



The Afghan Bulletin

No. 17 December 2025

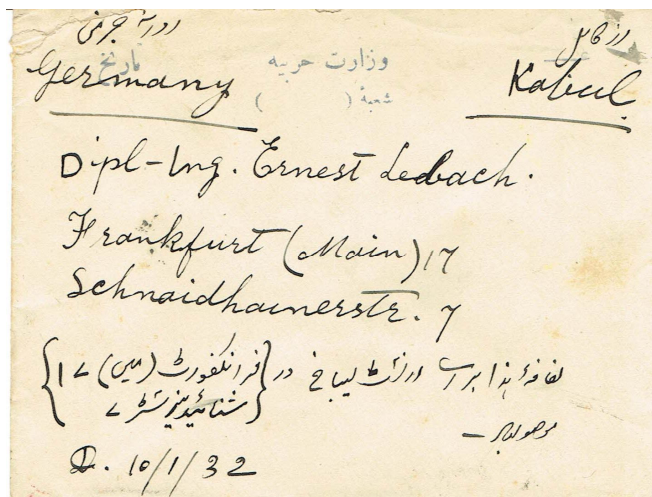


Contents

Landikhana/Landikotal	119
Revised Revenue stamps listing of #183-208	121
The German and French schools in Kabul	125

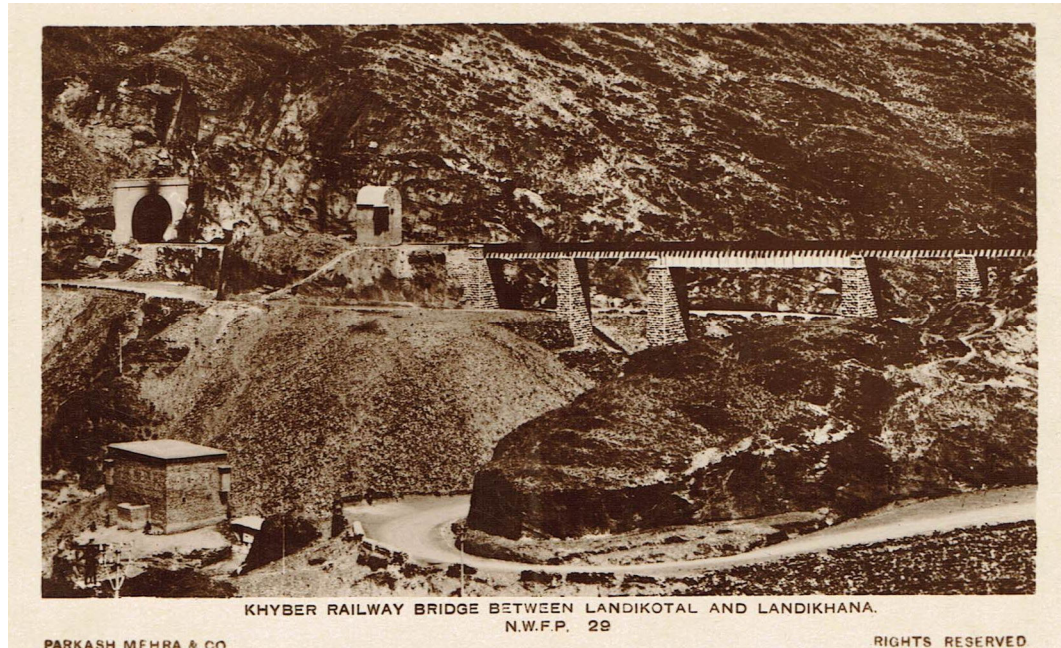
Landikhana/Landikotal

At some time in early 1932 the Indian Exchange Office for mail from/to Afghanistan via the Khyber Pass moved from Landikhana to Landikotal. The latest Landikhana marking I have recorded is the 22nd January 1932 (shown below), and the earliest Landikotal is the 9th March. Can anyone narrow this down?



This cover is also interesting in that the Kabul postmark is a late use of the Kabul transit censorship cancel, usually only seen during 1928/9, but here apparently used as a regular cancel on official mail from Kabul in 1932.

Landikhana station was built as the rail head of the Khyber Pass Railway and opened on the 3rd April 1926, but the station was closed on the 15th December 1932 apparently at the insistence of the Afghan government. Landikhana was just under 2 miles short of the actual frontier post at Torkham.



Khyber railway bridge between Landikotal and Landikhana

Landikotal, which had opened on the 3rd November 1925, became the new rail head. It was 900 feet higher in altitude than Landikhana and about 5 miles further away from the border. The station remained open until 2006 when floods washed away the track and bridges forcing it to close.



Landikotal Station

The Landikhana/Landikotal place names both seem to be used with or without a hyphen after 'Landi'.

Revised Revenue stamps listing of #183-208

Patterson recorded that special die proof sheets were prepared containing current postage and revenue stamps overprinted 'batil shod' (i.e., 'cancelled'). He doesn't specify a date when the sheets were printed but the postage stamps concerned start with the December 1931 Newspaper stamp and run through to the 80 poul Liberation Monument, the first known use of which is July 1932. The August 1932 Independence day stamp is not included and so could indicate a narrow window for when these sheets were prepared. Patterson says (p.159):

"Two such sheets comprised a set, the first of which contained the die proofs of fourteen revenue stamps and five postage stamps to the 25 poul, while the second contained fifteen die proofs consisting of the balance of the '1st Monuments' series, the 80 poul 'Liberation Monument' and the 'National Council' set. The subjects were so arranged that the sheets could not be perforated with the line machines available. The overprint on such sheets measures 7.25mm**,"*

The listing of the late 1920s/early 1930s revenue stamps has been somewhat tentative given the total lack of records but it was hoped that the die proof sheet containing the revenue stamps might clarify matters. However until now these sheets have proved to be somewhat elusive. A different Specimen sheet containing 20 postage stamps and inscribed in Dari 'Postal and fiscal tickets of the present day of Afghanistan' was known (see the back cover of the 1901-33 specialised catalogue, 2nd Edition) but it contains no revenue stamps.

Now, at last, copies of the two sheets referred to by Patterson can be shown. Together the two sheets contain a complete set of all the current postage stamps, and it is hesitantly assumed that the revenue sets are also complete. The two sheets are both cream surfaced paper whereas previous specimens have been on white surfaced paper. The two sheets bear consecutive manuscript numbers 105 and 106 (in Dari) – which suggests that whilst many sheets have no doubt been cut up, there could still be others out there somewhere!

So what can be deduced for the Revenue Catalogue listing? At present three sets are listed for this period:

#183-186, a short series separated out from the others of the period because they didn't 'fit' in with them. Some values exist both with and without a date.

#187-196, a longer set; all seen without a date beneath the coat-of-arms, *except* the lowest value which has only been seen with a date. The two top values have *only* been seen without a date.

#197-206, the same as the previous set but in new colours and all *with* the date beneath the coat-of-arms.

The Die Proof specimen sheet contains:

#185, plus 5 new additions to this set

#190-196 (but not the three low values, #187-189)

None of the specimens have the date beneath the coat-of-arms, a feature which was added to the National arms c.1931. In addition to the new values in the first set, the big surprise is the presence of a hitherto unknown 30 Afghani value. Because of its positioning on the Proof Sheet, it has been placed with the second set, but it could belong to the first set. Does this value also exist with a date or as part of the changed colours set?

The listings for the first two sets have been separated into 'date' and 'no date' sets. So the new listing (with no attempt at pricing the new discoveries) showing the changes in blue (and also including a few other recent discoveries) is:

* One of the five is the 2 poul Newspaper stamp.

** Specimen overprints either 9.25 or 10mm long are also found. These are from plate proofs as opposed to die proofs.

183-186. General revenue stamps, late 1920s? (pre-1932).**A Without date.** Clean cut perf 11.[\[The first six stamps on Proof Sheet 105 are this set\]](#)

183A	1/2 Afghani blue-green	5.00
184A	1/2 Afghani lilac	7.50
184AA	1 Afghani rosine	
	a. specimen overprint.....	
184AB	2 Afghani rosine.....	
	a. specimen overprint.....	
185A	5 Afghani Blue	—
	a. specimen overprint.....	25.00
186A	10 Afghani blue	
	a. specimen overprint.....	
186AA	20 Afghani dark blue	
	a. specimen overprint.....	
186AB	50 Afghani dark blue	
	a. specimen overprint.....	

The two 1/2 Afghani values may be later additions to this set as they are not included on the Specimen Die Proof Sheet produced in c.1932. The specimens come on either white or cream surfaced paper and either imperf or with a very rough perf.

B With date. (Not earlier than 1932).

184BA	1 Afghani rosine	
184BB	2 Afghani rosine.....	
184BC	2 Afghani blue-green	
185B	5 Afghani Blue	—
185BA	5 Afghani orange.....	15.00
186BA	10 Afghani blue-green	
186BB	20 Afghani dark blue	
186BC	20 Afghani yellow-green	
186BD	50 Afghani dark blue	

187-206. General revenue stamps, late 1920s/early 1930s

All stamps seen have been perf 11 all round, some clean cut, some rough perf. No complete sheets have been seen. Some of the 'Second colours' set have small design differences to the 'First' set – see e.g., the style of the numeral '4'. The specimens come on either white or cream surfaced paper and either imperf or with a very rough perf.

'First colours': A. Without date. (Pre-1932). Perf 11, either clean cut or rough.187A, 188A: 50 poul and 1 Afghani values not yet known without a date. [\[Stamps 7 to 14 on Proof Sheet 105 are this set\]](#)

189A	2 Afghani, red-orange	8.00
190A	3 Afghani, grey-green	10.00
	...a. specimen overprint.....	
191A	4 Afghani, grey green	15.00
	...a. specimen overprint.....	25.00
192A	5 Afghani, blue-green	15.00
	...a. specimen overprint.....	25.00
193A	10 Afghani, blue-green	17.50
	...a. specimen overprint.....	
194A	20 Afghani, claret	17.50
	...a. specimen overprint.....	
194AA	30 Afghani, claret	
	...a. specimen overprint.....	
195A	50 Afghani, rosine	—
	...a. specimen overprint.....	
196A	100 Afghani, rosine	20.00
	... a. specimen overprint	25.00

The 2 Afghani value may be a later addition to this set as it is not included on the Specimen Die Proof Sheet produced in c.1932. The specimens come on either white or cream surfaced paper and either imperf or with a very rough perf.

'First colours': B. With date. (Not earlier than 1932). Perf 11, either clean cut or rough.

Is there are 30 Afg claret with date?

187B	50 poul, claret.....	8.00
188B	1 Afghani, red.....	8.00
189B	2 Afghani, red-orange	8.00
190B	3 Afghani, grey-green.....	10.00
191B	4 Afghani, grey green	15.00
192B	5 Afghani, blue-green.....	15.00
193B	10 Afghani, blue-green.....	17.50
194B	20 Afghani, claret.....	17.50
195B	50 Afghani, rosine	—
196B	100 Afghani, rosine	20.00

'Second colours'. With date. (Not earlier than 1932)

197	50 poul, bistre	2.00
198	1 Afghani, green	2.00
199	2 Afghani, light blue-green, or green.....	2.00
200	3 Afghani, ultramarine	2.00
201	4 Afghani, orange-red (shades).....	2.00
202	5 Afghani, orange.....	2.00
203	10 Afghani, violet (shades)	2.00
204	20 Afghani, green (shades)	2.00
204A	30 Afghani, violet.....	
205	50 Afghani, red	5.00
206	100 Afghani, blue	10.00



New 204A

Whilst revising this period, the opportunity is taken to add a new 100 poul revenue to the next series #207-208.

207-208. General revenue stamps, 1930s-40s

Building designs, undated.



207	50 poul brown, Mosque.....	20.00
207A	100 poul blue-green, Ruins of Khaja Parsa Mosque, Balkh	
208	2 Afghani orange, Parliament House, Darul Funun, Kabul	20.00

The Die Proof Sheets 105 and 106



The German and French Schools in Kabul

After coming to power in 1919, Amanullah was keen to modernise his country, but also keen to distance himself from the British, from whom independence had just been secured. His long term aim was to end reliance on all foreign aid and to achieve this he recognised the need to improve the education system. When Germany suggested the foundation of a new school whose aim would be the “preparation of the pupils for studying at German universities with the purpose of procuring His Majesty competent higher officials, engineers, doctors and teachers and to educate the pupils to become independent, responsible and characterful people” Amanullah wholeheartedly supported the idea.

In the autumn of 1923 Dr Walther Iven, who was to be the school’s Principal, arrived in Kabul with two fellow teachers and, on April 15, 1924, the Amani-Oberrealschule (Amani High School), as it was named in honor of its royal patron, was opened. The language of instruction was almost entirely German. The Kabul school-leaving examination was recognised by the Afghan-German school agreement of 1928 as entitling students to study at all Prussian universities.

In 1929 King Amanullah was forced to abdicate and the rebel leader, Bacche Saqqao, abolished the Ministry of Education and closed all schools. The Amani-Oberrealschule served first as a barracks for Bacche Saqqao’s Tajik supporters, and then as a cattle shed. The school furniture and the window frames were burned and the window panes ended up in the bazaar in Peshawar. The teaching materials disappeared without a trace.

The rule of the rebel-King was short-lived and in October 1929 King Nadir Shah, a distant cousin of Amanullah, took power. Lessons at the school, which were then attended by 302 boys, resumed and the number of pupils rose rapidly: by 1933 there were 619 boys enrolled.

That year Nadir Shah was assassinated at a prize-giving ceremony at the school – the assassin was Abdul Khaleq, a seventeen year old student at the school and supporter of the ex-King Amanullah. One result of the assassination was an attempt by the Afghan government to erase all mention of Amanullah from public life: so the school was renamed the Nedjat Oberrealschule (*Nedjat* = Liberation). Despite all these adversities, the first year’s pupils sat their matriculation examinations in 1934.



The original school, soon after opening



The first class at Matriculation

The German teachers had to leave Kabul because of the Second World War, their place being taken by former students who continued to run the school and teach in German. German teachers returned in 1954 and remained until the Soviet occupation – when they were replaced by East Germans. The main school building burned down in 1959, but a new school was built near the German Embassy where it remains today. In 1974, after Nadir Shah’s son Mohammed Zahir Shah was de-throned in a coup and a Republic proclaimed, the school reverted to its original name: Amani.



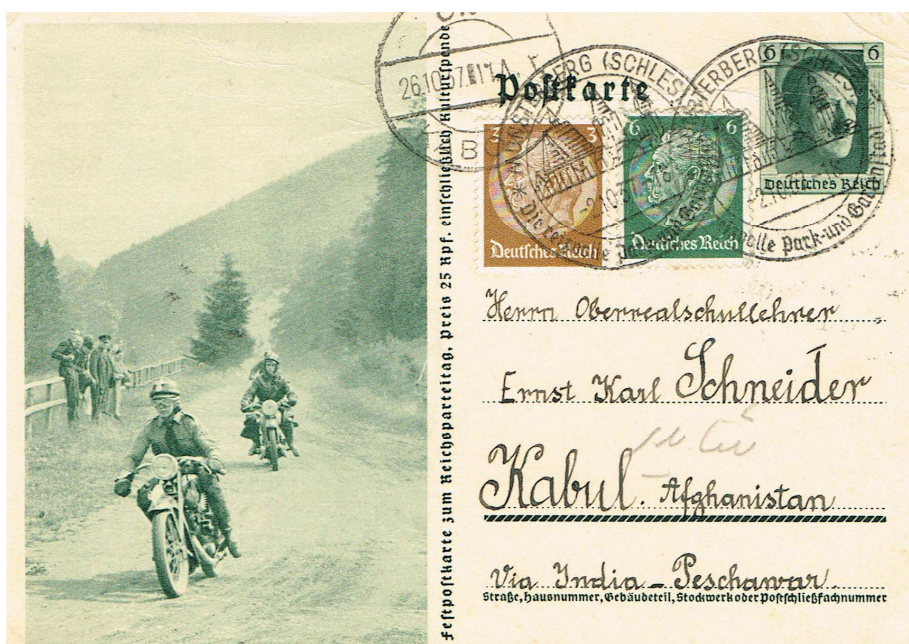
Cinderella label of the Nedjat Oberrealschule dated 1934 (١٩٣٤)

The next cards and covers all relate to the period when the school was known as the Nedjat Oberrealschule and are to/from Oberrealschullehrer Ernst-Karl Schneider and his wife Gattin (Oberrealschullehrer = High school teacher).

Two up-rated postal stationery cards to Oberrealschullehrer Ernst-Karl Schneider from MÜNSTERBERG, both franked with a total of 15 pfennigs.

1. Sent 2.10.37, received 26.10.37. Transit time: 24 days
2. Sent 28.11.37, received 31.12.37. Transit time: 34 days

The messages on both cards have the words 'Heil Hitler!' at the top.



Airmail cover from NÜRNBERG to KABUL, 20th April, 1937 – with special postmark for Hitler's birthday. Transit marks of PESHAWAR, 5th May, TORKHAM 7th May, and arrival mark of KABOUL, 8th May, 1937. Transit time: 18 days.



Although bearing 1 pfg more than the two previous cards, and sent 9 months earlier, the next card has been marked 'Nachporto 0.20' and accordingly been taxed on arrival – although I cannot work out the amount that has been charged.

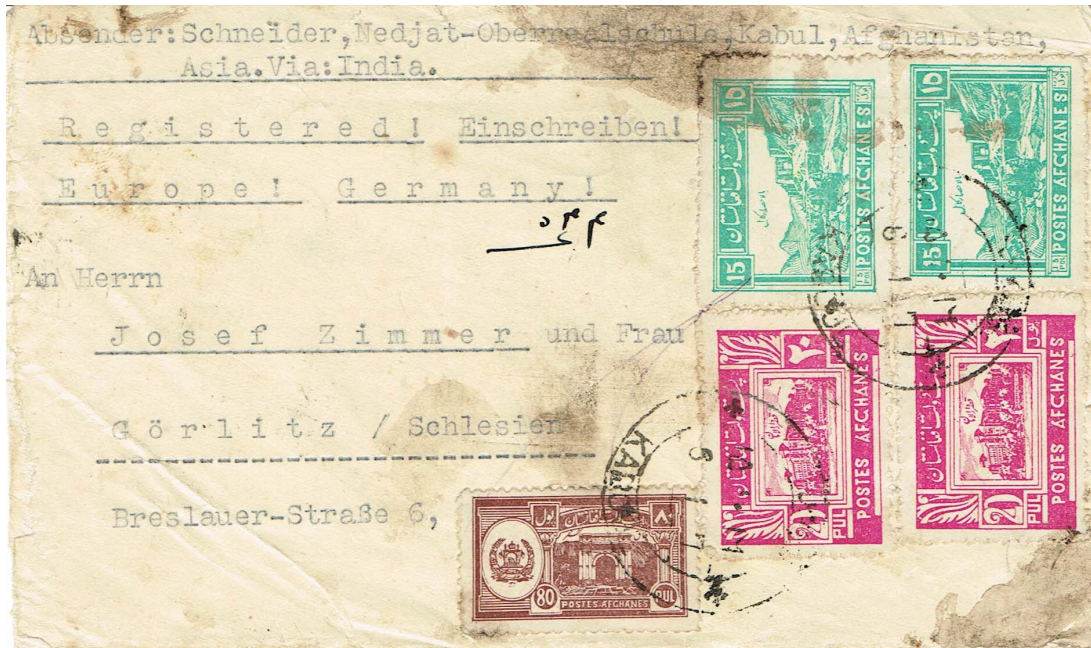
Up-rated postal stationery card to Oberrealschullehrer Ernst-Karl Schneider from MÜNSTERBERG, 14.1.37 franked with a total of 16 pfennigs.



Registered cover sent by Oberrealschullehrer Ernst-Karl Schneider to Germany, franked 210 poul.

KABOUL 6.1.7, GORLITZ 30.1.37. Transit time: 24 days.

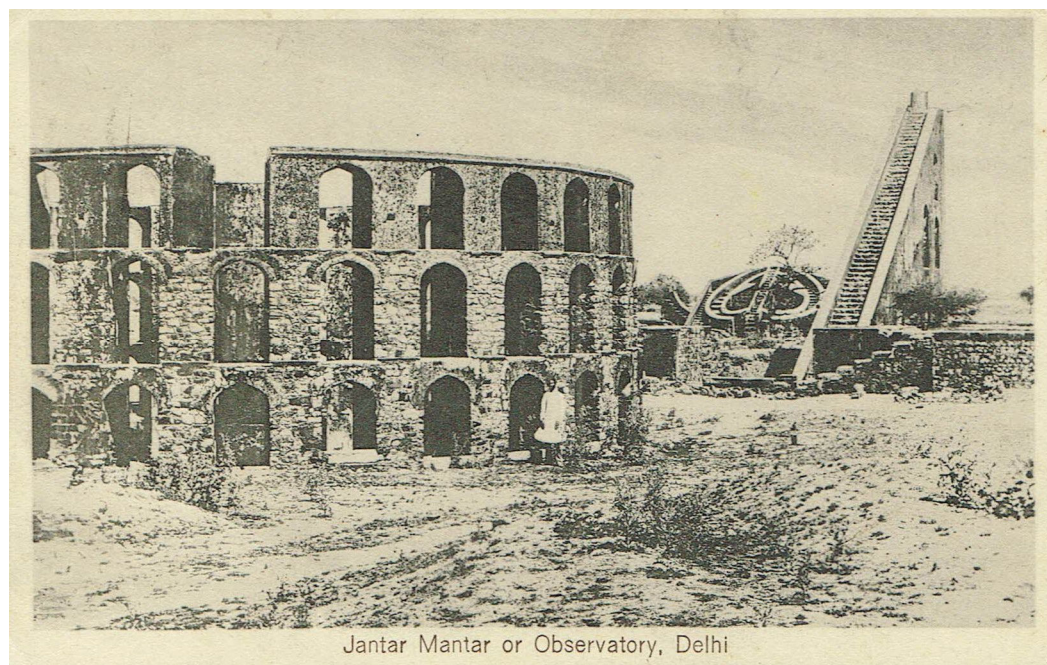
Postage at 75 poul + registration at 75 poul = 150 poul, which is the amount on the front of the cover. The 60 poul of low value stamps on the reverse would seem to be unnecessary: maybe the recipient was a philatelist!



The final item relating to the Schneiders is a postcard sent to Ernst-Karl Schneider from India in June 1938. When war became inevitable most of the German teaching staff returned to Germany. It is not known when Mr and Mrs Schneider left. Those that did

remain after the outbreak of war would have been amongst the 204 Germans and Italians expelled from Afghanistan via India on October 30th and 31st 1941, after which only 10 Germans were left in the country, all based at their Legation in Kabul. I have been unable to find any information as to what happened to the Schneiders after their departure from Afghanistan – if anyone has anything they can add I would be pleased to hear from them.

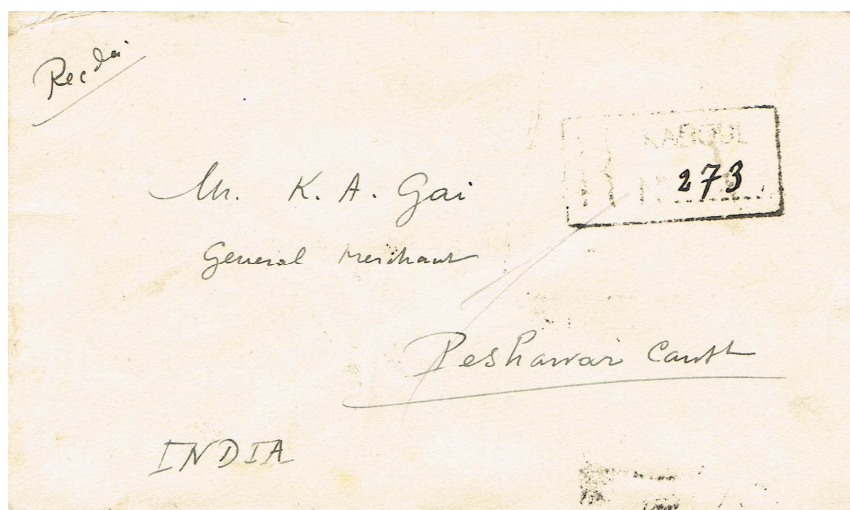
Delhi 13 Jun 38, Peshawar 22 Jun 38, Kaboul 23.6.38.



At the same time as the German language Nedjatschule was opening, a French language college also opened. This was the Lycéé Amaniya, renamed in 1931 as the Esteqlal ('Independence') High School. Its first principal was Lucien Ténèbre, who was succeeded in 1928 by a Monsieur Boinet. I have only one item relating to the Lycéé.



Registered letter from M. Boinet, Principal of the Lycée Amaniya, to Peshawar, India, April 1935.



The diary entry of the Military Attaché to the British Legation in Kabul for the week ending 11th October, 1935 records that:

"M. Boinet, principal of the French College, Kabul, left for India, en route for France, during the week. He was accompanied by his wife. His return to Kabul is doubtful."

As the diaries make no further reference to him, this assumption would seem to have been correct.

© Robert Jack 2025