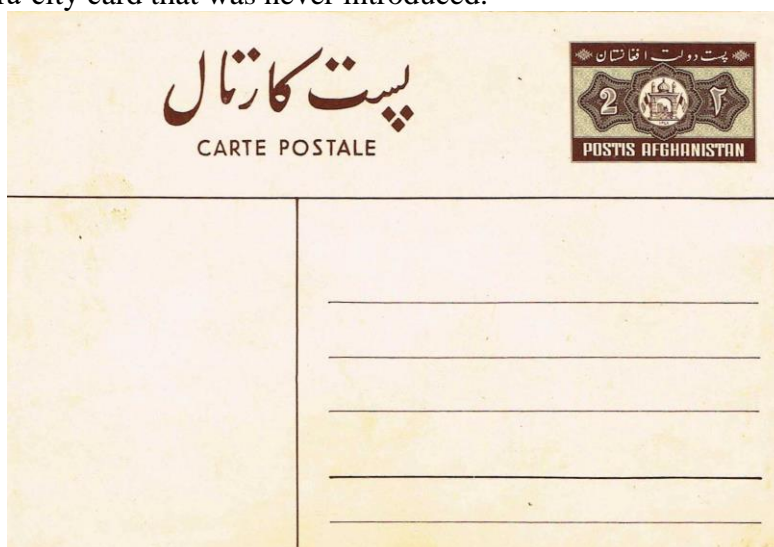
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Postal Stationary Essay

On a similar theme, shown below is what seems to be an essay for a postal stationary postcard. It is printed on good quality cream card. The reverse is blank. The Dari inscription appears to read 'Post Kart' rather than the usual 'Karte Postale' (i.e English rather than French). But the inscription at the top of the stamp imprint is 'Postes Afghanistan' – although the French equivalent at the bottom has been misspelt as 'Postis Afghanistan'. The Coat of Arms has a minute ۱۳۴۸ (1348) date below it: that format was adopted in 1931 and thus provides an earliest possible date. The 2 poul value is lower than any known postcard rate. However 2 poul was the proposed rate for the 'interurban' stamp in 1923 so perhaps this was intended to be a 1930's intra-city card that was never introduced.



Registration Rates

During the Sher Ali period there were no special registration stamps. The stamps to pay the registration fee were normally attached to a registration slip or 'tail' which was removed by the post office on delivery of the letter. I know of no such tails with stamps attached surviving, although the Dietrich sale did include a cover with the tail still attached – but exceptionally the stamps to pay the registration fee were on the cover itself rather than the tail.



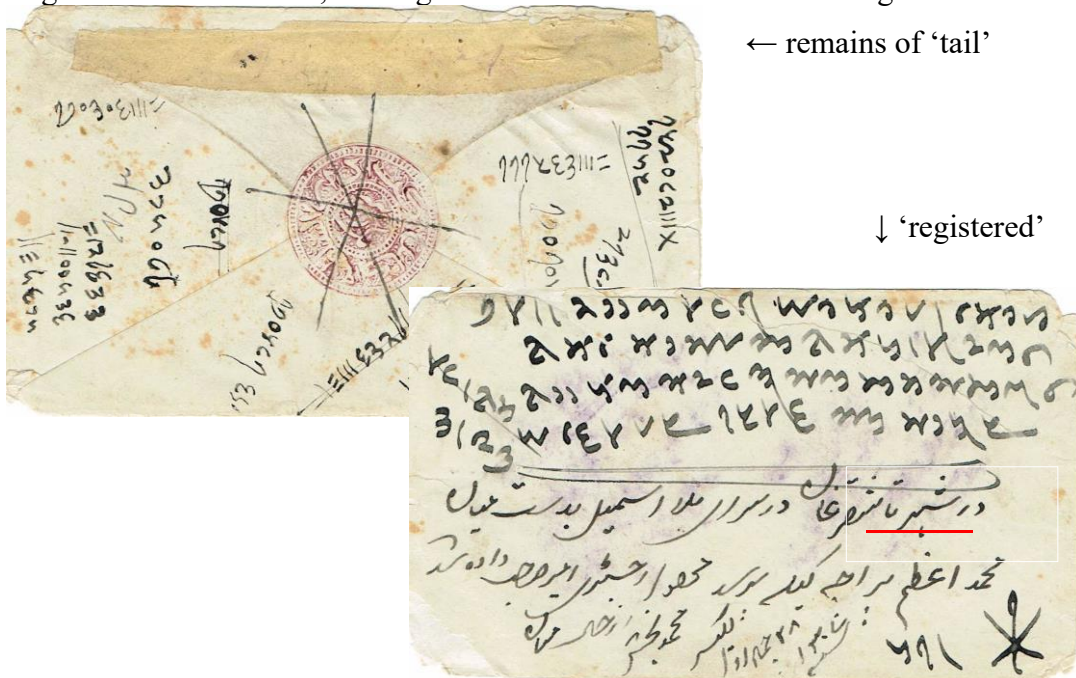
The franking is 1 sanar + 3 x 1 abasi.

The cover was sent from Peshawar to Tashkurghan, so the registration fee of 1 rupee was paid with the 3 x abasi stamps, and the sanar stamp paid the postage for a single weight letter travelling two postal stages.

The registration tail was not removed (shown with a copy of the reverse).

Image from the Feldman *Dietrich* catalogue, 19/11/2003, Lot 10197.

The fee for registration at this time was a Rupee – which was too high for the service to be much used and consequently registered covers are rare. Although they will usually only bear 'normal' postage rates, they can be recognised by the remains of the 'tail' torn off by the post office. It may then be possible to identify the word 'registered' on the cover, although the tail remnant is evidence enough.



The cost of registration when Afghanistan's first registration stamp was prepared in 1309 (1891-2) was still 1 rupee (= 3 abasi). The stamp was apparently unissued, although cancelled-by-favour examples are known. The second registration stamp in 1311 (1893-4) was also 1 rupee. It too is not known genuinely used.

As the service was too expensive and little used the price was reduced to 2 abasi the following year with the 'skeleton' issue of 1894-5. Only one example genuinely used on a 'tail' is known. Another 2 abasi registration stamp followed in 1898 and a handful are known used on a tail, such as the one illustrated right dated 28 Muharram 1317 (= 8th June 1899).



Patterson records that the registration rate current at 1st January 1901 – the start of the period covered by his book – was 1 abasi, but it is not recorded exactly when the reduction from 2 to 1 abasi occurred and there was no new specific 1 abasi registration stamp. Indeed, there were to be no more registration stamps at all.



Illustrated left is a registration tail with a 1310 1 abasi postage stamp (just) tied by a black batila cancellation. It is dated in manuscript at the foot 21 Sha'ban 1320 = 23rd November 1902. I only know of one other 'tail' at the 1 abasi rate with a 1310 postage stamp used to pay the registration fee.

The practice of attaching the stamps to pay the registration fee to the registration tail seems to have been abandoned with the introduction of the rectangular registration mark around 1909, from which time, while tails were still used, the stamps to pay both postage and registration were attached to the envelope.

اعلان
شخصی برای ادایک حجتی می آید
بارگشت مهر و یا رضایحی ایک با و سینه
کافه حجتی که خود و سینه و سینه و سینه
ایک حجتی که صاحبان سینه و سینه و سینه
از آنجا که سینه و سینه و سینه و سینه

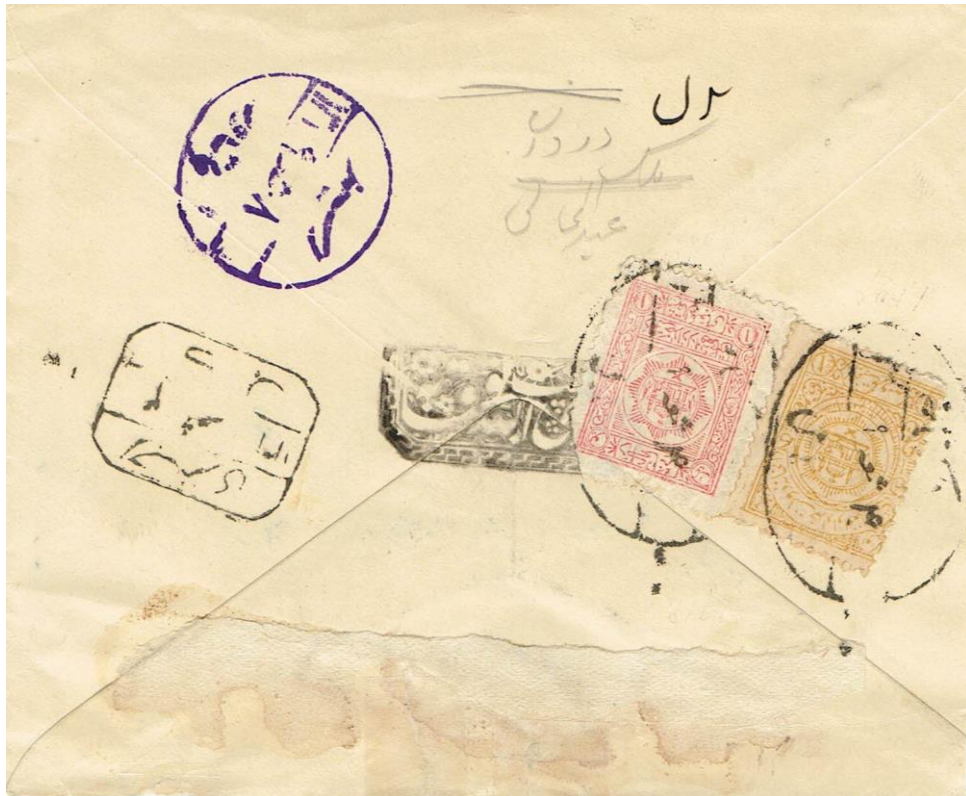
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“Announcement: the person who receives a registered envelope will not receive the envelope unless he signs or places his seal on this return document. Registered letters will not be given to anyone but the addressee. When the addressee cannot be located, the envelope will return to the post office and will be sent back to the sender.”

The use of registration increased greatly after about 1910. At some point an 'Acknowledgement of Receipt' service was also introduced for an additional 1 abasi. This has not been previously recorded.

AR covers can be difficult to identify unless they have the rate/weight marking. The cover below is franked with a 1 rupee and a 1 abasi, giving a total of 4 abasi: that could be a triple weight registered cover (3 abasi postage + 1 abasi registration). However, it is marked ۲ as a double weight cover, so the rate is actually:

2 abasi postage + 1 abasi registration + 1 abasi AR.



Another example of an AR cover. Franked with 2 x 2 abasi it is also marked ۲ as a double weight cover, i.e., 2 abasi postage + 1 abasi registration + 1 abasi AR.



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