



## Persia

Björn Sohrne

### Selection of rarities from five different exhibits

Early Persia Postal History (till 1900)  
The Years of Turbulence (1902–1930)  
India and Persia (till 1930)  
Russia and Persia (till 1930)  
Persia Postal Stationery. Qajar period

*These exhibits have together received 14 international Gold*

*Early Persia Postal History and Persia Postal Stationery each also Large Gold*

There are many rarities (1-3 known) in Persian postal history that belong to three main areas: the strictly Persian starting 1875, the Russian and the Indian starting as early as the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with their opening of post offices in Persia. The reasons for the many rarities on documents are several.

**I** - during the Qajar reign, i.e. till 1926, **about half of the 600 issued stamps** were provisional. In addition there were 8 rudimentary printed rebellion stamps and more than 30 definitive stamps overprinted by rebellion groups issued.

**II** - a number of high to very high face value stamps were issued because the postal services provided insurance when sending money or other valuables. Most of these stamps are rarely found on envelopes or even waybills.

**III** - Russian mail from Persia from the 19<sup>th</sup> is very elusive as only three covers are known of which two are shown here. Further, Russian mail from early 20<sup>th</sup> century, such as field force, censors, Caspian ship mail is equally rare though with some exceptions.

**IV** - early mail related to the Indian post offices in Persia, are in many cases very elusive. 30 recorded items related to Hendjam (1913), Chahbahar (1913), Maidan-i-Naphtun (1916/17) are recorded in total.

In my collection of 30 years of collecting there are about 15 different stamps that so far only one has been recorded on document. Some of these are shown here. It is a pleasure and an honor to have this opportunity to show the distinguished members of the Royal Philatelic Society, London a philatelic area that is on the whole still relatively unknown.



### **Dr. Mohamed Dadkhah**

(1910 – 1980) Iran

Dr. Dadkhah was the most renowned expert on the stamps of Iran and Bushire. His exhibit of Iran won a Grand Award at PHILYMPIA in London in 1970.

Dadkhah's book Emissions du Type "Lion" de l'Iran 1865-1879 (1960) was awarded the Crawford medal in 1961. This book also bears the English title, The Lion Stamps of Persia and is written in French, English and Farsi. Dr. Dadkhah was the founder and life president of the Iranian Philatelic Society. He signed the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists in 1965.

He was also a member of the Royal Philatelic Society London.

**Dedication:** This exhibit of mine is dedicated to Dr Mohamed Dadkhah who is the by far most distinguished and well-known philatelist of Persia philately. Member of the Royal Philatelic Society, London as well as other philatelic societies.

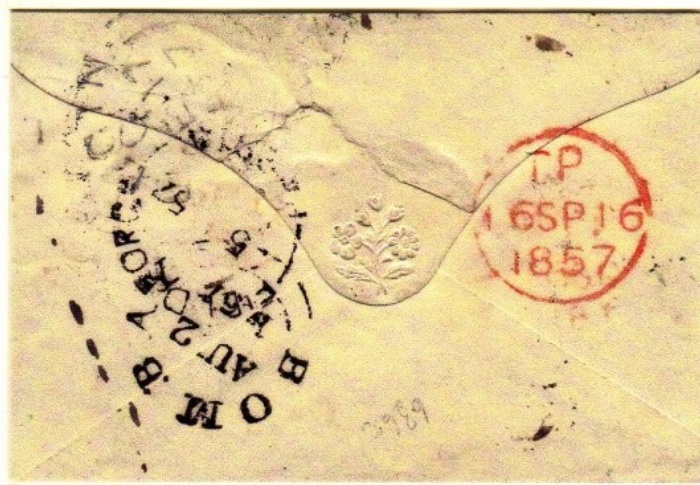
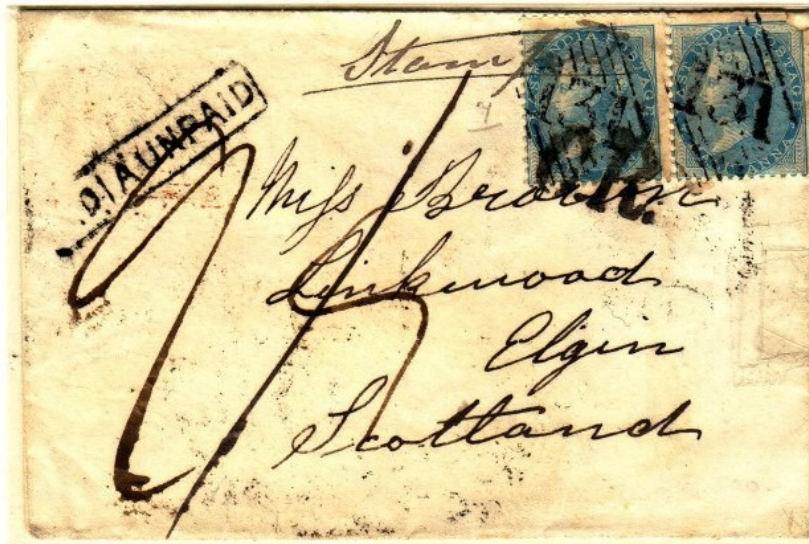


**\*A frivolous affair led to an unnecessary war!**

Due to the tension between India and Afghanistan a British expeditionary force was sent out from India and occupied ports along Persia littoral

A postmark, #131, and two circle obliterations "**FIELD FORCE/PERSIA/date/Pd(or/Bg)**" either a red "**Pd**" = **postage paid** or a black "**Bg**" = **bearing**

**Letter sent in July 1857 to Scotland via Bombay. Only paid to India**



The letter was sent from the Gulf on 5 July 1857 to Scotland via Bombay received 2<sup>nd</sup> of August 1857

The black "bearing" Field Force canceller was applied, back stamped, and in Bombay the boxed "India unpaid" was added. Both were applied to indicate that the recipient would have to pay as well, in this case 2/4d. **Rate to India 1a prepaid**

The "CR" stands for the Scottish "Caledonian Railways"

The Field Force was granted a **concession** by the Indian authorities of paying the **inland rate** for mail **to India**. It was common to send non franked mail within the Indian mail system

An Indian field post office accompanied the Force and **introduced** in Persia both the first **postage stamp**, as well as the use of a **canceller**, numbered "131". This number was later allotted to Billimora within the Bombay Circle in India.

Ultimately three P.O.s were established, the first at Bushire in December 1856, the second at Mohammerah in March 1857, and the third on the Island of Kharg in June 1857. There is no way to distinguish mail from any of these places unless it is stated in manuscript in the accompanying letter.

\* One of the worst scandals ever in the British diplomacy took place in Teheran where the Hon. Charles Murray was the Envoy of the British Mission. Whether he had an affair or not with a female relative to the Royal court, his obnoxious behaviour led to broken relationships between the two countries and ultimately to war in 1856.



**Introduction:** Russia had since long been trading with northern Persia. Before 1877 there was only rudimentary postal services in the interior and no services with abroad. Thus the need for a Russian post office in the Persian province Azarbadjan. A consular post office was opened in the 1860s. Three letters are known. The earliest from 1867. When Persia joined the General Postal Union in 1877, Russia was requested to close its post office.

In 1909 there was a constitutional crisis in Persia which at the time of the Great Game had as a consequence that Russia occupied northern Persia. The democratic movements were anathema to the Tsar who tried to support the reinstatement of the deposed Shah.

In early 1914 the consular post office at **Tabriz** was reopened. In addition a post office was opened in the north east at the trading center **Gambus-e-Qabuz** by the Russian postal administration.

Noted that the Russian postal services in Persia never had any relationships with their Persian counterpart in contrast to the Indian postal services in Persia littoral.

### Early incoming letter 1858

A Russian Scientific Expedition\* to  
Khorasan, eastern Persia, and  
Afghanistan



A 10-kopek Russian postal stationery envelope sent from Tiflis as per mark, a double oval reading "Iz Tiflisa Otravleno Djulfa, and Tabriz to Teheran"

\*This Russian scientific expedition had as purpose to penetrate into Khorasan and western parts of Afghanistan



Addressed to Tabriz, northern Persia and annotated to be forwarded to Rescht

The only Russian forwarding letter in Persia



Letter from Russia franked 10 kopek sent via Tiflis in Georgia and addressed to a Greek merchant at Tabriz and then forwarded to Rescht. M/s via Tiflis, Georgia. Before reaching the border town Julfa, the letter went via the nearby Naschichervan 23 ? 1861 (Julian calendar)

There is strong reason to believe that the Russian Mission at Tabriz, capital of the Persian province of Azarbadjan, also assisted in receiving mail to be forwarded to other places by a forwarding agency possibly as early as the 1850s. However, the Russian Mission had not by 1861 yet established its consular post office it seems



Russian postal services in Northern Persia pre-dated the Persian postal services which started only in 1876 and it closed down in 1877 when Persia joined the UPU. Three letters are recorded, two of which are displayed here

A rectangular marking "TABRIZ + date" in Russian, assumed to have been used by the Russia Consular Postal services

**Letter sent 1867 to Tiflis, Georgia. It is the oldest of the three recorded letters**



Folded letter from Tabriz dated 14 August 1867 to Tiflis in Georgia, Russia. The letter went via the border town of Julfa, franked Russia 10 kopek for external rate, of 1864-65 issue and cancelled truncated "870". Whether the postmark was applied already in Tabriz or only at Julfa is still debated

The **rectangular obliterator** in Russian reads "TABRIZ 19 AUG 1867" (Julian calendar), together with a Cyrillic straight line "DESPATCHED FROM JULFA 24 AUG 1867" in Russian

The Russian mail services in Persia never developed any relationships with the Persian postal system like the Indian which existed between 1864 and 1923 in Persia. Postal services were available from the Russian Consulate in Tabriz maybe as early as the late 1850's. It is almost certain that this post office served at least the business community. The Persian authorities requested to have the post office closed when it joined the UPU



I.c 1877

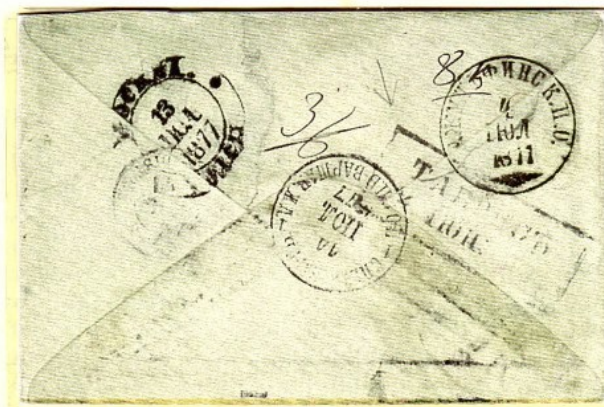
## Russian Consular Postal Service

Rectangular marking in Russian "TABRIZ + date"

Below is the latest of the three recorded letters from the Tabriz Consular Post Office. It was sent two months before Persia joined the UPU, September 1877. Note that rate and Julfa postmark differ from the first letter

### Letter to France June 1877

Single foreign rate had lowered to 8 kopek



The lower part is a photocopy of the back

Private letter using the Russian Consular postal services at Tabriz, as per the rectangular mark, and sent in June 1877 to Versailles, France. The letter was cancelled at the border station Julfa, Russia, on 4 July 1877 (Julian). Then it proceeded to Moscow as per transit cancellation 13 July, then by train Moscow-Warzawa on the 14<sup>th</sup> July. In France the letter received an entry mark at Enquelines on 29 July (Gregorian)

To comply with the UPU rules, the consular post office was closed when Persia joined UPU in September 1877  
It reappeared about 1914 and closed again in 1918

The exhibitor believes 8-kopek postage stamps were sold by the Consular P O at Tabriz but not cancelled until the letter reached Julfa, Russia.



**Route:** Tabriz-Urmia (both Persia)-Erzerum-Trebizonde (Turkey)-Konstantinople

**Franked letter using French adhesives to France in 1862. Four recorded from Persia**

Mail was taken to Trebizonde by courier but probably by private arrangement. The rate to France was 50 centimes



How the distribution of French adhesives were made in Persia is not known but most probably a company or a person wanting to use the French postal system had to obtain its own supplies by private means. The four known letters bearing French adhesives stem both from Hanhart et Cie at Tabriz a Swiss trading company

A printed circular dated 1 June 1862 at Tabriz from Hanhart et Cie of Tabriz. Sent through for-warders G Hochstrasser & Co of Trebizond (cachet on reverse) and French post office at Trebizond as per transit mark "Trebizonde Turquie D'Asia 21 Juin (18)62" and the French adhesives 10c + 40c, were both tied by Trebizond small figures "4016" of the same office. The circular passed on 25 Juin 62 the "Bureau Francaise de Constantinople". The letter further carries the "Mediterranee á Lyon 3 Juil 62 B" postmark and back stamped upon arrival "Lyon 3 Juil 62" as well

H. Arnaud was a trading company representative for G. Hochstrasser & Co in Trebizonde. Mr Arnaud was also in charge of a postal agency as well as acting as a forwarding agency. Existed between 1857 and 1914



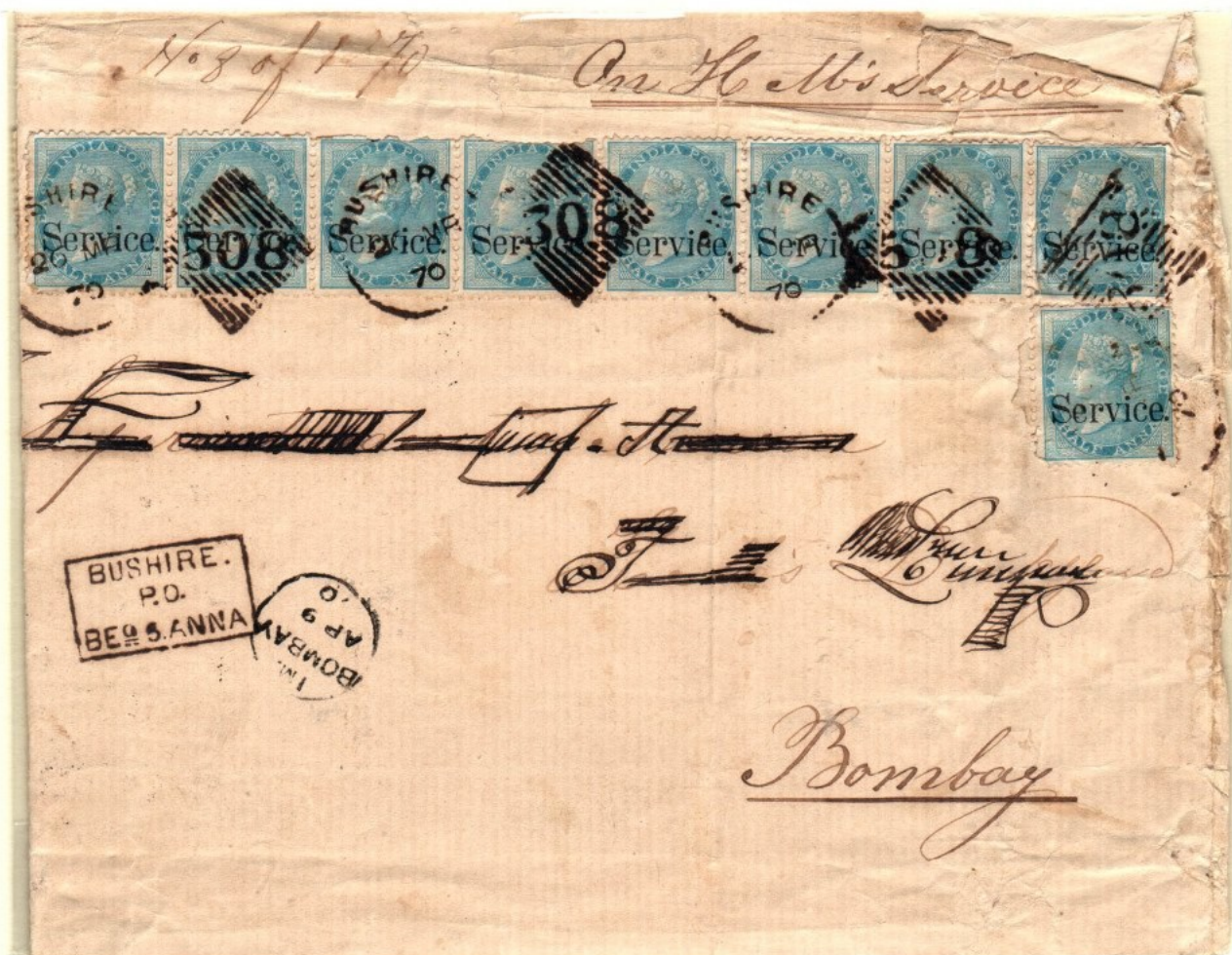
**Letter 1871 to UK with Duplex Bushire/26 + m/s**

Cover bearing 6as, single rate for UK up to 1oz, cancelled by "BUSHIRE/26" duplex. The stamps additionally cancelled in m/s "Bushire 5th Nov 1871. On reverse a Bombay transit Nov 18 and arrived Spilsby, England Dec 17, 1871



**Duplex mark, BUSHIRE with serifs, and "308" in 14 bars on Service letter**

Large folded official cover bearing in total 8as (some on reverse), but insufficiently paid, Thus added a rectangular bearing marking "BUSHIRE/P.O./B.E.G. 6 ANNA". Sent to Bombay. Postage stamps overprinted "Service"



Letter sent by the Bushire Health Authorities March 1870 arriving Bombay April 9, 1870. Damaged



18 kran 10 chahi. Combination of Lion and 1<sup>st</sup> portrait issueThis contains the **largest amount of 4-blocks** of the Lion issues recorded on any item

Waybill, cut-down, sent from Yezd on 12 May 1877 to Teheran arriving 23 May, bearing on the front 1 Kran carmine in two blocks of four and a pair. On the back another two block of four together with 10 chahi of the 1876 First Portrait issue of the Shah



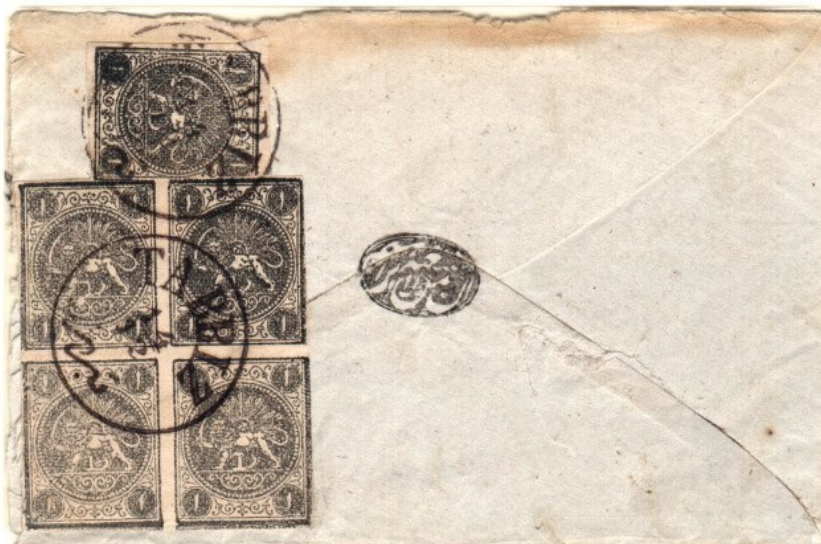
Combination 5-chahi postal stationery envelope and 8-kopek Russian stamp. 3 recorded



From Tabriz  
9 June 1877  
sent via  
Julfa 30 May  
(Julian) and  
Moscow  
8 June and  
St Petersburg  
9 June to arrive  
to Ipswich, GB,  
on 25 June

**Route: Tabriz - Teheran**

Opened 13 February 1876



Cover from Tabriz on 14 Sep 1876 to Teheran, bearing a sheet of four and a single of 1-chahi black.

Single rate 5 chahi

Two covers with 4-block of 1 chahi recorded



I.f

## Ship's Bag System of the Royal Navy

Letter from Bushire to UK in 1878, but using British adhesive

British officers could post mail to other navy officers worldwide through the "Ship's bag system". British stamps were used and there were different rates depending on which port in the world the Navy ship was calling at. Another navy ship calling the same port would bring the navy bag to UK or at least take it to a port closer to UK.

Prepaid 8 d, the rate for the Persian Gulf via Brindisi. The British postage stamp would only be cancelled at the destination

So far the **only recorded** letter using Ship's Bag System from Persia



Commander capel R.N.Wodehouse, commander of H:M:S: Teazer sent this letter to a relative in England on 10<sup>th</sup> of February 1878. His ship called Bushire that day and same evening the British India steamer "Punjaub" sailed that evening for Aden (according to the log of both Teazer and Punjaub)

The P. & O. "Deccan" left Aden for Suez on the 18<sup>th</sup>, and mails continued by the "Bokhara" to Brindisi, arriving London on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. The envelope has a Portsmouth back stamp at that date



## Postal Agreement with India in 1877

### Bushire Exchange offices

Earliest recorded outgoing mail via the Bushire Persian & Indian Exchange offices

Letter to Bermuda

Route: Teheran – Bushire - Bombay and onwards



Registered Free mail from Teheran 24 March 1878 via Bushire 14 April to Bombay transited 28 April. Then onwards to Marseille and Paris 17 May via Aden, to arrive in London 18 May. No further marks. Faults

A Free frank negative cachet applied in Persia due to special concession by the authorities

Official postal mail forwarded and distributed free of charge within UPU. Destination Bermuda very elusive

### Persian postal rates. Letters

LETTERS		1875		8.6.1878		1885		1891		Feb 1894		June 1894		1895		14.5.1905		21.10.1913	
Weight	class	int.	ext.	int.	ext.	int.	ext.	int.	ext.	int.	ext.	int.	ext.	int.	ext.	int.	ext.	int.	ext.
Normal rate	I	5	8k+ 5	5	5	5	6	5	7	5	8	5	10	5	12	6	13	6	12
Normal rate	II	10		10	10	10	12	10	14	10	16	10	20	10	24	9	26	9	24



**I. C5. India-Persia**  
Mail Arrangements

## Special rates for the Gulf

Ship fee  
applied

### 2ch ship fee applied extra for mail from the interior

From 1879 and onwards, 2ch ship fee has been recorded applied for mail originating from the interior.  
No explanation has been found yet for this fee.

Registered  
double-weight  
letter, bearing  
12 ch, from  
Shiraz  
13 July 1878  
sent via Bushire  
18 July, Bombay  
1 August to Suez,  
where the Italian  
postal services  
Poste Egiziane,  
on 16 August  
forwarded it to  
Cairo.

Double rate 10ch  
Registration fee  
10 chahi  
Ship fee 2ch



**Special 2-chahis extra rate for Persian mail addressed to Mesopotamia as the ship mail service was private and probably charged for it. About 1890**



9 chahi rate  
instead of  
normal foreign  
rate of 7 chahi

Sent from  
Schiraz about  
1892/3 to  
Basrah via  
Bushire IPO  
No arrival  
postmark

Special label  
"Mail to be  
transmitted to  
the Postmaster  
General in  
Bombay"



The only two AR-documents recorded showing this postal service for mail from Persia to abroad till about 1910

*N 311*

Monsieur *A. Stahl*

à *Teheran*

expédie *une lettre* adressé *تاغذ*  
*un paquet* *میرستد عدد*

à Monsieur *Heinrich Koch* *پاکت به*  
*Eltville a/Rhein* *آقای*

et prie l'adreset de lui *و خواهش میکند وصولی*  
 annoneer *آزاصر قوم و معنی فریاند*

le reçu en signant cette carte

Vom Auslande  
Eingeschrieben.

Sent to  
Germany

The AR-fee  
was half  
of the  
registration  
fee i e  
5 chahi

Sent from  
Teheran  
1st of May  
about 1878  
or 1879  
via Tabriz  
when Stahl  
was the  
Postal  
Director  
Returned  
to Teheran  
18 June  
(back  
stamped)

Sent to Germany and returned

*N: 44*

*339*

La présente lettre RECOMMANDÉE N° 44 par M. *A. Stahl*

de *Teheran*

POUR M. *Ragnit, prusse*

Lui a été délivrée par le bureau de *Teheran*

LE *18/9*

SIGNATURE DE DESTINATAIRE

*1. Oudolf Reichardt*

بایکست سفارش شده از جانب  
 بجهت  
 تیوط پستخانه مبارکه  
 قیلم شد  
 تاریخ  
 محل بیضام صاحب کپت

Sent as per m/s 2nd May 1879 but cancelled Teheran 5 May 1879 but left Teheran 30 May and addressed to  
 Ragnit, Germany arriving 27 May 1879.  
 Returned signed to Teheran 30 June 1879 (back stamped)



Route in use before Persia joined GPO (UPU) in 1877 for mail to and from Russia and the world. Exchange

This route was in function long before Persia joined GPO (UPU) in 1875 for communication with Russia. Also pre-UPU mail was transiting this way and in 1877 an agreement was reached between Russia and Persia to organise an exchange office here.

Postmark. Rectangular **Khiaban** (Teheran) on registered letter to USA



"Khiaban" was the section for foreign mail. A circular Teheran mark date 8 Aug 1880. Addressed to Boston, USA, arriving 16 Sept, via New York, N.Y. M/s via Berlin. Rate 5 chahi. Registration fee 10 chahi. German registration label applied at Berlin. Only three three-coloured items recorded of the 2<sup>nd</sup> portrait issue

### Teheran – Astarabad route

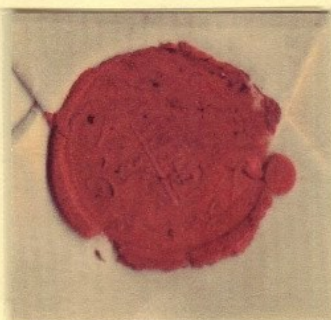
Waybill with mixed franking of dual currency. 1882



Total franking is 5 kran plus 1 franc and 50 centimes



3 kran 18 chahi . The highest recorded rate for a Persian letter sent internal or  
to abroad, from 1877 until at least about 1890



Rate 3 Kran 18 chahi. Can only be stated in total as we don't know what the insurance fee was

Sent from Teheran 14 March 1887 to Paris in a special mailbag. No transit marks. Two faint circled Paris postmarks and a circled distribution mark "PARIS/ 11 april 1887/DISTRIBUTION" on reverse

Special envelope used for insured mail. Fee for insurance only stated on the inter-postal document.

The special Teheran Post Office red circled wax seal, **R/TEHERAN/PERSE + script** in Persian used for special registration. Applied at back. Post office seal cost 2 chahi. It is not known whether that fee was paid in addition or included

Two recorded only of this registration/insured mark



Shiraz - Bombay



1 franc =  
1 kran  
used single  
on registered  
cover to  
Bombay

A very elusive  
single franking  
used to abroad  
(also internal  
use elusive)

Two recorded  
covers used to  
abroad

Registered letter from Shiraz 7 May 1883 (H 29 Samade ol Sani 1300) via Bouchir (unclear) and arriving Bombay 25 May (both back stamped). Double rate 10 chahi. Registration fee 10 chahi

## Teheran - Shiraz

Complete waybill with 10 francs (1 toman). Three recorded waybills with this value.



Parcel sent from Teheran 23 May 1885 (H 1302) to Shiraz. Combination with 1885 years issue.  
Two stamps missing at back. Stamps are also missing on the other two recorded waybills



1888

**\*International Money Orders**

With France &amp; Algeria

The upper part is an unused "International Money Order document". Two mint recorded. Used ones none  
 The envelope with Tabriz post office seal is the only recorded from Tabriz. Sent 24 March 1888 to Paris arriving 11 April

MINISTÈRE DES POSTES DE PERSE

Bureau d ۹۶۰  
 وزارت جلیلہ پست ایران

Timbre du Bureau expéditeur.

MANDAT D'ARTICLE D'ARGENT INTERNATIONAL Somme en chiffres.

Payable par le Bureau d برائت پستی بزرگ  
 (\*)

Payer à la personne nommée dans ma lettre d'avis de ce jour n°  
 ou à son ordre, la somme de (\*\*)

188

LE RECEVEUR,

ARTICLE D'ARGENT

N<sup>o</sup> 21. MINISTÈRE DES POSTES DE PERSE

Timbre du Bureau expéditeur.

TABRIZ

AVIS DE L'ÉMISSION

D'UN

MANDAT D'ARTICLE D'ARGENT INTERNATIONAL

Pour le Receveur des Postes

du Bureau de la place de Bourse N<sup>o</sup> 4.

Désigner ici le pays étranger auquel appartient le bureau.

France

Paris.

F.S.P.



The seal of Tabriz  
 post office

In 1877 Mr Riederer, the Austrian General Post Master, started an internal money order service in cooperation with  
 Agence Ziegler which had offices throughout Persia

\*In 1886 an agreement with France & Algeria was signed. Less than 10 Mandat d'Article d'Argent International" are  
 recorded. Due to mismanagement the service was suspended in 1889



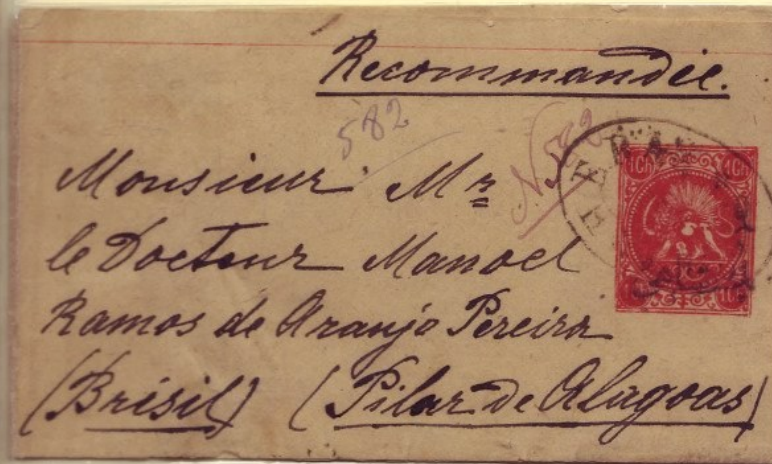
Type II overprint. Different usages

Registered to Hungary



Registered to Brasil 1891 (Below)

From Teheran via Pernambuco, Brasil to Pilar de Alagoas arriving 27 March. Adhesives were on the document (Postmarks on the back)



To Tiflis, Russia 1890 (Below)

From Teheran 4 Sep 1890 to Tiflis possibly added adhesives on the document



1-chahi wrapper used registered with a newspaper left intact. Up-rated to 18 chahis including the registration fee 14 chahi. Sent from Teheran in October 1892 to Budapest, Hungary, received 12 November 1892. The only 1-chahi, 1888 wrapper recorded complete with document/newspaper



Cover sent via London, New York, the Panama Canal to Valparaíso and returned the same route

Double rate 7+7 chahi =14 chahi. Registration fee 14 chahi

Returned  
mail to  
Persia  
most  
elusive



#### Going to Chile

dep Sultanabad 25 Feb 1894  
via Teheran illegible  
via Tabriz 25 March  
via New York illegible date. Got registration label  
to Valparaíso 2 May 1894

#### Returned to Persia

at Valparaíso 21 August 1894 w decedé label  
via New York 21 & 24 February 1895  
via London 5 March. Got red registration mark  
via Tiflis 3 March 1895 (Julian)

The cover got a registration label in Persia no 205 in m/s

Upon return to Teheran it seems as the cover got both a Persian oval black "R" mark plus "REBUT". Both have same type of colour so it is presumed that these marks must have been put there upon the cover's return.

There are several numbers, printed and in m/s, which have not been possible to fully explain



## Stamp shortages

When the new Shah, Mozzafer ed-Din, replaced the deceased Shah, important values were lacking  
Thus the old 1894 issue was surcharged 5 chahi, 1 and 2 Kran



Registered  
letter  
from Teheran  
8 Jan 1898  
to London  
arriving  
9 Feb 1898

Rate 12 chahi  
Registration  
Fee 12 chahi

## Waybill

Sent from Tabriz in 19 December 1897 (H 24 Rajab 1315). Both 1 and 2 kran surcharges used









**2 chahis used registered and internal. Up-rated**

From Teheran 31 March 1902 to Tabriz  
Rate 15 chahi. Registration fee 15 chahi

**2 chahis used registered and internal. Up-rated**

From Teheran 31 March 1902 to Tabriz  
Rate 7 chahi Registration fee 15 chahi

This control is only recorded in Farabakhsh.

Only five recorded genuinely used. Two registered

**The only two recorded registered**



## Money Order (Mandat)

Mandat sent from Teheran to Enzeli 1904. Only four Mandats recorded before 1925

MINISTÈRE DES POSTES DE PERSE.

Bureau de *Teheran*

**MANDAT** برات

d'article d'argent № **1079** نمبر

Payable par le bureau de *Enzeli* بتوسط دفتر خانه

بلغ در وجه شخصی که در کاغذ جداگانه ذکر شده

Payer à la personne nommée dans ma lettre d'avis  
 № *1049*, la somme de *Cent cinquante*  
*Tomans* تومان

payable à *vue* درمدن

*Teheran*, le *12/12/1904* 1904

À Monsieur le Directeur des Postes Le Directeur,  
 à *Enzeli* *Hedid*

en timbres du mandat délivré

Somme en chiffres

Reçu le montant du mandat ci-dessus, soit la  
 somme de *Cent cinquante Tomans* عايد كردند مبلغ

Signature de la personne à qui le mandat est payé  
*J. Baron*

کریستوفر بارون در کمالی ایستگاه

The Persian authorities decided to print special high value stamps

**100 Tomans** and **50 Tomans** are the **two highest** value stamps of Persia ever to be applied

They have only been **recorded on this one document**

The receiver at Enzeli has signed the Mandat at bottom

In 1903/4 the service of Money Order was again introduced by the Belgian administration but only within Persia. Rules and regulations followed those of UPU. Special formula was designed for this purpose. As there was a need for very high denominations for this postal service special postage stamps were printed and used in combination with other postage stamps of lower denominations



## Introduction to the period

The Shah governments were always weak and needed constantly money. Great Britain and Russia always "assisted", for a price! Belgians were hired to administrate the custom revenues in 1902 and the postal administration in 1904.

The Russians invaded Azarbadjan and made advances into Persia's north eastern border. Great Britain and Russia came to agreement to partition Persia into political and commercial zones in 1907. The Persian Government protested in vain. The Russians withdraw most of its troops. In 1909 a mullah in LAR province made his own "revolution". Postage stamps were printed. Nine covers recorded.

Highway robberies were plentiful in the south hitting the British had business interests. The Government was pressured to setting up a highway gendarmerie. Sweden was invited to provide officers and lead it, which the Swedish Government accepted. About 60 officers were there under Persian Government contracts between late 1911 to 1915. Some stayed on longer privately.

The Russians felt after the partition in 1907 free to do as they wished. Although Russia had withdrawn its troops from Persia north western Azarbadjan was again invaded in 1911 because of Turkish invasion in that area. In addition Russia helped – in spite of the agreement – the disposed Shah Mohammed Ali to return to Persia to fight for his – unsuccessful – reinstallation.

## Nude women caused hick-ups among Ayatollahs!

G. Lepeche's signature. The earliest use of visible censorship in Persia

This type of French ppc NOT ALLOWED!

Persian  
ppc

## G Lepeche

The signature of the censor officer used across a 2ch-stamp

Was in use between November 1902 and January 1904 before the delivery of the overprinted 2ch stamps

Sent 14 Jan 2004 from Teheran to Trieste

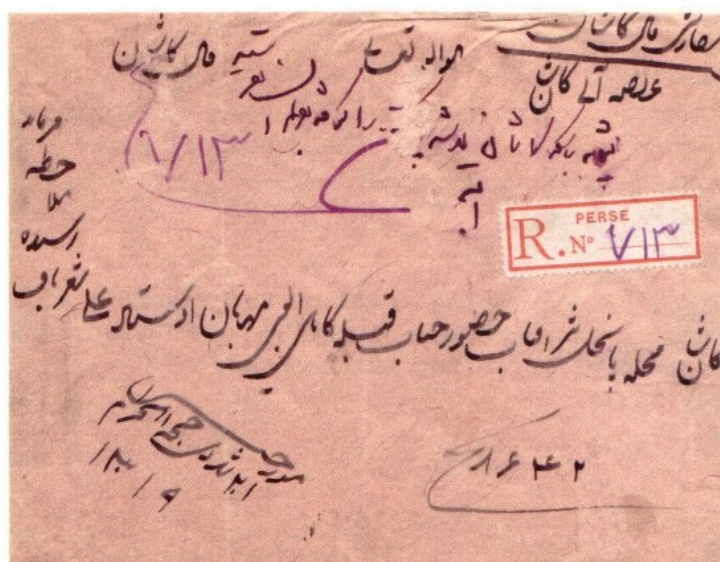
Rate to abroad 5ch

**Historical note:** Incoming semi-nude/nude women on ppcs was anathema to the mullahs. They wished to ban ppcs altogether in 1903. As a member of UPU it was not that easy. A solution was reached allowing Persian pcs to be sold, censored, at the Teheran GPO! A special obliterator were to be used and a levy of 2 chahi was to be paid in the form of a 2-chahi stamp of the 1902 issue overprinted **CONTROLE**. Varieties exist. Overprints in use till 1907. This was **the first censorship in Persia**



Unauthorised postage stamps printed in the city of Meched in 1902

**Combination of 5 chahi violet of Meched issue with 10 chahi of 1898 issue**



Cover sent 15 March 1902 (H 1319) from Meched to Teheran arriving 11 April. Certificate Holcombe

\*The Belgian Director of Customs and Post Master in Meched, Khorrasan province in north eastern Persia, Victor Castaign, printed his own – unauthorised – postage stamps in March – April 1902. It is said that there was a severe stamp shortage of certain values which was basically true and valid for all Persia. However, he never asked for an authorisation from the GPO in Teheran. Mr Castaign was dismissed from his position as a result of this misconduct. Probably less than 30 covers have been recorded with different values and combinations.



"Service" mail of the Customs department

1902 issue overprinted "Service"



Letter from the General Director of Customs at the Gulf port of Mohammerah 10 November 1904 and sent to his colleague at the Gulf port of Lingah (Not clear postmark) Rate 9 ch for 2nd weight class

The red seal is the official vax seal of **Muhammerah** Customs. Stated in Persian. Few recorded.  
The seal is scanned in 100%



## Russia finally in favour of letting parcels transit

Persia announced on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 1904 the establishment of Parcel Service between Europe and Persia via Russia after an agreement had finally been reached between the two countries. For many years Russia had refused Persia to have such service via Russia. Only after an intervention by UPU did Russia finally agree. The following border posts could be used.

- at the Transcaspian border: **Badjguiran or Goudan**
- at the Caspian Sea: **Enzeli, Bender-Gez, Mechedisser and Astara**
- at the Caucasian border: **Djulfa**

For incoming parcel mail special arrangements had to be done since Persia could not handle and deliver parcels from abroad to the interior of the country. Thus parcels could only go to the border with Russia where they would be forwarded by private arrangements like agencies, etc. So far there are no recorded foreign parcel receipts addressed to any of the exchange office recorded during this early period.

### "Colix Postaux" hand stamp and overprint

Although the agreement was signed in 1904 the services started only in 1907, at least for outgoing parcels. In the beginning special measures were applied. A sort of trial period.

See the following page

### Enzeli and Baku Exchange offices

Coupon.  
Peut être détaché par  
le destinataire

Timbre du bureau  
d'origine

F. 38,5  
Nom et domicile de  
l'expéditeur:  
*Savand  
Enzeli  
Perse*

EMPIRE DE PERSE  
*N° 553  
Constantinople  
Poste Russe*

DE PERSE  
*Enzeli*

VALEUR DECLAREE  
*250 francs*

BULLETIN D'EXPÉDITION

Ci-joint *1* colis portant l'adresse ci-dessous:

Valeur assurée *Deux cent  
Cinquante francs*

A *Yahouda Khan  
Constantinople  
(Lieu de destination)  
Hotel Sofia (Bourgeois)  
(Rue et N°)*

Poids. *3850 gr* Droits de douane (1). *9-1/2*

Acheminement:  
*Russie*

(1) A remplir par le bureau d'échange d'entrée du pays de destination.

This parcel of 3850 gram was sent from Enzeli in closed bag via Baku to Constantinople. The document bears 9 Kran 7 chahis in total rate which presumably includes insurance fee. Also there is an EMPIRE DE PERSE number label stating Constantinople Poste Russe.

The 4-kran yellow of 1907 issue is only recorded on two items



III.6 1908-9

### 2-chahis "Imprimés" levy on foreign newspapers

The 2-chahi of December 1907 issue was overprinted "Imprimé" to be used for this – illegal - levy



Incoming wrapper from Egypt about 1908-9 was levied 2 chahi. A 2-chahi stamp was applied

#### Shortage of 2-chahi stamps

Two 1-chahi registration labels overprinted "imprimés" replaced the postage stamp. Only two recorded



Wrapper used by "Supplement du Petit Journal", cancelled Paris 23 2 1909, addressed to Teheran, arriving 15 March.  
Two 1-chahi labels used

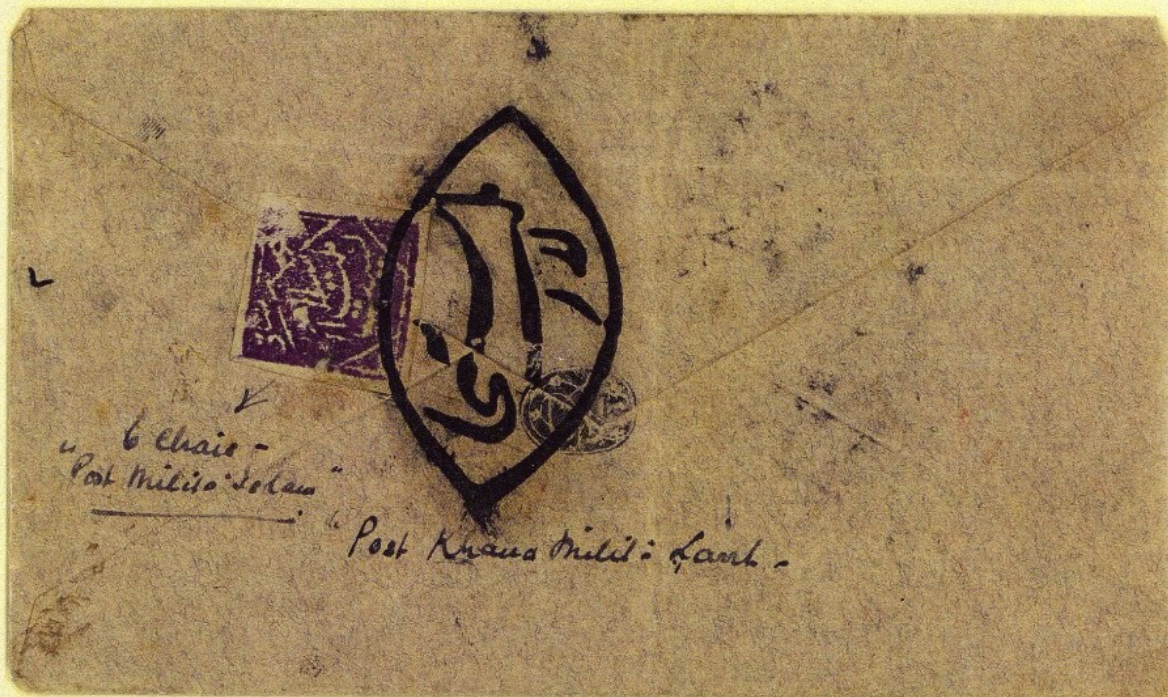
The levy was against UPU rules and was withdrawn in 1909 after intervention of the Belgian Post Master Mr Molitor. The overprinted 2-chahi of 1907 issue was only used in Teheran. In other parts of the country the normal 2 chahis without the "imprimés" overprint were used. Very few wrappers exist.



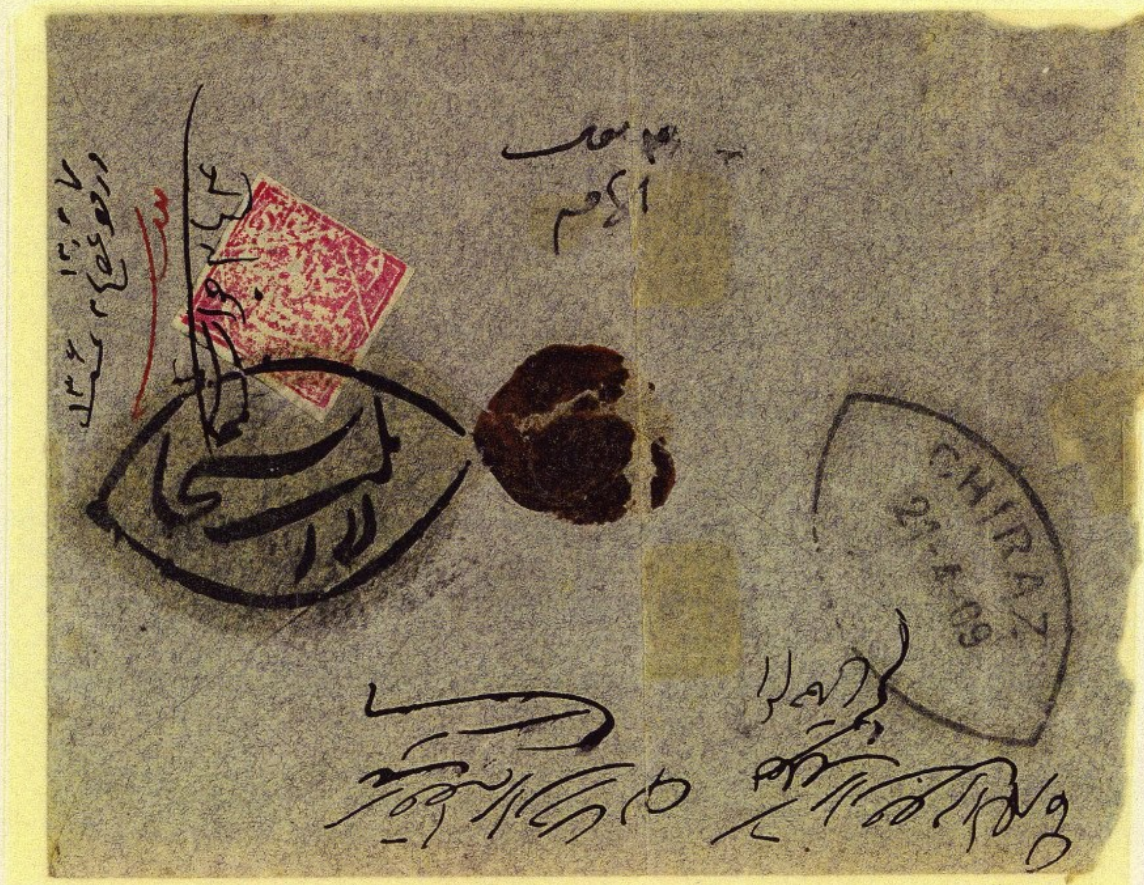
### Issues his own stamps and canceller. About two months in 1909

During the upheavals in Persia 1907 which ultimately lead to a revolution where Shah Mohammed Ali lost his throne in 1909, general anarchy prevailed throughout Iran. The central government had little control in the provinces. The de facto ruler of a part of South Persia was one Seyed Abdul Husein of Lar. He made his own canceller, and his own stamps, for a very short period, bearing the text "The Islamic Nation's Post" in Persian in 1909. The postage stamps several types, and two types of cancellers replaced. Out of nine covers or major pieces recorded **four are shown here.**

Cover from Lar to Linga at the Persian Gulf using single rate 6 ch Lar stamp



Cover from Lar to Shiraz in April 1909 using double rate 9 ch Lar stamp





### Censored in Karachi

The British replaced the Indian PO with a field post service while civilians would use the Persian PO which temporarily was put under British administration during the occupation. The Bushire Indian PO was reopened when the occupation ended

**Registered mail sent during the occupation very elusive**



Registered letter sent from Bushire 20 IX 1915 to Karachi arriving 27 IX. Addressed to an official at the Persian Gulf Telegraphs

Rate 12 chahis. Registration fee 12 chahis



## Germany's drive for India, the Crown Jewel"

related to Persian activities

**"Persia" HQs in Irak  
led by von der Goltz  
Special marks**

Von der Goltz died suddenly and untimely on the 19th of April 1916. He was replaced by Colonel Gleich. in spite of this the inscription **"Stab von der Goltz, Sondermission P"** ("P" for Persia) remained in a special handstruck circled device. Elusive



Field Post Letter bearing Persia Mission "Brief Stempel" in the center of von der Goltz special obliteration. The letter was addressed to Germany, transited via Konstantinople 5 May 1916



## UPU-rate surcharged but the old rate remained!

The 7<sup>th</sup> UPU Congress decided in 1920 to increase the rates. In order to be able to compete with the lower rates used by the Indian post offices situated in the Persian ports (Benaders) in the Gulf, the Persian authorities decided to surcharge 12ch-stamps with 1 kran and 6ch-stamps with 10 chahi i e the new UPU-rates **but let the customers in the Persian ports continue to pay only the old rates!**

**Two types of overprint. Type I; 10 Ch & 1 Kr. Type II; 10 CHAHIS/BENADERS; 1 KRAN/BENADERS**

Only type I is shown here as it is much scarcer than type II



### Type I

Registered bank envelope sent from Bushire (date illegible) to Teheran arrived 19 XII 21 via the **Baghdad route** (thus foreign rate) transited 2 Dec 21

### UPU Rate

1 kran, 1<sup>st</sup> weight  
10 ch for each step  
Reg fee 1 Kran

Thus this letter of 3d weight class has the rate of 2 Kran  
Reg fee 1 kran but the sender paid only  
 $12+6+6=24$ chahi plus reg fee **1kr** i e a total of **44ch** in comparison to the surcharged face value of 3 Kran=**60 chahis**

Benaders letters of type I are **elusive** and if addressed to the interior of Persia even more so.

Type II of Benaders is very scarce in any case



# Socialist Republic of Iran

Independent! Socialist!  
Assisted by Soviet Union  
only to be deceived later!

The idea of an independent Republic of Gilan was abandoned

## Postage stamp and Seal of the "Soviet Republic"

Eventually in May/June 1921 when this rebellion republic had only about three more months to survive before it was crushed (also Mirza Kuchek Khan died) **rebellion postage stamps** of five denominations were issued

Three covers are recorded of this elusive mail. This cover bears a 3ch Gilan rebellion stamp

Sent from Enzeli on 30 VIII (1921) and arrived Recht 31 XIII 1921 m/s 1339 = lunar calendar)

The letter was sent off uncanceled or sent off without a postage stamp and the 3ch stamp was put on at Recht

The document attached does not belong to the cover.

But the document shows the **seal of the Gilan Soviet Republic**.

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 it.





Company

## Soviet Transport Company

created about 1923

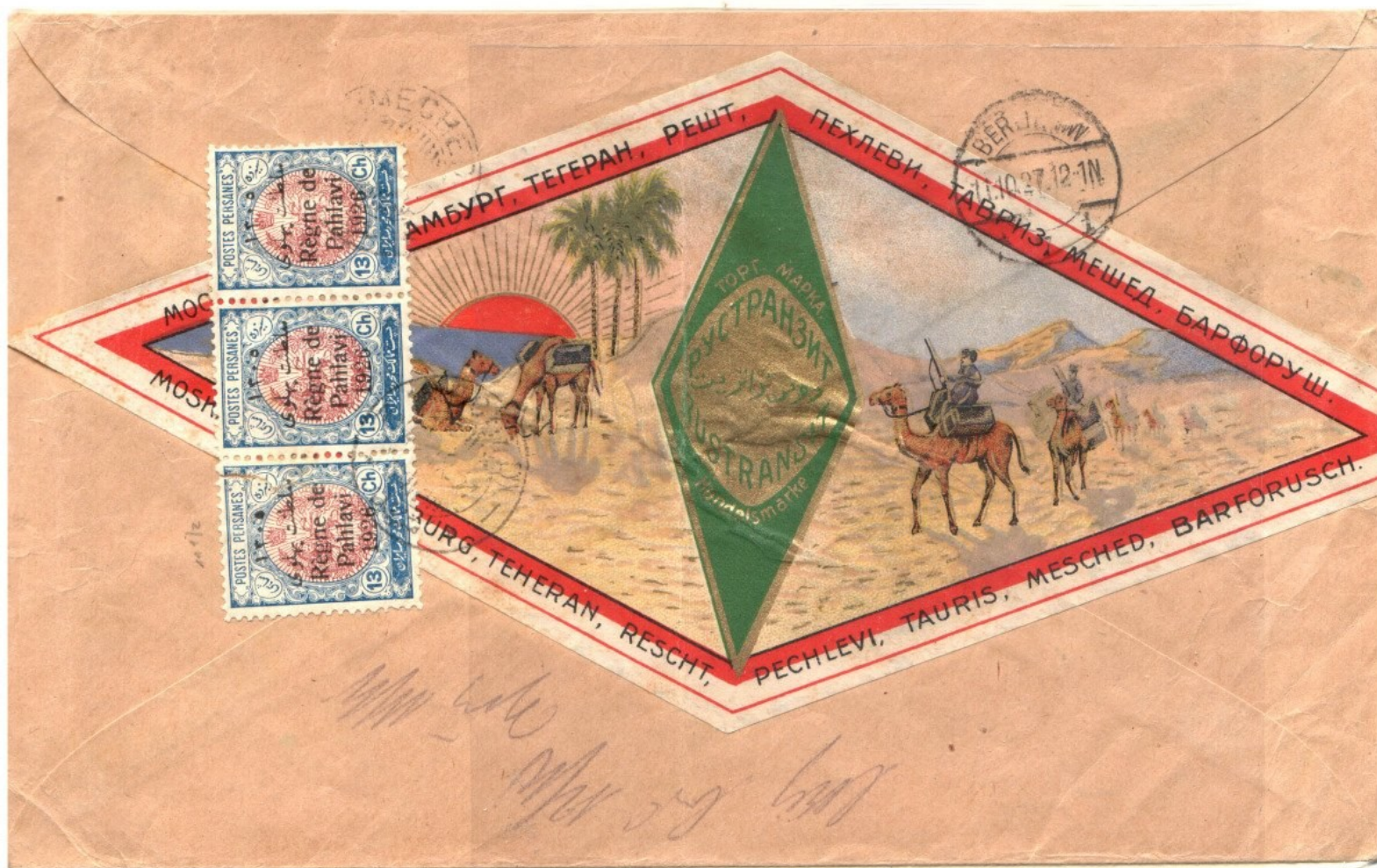
The company was forced upon Iran to accept and was the only company allowed to work internationally by the Soviet Government with goods related to Persia, import or export, via Soviet Union

This company was of great importance for the import and export of products between Russia and Persia

Offices were established in northern Persia at Teheran, Tabriz, Rescht, Bandar Pahlavi (Enzeli), Meched and Barfrouch. Main offices in Russia were in Moscow and St. Petersburg

Rustransit had their own labels of different sizes of the design

All goods went by truck in Persia and by train through Russia



Registered letter sent from Meched in September 1927 to Berlin, arriving 11 October.  
Rate 2<sup>nd</sup> weight unit 15 chahis Reg fee 15 c



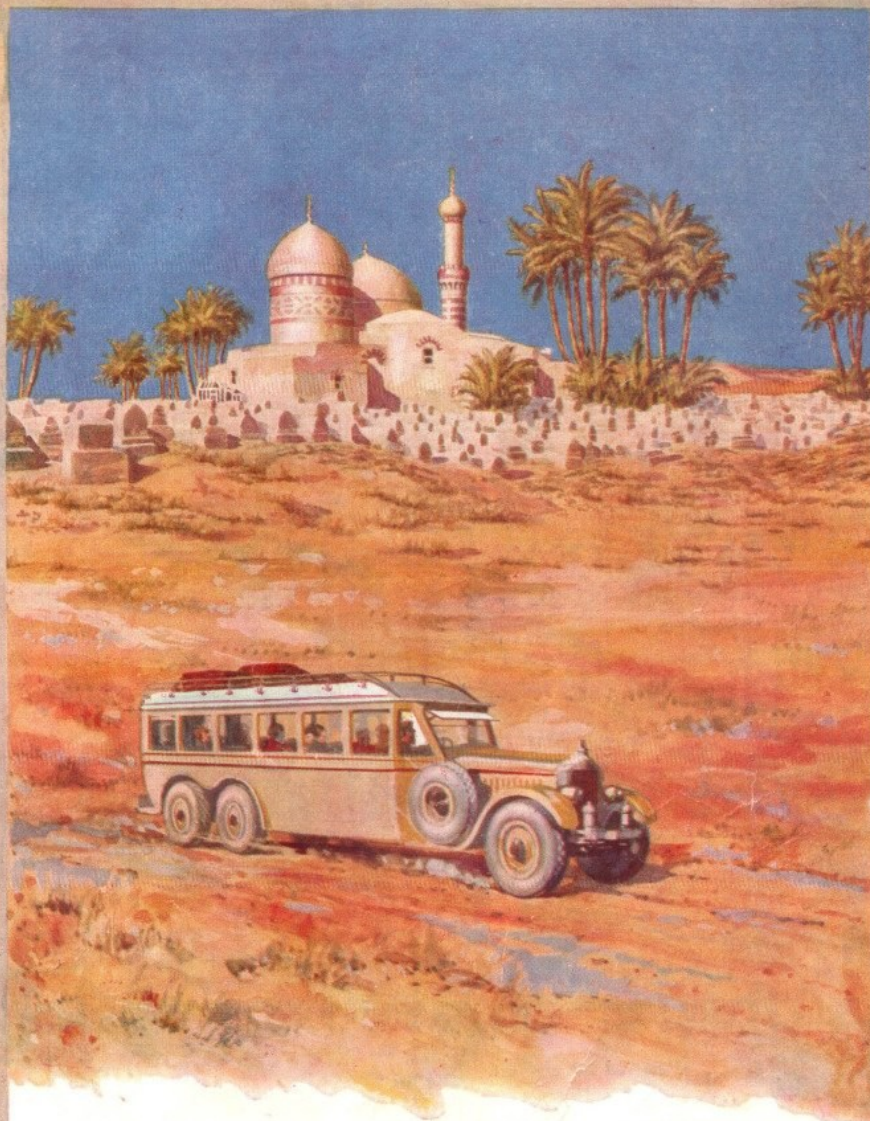
Two Australians started a regular overland transport service between Beirut and Baghdad in 1923, taking passengers and mail. This route became very important outlet for mail from western Persia that connected with this desert service at least from November 1923. On the left is an information leaflet issued by the **Nairn Brothers**. Their mail service contract ended in October 1928 and was not renewed. An unknown contractor got it for another two years.

### Parcel mail from Persia

Has existed via the border exchange office **Kasr Esshirin**, forwarded to Baghdad to continue with the Overland desert route to Beirut. Only **four** receipts are **recorded** the first one from 1929.

The below receipt shows a parcel addressed to Bern, Switzerland arriving 10-7-30.

Endorsed "**By Overland route**" in both English and **Arabic (red box)**.



HAIFA-BEIRUT-DAMASCUS-BAGHDAD

by the

**NAIRN EASTERN  
TRANSPORT CO. LTD**

Head Office: DAMASCUS

Branch Offices: BEIRUT & BAGHDAD

Agents:

**THOS. COOK & SON LTD**

and principal booking agents throughout the World.

Feb. 1931

