



# The Afghan Bulletin

No. 11 October 2022



## Contents

Obliteration of Royalist Arms .....	71
A 'Refused' Letter .....	72
Unrecorded Airletter Uprating Handstamp.....	74
New revenue stamp .....	76
Censored at Quetta during WWII .....	77
An unusual combination cover .....	80

## Obliteration of Royalist Arms

Illustrated are two covers from November 1979 bearing copies of the 500 poul 1963 Freedom From Hunger stamp, the design of which incorporated the Royalist Coat of Arms. The monarchy was deposed and a republic declared on the 17th July, 1973. Each stamp has had the Royalist Arms neatly obliterated either in black (17th November) or purple (28th November). Other examples have been seen from January 1980. This was an 'Appendix' issue and so not much used at its time of issue, but because of its relatively high face value it is found used from the late 1970's.

Information on any other values that were similarly 'censored' would be welcomed.



5 x 500 poul, making the 25Afg Airmail rate to West Germany.



2 x 15 Afg + 500 poul, making the 35 Afg registered airmail rate to Pakistan.

### A 'Refused' Letter

Possibly sent more in hope than expectation of delivery, this is an odd letter all round.

- It is addressed to 'Monsieur Thomas, Voyageur, Poste Française, Caboul'. So, Mr Thomas was a traveller – an intrepid one to be venturing to Afghanistan in 1921 – one wonders if he ever made it there? Or if he actually existed?
- The sender addressed it to the French Post Office in Kabul – but there was no such thing.
- It was sent from Reims-Vesle Marne on the 18th June 1921, but was unfranked and so received a 'T' in a triangle tax mark.
- The sender annotated the letter along the left hand edge 'A retourner en cas de non remise' – 'to be returned in the case of non-delivery' – but rather unhelpfully omitted to put a return address on the envelope. Maybe there was one on the letter inside?
- Nevertheless, the letter set off on its journey and reached Peshawar on the 15th July where it received a half round 'unpaid' marking on the front, and both the regular circular and unpaid octagonal Peshawar datestamps on the reverse.
- Afghanistan had not yet joined the UPU – that would not happen for another seven years – so any mail inbound to Afghanistan had to go through the Afghan Postmaster in Peshawar who would not forward anything for which he was not going to be paid. Rather predictably it seems that he refused to accept this letter for onward transmission and it is marked 'Refused' in red ink on both front and back, that on the back being accompanied by a date of the 15th. It looks as if the Afghan Postmaster has also annotated and dated it in black on the back to the same effect. It also has a rectangular REFUSÉ/REFUSED cachet on the reverse.
- It then makes its way to the Dead Letter Office in Lahore – two strikes dated 20 Jul 21 and 21 Jul 21, then on to the DLO in Bombay on 25 Jul 21.

- It has the remains of a corner of a stamp on the reverse, but this would appear to have become attached to the letter at a later date as it is over the 'Refused' manuscript and Peshawar datestamps – and the engraver's name of 'L Colmet-Daâge' identifies it as a fragment of a Gabon 2c stamp of 1910!



The meaning of the red manuscript 'B' on the front I don't know – ideas welcome!

### Unrecorded airletter uprating handstamp

At some point in the early 1980s the airletter rate changed from 10 to 12 Afghanis and the 1980 Valee de Hadjer airletter (PS79) was replaced with the 1982 12 Afg Dove and Globe (PS 81/82). The Valee de Hadjer airletter was also uprated by means of a handstamp to revalue it to 12 Afghanis (PS80), but whether this was an interim measure until PS 81/82 appeared or was just to use up old stock at a later date is not clear. The used copies seen have all be dated well after PS81/82 came out so 'using up old stock' seems the most likely explanation. There certainly wasn't a shortage of Dove and Globe airletters as they were later uprated in 1992 first to 20 Afg and then to 30 Afg, (and there were still enough left to uprate them again in 2002 and 2006). Illustrated below (Fig. 1) is a copy of the 'usual' uprated airletter, PS80, used on 5th November 1986.



Fig. 1

But it seems that there is also another previously unrecorded uprating. So far I have seen three copies, two dated 1st April and one 3rd April, 1986 (Fig. 2). Unfortunately all three are so poorly struck that the uprating can't be made out, although it is assumed that it will be to make them 12 Afghani, like the usual PS80. It may be that this was the first attempt at uprating PS79, but because of the poor results it was quickly replaced by PS80.

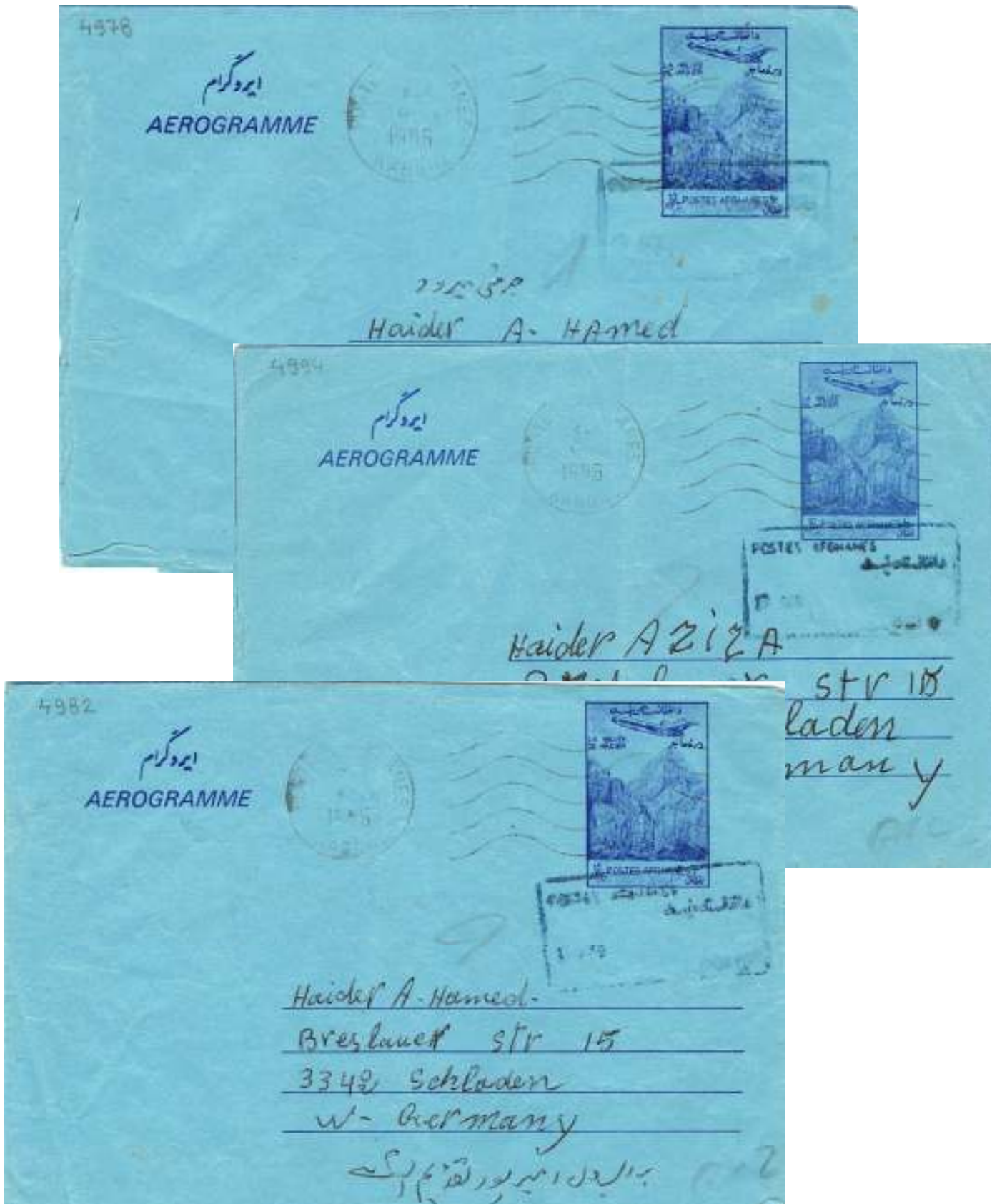


Fig. 2

PS80 itself was relatively short lived – PS79 is often seen simply uprated with stamps rather than a handstamp as shown by an example dated 21st September 1986 (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3

### New revenue stamp

For the record, an addition to the Amanullah period documentary stamps:

5 rupees, red.

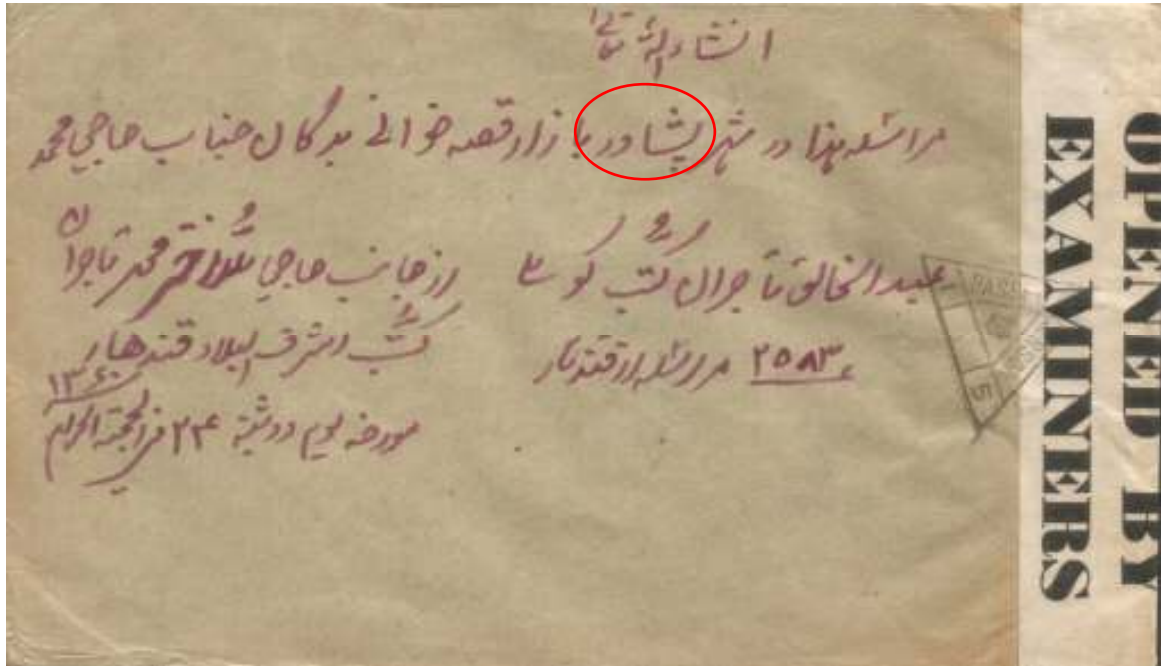


This will be catalogued in due course as No. 155A. It is likely that there are still other values in the series to be discovered – stamps for 2, 100 and 200 rupees have not yet been seen but may exist.

### Censored at Quetta during WWII

During World War II virtually all mail to/from Afghanistan through India went through Peshawar (censor code H). Only exceptionally did mail go through Quetta (censor code I). Here, a few examples of Quetta censored mail are discussed.

The first cover was sent from Kandahar on the 12th January 1942 to Peshawar (circled in red on Fig. 1) at the ordinary overseas rate of 1Afg 25. It has an OPENED BY EXAMINER 4-I tape in black tied by a triangular black PASSED CENSOR I 5. On the reverse is a Peshawar receiver for the 18th January 1942



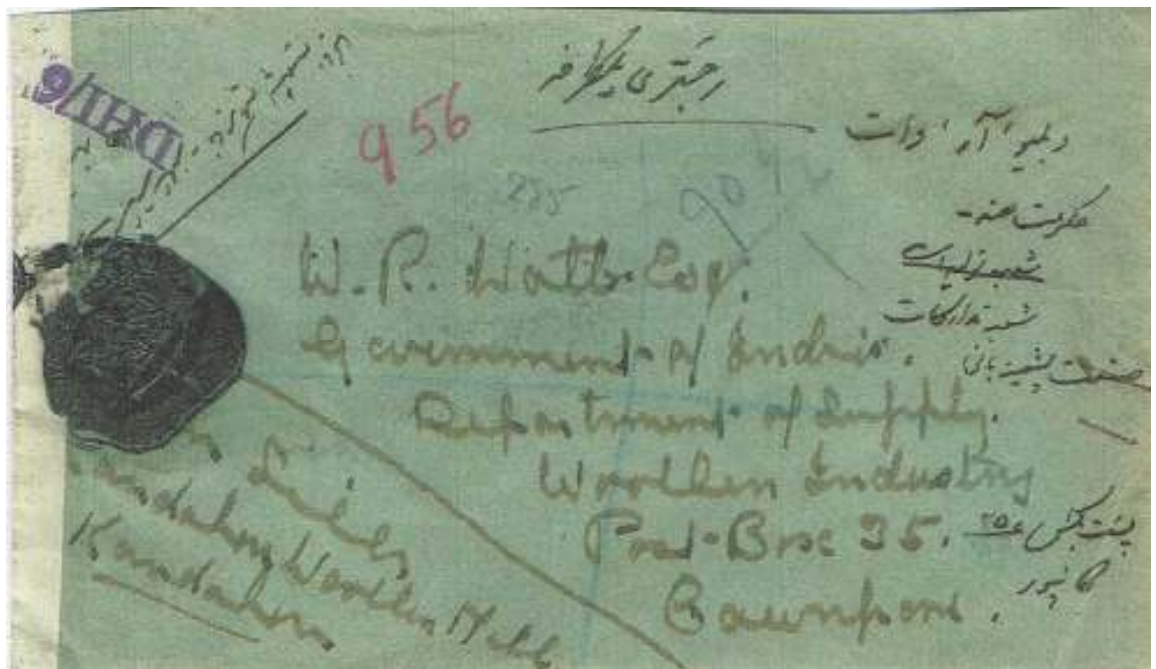
The second cover was sent from the Hotel de Kandahar in Kandahar to Menziken in the Canton of d'Argovie, Switzerland on the 26th August 1942 at the ordinary overseas rate of 1Afg 25. It has a PC90 OPENED BY EXAMINER tape in red tied by an octagonal PASSED DHI/2 in violet.



Unfortunately there are no transit marks and no Swiss receiver so its route, and the time taken for its journey, are not known.



The third cover was sent registered at 2Afg 75poul from the Kandahar Woollen Mills to the Government of India Woollen Industry Department of Supply in Cawnpore, India on 25th July 1943. It has an OPENED BY EXAMINER 2-I tape in black tied by black wax INDIA CENSORSHIP seals on both sides, and additionally by a DHI/6 censor of Quetta on the front (Fig. 2).



There are no receiving marks.  
 The rate would appear to be 1.25 (postage) + 1.50 (registration).

### An unusual combination cover

Before Afghanistan joined the UPU in April 1928, postage needed to be paid for both the Afghan part of the journey, and also for the journey to get to/from Afghanistan – which gives rise to some interesting dual frankings. The majority are Afghan-Indian combinations. Later, during the 1920s, Afghan-German combinations are often found – testament to the growing German business interests in the country at that time. Illustrated below however is a combination which may well be unique: Afghan-Jhind. Jhind (or Jind) was a princely state in the Punjab in north-western India, now in Haryana State. Its capital was Sangrur – where this cover originated in March 1910. It went first to Peshawar (6th March 1910), where it would have been handed over to the Afghan Postmaster at the Afghan extra-territorial post office there. The letter is marked 'Paid' on the front, but it is not clear whether the sender affixed the Afghan stamp, or the Afghan Postmaster at Peshawar did so as the recipient was known to him and had an account. I suspect the latter due to the Afghan stamp's haphazard placement partly overlapping one of the Jhind stamps. The Afghan stamp is cancelled not as one would expect by the oval cancel of Jalalabad, but rather by that of the HQ National Forces. Jalalabad was the winter capital for the Amir and his court, and the army HQ would presumably accompany them.



Unfortunately I haven't been able to find out anything about the recipient of the letter, Frederick E. Dunn Major. Why did his letter go to the Army HQ rather than the normal Jalalabad post office? Was Dunn Major seconded to the Afghan army? Should it have been addressed to Major Dunn rather than Dunn Major?

© Robert Jack 2022