

Constitutional crisis & Anglo-Russian partition of Persia

The Constitutional Revolution, 1905-11, during which a parliament and a constitutional monarchy were established as well as a partition of Persia in economic zones by Russia and GB in 1907, were partly a result of Russian domination and the Great Game. Russia had important commercial interests in the north and took measures to secure them by invading Azarbadjan. This situation remained until WWI.

Map of the Anglo-Russian Partition of 1907

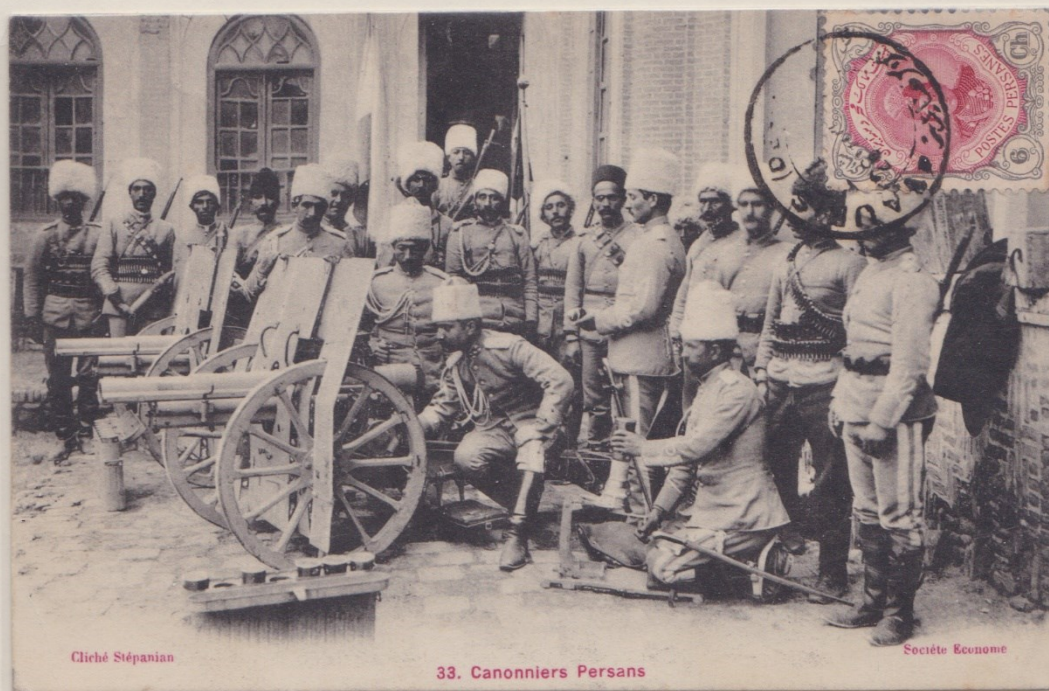
A division in Economic and Political Zones

A new constitution was established in 1907 and a parliament, Majlis, established. Shah Muzaffar-ed-Din died shortly afterwards and was replaced by his son, Shah Muhammed Ali, a reactionary, who stopped any democratic development with support from Russia



The divisions of zones however did not influence the Persian postal services as such. But Russia established their own post offices under the Russian postal administrations as well as under the consular systems

Ppc depicting Persian soldiers inspecting the canons



Cliché Stépanian

33. Canonniers Persans

Société Economique

Routes: Tabriz to Belgium via Julfa about 1910

Rates: 6 chahi

Imperial Cossack Brigade of His Majesty the Shah

Russian "political Coup"! Early Grip of the Power

The Russian Bear proves it Might!

Nasser ed-Din Shah, the first Shah to visit Europe included Russia in 1873 and 1878. The Shah got most impressed by the Cossack units that accompanied him across the Caucasus. The Shah made a point of that when asking the Tsar if he could provide him with such a unit. The Tsar realised the high political value of offering such a non-digital SPYWARE right into the Shah's inner power circle. Thus, Russia could keep an eye on every move of the Shah! A clever offer not to be missed! So the Tsar agreed to help.

And the Russians political antagonist, **the British**, were not happy!

A proper training school for the Persian soldiers was set up in 1879

The **only recorded** item by the Shah's Cossack Brigade before WWI

A Persian 5ch ovpt a 5-ch p stat card sent from Teheran
on 19 XI 13 and TEHERAN (DEPART) 20 XI 13 to Germany in 1913

The Majesty the King's
Blessed Cossack School
On the back



Outer circle 38 mm
Inner circle 28 mm



Part of the back side

Colonel Liakhov, the Commander of the Cossacks that bombarded the Parliament 1908 shown here on a ppc sent from Mechedisser June 1913 to Brussel

During the Constitutional crises the new conservative Shah, Muhammad-Ali (1324-27/1907-09) was supported by the Russian Emperor who was against the "democratic" parliament installed in 1903. The brigade commander, Colonel Liakhov assisted Mohammad-Ali Shah, who appointed Liakhov also military governor of Tehran. In that capacity Liakhov attacked the Parliament. 400 people killed.



Russian meddling in the Persian revolution as from 1907

Russia sent troops and organised a special Imperial Mission attached to its Embassy

Mission letter from Teheran Mission to Lifland. Courier to Baku



The letter went into the Russian Postal service in Baku 1 6 09 arriving Valk in Lifland 7 6 09 (both Julian)

Rate: 10 kopek

Rossiskaia IMPERATORSKAIA Missia in Persia

The **only record-ed** envelope with seal in Russian from the Mission in Teheran

Front reduced

Front reduced

Dr. Casey wrote about the cover in Post Rider p 32, 1982. The famous Russian editor Andrew Cronin adds in that article that the cover was a discovery back in the 1950s. Closed bag: Teheran to Baku

Russian General Consulate in Isfahan. Letter to Russia

Registered letter from Isfahan 24 11 08 to Varonish 40 km south of Moscow

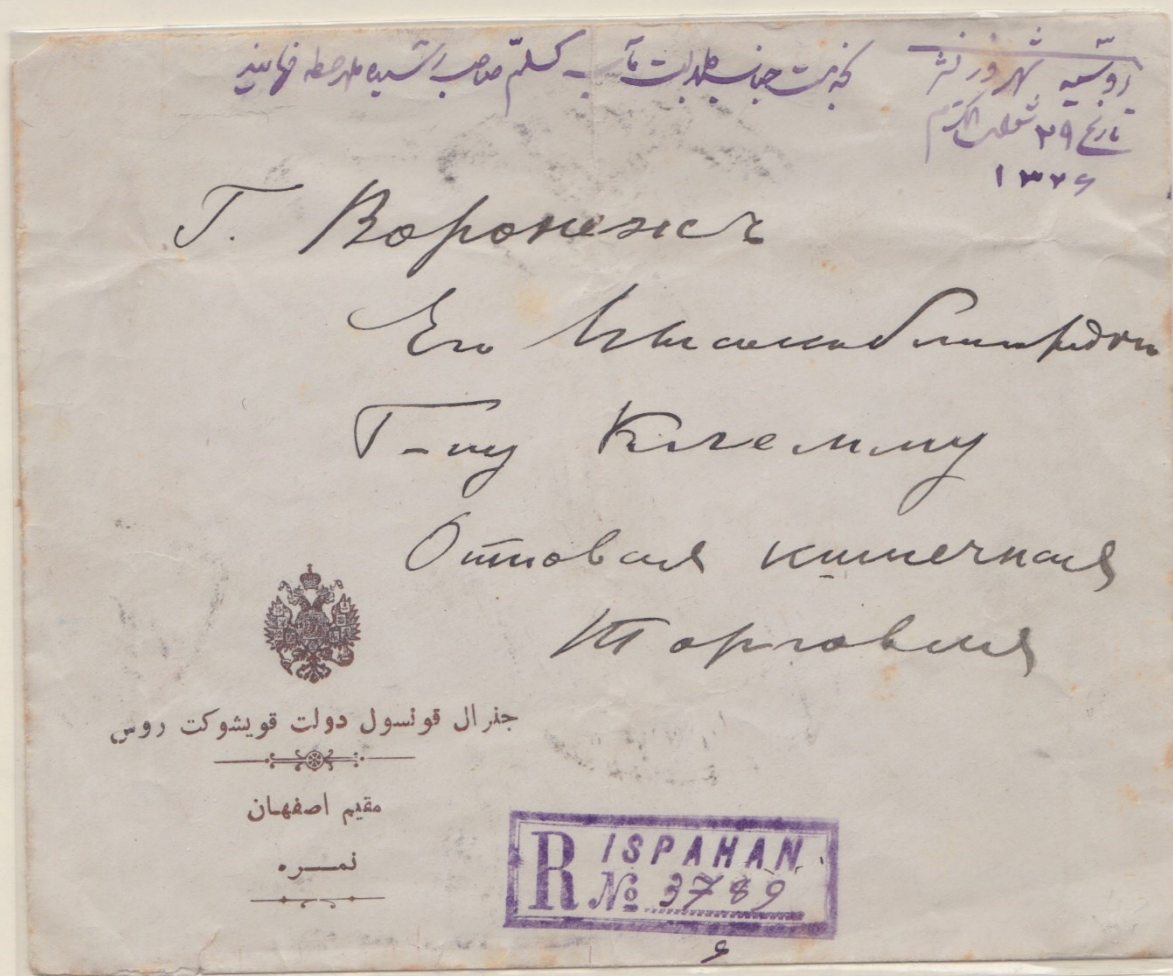
Arr date not clear

Foreign rate: 13 chahi

Reg fee: 13ch

This Consulate was a most important and dominant post for Russian political and economical hegemony in both the south as ingeneral in Persia

The **only record-ed** cover of the Russian consulate in Isfahan in private hands

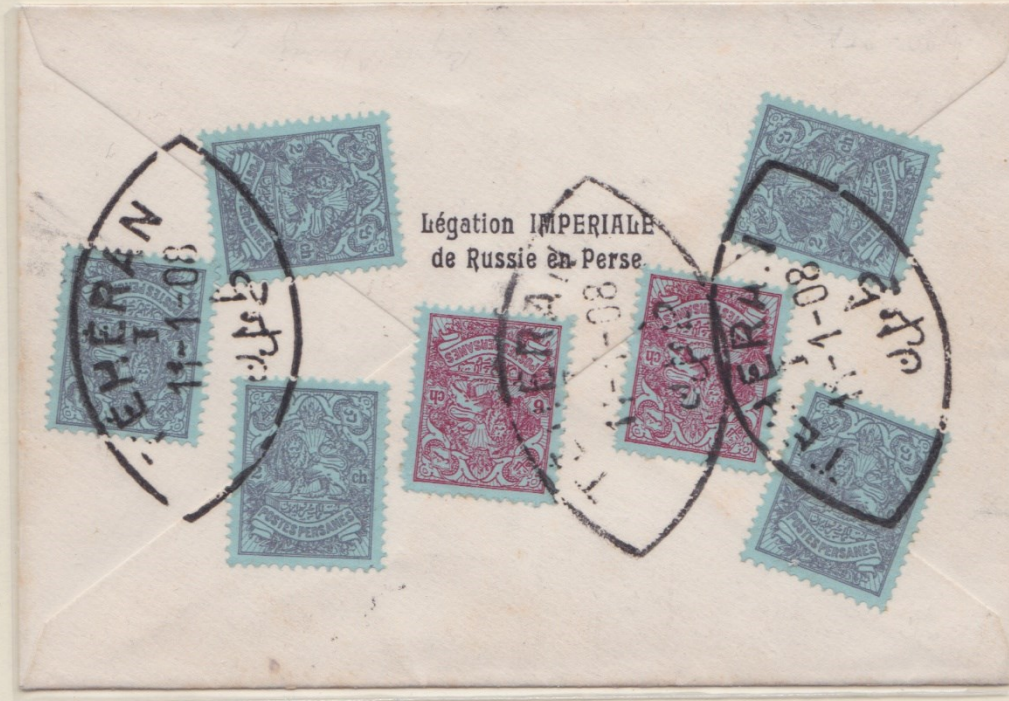


Russia meddling in the Persian Revolution & Affairs

The Tsar against the 1906 Constitution. Uprising/Civil war. Shah disposed!

The Russian bombardment of the Majlis (parliament) in June 1908, led to its closure and executions of revolutionary leaders led to a national uprising by Sattar Khan, an Armenian. He wanted the 1906 Constitution reinstituted. His forces from Azarbadjan and the Bakhtiari from Isfahan liberated Teheran. The Shah was disposed! Large parts of the country was in a revolutionary mood.

Registered letter sent by the Russian Legation in Teheran to its Agent Consulate in Ahwaz



With the exception of the Russian Consular P O in Tabriz 1913/14 very small amount of mail is recorded from any of the **Russian Embassy & Consulates** and the **Special Mission** in Tehean set up in connection with the 1908 Constitutional crisis.

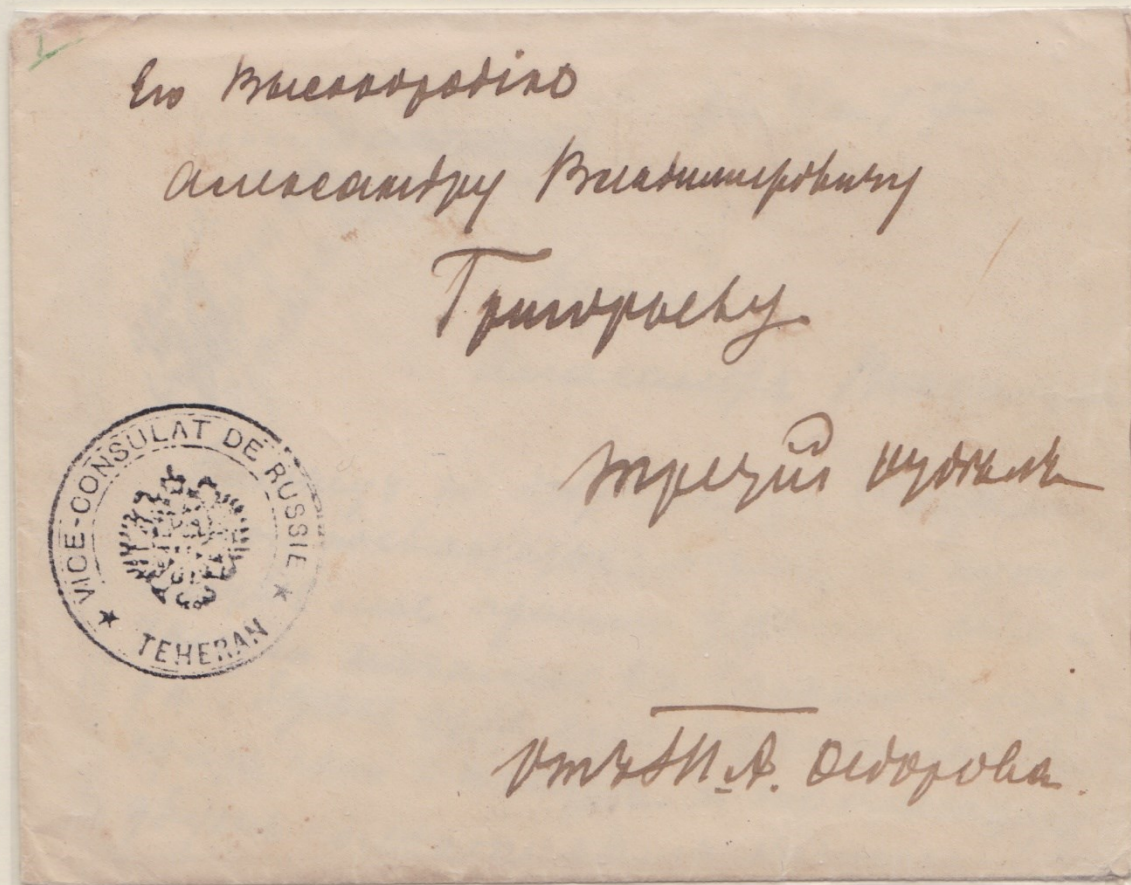
Légation IMPERIALE
de Russie en Perse

*Monsieur P. P. Ser Mencha
Agent Consulaire de Russie*

Rates: Class II; 9 ch. **Reg. fee:** 13 ch

Routes: From Teheran 11-1-1908 to Ahwaz in southern Persia via Bushire (in manuscript)

A non-franked cover from the VICE-CONSULAT DE RUSSIE/TEHERAN sent by courier within Persia



Russian General Consulate Machad in Khorasan NE Persia

Russian outlet for intelligence and power play

The overall Russian policy was to make Central Asia and adjacent areas civilized Russia also obsessed with the dream to obtain a harbour in the Indian Ocean as well as to create business for Russian products

A prerequisite for these plans was communication. Russia constructed a railway, the Trans Caspian Railway, from the Caspian Sea via Ashkhabad to Tashkent in the 1880s. From Ashkhabad a feeder road to Machad, the capital of the Khorasan province in NE Persia and was constructed against the will of the Shah government in early 1890s. Exchange postal service began officially in 1896

The Russian Imperial General Consulate Khorasan courier letter dated 1909 addressed to Sadr-al-Mamalek, a high priest in the Imam Reza Foundation in Machad

نخستین حبیب دارم دوست لکھنؤ محرم قادی صد ہمالک تمولے بہرستان تیس درم بڑا
۱۲۲۷
۱۲۱۴

Россійскаго ИМПЕРАТОРСКАГО Генеральнаго Консульства въ Хорасанѣ.

Russia had bad relations with the representatives of the Holy Shrine of Machad since Russian troops some years earlier had bombarded the Holy Shrine!!



The red seal of the Russian Imperial General Consulate Machad at the back.
Enlarged

Local courier letter within Machad from the Russian Imperial Consulate. Exact date in m/s on front 11 Jamadi, 1327 (31st of May 1909). The Imam Reza Foundation which even today is the most important and richest charitable foundation in Iran. Most elusive

1911-1915
(1923)

The Gendarmerie General. The "G.G." A HUMILIATING ULTIMATUM!

Russia & GB forced the Government to establish the G.G. against highway robberies in 1910
Swedish involvement. About 40 officers in charge. Embryo to a modern army. In WWI Persia neutral
Persia was in chaos. A revolution followed by civil war caused havoc and highways were not safe. Caravans between
Bushire and Shiraz, etc. with British goods were often attacked. Many people killed

Not long after the end of the "Great Game" Persia became a WWI war theatre. Swedish and Persian officers within G.G. took side for the (Germans and the Ottomans).
WWI led to most Swedish officers returned but some officers remained.

Some joined the German side and battled against Russian forces. some the Russian-British side.
Most Russian officers left in 1917. The British financed the Cossack troops. In 1920 a Persian officer, Reza Khan, raised to commander.



The G.G. consisted of 6 regiments The HQ was in Teheran
The other locations were: Isphahan, Shiraz, Kazvin (Russ. sphere), Boroujerd & Kerman

From an embryo of 300 soldiers in 1911, left overs of M Shuster at the Treasury after he had been sacked the G.G. reached 9000 armed and mounted soldiers end 1914. By far the largest military force to reckon in Persia and disciplined!

Russia disliked the competition so the Persian (read Russian) Cossack troops were reinforced. In 1917 due to the Russian revolution most of the Russian officers left. In 1923 the G-G. was first incorporated into the Cossack troops and formed the new army.

Bureau de l'Organisation de la Gendarmerie Gouvernemental

A special department of the Ministry of Interior was created for the Gendarmerie

Official letter from the G.G.s Hq in Teheran to Sweden in June 1914



Foreign rate: 12ch. Route: Tedriche 7 VII 14 via Teheran and EPOs Enzeli-Baku to Sweden 10/7/14

1.D 1907 - 14
1907 Constitution
A prolonged crisis

The Kurdistan Rebellion

Rebellion hand
stamp across
regular stamps

Russia supports the ex-Shah's return and rebellion

Russia supported the 1909 deposed ex-Shah's, Mohammed Ali, trial to recapture the throne with help of his brother Salar ed-Dowleh. While the ex-Shah landed with troops in northern Persia in April 1912, his brother rose a **rebellion in Kurdistan** and proclaimed his brother, the ex-Shah, again Shah!

Letter to
Russia.
Only three
Recorded
to abroad

Ahmed Shah
1911 postage
stamps with
hand stamp
El Sultan
Mohammed
Ali Shah
Qajar in
Persian
Used in
Senneh.

Mail returned
to Senneh
from Hamadan
the provincial
capital by the
post master
carrying
a message
See below.

Addressed
to Russia
(via Baku) in
April 1912.

Foreign rate
13 chahi



A ppc depicting the ex-Shah taken upon his return to Persia to lead a rebellion



All mail had to go via Hamadan, the provincial capital, and its postal HQ. There the Postal Director refused to forward the mail. He sent off a telegram to the GPO in Teheran and based on their answer the Director wrote its return message on each envelope by anilin pen.

"As per telegraphic Instruction no 6277 dated 1st Sour issued by the Director General of the Post Office this envelope which is surcharged by the stamp of "Muhammed Ali Shah" is not accepted. We are returning it to its original point. 2nd Sour. Signed "Hamadan Post Office"

Thus all mail was returned to Senneh. **Not a single letter transited beyond Hamadan** is recorded. However, there are other letters that were used locally and did not pass by Hamadan and they are without the hand stamped overprint

I.D 1907-14
Constitutional crises
Russian power play

Russian re-occupation of Azarbadjan

Looting led to
overprint for
security

Looting causes the OFFICIEL overprint 1912 as security measure
Parcel tag used from Tabriz to Germany in December 1913
Only two recorded parcel tags during the Qajar period



Rates: 14 chahi

Routes: Tabriz ? XII 1913 to Berlin

Notes: The only tag recorded used with this overprint. Total rate 14 chahi

Registered insured letter sent by the Imperial Bank in Tabriz to Vienna



Rates: Total of 3 kran 18 chahi. Since the content was insured it is not possible to make a breakdown

Routes: Tabriz April 1912 to Vienna

Markings: A violet rectangular Tabriz registration stamp applied at the back

After the invasion of NW Persia 1911/12 up to ten POs - often small - opened
 Tabriz Consular PO reopened. Maku, Kazvin, Ardebil, etc State POs had very little private mail as
 they served the Russian army by onforwarding and those having Russian citizenship/privileges
 A most interesting item from Kazvin 1913. The sender by misspelling the name had the reg.
 letter returned from Baku. After correction the letter was resend to Baku for a fee of 14 kop

ТИПОГРАФІЯ, ПЕРЕПЛЕТНАЯ



МАГАЗИНЪ

Писчебумажныхъ, канцелярскихъ

— и —

чертежныхъ принадлежностей.

— о —

ФАБРИКА

Канторскихъ книгъ,

ТЕТРАДИ СОБСТВЕННОГО ИЗДѢЛІЯ.

— о —

ФАБРИКА

КАУЧУКОВЫХЪ ШТЕМПЕЛЕЙ

— и —

МѢДНЫХЪ ПЕЧАТЕЙ.

— о —

TYPOGRAPHIE, RELIURIE

PAPETERIE, OBJETS DE DÉSSIN AI

— о —

FABRIQUE

DES LIVRES DU BUREAU, DES CAHIERS

— о —

SCOLAIRES,

DES STAMPES DE CAOUTCHOU

— ET —

DES CACHETS DE CUIVRE

— о —

مطبعة و جلد خانه و دفترخانه
 اسباب و کاغذجات کنطور و دفترخانه
 کارخانه و کتب کنطوری و دفتر
 تحصیل و استنباط کاوچوک مهره



Экзели (Персія), Ноябрь 28^{го} дня 1913г.

ПОСТАВЩИКЪ

РУССКО-ПЕРСИДСКАГО ЛѢСОПРОМЫШЛЕННАГО Т-ва

В. В. Ямпольскій.

Г.Завѣдывающему почтовымъ учрежденіемъ
 № 1 при Казвинскомъ отрядѣ.

14 ноября с/г мною сданъ денежный пакетъ на 85 р.
 въ Баку на имя Щалинскаго, который прошу выдать Царин-
 скому. Ямпольскій



Копія расписки

№ 12

Число единому Снег 1^{го}/3

1913г. 14/XI

вс Крестъ 9. н.

на Восемьдесятъ пять руб.

вс Баку

на имя Щалинскаго

оплачено марками - 39 коп.

Вручилъ Степановъ

сг Подписанъ Скрип:

Завед. Почтов.

Сур. 001

С. М. Я.

II. 1914 - 18

WWI. Entente against
Central Powers

Russian Consular Post Office

Russian Consular
P O reopened in
Tabriz 1914-18

Tabriz

The French Consulate at Tabriz using the Russian Consular Mail services 1915



Registered letter bearing 20 kopek sent 1 April 1915 to Tiflitz arriving 9 April. (Julian). A Tiflis censor mark also applied on the back. Cancellation reads **TAVRIZ ROSS. KONSULSTVO**

Consulate P O cared for external mail. Internal mail required the use of Persian mail services

Letter sent 5 X 1916 to Mianedj arr canc at back. **Rates: 12 ch. Reg fee: 12 ch**

Seal reads: The Russian Imperial General consulate in Azarbadjan



WWI. Entente against Central Powers

Russian Consular
P O at Maku opened
in 1914

Maku, Azarbadjan province. 1914 - 17

During 1913-18 four Russian consular post offices opened or re-opened (Tabriz) in Persia. The new ones were Ardebil Maku and Khoi. Only mail from Tabriz and Maku are hitherto recorded

The **only recorded** Russian postal item franked Maku

Sent from Maku to Poste Russe Harbin in China 1916



Rate: 3 kopek

Route: Maku 11 2 16 via Transiberien Railway to Kharbin(Manchuria) 25 2 16

Marking: Rectangular censor at Irkutsk

Free franking at Maku

The free-frank hand stamp reads "1st Company of 3rd Caucasian Army Military Railway Detachment"

Railway

The Russian had for long planned to construct a railway between Tiflis and Tabriz in Azarbadjan. When the WWI began the Russians quickly completed it for logistical purposes.

Turkish troops invaded north western Azarbadjan causing the Russians to also construct a narrow-gauge military railway between Maku and Shakhtakhty (on the Tiflis-Djulfra line).

Only five items known cancelled at Maku



Rate: Free for soldiers

Route: Ppc sent from Maku 13 1916 to Nikolaev, Kherson province (Ukraine) in early 1916

Different types of Russian Post Offices in Persia

Introduction of the subject. Examples also found under different sections

Almost no exchange or interference took place between the two postal systems. But it is now known that Kazvin Consulate PO cared for Persian closed bags to Russia whenever the border was uncertain during WWI

Note: For consistency and clarification certain relevant items are shown in different sections

Few documents exist about Russian post offices in Persia, either consulate POs, Russian State POs or Field POs, stationary or mobile ones before or mainly during WWI with the exception of Tabriz Consulate PO from at least 1867. Closed in September 1877 when Persia joined UPU. All others were in function about 1908 to 1917 as auxiliary post offices. These POs were all in addition to Courier mail.

To represent and protect the interests of Russia the Russian imperial mission in Teheran also operated numerous consulates and vice-consulates in Tabriz, Astrabad, Meshed, Kerman, Kazvin, Resht, Isfahan, Ardebil, Bushire, Maku, etc, since serving also Russian citizens living in the areas of the consulates. All of them, to some degree, solved the problem of delivery of consular mail, either by courier or by acting as real PO but only for mail to Russia and abroad places. Russian official mail often used labels or handstamps for courier mail, a few consulate POs used Russian postal stamps for abroad and Persian for domestic destinations - though both rarely seen - except for Tabriz Consular PO after it was reopened between 1914-1917. Instead of stamps special postmarks were used which are almost equally elusive as adhesives.

Tabriz and Kazvin areas invaded by Russian troops in late 1911

A piece of an official cover of the Kazvin Russian Consulate during WWI. It was cancelled by the oval Caspian sea mail "Baku-Enzeli". The exact arrangement for this particular service for Kazvin Consulate mail is not known.

Date 18 4 14(Julian)

The only recorded from Kazvin using this service

Consulat IMPERIAL
de RUSSIE
Kazvine (Perse).



Russian Consulate in Kazvin



Kazvin #1
Date: 6 3 13
(Julian)



The cover (backside only) was sent 6 March 1913 from the post office #1 of the Kazvin detachment (located in Enzeli Persia) to Mikhailov (Ryazan gubernia) (13/03)

Only two examples with this postmark has been recorded (Rafailovich collection (described by Casey in BJRP) and S. Braiman collection)

Lines-of-Communication Field postal and telegraph branch #201 at Khoi

Postmark reads: "Полев. Этапн Почт-Тел. отд. 201 е *"

Ppc sent from Khoi to Velikoe of Yaroslavl gubernia" January 1916

Free franking as per violet seal that reads: " Service Free Franc seal of FPO #201" (in Russian)



Rate: Free franking for soldiers

Route: Khoi 1.1.16 (Julian) and sent to Velikoe (of Yaroslavl gubernia) arrived 10 1 16

Letter sent by soldier in Persia to USA in 1916 with POSTAGE DUE mark

Soldiers had free franking to Russia. Mail to foreign destinations were duly charged

Postage due applied in Petrograd



Rate: Free for soldier. 10 c charge for postage due in USA

Route: From North Western Persia via Petrograd 6 3 16 to USA arriving New York 15 April

Markings: The postmark reads: Polev. Zapach. Pocht. Kont. 115 e * (02.15-10.17)

A Petrograd censor mark on the back

Russian state post-offices in Gumbet-i-Kabuz and Karasu alongside Persian POs

Gumbet-i-Kabuz most likely opened in 1914, Karasu in 1917. The official Post/Telegraph Journal published by the Russian P/T Administration) from early 1918 states about the closure of its Persian Post Offices in Gumbet-i-Kabuz and Karasu, all near the south eastern corner of the Caspian Sea where Russians congregated. Gumbet-Kabuz P O can be found in the official Russian Post Office list for 1916. The Karasu postmark most elusive

Gumbet-i-Kabuz. Russian post-office

Three items from this office recorded only



Picture post card from this place cancelled 14.4.14 and sent to Kiev arriving 11 4 14. (Julian)

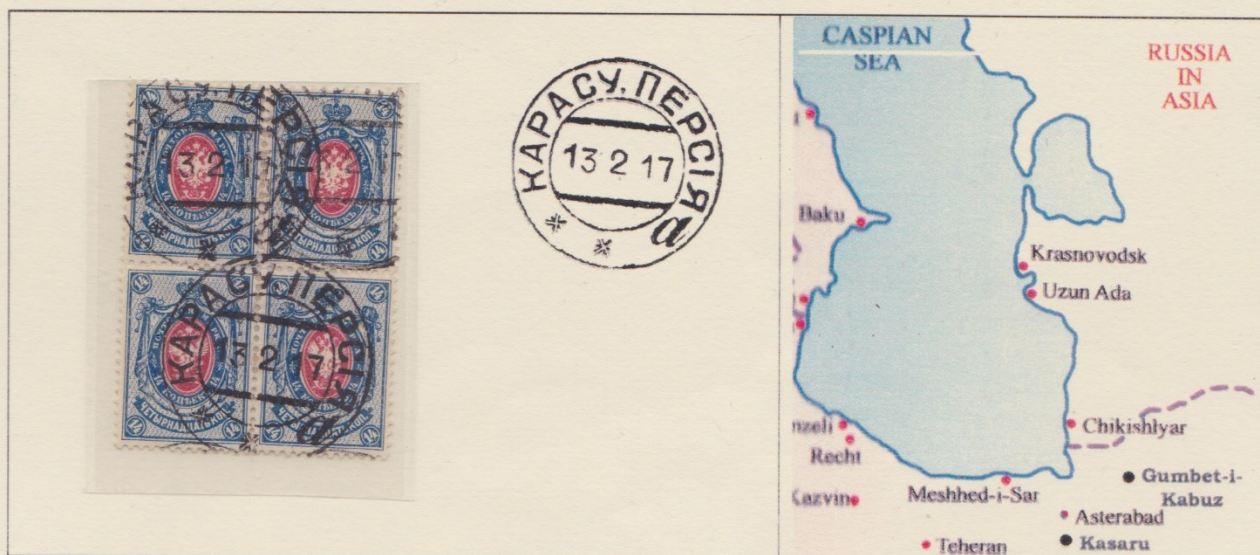
Karasu Russian post office. No stamps or postal documents previously recorded

Only a Russian newspaper notice exists stating that the Karasu post office closed in August 1917

4-block of 14-kopek cancelled "KARASU. PERSIA a/13 2 17". In Kyrillic + map of region

Whether the postmark is genuine or not is difficult to state
Different views of the experts

The two Russian state POs in
Persia with black points



The Persian post offices in Gumbet-i-Kabuz, Astarabad and Karasu

Only Astarabad was a significant town at the time of WWI. Most mail went by closed mail bag to the port. Gumbet-i-Kabuz was then a smaller town and had no Persian post office in function between WWI and late 1920s. Russian mail recorded from the latter PO is also insignificant. No Persian mail is recorded from Karasu except a few pieces related to early 1920s. From Astarabad no Russian mail is recorded except on fragments. Why could not Russia make use of the Persian PO, is the question. With Karasu there is no proof that a Persian PO actually did already exist in 1917 when that village became the temporary home of the Molokons from Russia, a spiritual religious sect.

Persian PO of Gumbet-i-Kabuz or Gombed-Ghabousse (French spelling). Native postmark



Half of parcel receipt from 1907 with native type of cancellation, sent to Astarabad, 94km, arriving 12 5 (19)07

Persian post office of Karasu

No complete Persian cover is recorded from this insignificant place. Only a few fragments

This piece is bearing the 1924 issue of the Shah



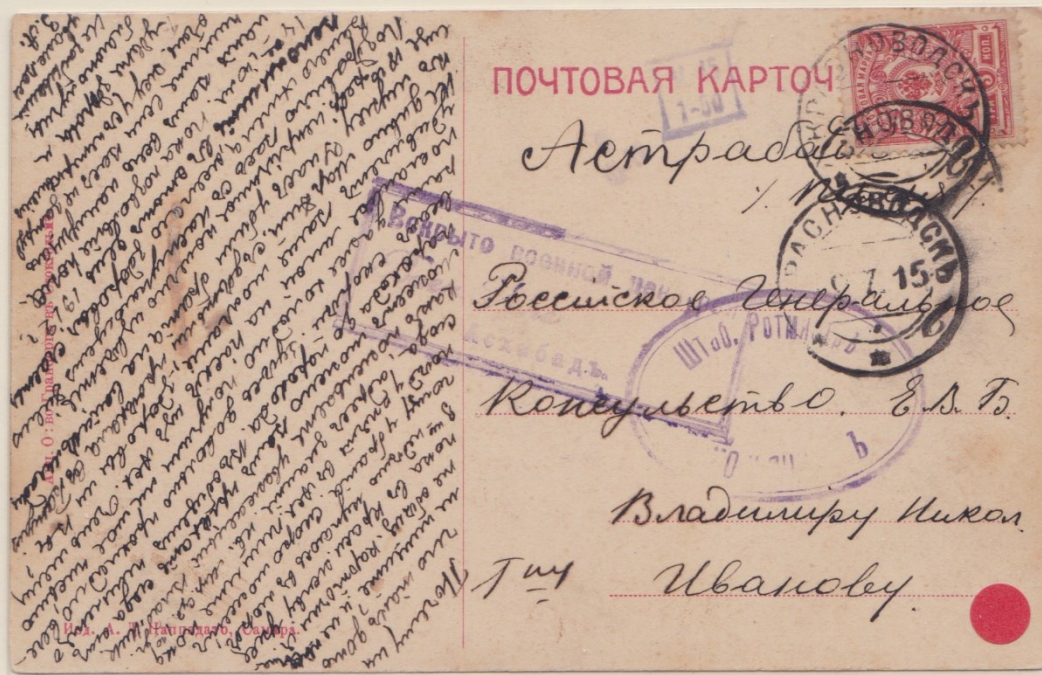
Probably a single letter rate 6 chahis

Astarabad and Meched. Two Russian Consulates

The consular mail was opened also to privileged citizens of both Russian and Persian origin which policy was a pain in the neck for the Persian Government

Ashgabad – Astrabad via Houdan border station. Letter via the Russian courier mail in 1915

Addressed to "Astrabad General Russian consular, Persia via Ashabad"



Rate: 3 kopek inland rate

Route: Krasnovodsk July 1915. No further postmarks. Two large censors from Ashgabad

Meched – Ashgabad - Petrograd. Russian Parcel post via courier to Ashgabad in 1916

The violet hand stamp reads: "Ashabad/The office of the chief of Transcaspian province for Russian Emperor's General Consulat in Mesched city, Persia"

The **only Russian parcel post recorded** from Persia using the Russian **courier** service



Rate: Not known

Route: Courier between Meched to Ashgabad transitting the post office 23 3 16 arriving Petrograd 11 4 16.(reverse)

Markings: Parcel number 723 m/s in red on the front and in black at the back

The parcel post document is of Russian origin

1914 - 18

WWI. Entente contra
Central Powers

The Great War 1914 - 1918

The Central Powers active the Middle East and Persia
The three Emperors of Germany, Turkey and Austria-HungaryPersia neutral
Too weak to
resist pressureHungarian
Feldpostkarte
depicting the three
emperors. Sent to
Budapest in Aug 1915
Note. Bottom part
HiddenThe German
Emperor
announced via
Konstantinople
that he had con-
verted to Islam!

Two major Powers, **Turkey and Germany** plus **Austria-Hungary** formed the **Central Powers** stirred up anti-Government tribes in Persia by promising weapons and money, and to support anti-government political groups who were also against **the Entente (or Allied) powers**. Foreign i.e. British, Russian and Turkish, and governmental troops were constantly fighting the Nationalists/Democrats. Censorship - civil- and military - was commonplace. Many of these censors are great rarities.

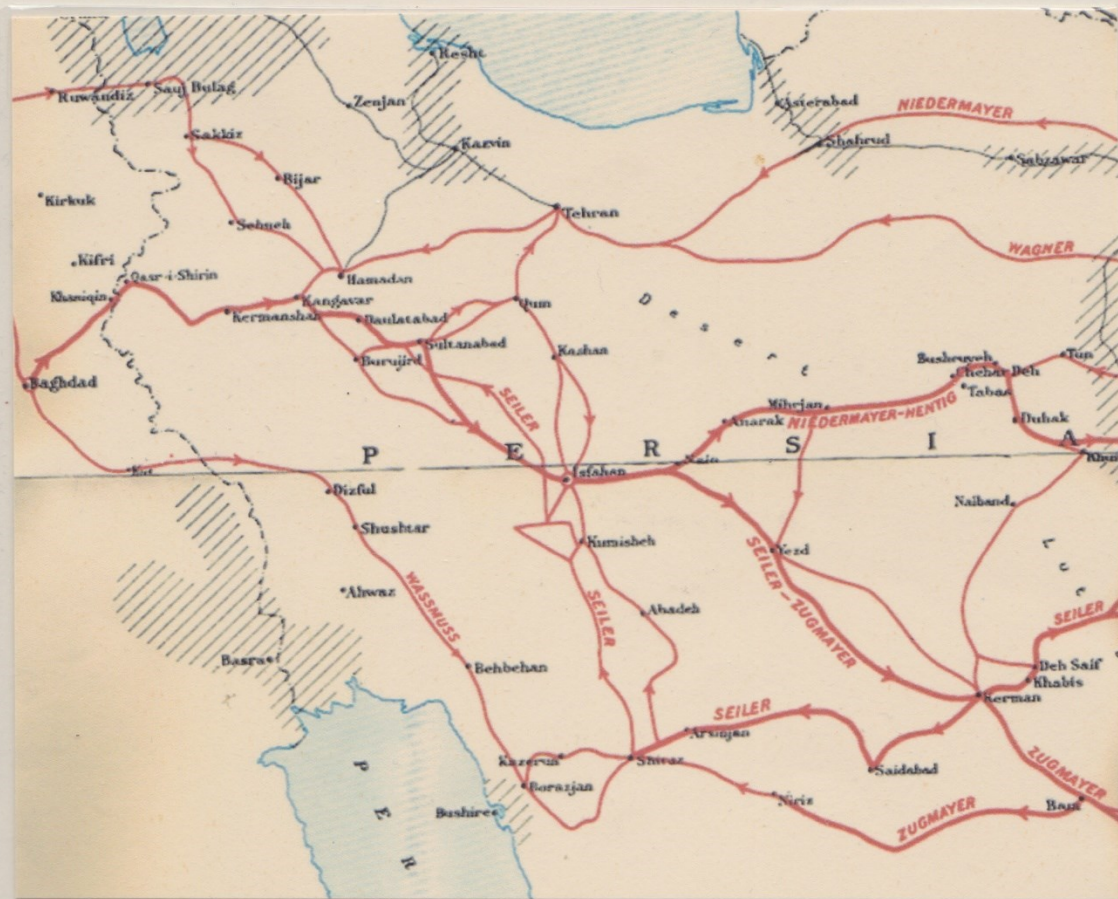
Russia re-entered Persia with troops to fight against the Turkish troops primarily. But with the advance of the Democrat movement supported by German agents and Turkish troops the Russians were soon fighting a much more sinister enemy. The Russian presence got more visible also in postal communication.

Cachets, labels and censors from this period are mostly scarce to very rare.

Persia. A stepping stone to India. WWI activities in Persia

German agents infiltrate Persia causing immense troubles for the Entente and the Russian troops

A map showing the German infiltration in Persia during WWI



Movements of German agents

Wassmuss, Zugmaier, Niedermaier, Seiler and Wagner

Censors & Propaganda during and after WWI

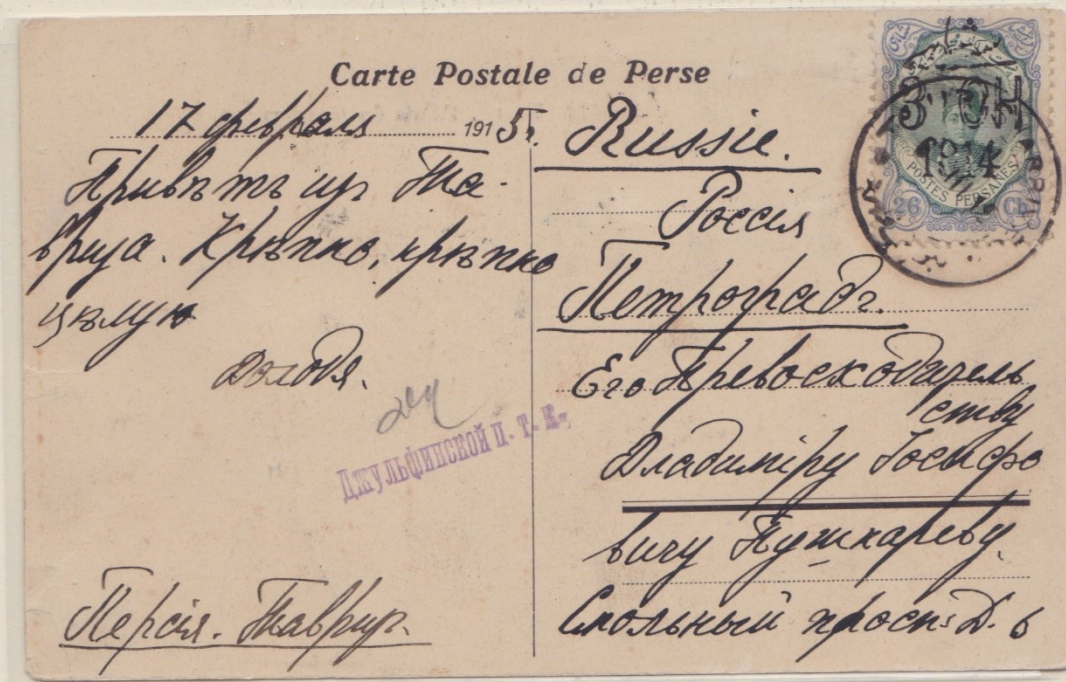
During and after the WWI censors of various sorts and parties were used in abundance. Also at places near the Persian border. Russia censored all mail. Propaganda was also another factor used by all parties. The German emperor announced with Turkish support that he had converted and become a Muslim, hoping for Muslim uprising in India!

Table of censors used in Persia by the different parties and by its close neighbours

There is a timeline of the events during the whole period of which censor marks are an important part of the overall story of the development of the war emphasizing the Russian presence and input

- Russian censors in Russia, near to Persian border	1915 - 18	- British censors & field post	1915 - 20
- British censors used in the South	1915 - 18	- Jangali, Gilan, nationalist movement	1916 - 21
- Russian censors and field post in Persia	1916 - 17	- Russian, British & Pro-government censors	1918 - 20
- Local & Opposition groups censors	1915 - 20	- Persian Governments censors/cachets	1919 - 20
- German "Sonder-Mission P" field post cachets	1916 - 17	- Reza Khan (future Shah) related censors	1921 - 24
- Ottoman censors	1916 - 19	- Reza Shah related censors	1926 - 27

Examples of rare Russian censors used at Djulfa



Censor

Not recorded
by Speekaert

Ppc sent from
Tabriz m/s
17 March 1915
to Petrorad

Rate: 5ch
abroad
(2ch at back)

Stamp ovpt
due to
shortage
of specific
values

Rate: 5ch
postal stat.
card ovpt 2
chahis +
3 ch abroad

Route: Tabriz
3 IV 1916
to Paris
via Julfa
Ex P.O.



II. 1914 - 18

German early
intelligence!

Germany prepares!

Arrangements for a
Jihad, Holy War to
arise Asian Muslims

Wassmuss, the legendary and the German answer to "Lawrence of Arabia"

While consul at the Persian port Bushire before WWI, Wassmuss befriended anti-Government tribes, conducted intelligence for the immediate future. Within a year these tribes would erupt under his leadership and for a promise of weapons causing much trouble for Russia and Great Britain. The British felt it necessary to divert scarce troops from the Mesopotamian battlefield to occupy Bushire in the autumn 1915 to rescue Governmental pro-Allied movements up-country as well as British subjects! All in order to stop German advances to India!

Registered letter from Wassmuss to Niedermayer after the latter's arrival to Bombay from Persia, March 1914



Letter sent to Oskar Niedermayer, one of the German agents in Persia and Afghanistan, While visiting Bombay
Wassmuss wrote this letter to Niedermayer.

Rate 15 chahi. Double registration fee 24 chahi
Normal rate is 12 chahi. There is no known explanation for the extra three chahi

Only a few covers from Wassmuss clandestine operations in Persia have survived

II. 1914 - 18

WWI. Central Powers
gaining foothold

The "Democrats" A Rebellious movement

Germany's drive for
India, the Crown
Jewel in the Empire

German underground activities under the nose of the British!

The Persian puppet Government was very weak and changed constantly under the political threats of Russia and GB. A nationalistic and anti-government political movement "the Democrats" was growing steadily gaining recognition from left to right and supported by Germany. By August 1915 their controlled area was quite large: Kermanschah, Isfahan and Shiraz and more was to come. As German agents and forces crossing Persia for Afghanistan would potentially have very serious consequences as Turkey was promoting a JIHAD! i.e. a Muslim uprising, the British was soon to occupy the Bushire port.

During the preparations for a Jihad and the crossing of Persia into Afghanistan an Agent/partner in Kermanschah, Persia sent a letter to Germany via Baghdad. Censored by Turkish authorities



Letter sent
7 August 1915
from
Kermanschah
addressed to a
German
General
at Halbe in
Germany
via Baghdad
and the
Ottoman postal
service to
Konstantinople.
Received at
Halbe
5 September.
Rate 4 kr 1ch
Registration fee
12 chahi

It was censored twice by the Turkish authorities. First with a squared no 22 censor mark at the front probably in Baghdad and in Konstantinople with the red circled military censor seal at the back.

Historical note: a declaration of "Jihad", a wholly war by the Ottoman Empire against Western imperialism i.e. the Allies, and a Turco-Persian alliance, was the overall objective to get the British to divert war efforts in Europe towards India. To reach Afghanistan and to attack Bushire port were the main objectives. To have Persian "friends" were indispensable.

II. 1914 - 18

WWI. Entente against
Central Powers

The "Democrats" Rebel Government

Germany supports
the opposition and
certain tribes

Russian troops under General Baratoff fight out opposition and Turkish/German forces

The "Democrats" with German support controled virtually all Persia south of Qum, Kermanchah, Sultanabad and Yezd line second half of 1915 and well into 1916. Only the Russians were able to stop their advance



**Kermanchah
National Censor
1334 in black**

Emblem of the
Lion and the Sun
Existed late 1915-
Early 1916 in
black and blue

Registered single
rate 6 ch cover
from Hamadan
18 Dec 1915 to
Kermanchah.
arriving
22 Dec 1915

The **only**
recorded with
this mark used
on opened and
closed censored
cover across
a label

**Sultanabad-Arak
National Censor
1334**

Local 2ch card
Sent 11 Jan 1916
to Teheran
arriving 15 Jan.

Very elusive
Censor.
Five recorded



History: The huge area between Hamadan, Kermanchah, Sultanabad-Arak and Qum was in the hands of the "Democrats", a nationalistic movement for independence of Persia. They leaned towards Germany, hoping it would win the war and in their special hatred of the Russians. Some groups had their own censor marks.

II. 1914 - 18

Fights between Turkis
aand Russian troops

Russian occupation of northern Persia

Russian Field Post
Mobile Medical
Units

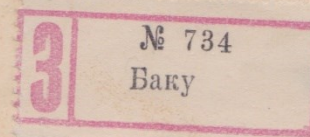
Kazvin. HQ for the Russian army

Letter from the "Society for Improvement of the Russian colony in Kazvin (Persia)"

Letter may have originated from Kazvin but first taken by courier to Baku

ЗАКАЗНОЕ

Петрограду



Всего Императорскому Вели-
честву Государю импера-
тору .

№ 5

Изъ Общества БЛАГОУСТРОЙСТВА Россійской Колоніи въ г. Казвинѣ (Персія)



Registered letter from Baku 14 10 14 to Petrograd arriving 19 10 14.

Khoi. American Red Cross Mobile Field Hospital attached to a Russian Mobile unit. Etape 201

Between December 1915 until end August 1916 this unit was at Khoi, Kermanshah and Hamadan. Mail from Khoi and Hamadan are recorded. Special war rate 4 kopek. All dates in Julian as all marks are Russian



Dated m/s
Khoi 18/6/16
addressed to
New York
Transited via
Petrograd

It carries a
Red Cross
cachet and a
rectangular
censor from
Petrograd and
postmarked
POLEVOYE
ETAPNOYE
OTDYELNIYE
201

(Etape Field
Post Branch
201)

The Red Cross
cachet reads:
**North American
United States
Branch Russian
Red Cross Society**

Hamadan. 1st occupation. American Red Cross unit

During the first occupation of Hamadan, an American Red Cross Mobile Field Hospital was attached to a Russian military unit which also visited Khoi and Kermanschah. Reduced war rate of 4 kopek applied



Dated m/s
Hamadan,
Persia
July 18 1916
sent to USA

It carries a
hospital
cachet and
a Baku
censor

Postmarked
**POL. POCHT.
KRA. GL.
KB. L.K.**

Russia occupied & re-occupied "Turkish hold areas" in Kurdistan

1st period; 10 Dec 1915 – 10 Aug 1916; 2nd period; 2nd March 1917 – April 1918

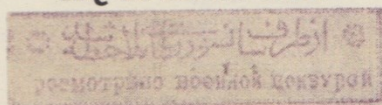
After Turkish troops had occupied the area around Hamadan in 1915 Russian troops battled them away and kept the area from 14 Dec 1915 until 10 Aug 1916 when the Turks re-occupied and held the area until Russian troops returned for a 2nd period between 2nd March 1917 to April 1918

1st Occupation

First the Turks!

Then the Russians

HQ at HAMADAN



2nd Occupation

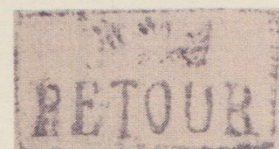
The Turks return!

So did the Russians!

1st occupation: Letter from Sweden to a Swedish Gendarm, 1916

Censured three times by Russian civil and military authorities: Petrograd, Baku No 3, and in Hamadan. Opened at back, white label, possibly at Teheran

This is the **only RETOUR mark** seen during the Qajar area. Not known exactly where its use



RETOUR

Not recorded

The cover had a dazzling route

Russian. 20 2 16

Teheran 6. 15 III 16

Teheran 11 15 III 16

Isfahan.No 2. 20 III 16

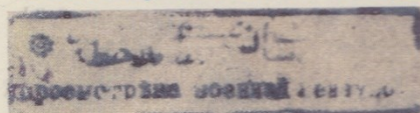
Hamadan Depart 8 IV 16

Isfahan No 2 22 IV 16

Teheran Arrive 30 IV 16

2nd occupation: Two same Hamadan Russian censors but different colors

Blue rarely used in 2nd occupation



Reduced ca 30%

The blue + black
Russian Hamadan
censor of 2nd
occupation

Double registered
letter

Route: Hamadan
to 30 V 17 to Tehran
Arriving 30 V 17 to
Tehran arriving
5 IV 17

Rate: 6 chahis
Double registration
fee 24 chahis

Two of blue color
recorded



II. 1914 - 18

WWI. Entente against
Central Powers

The Gendarmerie goes German

A Government
Gendarmerie unit
joins the opposition

Involved in fighting the Russians under Baratoff

Nationalistic & pro-Democratic movements gain support from the Gendarmerie

The censor reads "Was censored under the provision of the Government Gendarmerie" in Persian. It was applied during December 1915 when under Colonel Pesiyen. Three recorded of this mark



Sent from Hamadan on 11 Dec 1915 and via Teheran 19 Dec arrived Meched 30 Dec 1915
Single Rate 6 chahis

History: Colonel Mohammed Pesiyen had joined an opposition group the "Democrats" in late 1915 which "forces" were assisted by the entente powers i e Turkey and Germany in the fight against Russian and British forces in Hamadan and Kermanchah

Special note: when the Swedish officers officially left their assignments to return home due to WWI outbreak there were already a number of trained Persian officers who took over and continued to run the Gendarmerie. One of the leading figures was Colonel Mohammed Taghi Khan Pesiyen, who later, in 1921, revolted in Khurasan, Meched, against the Government with War Minister Reza Khan (later to be Reza Shah). As a result Reza Khan dissolved the gendarmerie. The Colonel was executed, of course!

A Turkish censored Persian AR-cover not delivered in beleaguered Bagdad. 1917

The Cover, undelivered, was detected at Baghdad Post Office and with its Avis de Reception document left intact

Found undelivered by the postal military service of the British-Indian army

Hamadan Turkish censors, military and civil in use 1917

Postage 12ch

Reg fee 12 ch

AR-fee 12ch

The letter while In Baghdad could not be delivered to Najaf as British troops had occupied that area. When the British troops later captured also Baghdad, the letter was found at the Turkish post office.

A special note to that effect was stuck on to the cover (see below)

The backside



Captured along with Admin Note in Baghdad post office March 11th 1917 on entry of British forces - E.B.

Captured along with admin Note in Baghdad post office March 11th 1917, on entry of **BRITISH FORCES** EB of I.E.F

Administration des Postes
Empire de Perse

20

AVIS DE RÉCEPTION

قبض رسید



Récépissé à renvoyer

قبض برگردان

d'une Lettre recommandée enregistré au bureau de Hamadan
le 10 / 2 1917 sous le N° 1380, et adressé à
M. Djalal G. Hassan à Najaf achraf

WWI. TURKEY'S PERSIAN MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

Russian Intervention and controle

Russian troops under Baratoff took controle over Kermanschah in March 1917

The Turks were chased away. Persian stamps were in short supply at the Kermanschah PO thus enforcing a local surcharge. Two letters recorded

Letter from Kermanschah to Teheran addressed to the British Legation

The local Director of the Post Office had to surcharge existing stock with values which were in demand i.e. 12 and 24 chahis



Rate

12 ch for 3d class

Route

Kermanschah 12 3 17

History: Already in late 1914 Turkey occupied parts of Azarbadjan. Fights against Russian troops under Baratoff were frequent. Late 1915 to late 1916 Turkey occupied an area that included on and off the border towards the border of Mesopotamia, Kurdistan, Kermanschah, Melayar and Hamadan

1st Hospital of URMIYA district Caucasian Committee of All-Russian Cities Union"

1 Лазарет Урмийского Района * Кавк. Комит. Всеросс. Союза Городов"

Russian Red Cross seal of type "All Russian Zemstvo Union East Persian Branch"

Registered mail to Switzerland

As registered mail was not handled by the Field post offices such mail would have to be sent by other arrangements to the Hq in Russia



Rate: 10 kopek abroad Registration fee: 10 kopek

Route: Urmiya(probably) sent to Hq in Tiflis for registration purposes. Tiflis 15.10.16 to Laussane, Switzerland arrival 7 XI 16



On the front and the back there are three similar censor labels "Petrograd war censor" in Russian plus two blue violet rectangular censor marks of which one is from Petrograd

1915-17

Cossack Brigade Reconstructed. General Baratoff in Command

A reinforcement of the Russian occupation forces with about a 1000 Russian Cossacks was sent to protect Russian interests and fight the Central Powers i.e. against Ottoman troops added with German officers as advisers. Baratoff and his troop's correspondence were mainly w. Russia and thus used the Russian military mail service

Mail emanating from the Cossacks, either to or from Russia or sent internal using the Persian mail service is simply RRR!

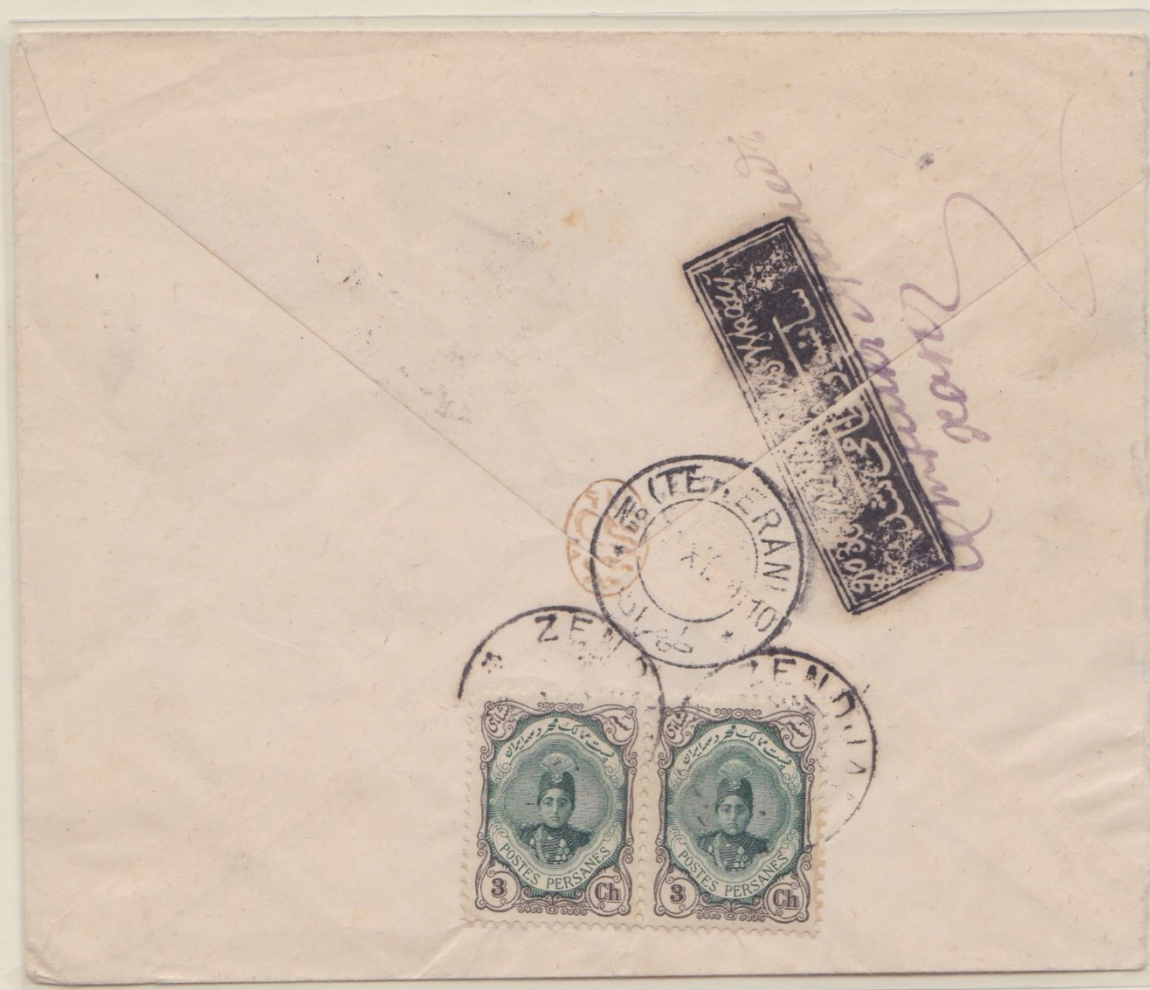
"dozvoleno tsenzuroi" =
passed by censor (Russian)



52 x 16 mm

Only two items recorded

A Petition addressed to His Eminence Mokhber Saltaneh



Rate: 6 ch (1st cl)

Route: Zenjan 27 XI 16 to Teheran arr. ? XII 16

Mehdi Goli Hedayat



Also known as
Mokhber-ol Saltaneh
Minister
1907 Two months
1927 - 33
Holder of various
Minister posts
between 1907
and 1926

General Baratoff

1865 - 1932



General Baratoff meeting w. British
officer and Kurdish leader in 1915



WWI. TURKISH PERSIAN MILITARY INTERVENTION

Dowletabad-Melayer Turkish censor Dec. 1916

The only example recorded



Letter from Dowletabad-Melayer, an important town in the province of Hamadan, situated 85 km from Hamadan city and occupied by the Turks about the same time. The letter was sent 16 Dec 1916 to Tousserkhan and received 21 Dec 1916, bearing 6 ch.

Hamadan Turkish censor in black

From Hamadan 28 Oct 1916 to Melayer



Russia censored transiting mail

Persia surrounded
by big powers. Persia
not "independent"

Mail to deceased Swedish gendarmerie officer

Captain de Hierta belonged to the regiment at Kazvin. When the letter arrived at Kazvin Count Hierta was already dead. He died in a battle on 20 August 1915

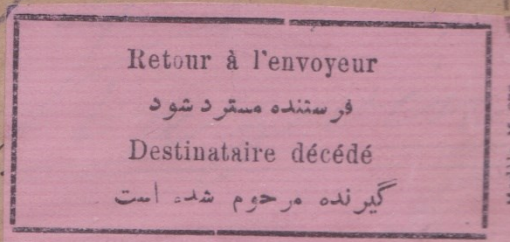
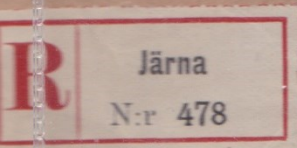
The letter was thus returned as per rosa label and a Kazvin dep. strike was used "26 of August" which was tied to both the label and the envelope

Rekommenderas
صاحب کاندمر حوم شه نذر عیوت داده شد



Mr. Philip Hierta

Capitaine de la Gendarmerie Gouverneur
Rekl



Persien

The rose Persian "Retour à l'envoyeur"/Destinataire décède" label in French and Persian label is very elusive
Only two recorded tied by strike during Qajar period

Tripple rate: 40 öre ; Registration fee: 15 öre

Route: Järna in Sweden 6. 8. 15 via St: Petersburg, train to Baku then ship to the Persian port of Enzeli. From Enzeli to Recht arriving 18/8 to continue to Kazvin arriving 21/8. Returned to sender from Kazvin 26.8 and arrived Stockholm in September, date unclear(back stp)

Along the route the cover received a censor



Recht No 2 is unrecorded



A censor from Moscow

Note: On the front there are some manuscripts suc as "Rekl" = Reklamationskontoret = Office for reclamation
"Försäkringsbok +signatur" in m/s = Insurance book + sign. = are things probably found in the letter when opened
B1766/15 is probably reclamation number at the Office for Reclamation.

WWI. Entente against Central Powers

Via Archangelsk

Mail to and from
Persia via Russia

The normal transit roads via Russia, and Germany, etc was cut off and the mail had to be diverted via Scandinavia and or via the ports at north western Russia such as Murmansk and Archangelsk at the Barents Sea

This UPU parcel document with pre-printed addresses of the sender in Meched, the receiver, the well-known company E.D. Sassoon of London, and not the least the acheminement, the route, **VIA ERKENGEL, mer Blanche**

However, for unknown reasons the parcel got lost along the route and the postal authorities paid out an indemnity as per the hand written information in Persian on the back

"For the Colis Postal which was lost on the route of Badjgiran, a value of 300 Krans was paid by the Post office."

Parcel sent from Meched via an agent in Badjguiran, a small town. The agent arranged for the forwarding of the parcel to abroad as customary. Badjguiran was only a few kilomers away. Cancelled there 12 IV 16. A private hand stamp across the adhesives 23 MARS 1916 applied probably by the sender

The text in m/s, 30% reduction, written at the back

II. 1914 - 18

WWI. Entente against
Central Powers

Russian occupation of Kurdistan

Western Persia under
the opposition, the
Military & Russia

Both Russian and Persian military censor

During the Russian occupation the Kurdistan administration was run by Persian civil
and military authorities.

From the
Iranian
Telegraph
Office in
Hamadan
24 VI 1916
to Tabriz
arriving
3 - VII.16

Received
both a
Russian
and a
**Persian
military
censor**
43x10mm
(elusive)

Single rate
6 chahi



Persian censor "Was censured in Kurdistan 1334" in Persian in combination with
Russian/Persian military censor



From Recht
8 July
1916
via
Hamadan
to Senneh
arriving
20 July

Rate
II class
9 chahi

The
Russian/
Persian
rectangular
censor at
reversal

1915 - 1916
Anti-Shah gvmnt

The National Party flirting with Germany and vice versa!

Democratic in-
fluence

A short period, end of 1915 until Feb 1916 the National anti-Shah Party based in Kermanschah and Sultanabad tried to resist Russian pressure. The party had been promised military assistance by Germany but very little of it was delivered

It had not gone well for some of the Gendarmerie units. Losses against Russian cossacks. Major Källström as well as Pousette and de Maré who both had led National forces withdraw to Kermanschah, under full military control by the G.G. under its leader Colonel Muhammad Passian Feb 1916

Kermanschah censor Dec 1915 - Jan 1916

Kermanschah
National
censur

22 x 18 ½ mm



Black or blue
4 known

Registered
single

Rate: 6 ch

Reg. fee: 16ch

From

Kermanschah
19 12 16

via Teheran
to

Meched
arriving
12 1 16



Sultanabad-Arak National Censor Jan 1916

Sultanabad-Arak

National censur

30 x 25 mm

Violet

8 known

on top of
white for open
label

Registered single

Rate: 6 ch

Reg. fee: 16ch

From

Sultanabad-Arak

? 1 16

to Teheran

arriving

15 1 16



II. 1914 - 18
Fights between Turkis
and Russian troops

Russian occupation of northern Persia

Russian Field Post
Mobile Medical
Units

Menjil. Postal & Telegraph division cancel no 243 "b"

Russian Military Hospital was based at Enzeli. Medical units attached to army units. One was in Menjil 100 km south of Enzeli. The Red Cross cachet on the front reads "All Russian Zemskoi Union. **Eastern Persian** team".



Sent 8 April 1917 (Julian) from Menjil via Enzeli and Baku to Moscow arriving 16 April



On the back: "Support the sick & wounded soldiers. District administration of the 25th medical and food supplies at **Enzeli**" (Persian port at the Caspian Sea)

II. 1914 - 18
Russian troops
Fights the Turks

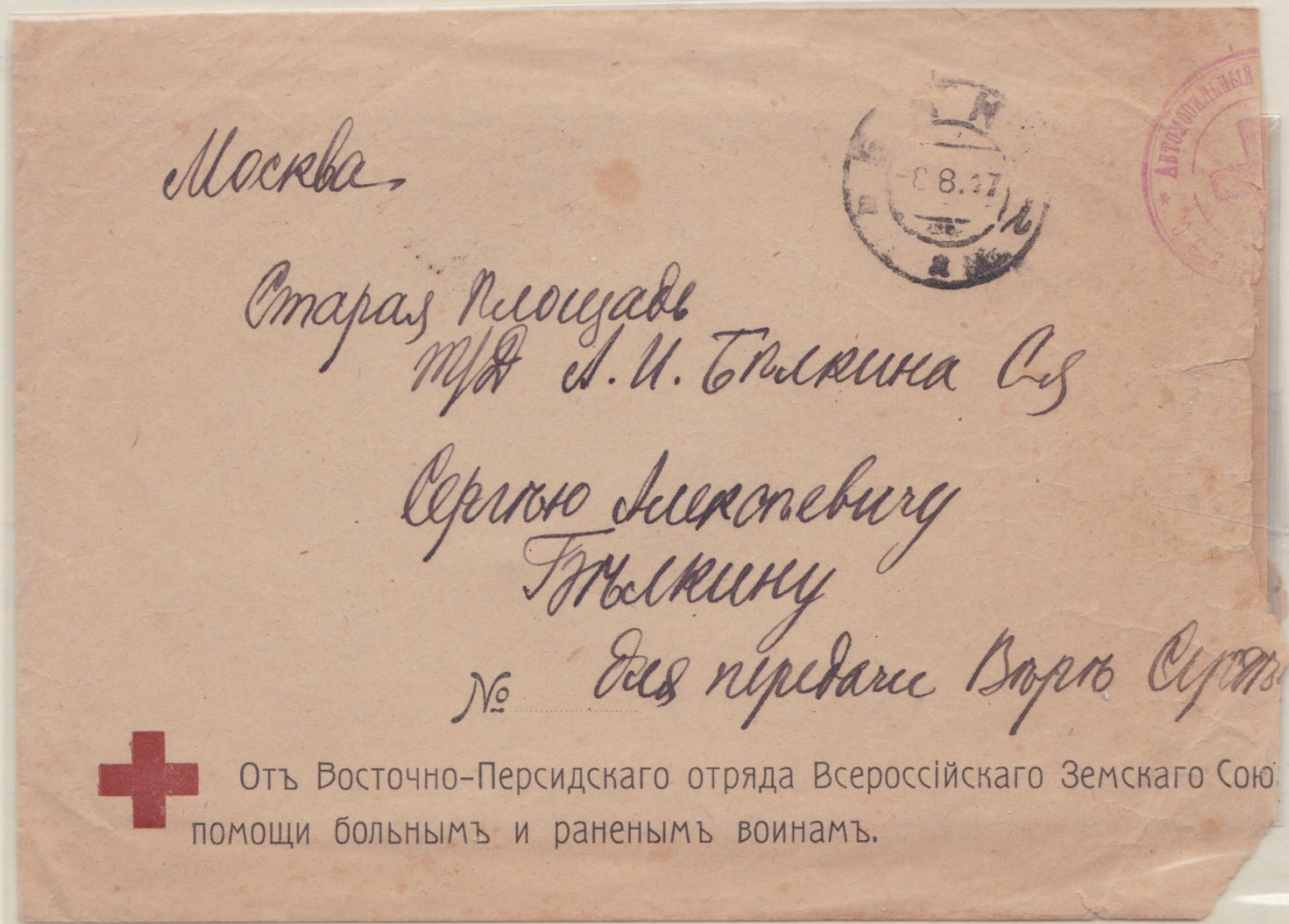
Russian occupation of northern Persia

Russia Field Post
Mobile Medical
Units

Enzeli Military Hospital Unit

The Russian Military Hospital based at Enzeli. Medical units were attached to army units
From Eastern Persian Team. All Russian Zemskol Union for support of the sick
and the wounded soldiers

The faint, incomplete Red Cross cachet reads All Russian Zemskol Union. Eastern Persian team



Written at Enzeli 20 7 1920 (J) in m/s and sent via Baku
8 8 17 (J) to Moscow arriving 13 8 17 (at back)

Menjil Hospital



Written 19 April
1917 (J) in m/s
to Moscow

Enzeli and
Kazvin 23 9 17
(at back).

The content

Mentions that
he will be stay-
ing att Menjil
During one
month and then
Go to Hamadan
And
Kermanschah

The Original Persian Cossack Brigade reinforced

Russia wary of
Gendarmerie

Russian Cossack troops under Colonel Baratoff were sent to meet the challenge posed by Ottoman troops supported by German agents invading Persia

Up to about 1914 the Cossack Brigade had lost much importance. But the raise of the Gendarmerie's strength to almost 8000 well trained soldiers was a threat to Russian interests. Swedish officers had "gone over" to the German-Central powers by joining leading Persian officers and political anti-Shah parties, the Nationalist and the Democratic parties which both were hoping for complete independence. In N E Persia, the **East Persia Cordon**, had been organised by Russia and GB to stop the five different groups of German agents trying to cross Persia from Bagdad and enter Afghanistan and meet its Ruler, carrying a proposal from the German Emperor to get the Muslim Ruler to agitate among the Indian Muslims to raise up against the British! The Russian Cossack Cordon force there, was the 1st and 2nd Semirechia Regiments.

P. st. card- 5ch - used to Russia by the Cossacks at the North Persia Cordon 1916 M/s dated 26 Feb. (1916)- possibly from Turbet-i-Heidari - in Persia (Military HQ). Via Gaudan to Ashkabad 9 March and censored with two marks on back. The large circular mark reads **General Kolpakovsky First Semirechinsk Cossack Regiment.**



M/s dated 26 Feb. (1916)- possibly from Turbet-i-Heidari - in Persia (Military HQ). Via Gaudan to Ashkabad 9 March and censored with two marks on back. The large circular mark reads **General Kolpakovsky First Semirechinsk Cossack Regiment.**

The "101" mark is a Moscow censor. Addressed to the Moscow suburb **Losino - Ostrovskaya** arr. on 23 March). The card was forwarded to **Novy Simeiz** in **Crimea** (pmkd in April).

Ashkabad (both)



Ашкбадский Военный Цензор
Подполковник Цветков

Vossug ed Dowleh
وفاق الدوله



Vossug ed Dowleh by Kamal-ol-molk, painted between 1900 and 1917

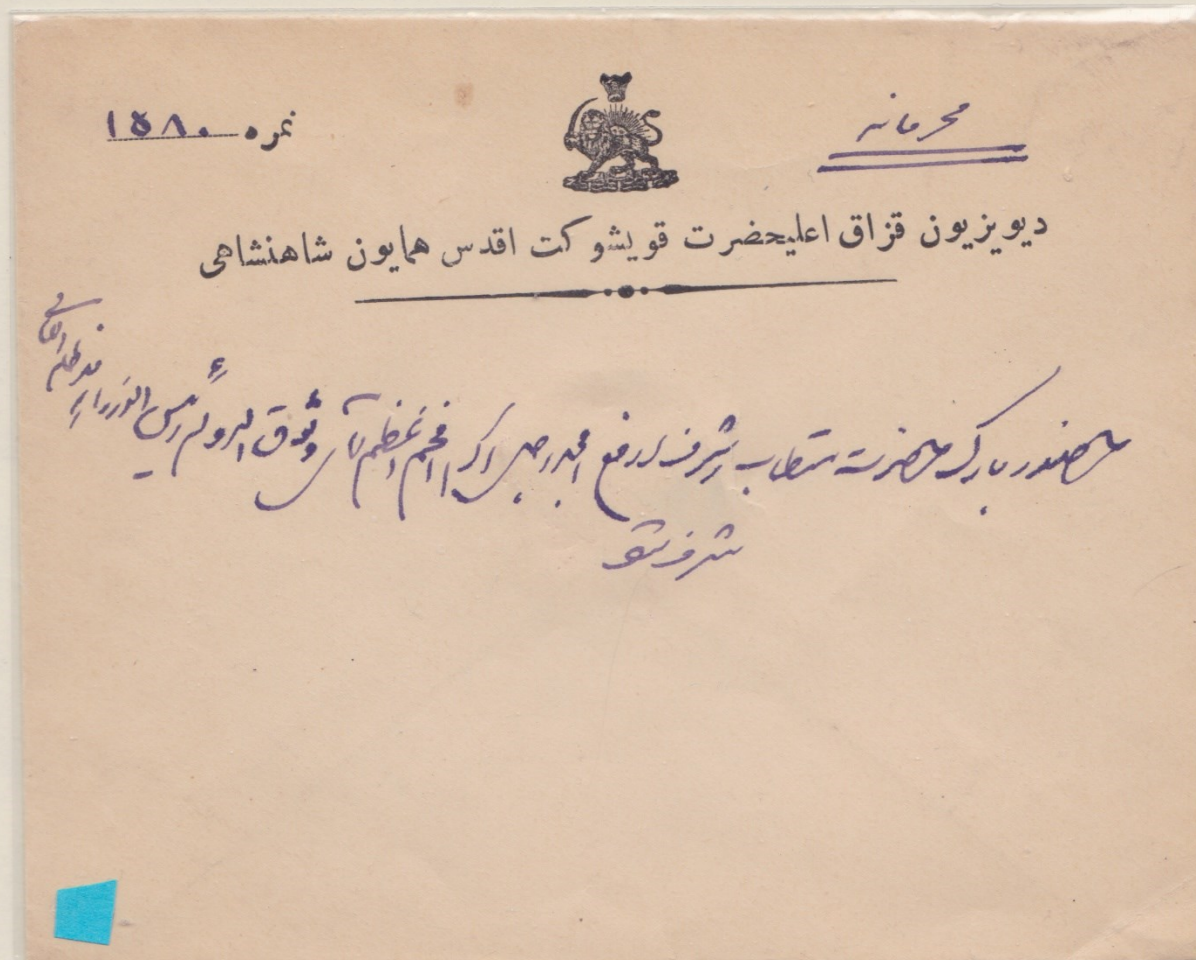
18th Prime Minister of Iran

In office

29 August 1916 - 5 June 1917

Founding
member of the
Majlis 1906

The Royal
Cossack Brigade



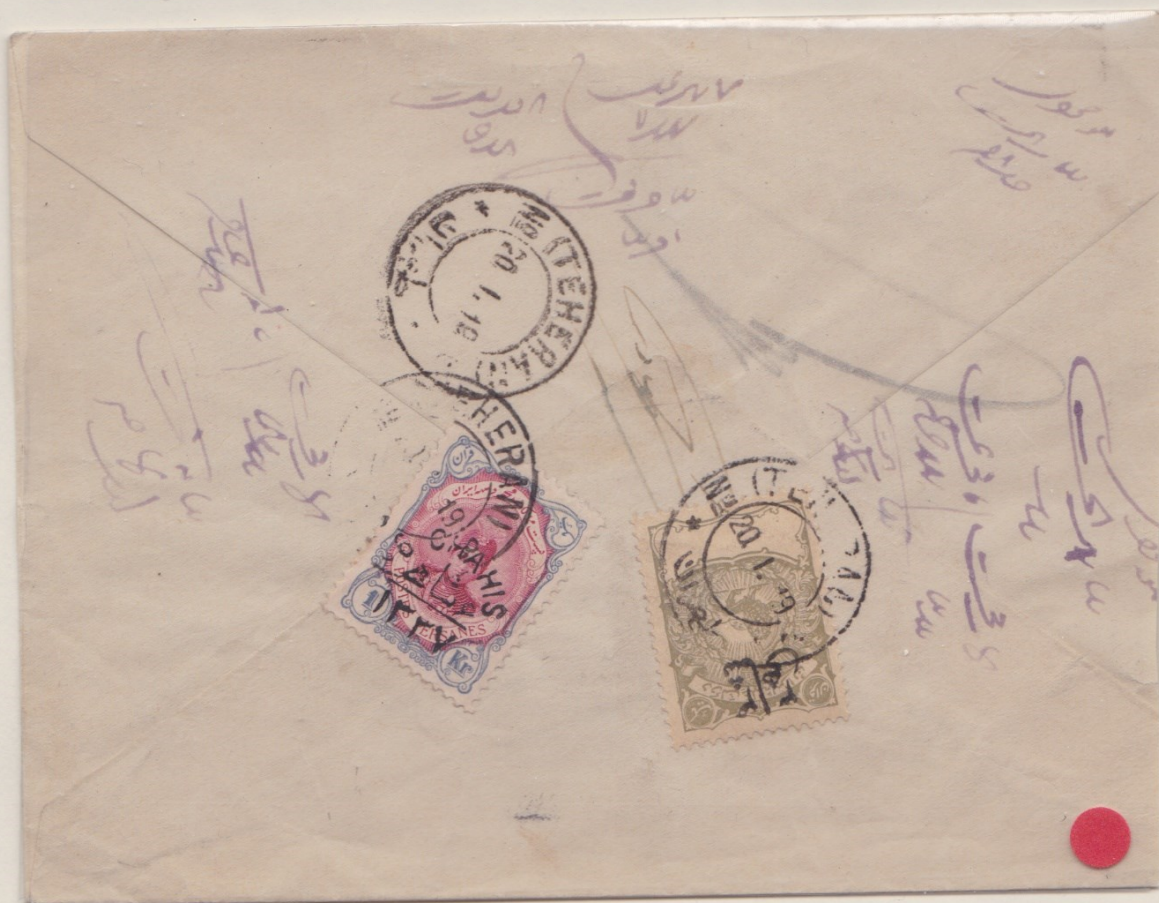
III. 1918 - 21
Persia war-theater
also after armistice

Famine Relief stamps

Teheran, Tabriz,
Recht, different
colors & values

Teheran. 1ch on 1 Kran, olive

Olive relief stamp 1ch on 1 Kran surcharge and (13)34 lunar date overprinted. No overprint "Teheran". Single rate 6 ch + 1ch relief stamp sent from Teheran 20 January 1919. **Two** items only **recorded** with this relief stamp



1ch violet used on 5ch postal stationery card.

From Teheran 23 May 1918 to Isfahan 2 June 1918. Elusive on p st card



II. 1914 - 18

WWI. Entente contra
the Central Powers

End of the Great War. Peace and Hope

The Turks continued
fighting for the sake of
oil and Pan-Islam!

Overprint: Novembre 1337 (1918)

The Persian Government commemorated that the Great War had ended by having a very small quantity of the higher values of the 1915 Coronation issue overprinted **Novembre 1337 = 1918**. Two commercial letters have been **recorded**



Registered insured bank-sized letter from Teheran 6 March 1919 bearing 1, 2 and 5 Toman with the over-print plus 2x12 and 2 x 1 kran = 8 T + 64 chahis = 14 Tomans and 4 chahis. The very high face value due to money was included in the envelope.

III. 1918 - 1920

Persia war theater
also after armistice

The Hunt for Oil and Communists

Dunsterforce
The Jangalis &
The Bolsheviks

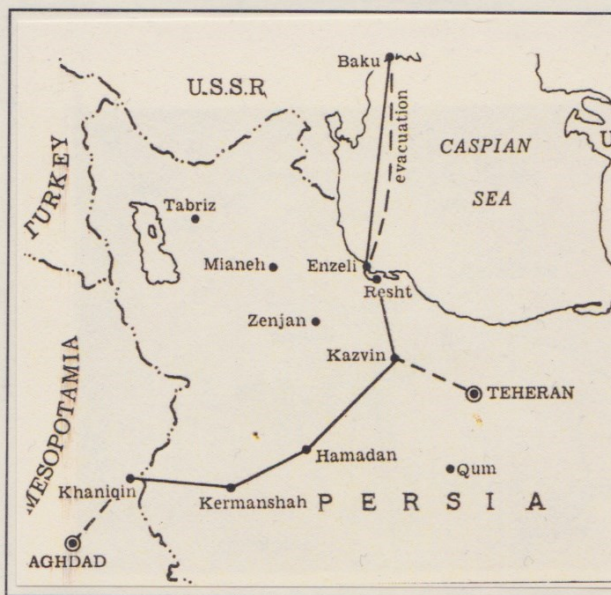
Introduction to the period 1918-21

Dunsterforce

The 1917 Russian Revolution's relations with surrounding areas were insecure. Persia recognized

Soon an anti-Russian 1918 that allowed British for invasion of former caucasian and Trans-caspian quest for oil. The dominant power and under Dunsterville. As wanted access to the oil in forces, named **DUNSTER-BAKU** to Persia in the were reorganized **NORPER-** policing in northern Persia In the Gilan province the German and Turkish as agents from Russia caused and Persian Government.

movement to become Socialist, but only to abandon it in 1921 for the need of food provided by the British.



lution had a great impact on Russia. Caucasus and left unprotected and Soviet Russia 14 Dec 1917.

cabinet was installed in troops to use Persian territory Russian territories, Trans-caspian areas (Turkmenia) in British now became the decided to invade Baku Turkey and Germany also Baku the Dunsterville's **FORCE**, had to return from middle of 1919. The forces **FORCE**. Its purpose was to that went on well into 1922.

Jangalis influenced by well as by Communists problems for both the Entente Soviet Russia supported the

Dunsterforce used **two types of censor** marks: a circular and a strait, the latter being elusive

Recht charity stamp

Dunsterforce
strait line
censor and
Recht relief
stamp.
Elusive
combination

Registered
letter sent
from Recht
July 1918
to Teheran
arriving
same month



In Teheran the authorities introduced "compulsory" **charity fee stamps** for relief purposes in 1918. Similar arrangements were made at **Tabriz** and **Recht**. Recht used the same design, the "Lion", as that of Teheran. The use of charity stamps at Recht were short lived probably due to the Jangali's occupation of Recht. And the Jangalis - of course - cashed in the relief money

Norperforce

N P F used for
policing purposes
1918-1920/21

North Persian Force censor

Norperforce rectangular censor in violet or black, size 56 x 17,5mm used also for mail being opened. It's reads **PASSED BY CENSOR/NORPERFORCE**. A lack seal "Bureau de la Poste Persane Rescht" and a mark for Rescht special registration.

Insured letter

Registered
insured letter
sent from
Rescht
13 Feb 1919
to Teheran
[no arrival
cancellation]
A Norperforce
censor in
violet on the
front

Historical note:

After the return to
Persia from the
failure at Baku
the British force,
Dunsterforce,
was broken up.
Most soldiers
Were absorbed
into the North
Persian Force
(Norperforce,
N P F). It was to
stay in Persia for
policing assign-
ment in the
northern
provinces
mainly against
the Jangalis



Dunsterforce label "opened by censor" applied with the 2nd type, a circled, censor



41 days for
delivery!

Could be due
to the war
circumstances
or or forced
delay.

Sent from Yeze
18 III 1919 to
Teheran.

Single rate 6ch

Opened by
Dunsterforce
elusive

III. 1918 - 1921

Persia war-theater
also after armistice

The Jangali Movement. Gilan

The 1917 Bolshevik
revolution changed the
cause for the Jangali

A nationalist movement turning socialist. Government and British forces together fighting them

The most important and profound nationalist movement ever in modern Iran, 1915 till 1921. Led by Mirza Kuchek Khan.

A censor "**PASSED CENSOR ZENJAN**" was used by the joint forces during November 1918 . Four recorded,



Possibly joint
Persian-British
censorship

From Tabriz
14 Nov 1918
to Teheran
28 November

While transiting
Zendjan, the
letter was
censored

Qasvin censor. Negative oval "censored" and "Opened by censor" label



Possibly joint
Persian-British
censorship

From Sirab
27 VII 1919
to Teheran
30 VIII 19
i e 33 days
for delivery.

The oval
Censor in
Use July-
August 1919

Historical note: The nationalist movement of the Jangalis in the Gilan province joined up with the Iranian Communist Party supported by the Bolsheviks in Russia as well as by German agents! The Jangalis created a **socialist republic, SSRI on 4th June 1920.**

The political implication of the Jangali movement led to the **Coup d'Etat on 21 February 1921** in Teheran and the rise of Reza Khan (Shah in 1926), the leader of the Cossack troops. So when SSRI occupied Recht, the main city of Gilan province, on 27 June 1920 and assisted the Bolshevik troops from Baku to occupy the port of Enzeli with the purpose to wipe out the White-Russian troops under Denekin, the Persian Government now under Reza Khan, newly appointed War Minister saw its chance to crush the rebellion. By August/September 1921 the SSRI republic was crushed by Reza Khan, the officer who had led the Cossacks, In 1926 he made himself Shah. Reza Shah Pahlavi.

Although it was part of the Socialist World Revolution it was ultimately deceived in 1921 by the Moscow Bolshevik Government due to its agreement with Great Britain in 1921 of non-interference. (in order to get food supplies during the civil war in Russia!)

III. 1918 - 1920
Persia as normal
in a mess

Bolshevism and the scramble for Oil

British interest in
monopolizing the
oil at Caspian Sea

British army censor #549 applied Recht - Teheran

High-valued insured mail

According to the 1916 New Postal Act, bank-notes, bills and title-deeds may be accepted as insured letters
Maximum of insurance 2500 tomans

Insured letters pay

- normal postage
- registration fee 12 ch
- 10 chahi for every 10 tomans insured or fraction thereof

Rates: The total
11 kr 19 ch incl
registration fee

Routes: From Recht
28 Feb 1920 to
Teheran 4 III 20

Markings: In m/s
the total amount
on the front

Red wax seal applie
of the post office

British Army
censor #549



Front



Size 75%



Red lack seal 100%

III. 1918 - 1921
WWI soon to end but
the fight for oil

The Turks fight for the Baku Oil

The Turks battling
the British in both
Azarbadjan & Persia

The Turks wants to reach Baku before the British in the quest for oil
Turkish censor "censor edilmistir" = has been censored applied



Opened for
controle by
The Turks

Sent from
Tabriz
15 VIII 18
to Isfahan
via Teheran

Mail was
exchanged
between
occupied and
Government
areas as usual

"PASSED BY BRITISH MILITARY CENSOR" in circle used in Hamadan
In black. Also found in violet



From Zenjan
6 June 1918
arriving
two daya
later to
Hamadan

A sunduq,
mail box,
mark of
Zenjan
Applied

Censor in
Violet
elusive

Reza Khan, Commandant of the Cossacks organized a Coup, 1921

The Chef of the Police of Teheran, General Westdahl, agreed to cooperate by not interfering
The Swede, Colonel Glerup, Commandant of the **Teheran Gendarmerie** also participated

The illegal overprinted issue to commemorate the Coup in June 1921

A limited number of the 1915 "Coronation issue" was ovptd "21. FEV 1921" in June 1921

The Post Master, Molitor, a Belgian, refused to recognize this totally unnecessary ovpt
7 postally used parcel docs and probably less than 20 covers exist, all properly used postally



**Registered
letter**
from
Teheran
21 VI 1921
to
Tabriz
arriving
? VI 21

Rate: 15 ch
June .21 -
Nov 21
Reg. fee:
1916 - 1921

Noted that the Gendarmerie and the Cossack troops cooperated in the Coup!

Reza Khan (Pahlavi) and Agha Seyed Zia ed-Din, the two masters of the coup

Colonel **Glerup, Swedish Gendarm**, Commandant of the Teheran Gendarmerie participated in the Coup and is seen as no 5 from left among the Coup-makers on this unused ppc



Oil Worth Fighting for & Communism against!

A bi-lingual censor in Russian and Turkish used during the short-lived independency of Azarbadjan, ADR, - Mussavat government - 1918-April 1920. There is no known "history" for this remarkable type.* Six covers recorded of which this cover here is **the only recorded originating from Persia**. The censor was most probably applied at Baku. British troops had left.

There is **another unrecorded** censor in m/s "**Opened by/Censor/** and underlined" and not known where it was applied!

The octagonal, violet, censor No 550 is British Field Force and used by Norperforce that took over the Dunsterforce organisation in 1918? Mail was censored but not opened often. The slip had different size. The one here: "OPENED BY CENSOR" in English and Persian has size 110 x 38mm and is rarely seen

A letter with 4 different censors is proof of very difficult times

Letter posted from the port of Enzeli in a letterbox and addressed to Paris in 1919



*

The Censor in Russian reads
ПРОСМОТРЕНО
организацией по
борьбе с
контр-революцией

In English
Checked (looked
through) by
(instrumental)
organisation for
struggle against
counter-revolution

In Old Turkish
(Arabic letters)
Similar translation

Posted in a letter-
box at Enzeli and
cancelled

Sundug
= Letter box
Enzeli



Rate: 12 ch (overpaid by 3 ch)

Route: Enzeli 17 Oct 1919 by ship to Baku. There is no further indication of the route but should probably have gone by train to Batumi and then by ship via Constantinople or Odessa

The Transcaucasian countries, "independent" between May 1918 and April 1920, were quite unstable fighting Turkish & Russian troops while the Western powers wanted to keep the oil in Baku as well as fighting Communist groups supported by Soviet Russia. So the British decided to try to keep the oil and the independence of Azarbadjan. On 27th of April 1920 Communist troops entered Baku and set up a Communist government. In Persia at the same time Communist forces assisted also in the Gilan uprising. On 12 March 1922 the three Caucasus countries formed a federation under Soviet Union.

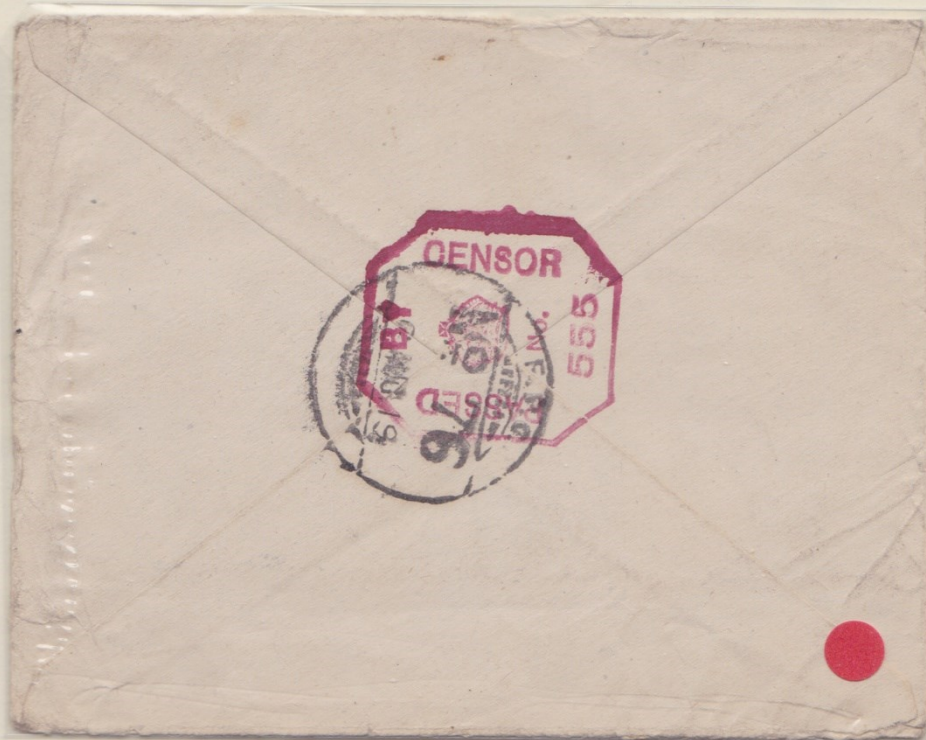
1918 - 21

Caucasus, Baku area
still war theater

British forces heading for or protecting Baku area and the oil

Dunsterforce &
Norperforce fights for
the oil in Baku area.

Indian FPO 76 used in Kazvin, Persia, on 9 AUG 1919 together with the British octagonal censor
No 555 (No 549 -560 designated Persia and Persia related troop movements
Octagonal censor 555 is recorded two times



OAS cover sent during the campaign either from or transiting Kazvin 9 August 1918/19
Addressed to Bedford, UK. No further markings. Free of charge.

Indian FPO 81 was attached to British 39th Brigade and it travelled – starting in
Mesopotamia in 1916. In July 1918 it moved to Hamadan area.
Together with No 541 octagonal censor



O.A.S. letter sent from Baku 11 May 1919 as per FPO 81 and addressed to Bombay
arriving 10 June 1919 (both backstamped)

Persia war-theater also after armistice

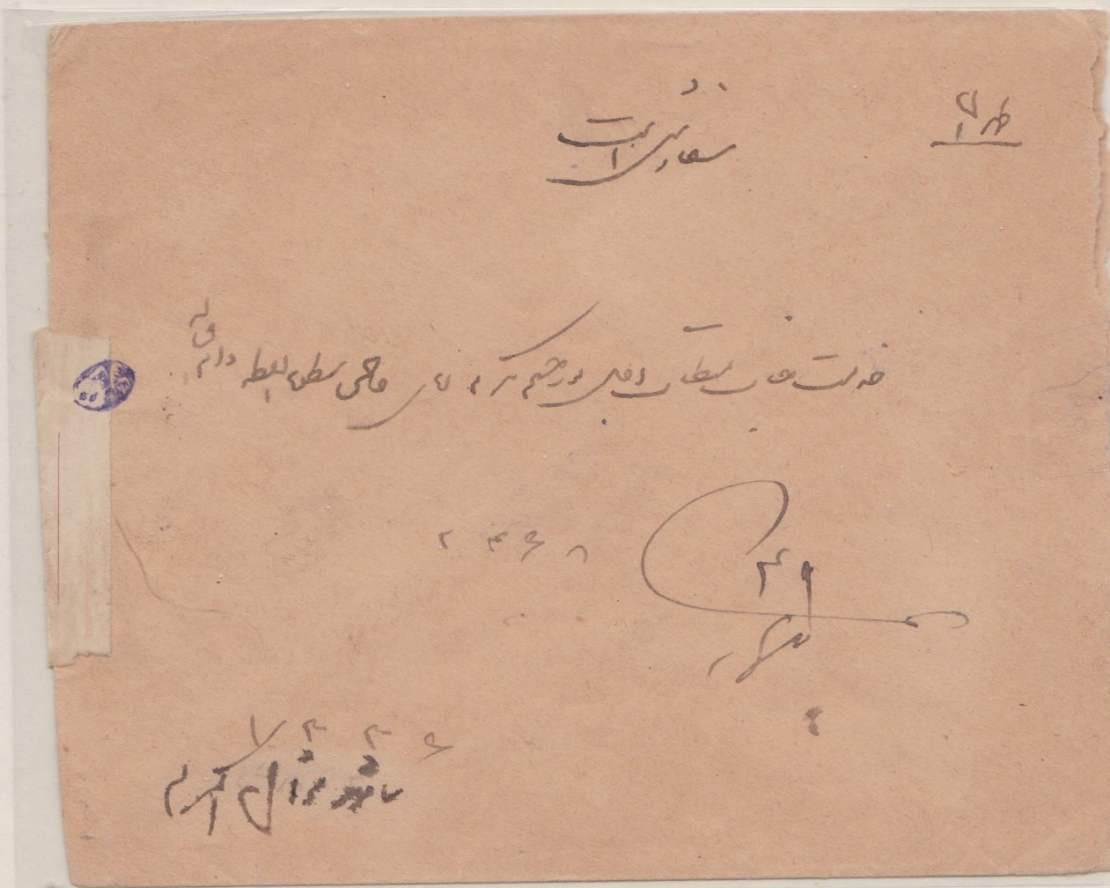
North Persian Force
British troops in
Kazvin area

Norperforce censor used recorded Opened and closed by label. Only recorded on a five covers

Violet censor
across
white label
A few recorded
with label



Tabriz was occupied at times by the Turks and at times by the Russians. In this case it was in between.
A very small violet censor was applied at Tabriz (Bazaar)



Censored
enlarged

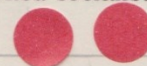


K

1918 - 21

Persia war-theater
also after armistice

Soviet Socialist Republic of Iran. SSRI

Jangali movement
turned socialist

A Jangali cover with 4 different censors plus labels

From Gilan. First opened and closed by the **Jangali**. When the letter reached the "border" it was again opened by the **Government** authorities. The "**blackened out**" obliterator was applied on top of the Jangali censor BEFORE the next large label was put on. The small white label was put on BEFORE the circled **no "4"** **Government** censor was applied!

The only Jangali cover recorded with 4 different censors applied



Mirza Kuchek Khan

Started as a Nationalist movement in 1918 in the province of Gilan, north western Persia and ended as a Bolshevik state by the end of 1921 when the movements charismatic leader Mirza Kuchek Khan was defeated by Reza Khan. He died in the mountains. The Jangalis were a pain in the neck also for the British as they were a real threat to the Shah's regime.

No other political movement or rebellion in the modern history of Persia had ever been so successful in creating a state within the state. They were not that far from being successful!

Propaganda and censor
cachet of the Jangalis
Soviet Republic

In all correspondence during that period in 1920 the Jangalis used a cachet. As was a long standing practice in Persia the postal authorities and rebellions exchanged mail bags. So incoming mail from the Jangali State would then receive a black cachet by the Government authorities blackening out the Jangal propaganda cachet. As the Jangalis in the south were surrounded by the Norperformance a British censor no 4 was most often applied as well.

From occupied
Recht 27 VI 20
to Julfa- Isfahan
arriving 10 VII 20
via Teheran 3 VII 20

Sent from Recht 27 June 1920, transited Teheran 3 July and reached Isfahan 10 July (blue)
Single rate 6 chahis. The blue "Djoulfah-Isfahan NO 2" is elusive

III. 1918 - 1921

Persia war-theater
also after armistice

Soviet Socialist Republic of Iran, SSRI

Internal squabbles
among the socialist
groups

The Gilan (SSRI) cachet across the postage stamp. 2 recorded

The Jangali cachet overprinted diagonally on the stamp. At the "border" the cover was opened and sealed. A Governmental military censor no "4" applied



The cover
was
cancelled
Recht
Sabzemeidan
(unrecorded)
about
19 June 1920
and addressed
to Teheran

Arrived
25 June 1920

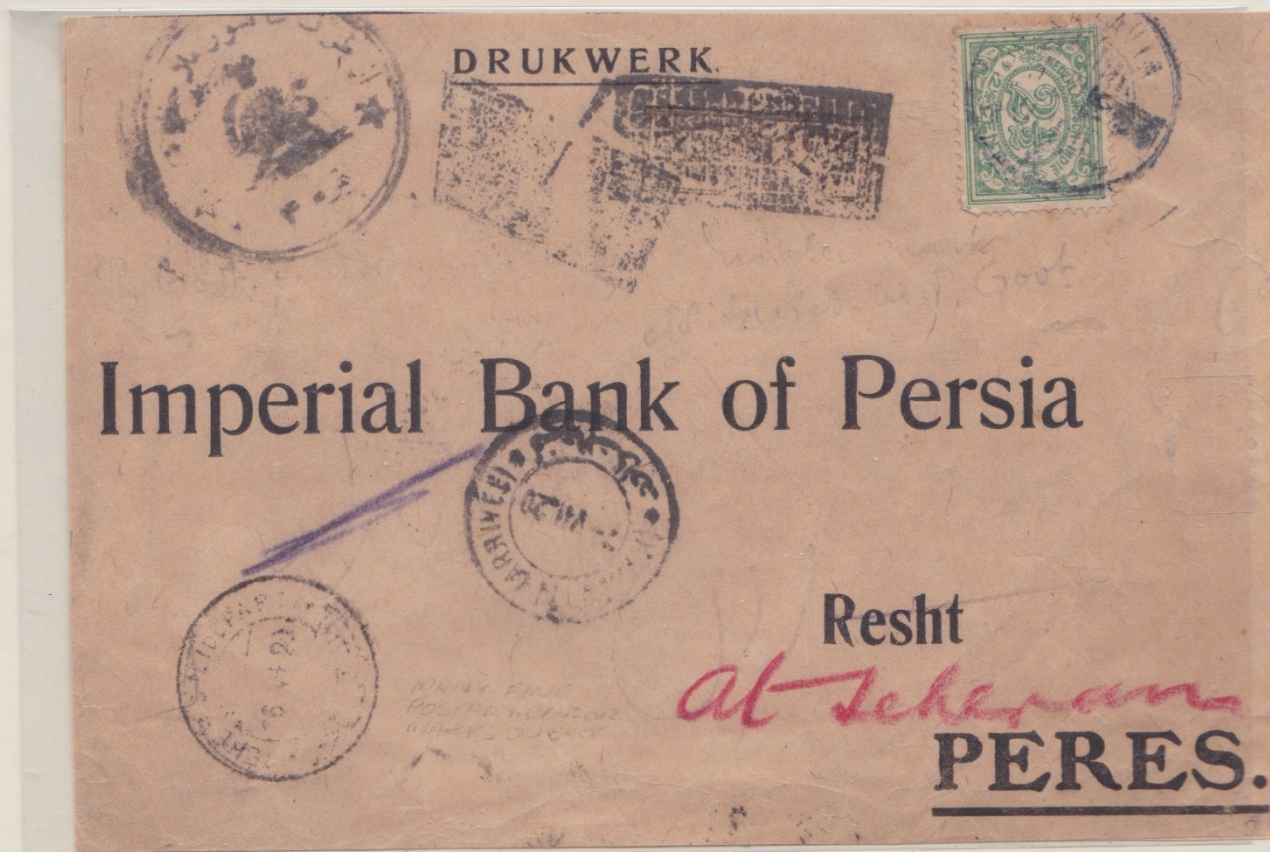
Government policy to blacken out the rebell's propaganda cachet. 6 recorded

Incoming

Redirected out of SSRI

Letter from
Batavia
May 1920
to the
Imperial Bank
of Persia in
Recht but
redirected to
bank HQ
in Teheran
as bank
office had
closed

The Gilan
Cachet
blackened
out by the
governmental
forces across
the border



III. 1918 - 21
Persia war theater
also after armistice

Iran Soviet Socialist Republic

Flirtations with
socialism

Astara Bolshevik censor (The only recorded such)

There are several censors attributed to the Gilan campaign
Other censors shown here are: the Gilan and #4 Persian Government



Rates: 6ch single

Route: From Astara (border town with Russia) 23 June 1920 addressed to Teheran

Note: As customary mail was exchanged between the Government and Rebellion groups in Persia

The only recorded Astara Bolshevik Censor

The Communists in Persia and in particular in the Gilan Republic got a lot of help from the Russian communists



Enlarged photocopy of the Astara censor

A rectangular Gilan mark/censor was applied and found either alone on the envelope or across the postage stamp (rare), and also used as a real censor by striking partly the closing label. Is recorded used between early June and August i e **two months**. The Persian Cossack troops belonging to the Government occupied Recht on the 25th Aug. 1920

At the border of Gilan Governmental forces and "Norperforce", blocked the outlets. All mail from Gilan were **censored** by #4. The Gilan censor was at times blackened out by a black rectangular by ink across the Jangalis own rectangular mark but not on this occasion

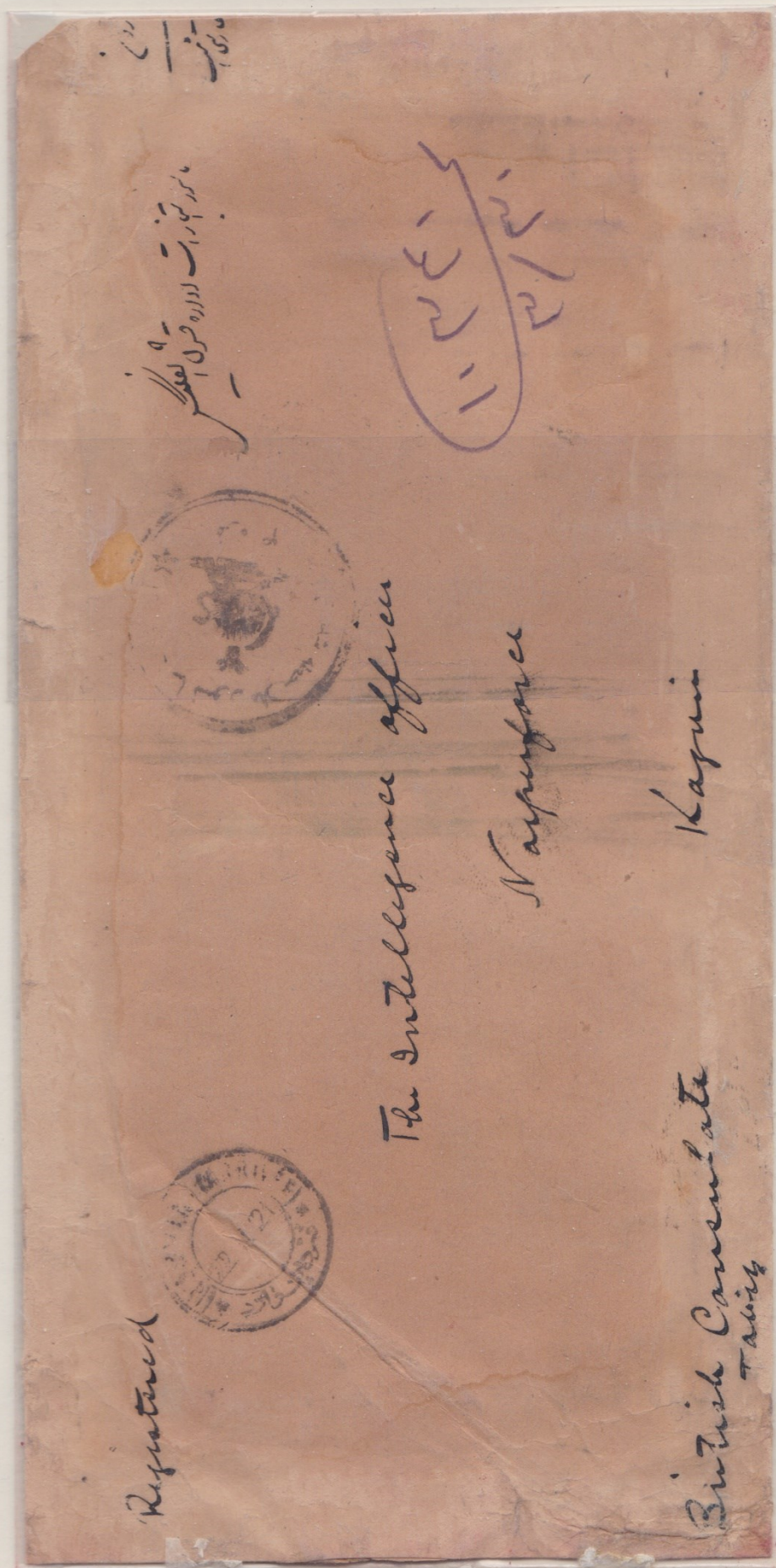
III. 1918 - 1921
Persia war-theater
also after armistice

Persian forces fighting Jangali

Government Forces
fighting the Jangali

"As Tarafe Censure Molahezah Shod no 4" = Passed by Government censor

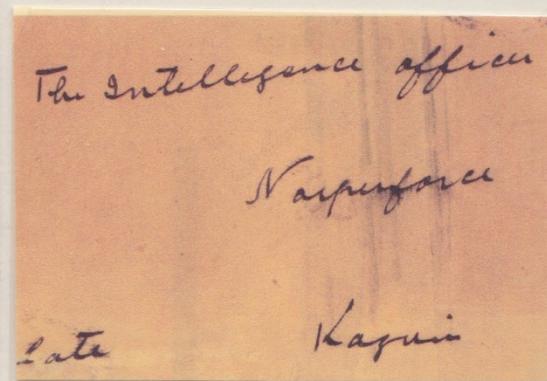
Exist numbers 3, 4, 5, 8, 13, 15, and 16, used between March 1920 and February 1921



Registered
letter to
Norperforce
at Kazvin.
Sent from
Tabriz
9 Feb 1921.
The censor
has
number "4"

Rate
3 Kr 6 chahis
on reverse.

Incoming
mail to
Norperforce
very elusive



III. 1918 - 1921
Persia war-theater
also after armistice

Iran Soviet Socialist Republic, ISSR

Jangali movement
turned socialist.
Russian support

Russian/Soviet marine based at Enzeli (ISSR)
to support the Jangali republic

The **only recorded** proof of Russian military **presence** and the only addressed **to abroad from ISSR**

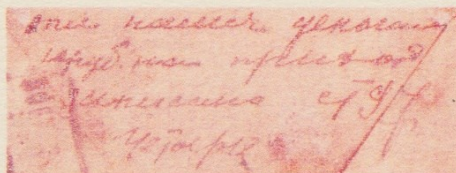
The cover is stampless because it was Russian Field Post. However on the back it is stated in m/s that the postage incl. registration was 10 rubles paid in cash

Note: Although Persia was not renamed IRAN until 1934. The Gilan Republic called itself "Iran"

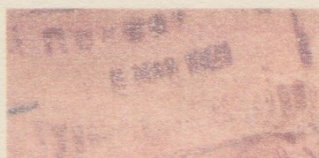


Certificate
RPSL

1. The Cyrillic letter "И" in **И.С.С.Р.** on the front right as part of the senders address refers to Iran Soviet Socialist Republic, ISSR, (of Gilan province at the Caspian Sea in Persia)
2. Addressed to Baku, **А.С.С.Р.** = Azarbadjan Soviet Socialist Republic
3. The manuscript notation on the back states that the [postage] was paid in cash 10 rubles which was the fee incl registration. (See pic. Reduced)



4. Two different rectangular markings, POKONT is short for Pochtovaya kontora (post office), No.162. dated 7 May 1921 - followed by UPRASVYaZ' KASPMORA, or Caspian Sea Communications Administration.
5. MAYBE the abbreviation "OTD" (for otделение - branch office or section)
6. Arrival mark on the back states 8 May 1921 (See pic. Reduced)



The detailed information have been given by Prof H Weinert and A Epstein of ROSSICA, USA

The ultimate before complete disappearance. Own postage stamps!! Three recorded



Postage stamp
and Seal of the
"Soviet Republic"

In May/June 1921
this rebellion
republic when had
only about three
more months to
survive **rebellion**
postage stamps
of five
denominations
were issued

Three covers are
recorded. This
cover bears a 3ch
Gilan rebellion
stamp

Sent from Enzeli
on 30 VIII (1921)
and arrived Recht
31 VIII 1921
m/s 1339 = lunar
calendar) either
uncancelled
or without postage
stamp as the 3ch
stamp may have
been put at Recht

The official document
shows the **seal of**
the Gilan Soviet
Republic.
It does not belong
to the cover.

During the Pahlavi
rule it became very
dangerous to
own any sort of
documents including
mail related to this
Soviet style
independent Republic
and people preferred
not to keep such.

The **only** recorded sea
on document

IV. 1921 - 1924

Reza Khan raises to power

The Persian Cossack Brigade

The Brigade's units spread out. Official mail very elusive

Boroujerd & Zendjan units seals

The Cossack Brigade's units were spread out to fight primarily the SSRI/Gilan/Jangali republic which lasted till the end of 1921. However, units remained in the areas for some time before the Cossack Brigade was disbanded



Boroujerd seal

Sent 24 XII 1921
to Teheran
arriving
6 January 1922

Single rate 6ch

The unit's seal
was applied

In total only 5
official Cossack
letters are
recorded.

All the 5 known
are from the
time when the
Brigade was
under British
command

Three of them
are shown here

Zendjan seal

Sent from
Zendjan
? XII 1921 to
Teheran
arriving
8 Jan 1922



IV. 1921 - 1924
 Russias political
 weapon a long time

Soviet Socialist Republic of Iran

The Shah's own force
 now w British support
 a major military force

The Persian "Russian" Cossack Brigade's cleaning operations

The Cossack Brigade were spread out to fight primarily the SSRI/Gilan/Jangali republic which lasted till the end of 1921.
 However, units remained in the areas before the Cossack Brigade emerged into the new national army

Recht Cossack Unit official Envelope and with seal

This official
 cover
 originates
 from Recht
 at Gilan as
 per violet
 hand stamp.

Sent from
 Recht
 8 XII 1921
 to Teheran

Single rate
 6 chahis



Below

Part of the
 front scanned
 showing pre-
 printed official
 Cossack enve-
 lope

The Cossack Brigade

Ppc
 depicting
 the Cossack
 Brigade
 Sent
 19 Feb 1912
 (per m/s)
 to
 Brussel

In the text
 the writer
 includes
 the
 mentioning
 of the new
 Swedish
 officers
 to Persia
 for the
 Gendarmerie



Téhéran, La brigade des Cosacques.

Loose frontier between Turkestan and Khorasan

Up till 1923 the situation in Central Asia was very unstable. The Civil War in Russia/Soviet had just ended. The Bolsheviks had lured over some local leaders into their fold. Yet there were self-described national leaders, Muslim separatists as well as Turkish Pan-Islamism in the form of the Basmachi Movement under Enver Pasha. In 1922 the Turkestan Federal Republic was formed by dictate from Moscow

Mail communication was sporadic. Still now and then mail did get through by using not normal mail routes.

This letter originated at Chernjajev, now in Kazakstan, as per the registration mark. Cancelled at Chernjajev Serdarja on 5 10 22 (Julian)
There are several unreadable postmarks. One distinct is Lotfabad ? X 22 on the Persian side in Khorasan, and Teheran, the destination,
with a "Teheran (arrive)/5 XI 22. Total rate 84 Rubel 6 kopek

Lutfabad seems to have been an un-official exchange office



Any Parcel post redirected to another country is extremely seldom seen

Sent from
Teheran
via Buchire
to Cairo.
Redirected
SE (19)24
via
Alexandria
Foreign Parcels Post
8 IX 24
to
Stamboul
date uncertain
One Egyptian
Stamp missing

Diplomacy, Trade & Commerce

Persian Consular Post Office. Baku. Special large cancellation

Azərbaycan independent 1918- (April 1920 turned Communist) December 1922

DELEGATION FINANCIERE DE PERSE in Feb. 1920

The only recorded related to this official delegation

Head of letter: My of Foreign Affairs. Visa Department of Iran Gov. Caucasus, Tiflis
Addressed to Financial Department of Gilan

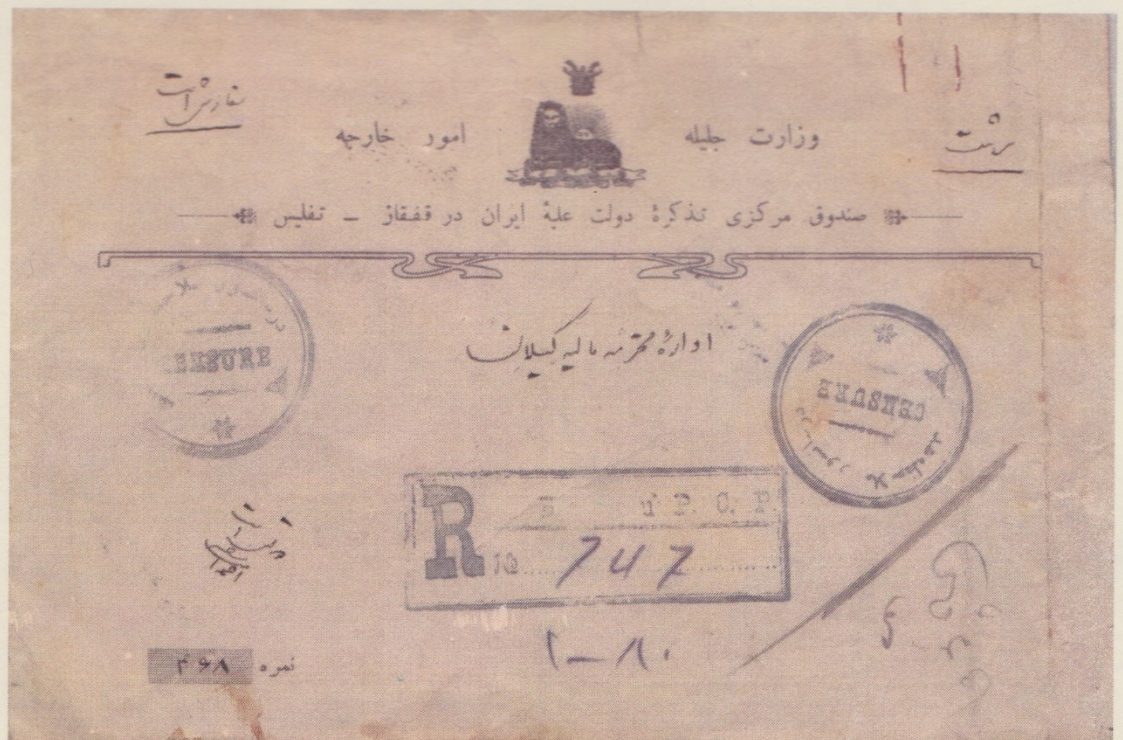


Registered to Gilan
Rate: stamp missing

Sent late Feb 1920
from Baku by courier
to Enzeli by ship arr:
29 II 20 and forwarded
to Recht in Gilan arr.
1 III 20

Censurs
Persian Gov. censor
used at Baku

At Enzeli/Recht a
NORPERFORCE
550 octagonal censor
applied



II. 1914 - 18

Caucasus war theater
after armistice

Diplomacy, Trade & Commerce

Caucasus in total
turmoil as a result
of Russian civil war

Persian Consular Post Office. Baku

Azərbaycan, Armenia, Georgia, independent between 1918-1923

Persian postage stamps, an obliterator **Postes Consulaires Persanes Bacou** and censor were introduced
By sea to Enzeli. January 1920. The **earliest recorded** mail from this Persian mission

Extraordinary Mission Imperial Government of Persia in Caucasia 1919-20. Cachet in Persian

Registered,
cachet reads
No 134 (back)
Departure
date not
but receiving
date in
Teheran is
10 Jan 1920

Foreign rate
12 chahis

**registration
fee:**
12 chahis

Nonperformance
censor
no 550
was applied
at Kazvin



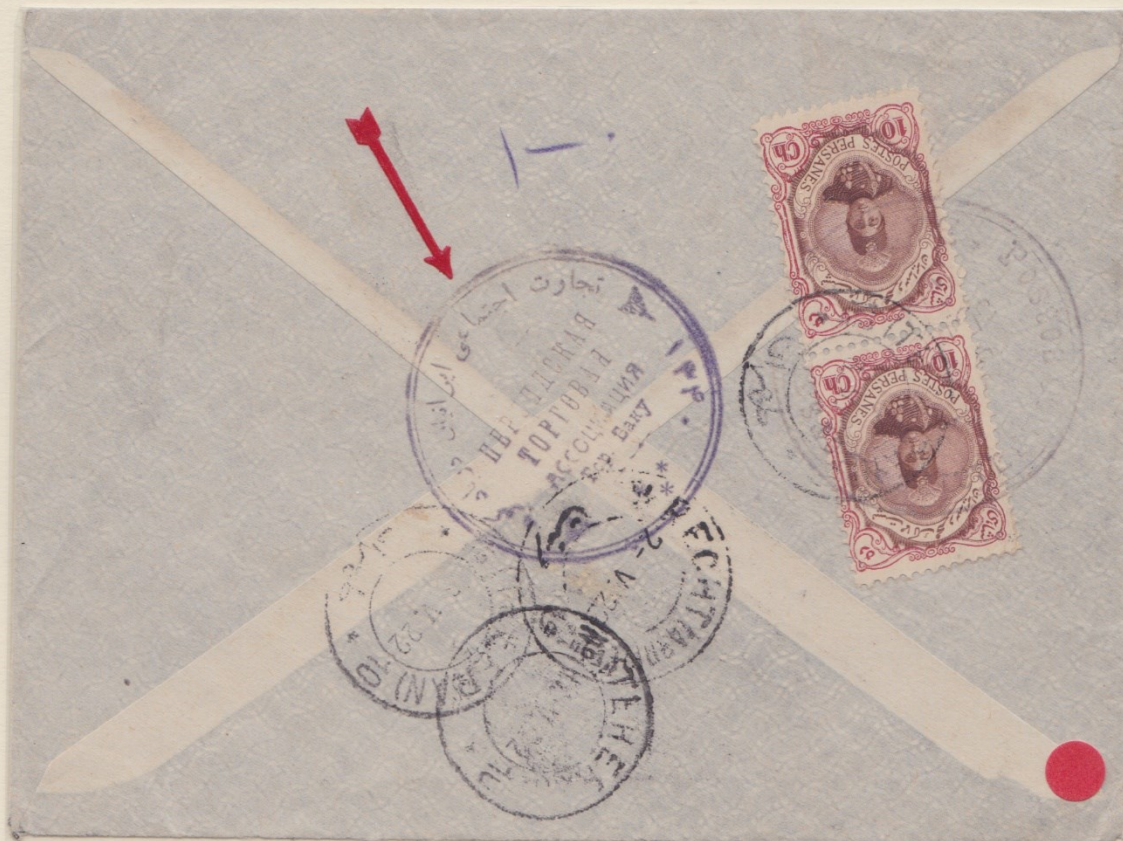
**After the Communist take-over of Baku 28th April 1920 mail communications
with Persia were interrupted till 1922**

Violet cachet of the Persian Trade Association of Baku. The **only recorded** on mail

To Teheran

Departure
Date from
Baku not
Known.
Transit via
Recht 2 V 22
and Teheran
to Chahroud
12 V 22
Redirected to
Teheran
Arrival date
blurred

Rates:
1 Kran for
1st weight
class
(Aug 1921-
Sep 1925)



IV. 1921 - 1924

Reza Khan raises to Power

Caucasus "independent"!

Caucasian countries get "independence" from Soviet Russia

Registered letter from Azarbadjan in 1923

As the traditional mail exchange between Baku and Enzeli by sea had been discontinued mail between Azarbadjan and Persia had to go by train via Djulfa



From Baku 11 September 1923 by train (Baku voksal) via Djulfa exchange office and via Tabriz (faint cancellation) to Kazvin

History: The three Caucasian republics under Russia, Armenia, Georgia and Azarbadjan were independent between 1917 and 1923. In June 1922 after all the three countries had installed with Soviet "support" communist regimes they formed the **Trans-Caucasian Soviet Republic**

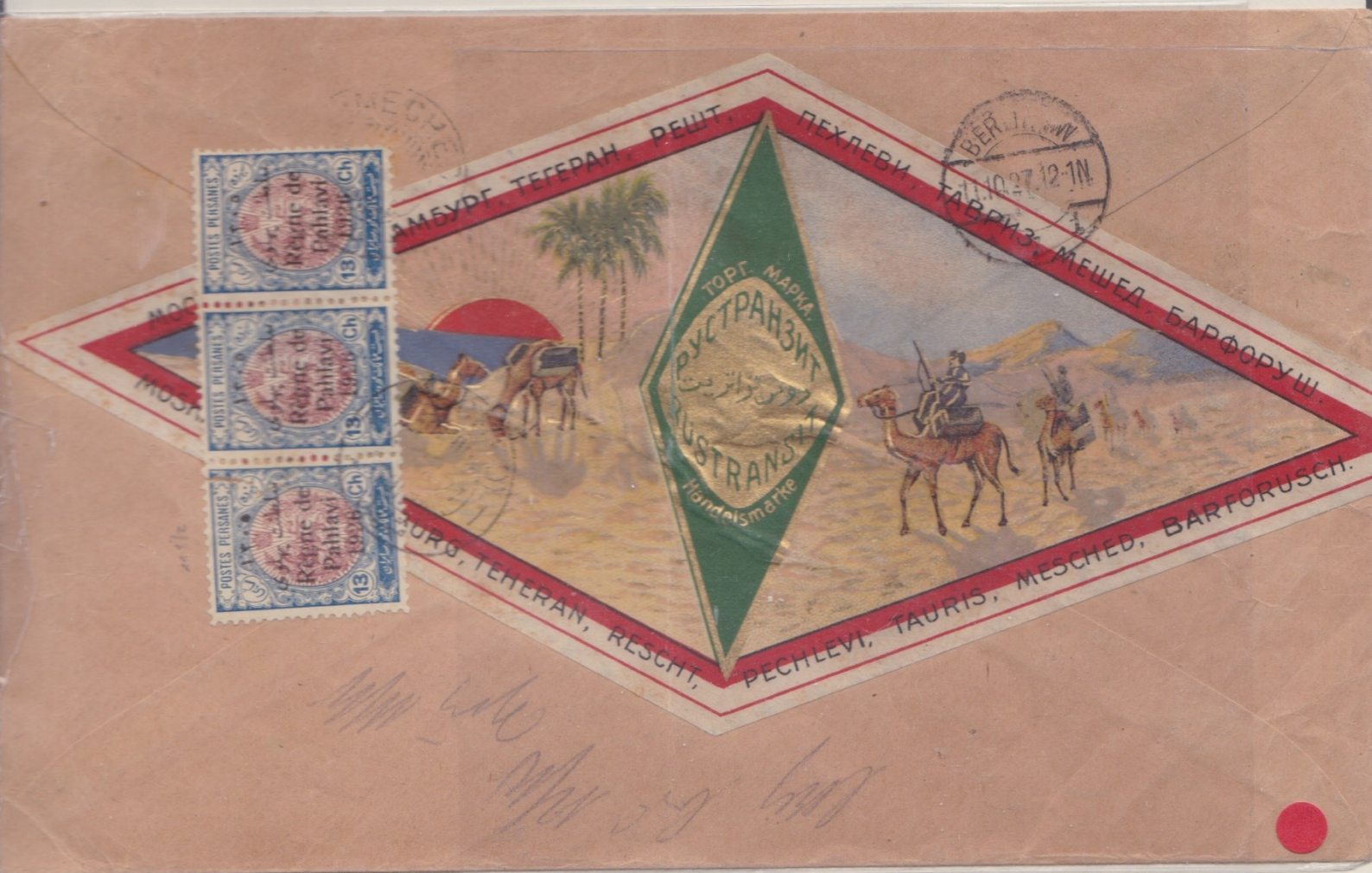
Rustransit

Soviet Transport Company. Created about 1923

Used for transporting commercial goods between Persia and Soviet Union

In Persia Rustransit offices were established in the north: at Teheran, Tabriz, Resht, Bandar Pahlavi (Enzeli), Meched and Barfrouch. Main offices in the Soviet Union were in Moscow and St. Petersburg

Rustransit had their own labels of different sizes of the design



Rate: 2nd weight unit 15 chahis **Reg fee** 15 c

From Meched in September 1927 to Berlin, arriving 11 October

Diplomacy, Trade & Commerce

The new Soviet Russian regime interested in trade but only on its own terms!

The new treaty between Russia/Soviet and Persia in February 1921 included commercial relations

Торговое Представительство С. С. С. Р. в Персии
Représentation Commerciale de L'U. de R. S. S. en Perse Téhéran

Italia

Recommandée

Milano

TEHERAN
R.N. 9282

Via Cusani 13

Rappresentanza in Italia per
il Commercio Estero Della U.R.S.S.

№ 38/50, 38/51

Торговое Представительство С. С. С. Р. в Персии
Représentation Commerciale de L'U. de R. S. S. en Perse Téhéran

Reg. letter
from the Soviet
Commercial
Representative
In Teheran
sent
5 5 26
to Milano
6 6 26
arriving
7 6 26

Foreign rate

15 chahi

Registration

Fee 15 chahi

(both new

July 1925 -

21. 6 1930)

Reg letter from
Turkestan and
Poltoratsk, Russia
The passport dep.
Sent to Ministry of
Finance, Dep of
Incomes in Teheran
Reverse: Handstamp.
Cash Desk for
Turkestans passport

From Poltoratsk
but cancelled at
Ashabad 8 11 25
sent via Gaudan
(m/s) to Teheran
Rate: 28 kopek

Poltoratsk
№ 155

ТЕГЕРАН - ПЕРСИЯ.

через Гаудан.

МИНИСТЕРСТВО ФИНАНСОВ.

Т. Ибрагимович.

دفتر گذرنامه ترکستان

V. 1925 - 30
Reza Shah creates
a new dynasty

Pahlavi Dynasty shows it might!

Ex-Shahs head black-
ened out. Reza Shah
proves his power



British & Soviet Support for Pahlavi Dynasty

First with British followed by Soviet assistance Reza Khan (later Reza Shah) could consolidate his power and in 1926 establish the new Pahlavi dynasty. While waiting for new issue to be delivered stock of Ahmed Shah 1924 issue were used for a short period in various provincial post offices. The face of shah defaced by cork obliterator or pieces of paper. Covers scarce.

Registered bank letter from Hamadan in May 1926 to Teheran.

One stamp missing. Remaining representing 20 Kran 13 chahis

This is by far the highest denominations recorded on defaced items during